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THE GUARD EXPERIENCE

>> BACK TO BASIC

**GX GOES TO
FORT BENNING**

>> ON THE ROAD

SAVING THE COAST
SOLDIERS TAKE ON
DEEPWATER DISASTER

>> GEAR

EFFECTIVE FIRE
THE M109A6 PALADIN

>> GX HERO

**RISKING FIRE
TO SERVE**
SOLDIER SAVES
WOMAN FROM PERIL
P. 100

COMBAT TESTED

MEDICS SHINE IN BATTLE



WE ALL SERVE



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

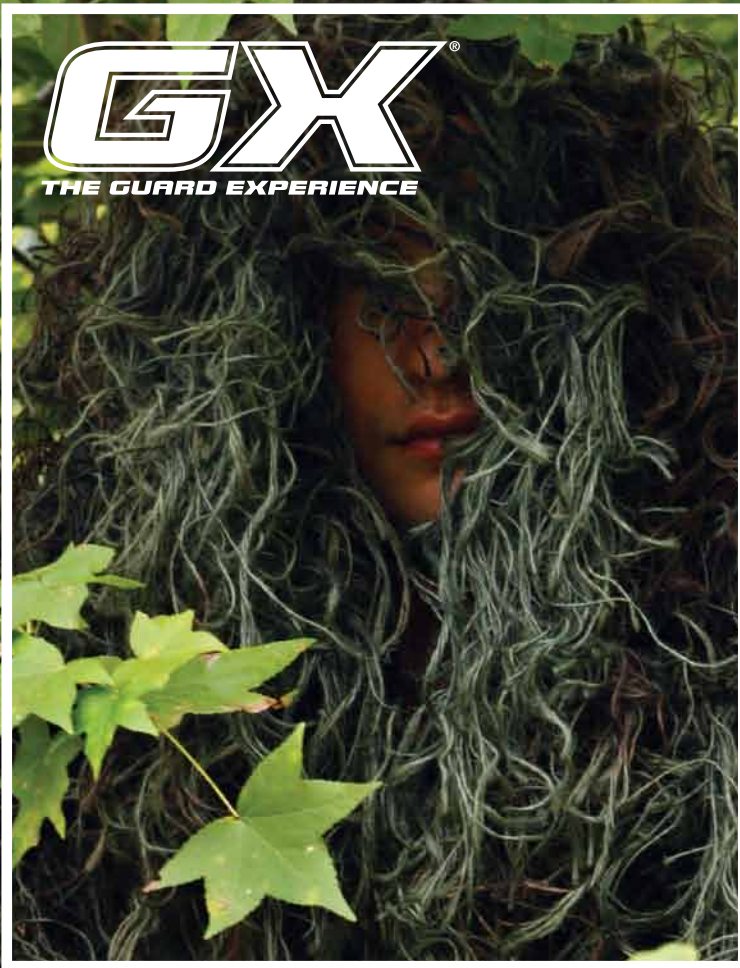
**ARMY NATIONAL GUARD ★ ARMY RESERVE ★ NAVY RESERVE ★ MARINE RESERVE
COAST GUARD RESERVE ★ AIR NATIONAL GUARD ★ AIR FORCE RESERVE**

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



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90



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Soldiers of the Louisiana National Guard,

On April 20, a deadly explosion on the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig threatened to change our way of life. But, just as in prior emergencies such as Hurricanes Gustav and Ike, you, our Citizen-Soldiers, stepped up and answered the challenge.

Our state aviation command, with the help of our partnering states, has done a tremendous job of defending our coast. They have airdropped over 40 million pounds of sandbags to fill gaps in low-lying and sensitive barrier islands. These critical operations helped fortify our initial layers of defense against oil intrusion.

Louisiana Guard Soldiers moved tons of rock and sand to create land bridges that closed gaps and helped protect our fragile interior marshes and bays.

You pioneered the use of vacuum barges to extract large amounts of oil from the surface of water in shallow areas where larger skimmers could not reach. I admire your incredible ingenuity, especially in such a timely manner.

Our Guard's engineers completed many other missions, such as building miles of Hesco barriers and emplacing Tiger Dam shoreline protection systems, as well as a myriad of associated missions.

I cannot stress enough the importance of your selfless efforts after such a disastrous event. You stand tall, put in long hours and continue to lean forward to ask "What's next?" in making sure your fellow citizens are protected.

As we move ahead, Louisiana citizens will continue to rely on you, and I am confident you will continue to respond accordingly.

Keep up the great work.

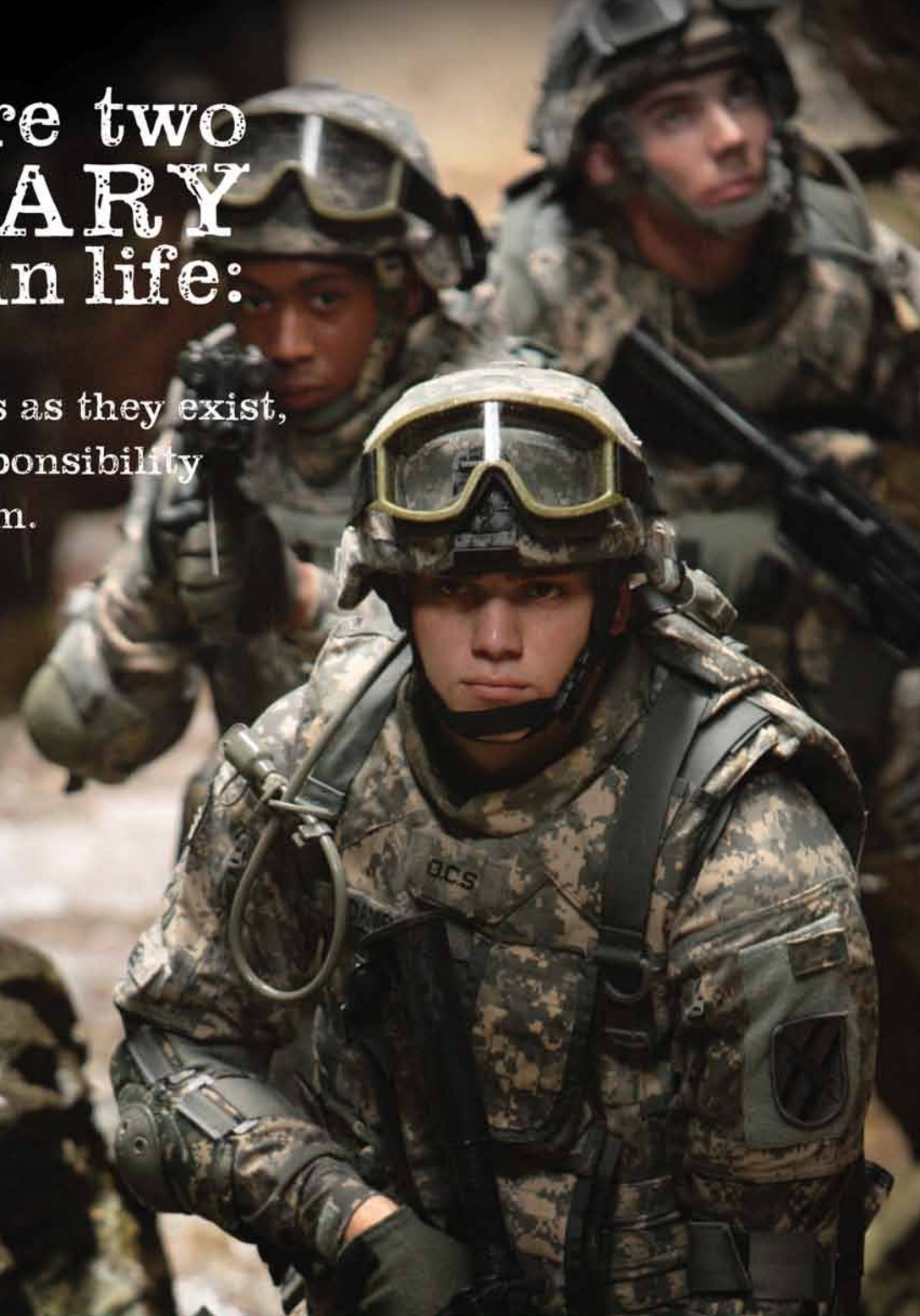
A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bennett C. Landreneau".

Sincerely,

MG Bennett C. Landreneau
Adjutant General of Louisiana

There are two PRIMARY choices in life:

Accept conditions as they exist,
or accept the responsibility
for changing them.



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COURTESY OF THE OFFICE OF MAJOR GENERAL BENNETT C. LANDRENEAU

A battle-hardened sergeant once told me he became a National Guard Infantry Soldier to take the fight to the enemy, so his kids wouldn't have to. My wife and I recently had a baby boy, and during those 3 a.m. feedings, I often think of what that Soldier expressed to me. If not for our military, if not for Soldiers like you, my son might have a very grim future ahead of him.

With that in mind, it's my pledge to you to spotlight and support your great sacrifice and courage. Our team will continue to look for ways to improve *GX*, enhance our content and cover more units and individual Soldiers. No doubt, we'll need your help to accomplish this.

Send us snapshots of your Guard experience—your promotions, your training, your hometown support. Let us know of community-level efforts where your service is making a positive impact. Let us know why you first put on your boots, or why your kids are following in your footsteps.

The efforts of the National Guard directly impact the American way of life. As Guard Soldiers, you are embedded into the fabric of our neighborhoods, schools and workplaces. At a moment's notice, you are there to turn a disaster into a recovery effort. Further, you have safeguarded our nation by forging positive relationships with foreign countries, and rebuilt countries previously brought to their knees by dictatorship. We at *GX* are forever grateful.

Thank You!



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



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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This is a photo of a tree in South Dakota after a big storm. It looks like the only thing holding up the tree is the Yellow Ribbon I hung for my son, Specialist Xander Dannen, who is in the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade.

I enjoy reading *GX* magazine and wanted to thank you for all the support for our Soldiers.

Robin Dannen
Chancellor, SD



Governor Mike Rounds of South Dakota pins a Combat Action Badge on Specialist Brittany Ketcham July 23, at Camp Phoenix in Kabul, Afghanistan. Left to right, Staff Sergeant Jason Sussner, Specialist Jacob Nelson, Ketcham and Staff Sergeant Robert Schmidt, all Soldiers of the 196th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, South Dakota Army National Guard, were each awarded a CAB for taking enemy fire in a combat zone while on a mission in Kabul, Afghanistan.

PHOTO BY SGT REBECCA LINDER



Clint, Keep up the great writing and photos! I look for them every issue.

MAJ Mark Lappegaard
Minnesota National Guard

Thanks for sending Clint Wood to Fort Benning for an article in *GX* magazine. The Army National Guard will truly benefit from his visit. Even after working long hours, his unwavering dedication and commitment were evident.

SGM Edward Chavis,
TRADOC Liaison
Fort Benning, GA

Let me say, there truly isn't a better magazine than *GX*. It's simply an honor to be included on your website and in your publication. Great job guys!

MAJ Craig Heathscott
Arkansas National Guard,
NGPEC

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU!

Send your photos and letters to
Editor@GXonline.com



ON THE COVER
A combat medic in the California Army National Guard, SSG Emmett Spraktes was awarded a Silver Star for his service in Afghanistan.

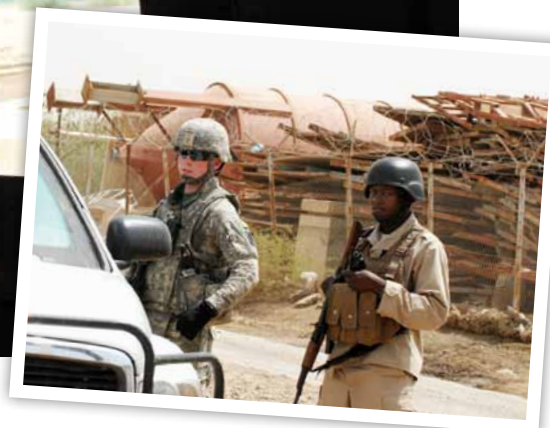
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SPC Robert L. Walker stares down the barrel of an M240B in a tower as he scans the perimeter of the Victory Base Complex for suspicious activity around the entry control point. **Below:** SPC Phillip L. Skipper and a Ugandan contractor check credentials on personnel in vehicles approaching an entry control point on the Victory Base Complex.



Louisiana Soldiers Write Home

NOT HAVING JOINED THE MILITARY UNTIL THE age of 38, I've met my share of American heroes who made the ultimate sacrifice in support of Operations Desert Storm, Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. When I first arrived in Iraq, I couldn't help but think of their time here.

I sat in Tallil watching the sunset: vivid orange beams lit up the sky. It reminded me of a beautiful spring day back home. The only things missing were green grass, cows, horses, family and friends.

What was so amazing about that particular sunset was the wall of dust that approached COB Adder just to the right.

As the dust rolled toward us, I could almost hear the rumbling of thunder. As we sat watching, we realized that there was no way we were going

to make it back to the pad before the storm hit.

We hunkered down and prepared to sit through what we assumed was just a huge cloud of dust. But as it made its way over us, we realized that a rainstorm accompanied this impressive wall. As the storm made its way across the desert, the 50+ mph winds picked up dirt. The dirt intermingled with the rain clouds, causing a massive mud storm. That's the only way I can describe it.

With rain a rarity in this part of the world, I always assumed that the earth would quickly suck up any moisture in a sense of desperation. Instead, the water lingered on the dry, cracked earth's surface and the dusty, powdery dirt quickly turned to something similar to concrete. It caked my boots and pants.

I'm sure your readers have experienced many of these storms in their time over here.

>> First Lieutenant Angela K. Fry
256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team
Public Affairs Officer

I RECEIVED A DVD IN THE MAIL just four days ago. It was not the latest blockbuster, newly released at a local retail store. It was something better and more valuable—a digital photo album from my wife back home, filled with pictures and video clips of my two young daughters.

Little milestones, huge accomplishments, little snapshots of a smile, a laugh, or even a cute temper tantrum filled my heart and soul with a

SGT TRESAL ALLEMANG, 199TH GARRISON COMMAND PUBLIC AFFAIRS

grin that even the dust storms and recent rains in Baghdad could not conceal. Predictably, it's during these times of deployment that we, as parents, husbands, wives, sons and daughters, regain the focus on our true priorities in life: our loved ones, our faith, our values and our goals.

When immersed in an environment where so many of our luxuries are temporarily set aside, we resort to our most basic needs and desires and regain some clarity.

This deployment challenges not only the Soldier, but possibly even more so, the family member left behind to care for the children, the pets, the home and the bills. Perhaps it's not just the 7,171 miles of distance between my family and me that makes me more appreciative and aware of my many blessings. Maybe it's the overwhelming support of my wife and family.

I am not sure what it is about human nature that makes this phenomenon so common among Soldiers, but it seems to be an experience shared by many, if not all, of us. Personally, I am grateful for it. I feel fortunate to be able to take a moment of pause while serving the nation and state that I love, and recognize that my wife—my teammate—is serving with the same dedication to duty, to honor, and to country as I am.

Through the coming weeks and months, I know that there will be challenges. I know that we will experience loneliness, frustration and a sense of being overwhelmed. But I also know that we will experience a great sense of elation and accomplishment at the end of this tour, and will be a stronger and more loving family because of it.

>> Captain William W. Saint
256th Infantry Brigade Combat
Team Engineer
Camp Liberty, Iraq

"I AM NO ONE SPECIAL, JUST A COMMON MAN with common thoughts. There are no monuments dedicated to me, and my name will eventually be forgotten..." were a few of the thoughts that motivated me to join the Army National Guard.

Though I have no children or grandchildren yet, I wondered what stories and life experiences I would share with them in the future.

I feel privileged and honored to serve my country. I knew that joining the Guard would be one of the most challenging and rewarding experiences of my life. One of those challenges was my deployment to Iraq. I graduated from AIT in Fort Huachuca, AZ, in November 2009. I reported to my unit—Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 256th Brigade Special Troops

1LT ANGELA FRY, 256TH INFANTRY BRIGADE PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

Battalion—for pre-mobilization training the following January.

Fear of deployment due to lack of experience, not knowing what to expect when reporting to my unit for the first time as a Soldier, saying goodbye to family and friends, and ultimately just being a private, were the thoughts racing through my mind. Surprisingly, those thoughts went away after stepping through the doors of my unit that first day. The officers and noncommissioned officers over me did not seem nervous about the deployment, just focused on the mission. I quickly adopted that mindset.

Being surrounded by Soldiers who want others to succeed, and who work as a team toward

success, is something I could not imagine existing in any organization other than the military.

"Tell your family you're in good hands and let's do this," said a text message I received from SSG Jesse Boudreaux right before deployment. That's an example of teamwork and a reassurance of success.

I am a 23-year-old private first class in Baghdad, Iraq, and occasionally, I miss the luxuries of home. But, this is exactly where I want to be.

>> Private First Class Xavier A. L'Herisse
256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team
Special Troops Battalion
Intelligence Analyst for
Base Defense Operations Center



SPC Patrick Rigney of the 1-141 Field Artillery Battalion prepares his field pack in anticipation of a foot patrol while deployed with the 256th.

» **TAKE COVER**

[Postojna, Slovenia]

Slovenian Army Special Operations Soldiers and Soldiers of 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces, Colorado Army National Guard, practice explosive breaching techniques during a three-week Joint Combined Exchange Training exercise in Slovenia, June 2010.

Photo by CPT Michael A. Odgers, Colorado Army National Guard



Denver, CO, to Postojna, Slovenia: 5,440 miles

For more on Special Forces, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/highspeedtraining



>> READY TO ENGAGE

[**Qala Ye Serkh, Afghanistan**]

Soldiers with 3rd Platoon, B Troop, 1/172nd Cavalry Squadron, Vermont Army National Guard, prepare to engage enemy combatants while out on patrol near Qala Ye Serkh.

Photo by SSG Whitney Hughes, 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain)



Montpelier, Vt., to Qala Ye Serkh, Afghanistan: 6,500 miles

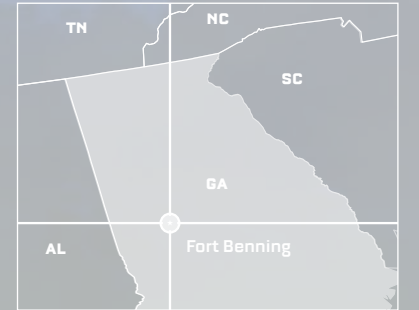


>> **DOUBLE TIME**

[Fort Benning, GA]

A drill sergeant directs Soldiers to a training cycle during their first day of Basic Training at Fort Benning, GA.

Photo by Clint Wood



For more information on Basic Training, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/careers/basic-training

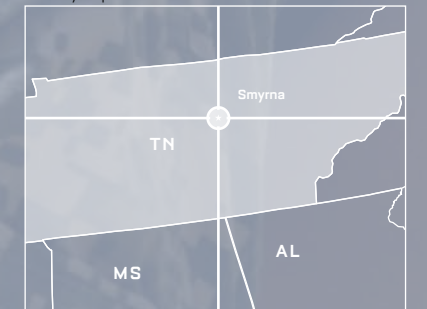


>> HERO'S WELCOME

[Smyrna, TN]

A Soldier from the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard, hugs his son during a homecoming celebration in Smyrna, TN, on July 21, 2010. The 278th spent six months in Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Photo by Stephanie Inman





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Guard holds massive exercise

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

>> GEN GEORGE WASHINGTON

★★★★

In the Nick of Time

Alaska Soldiers Pull Man From Treacherous Water

By SSG Karima Turner, Alaska National Guard Public Affairs / CAMP DENALI, AK

IN A BREAK FROM THE NORMAL C-23 Sherpa mission of transporting cargo and people, Soldiers from F Company, 207th Theater Aviation Company, had the opportunity to assist in a search and rescue June 30 on the inlet between Peter's Creek Drainage and Eagle River Drainage.

A 911 call to the Anchorage Fire Department's Communication Center at 7:36 a.m. came from a man telling them his boat was sinking and all he had for survival gear was an orange life vest.

Quick to respond, the fire department contacted the Alaska State Troopers, Merrill Field Tower, Anchorage Tower and Chugach Fire Department to assist in the rescue.

Shortly after the 911 call, Chief Warrant Officer Mel Rush, pilot; Warrant Officer Ross Wise, co-pilot; and Staff Sergeant Jeff Austin, flight engineer; departed Bryant Army Air Field on a mission to Bethel. En route, they received a direct request from Anchorage Approach Control (AAC) asking if they could see anyone in the inlet appearing to be in distress.

"The Anchorage Approach Control knew where we were because they could see us on the radar, so they asked us if we could see anything," said Rush. "We looked immediately to our right and didn't see anything, so we asked if they wanted us to drop down and take a closer look. AAC said, 'If you have the time and the fuel and don't mind, that would be great.'"

Within minutes, Rush noticed debris in the water, and the victim holding on to part of his sunken watercraft. The crew immediately relayed the coordinates to the AAC. An unknown pilot of a Hughes 500c helicopter overheard the transmission and offered to assist as well.

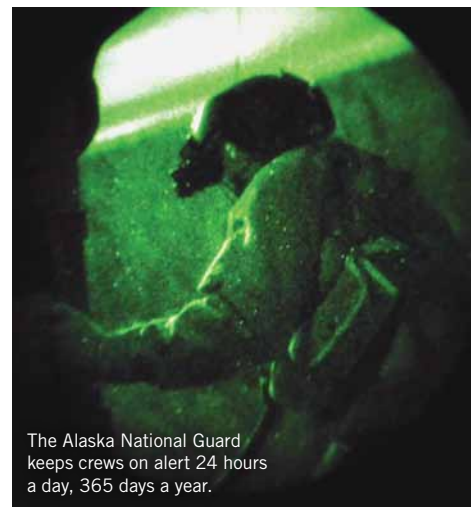
THE BEST CHOICE

"It was good that we found him, but then the questions came up: How did he get there? How long had he been there? We had only been told that there may be someone in the water in distress," said Rush. "We couldn't tell if he was wearing a water survival suit or just a float coat, if he was conscious or unconscious, or if he was standing on something or floating. Then the big question was, how long was he going to be there before someone could haul him out?"

The C-23 marked the location of the boater and kept a visual on the man. The Hughes 500c was able to pull the man from the water shortly thereafter.

Although the AAC gave the Alaska Army National Guard crew the option of continuing on their mission, the crew all agreed that the right thing to do was to assist.

"We did what we thought was the right thing," said Rush. "We were happy to accommodate the request. The guy could have been in the water a lot longer if we hadn't helped. But,



The Alaska National Guard keeps crews on alert 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

because we were able to locate him before the helicopter got there, he was pulled out of the water quickly."

The man was transported to Providence Hospital for medical assistance and possible hypothermia after being in the water for approximately 40 minutes.

The quick reactions of the Anchorage Fire Department, Alaska State Troopers, Anchorage Approach Control, the Alaska Army National Guard and an unknown Good Samaritan led to the rescue of another Alaskan. **GX**

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS



The Alaska National Guard relies heavily on its helicopters for almost all search and rescue missions.

ALASKA NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

More than **1,700 Lives Saved** and **720 Assists** Since 1994

Since 1994, Alaska National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have supported RCC calls with search and rescue assets, flying **19,400 mission hours**.

Alaska saved **48 lives** in 2009.

Alaska saved **32 lives** in 2010.* These stats are from Jan. 1 – July 31. August and September are traditionally the busiest months.

*Information current as of Aug. 5, 2010.

Ready to Lead

Q & A With Command Chief Warrant Officer Gary Nisker

By Clint Wood / ARLINGTON, VA

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD acting director Major General Raymond Carpenter and his staff couldn't have picked a better man to represent the Army National Guard's warrant officer corps than Chief Warrant Officer Five Gary Nisker.

Nisker, who has flown several helicopters, including AH-1 Cobras and UH-60 Black Hawks, brings a wealth of Regular Army and National Guard knowledge to his position as command chief warrant officer of the Army National Guard.

He has served in the Army for more than 37 years, including nine years in the Regular Army. His assignments ranged from Schofield Barracks, HI, to the Republic of Korea. He joined the California Army National Guard in 1985.

While in the Guard, Nisker has served as the West Virginia National Guard command chief warrant officer, and served in a variety of positions with the National Guard Bureau. These positions include aviation manpower development officer, training platform instructor and, most recently, executive officer to the G3 of the Guard.

"I can speak both the Active Duty and Guard language with ease," said Nisker from his office in the Army National Guard Readiness Center. "It helps me to better understand how they're thinking. I can relate."

In this exclusive interview with GX, we asked Nisker about his experience as command chief warrant officer of the Guard and his plans for growing the warrant officer corps within the Guard.

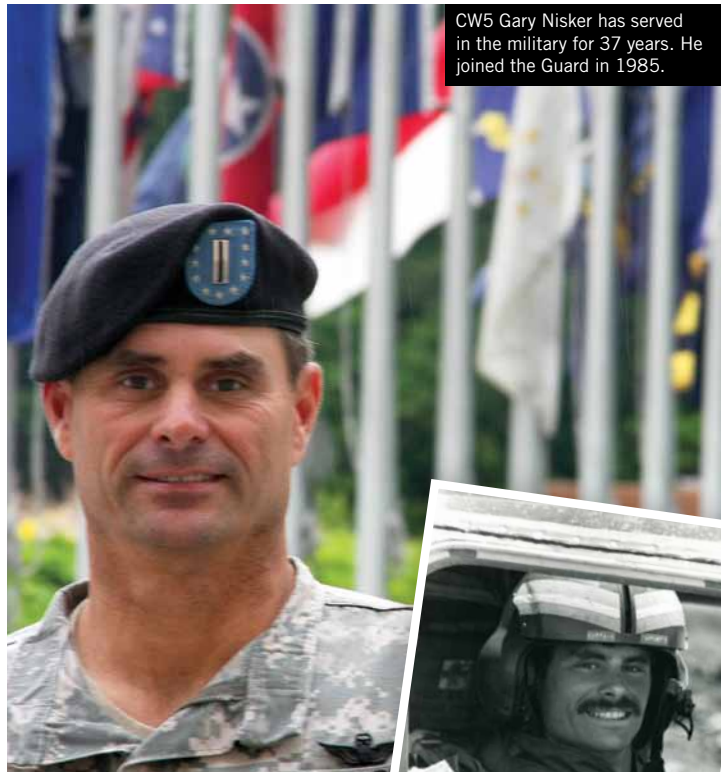
He intends to hold a warrant officer symposium for about 1,000 noncommissioned officers (NCOs) next year at a location to be determined later. Commands will select interested and qualified NCOs and send them here.

Here, these NCOs would be told what the warrant officer corps has to offer them as far as promotions and opportunities, compared to the NCO ranks.

"We will see if it succeeds. That's the big plan right now," he noted. "And hopefully, it will produce many WO1s."

GX: What traits do you see in Soldiers that indicate a good warrant officer candidate?

GN: Leadership, technical skills and tactical knowledge are probably the three biggest things I look for. They need to have a good basis in all three.



CW5 Gary Nisker has served in the military for 37 years. He joined the Guard in 1985.



The warrant officer corps is your depth of knowledge in whatever your MOS is.

For example, in aviation, which is my background, the O grades and the W grades go through the exact same training. I mean we're in the cockpit with the O grade and we go through the exact same training—the same instructor, the same aircraft.

GX: Obviously, it takes a lot of hours to become an officer of any type. Why might you encourage someone to become a warrant officer rather than a basic branch officer?

GN: Less politics than the O grades. I'm not competing against him for my next job. I don't have to worry about a company command or a principal staff job or any of those things that they need to worry about. So they don't perceive me as a threat. It's an ideal situation to be in, in that I'm still an officer. I still get the respect from everybody in my unit. No one questions my knowledge of my MOS.

GX: Are you seeing a growing number of women becoming warrant officers?

GN: Yes, especially in some areas.

There were no women when I went to flight school. Today, every class has a percentage of women in them.

GX: What has been your biggest win so far?

GN: Going from warrant officer candidate school (WOCS) to Warrant Officer Career College to the National Guard [Regional Training Institutes], where we train National Guard and [Army Reserve] noncommissioned officers for that first phase of WOCS, before they're eligible to go to their own warrant officer basic course. That was quite a coup because our numbers were really hurting for a long time on warrant officer strength. The Active component wanted us to have all our people go to their schools. Well, that doesn't fit the National Guard/Reserve component model. Whereas with the Reserve component course, we have a three-phase program. **GX**

COLOR PHOTO: CLINT WOOD; BLACK AND WHITE: COURTESY OF CW5 GARY NISKER

Massachusetts Soldiers

March to the Carolinas and Back

By Jonathan Bernstein, NGAUS / WASHINGTON, DC

AS THE REALITY OF THE CIVIL WAR set in during the spring of 1862, it became increasingly apparent to the U.S. government that greater manpower was essential to win on the battlefield. What was originally envisioned as a quick and decisive war had resulted in a series of defeats for the Union. The original fervor to enlist in the Union Army that was so prevalent during 1861 had dissipated, and the harsh reality of being a nation at war had slowed new enlistments to a trickle.

The Militia Act of 1862, signed into law on August 4, 1862, was enacted as an interim draft to allow the states to expand their militia ranks. The act called for the raising of new regiments for no more than nine months of service. States were given quotas to fulfill, with the ultimate goal of expanding the Union Army by 300,000 Soldiers.

The 44th Massachusetts Volunteer

Infantry was created from the 2nd Regiment Massachusetts Volunteer Militia's 4th Battalion, promoting the 4th Battalion's commander, Major Francis L. Lee, to colonel of the regiment.

The regiment was organized in the final weeks of August 1862, at Readville, MA, and nearly 1,000 new recruits joined the regiment during this time.

The regiment trained at Readville throughout September and most of October. During this time they were issued new equipment, weapons and uniforms.

The regiment departed Boston on October 22 aboard the steamer Merrimac (not to be confused with the Ironclad warship of the same name). The Merrimac steamed southward unescorted on calm seas and arrived in North Carolina three days later, in pouring rain. Soldiers of the regiment immediately entrained on flatcars and made for Newbern, NC, and their bivouac site.

The 44th Massachusetts, along with several other Union regiments, supported by 40 artillery pieces, moved from Newbern via steamer to Little Washington and then marched eastward on November 2 under command of Major General John Foster. After a forced march of nearly 20 miles, elements of the 44th passed several deserted Confederate outposts on the road to Rawle's Mill.

The regiment, leading the advance, was engaged by North Carolina Infantry at Rawle's Mill as they attempted to ford Little Creek. Although Company E was forced to withdraw after taking some casualties, they were able to

establish a foothold on the far shore, which additional companies were able to consolidate.

On Wednesday, November 5, G Company was assigned to a small scouting force along with Company A, two cannon and a small cavalry force. The unit was tasked as a diversionary force to probe Confederate lines, but stumbled on a significant enemy force.

The force soon found itself opposed to a formidable enemy in ambush, and after a somewhat brisk skirmish, concluded it would be wise to rejoin the main force, which they did the next morning at daylight.

As a nine-month regiment, the 44th's term of service restricted it to one major campaign as part of General Foster's Goldsborough campaign. The Goldsboro expedition continued westward through December, and the 44th engaged the enemy at Whitehall and Goldsboro before being withdrawn to Newbern for the winter.

By March 1863, the 44th had moved to Washington, NC, to bolster the defenses there. Over 8,000 Confederate troops laid siege to Washington for nearly a month, and several skirmishes were fought. The siege was inconclusive, as losses on both sides were roughly comparable, and the Confederate forces withdrew. After the siege of Washington, General Foster's North Carolina Department remained quiet until the spring of 1864.

The 44th was withdrawn to Newbern and remained a constabulary force there for two months, until the regiment was ordered to board the steamer *Guide* on June 6, 1863, bound for home. A week after their arrival in Boston, the 44th stood assembled at Readville, MA, where they had mustered into federal service a mere nine months before. The 1,018-man regiment returned home with 916 officers and men. Of the 102 that did not return with the regiment, 13 were killed in combat. The remainder died of disease or were discharged due to disability. **GX**



The 44th Massachusetts fought in the Carolinas from 1863 to 1864.

The National Guard Educational Foundation (NGEF), located in Washington, DC, was established in 1975 with the mission to educate the public and foster awareness about the contributions of the National Guard of the United States. In short, we tell the Guard's story.

As the educational element of the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS), the foundation achieves its mission through a portfolio that includes the National Guard Memorial Museum and the National Guard Memorial Library in Washington, DC; the Guard Muster, a permanent register of Guard men and women, preserving individual legacies of service; and educational programs, forums and seminars for students and the general public.

Please visit us at:

National Guard Memorial Museum
One Massachusetts Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20001

Hours:
Monday – Friday
9 a.m. – 5 p.m.

The National Guard Memorial Museum is free and open to the public.

To learn more about the museum, go to www.ngef.org.

Not a Lone Ranger

By SPC Miko Holloran, North Carolina National Guard Public Affairs / FORT BENNING, GA

▶ **MOST FAMILY MEMBERS** who visit their loved ones at work don't watch them jump from a helicopter into a pond, swim to shore in a makeshift raft, run a mile to a canoe and paddle it three miles upstream, and traverse a 12-hour trail in the woods with 80 pounds on their backs. But Erin May's husband doesn't have your typical job, and so her visit to his "office" wasn't typical, either.

Her husband, Captain Robert May, and his teammate, First Sergeant Kevin Dylus, competed as "Team 41" in the 27th annual David E. Grange Jr. Best Ranger Competition at Fort Benning, GA, in May of 2010. History was made for the National Guard and the North Carolina National Guard during the event this year, and Erin May experienced it firsthand. Her husband and Dylus were one of the two National Guard teams to ever finish the event, and the first to place in the top 10.

According to the competition's website, only a quarter of the teams that compete each year

actually finish the last event. This year, 40 teams started the three-day competition. By the beginning of the third day, only 25 teams were still eligible for the title of Best Ranger.

Erin, an established portrait photographer, brought her two children and her camera. She found the event very accessible to

the Rangers' physical and mental strength, team strategies and Ranger skills.

THE GREAT UNKNOWN

To surprise the Rangers, events are not announced before the competition. Because of this rule, Erin didn't know what to expect, she said. But what took place turned out to be

"I REALLY GOT A GOOD SENSE OF CAMARADERIE BETWEEN THE TEAMS."

>> Erin May, wife of Best Ranger Competition participant

people who wanted to watch and was able to take pictures while pushing her double stroller.

"I was surprised at how spectator-friendly the event was," she said.

The competition was created in 1982 as a "Ranger Olympics" and has been compared to physically grueling events such as the Ford Ironman Triathlon. The events test

fascinating—a grenade assault course, a tri-tower challenge, a "stress shoot" and an event in which they had to tactically enter and clear a room.

"The entire competition was really awesome and super intense," said Erin. "But it was a very positive experience for all of the families of the Soldiers who participated." **GX**

The Soldiers in Team 41 didn't know each other before the tryouts, which were in January. After meeting and being selected as a team, it didn't take long for the two to become close, and their families did as well.

"I really got a good sense of camaraderie between the teams. It was very motivating," said Erin. "We linked up with the Dylus family when we got there. It was really neat because Dylus' wife, Laura, surprised him at the event."

In the end, Erin believes that she has definitely walked away with a better understanding of her husband's job and its necessities. She also said that she can appreciate all of the training her husband went through for this competition.

"It may appear that this competition is about a team of two guys testing both their physical and mental strength over the course of three days, but it goes far beyond that," said Erin May. "The Best Ranger Competition showcases what this highly trained military community is all about, and that it takes more than just two guys, a team or a platoon of Soldiers for these guys to do what they do best—it takes support from families and friends." **GX**



MAJ Shep Woodard, DART deputy, briefs MG Wayne M. Pierson, 35th Infantry Division commander, in the daily update.

DART Concept Put to the Test

Guard Readies Response to Natural or Man-Made Disaster

Story and photo by MAJ Michael Howell, DART-West 35th ID Plans Officer / FORT LEAVENWORTH, KS

▶ **THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY**, the National Guard has responded many times to hurricanes, forest fires, earthquakes and floods. Additionally, the events of 9/11 show there are a myriad of man-made threats to our nation. The National Guard is preparing to respond to these potentially complex and large-scale threats with a new initiative, the Domestic All-Hazards Response Team (DART). The DART is the evolution of a concept that began with the use of division headquarters to command and control Guard forces during the response to Hurricane Katrina. It was expanded by Joint Task Force 29 to include preplanned capability packages during the 2009 presidential inauguration.

The DART concept leverages the planning and command capabilities organic to a division headquarters to assist states in responding to large-scale events. Using the eight National Guard infantry divisions as a force pool, the nation was divided into two areas of responsibility. DART-West was formed with members

of the 35th Infantry Division and was assigned the states generally west of the Mississippi River as its area of responsibility, while the 28th Infantry Division was designated DART-East and assigned the states generally east of the Mississippi River.

DART responds only at the request of the affected state. Coordination is done directly with the Joint Operations Coordination Cells (JOCCs) of the affected and supporting states as resources are brought to bear on the event. The DART concept saves not only taxpayer dollars, but also time. By identifying existing capability gaps, DART identifies which resource can best respond to a man-made or natural disaster. The unique capabilities brought to the disaster through DART offer a scalable, modular response.

"EXERCISE OBJECTIVES HAVE BEEN MET"
The 35th Infantry Division commander, Major General Wayne M. Pierson, has worked diligently with the National Guard Bureau and his

DART-West personnel as the DART concept was developed. Working together, the DART members collectively developed Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to identify force packages to fill identified capability gaps in the affected states.

While developing DART, the 35th has begun to coordinate with the adjutants general from various states to ensure the DART concept is understood. The initial focus was on the states facing the most dangerous scenarios. This focus led to the development of a validation exercise, which culminated in the practical application of all processes and SOPs developed since August 2009.

The exercise, held July 12–16 at the 35th Division Headquarters, Fort Leavenworth, KS, focused on identifying the resources the affected states would request based on pre-identified capability gaps from states that have been historically affected by floods, hurricanes, wildfires and earthquakes. As the exercise concluded, Pierson stated confidently that "the exercise objectives have been met." **GX**



CPT Robert May slides across a rope as part of an obstacle course during the 27th annual David E. Grange Jr. Best Ranger Competition at Fort Benning, GA, in May of 2010.

ERIN MAY

Florida Soldiers Assist State Experts With Oil Spill

By MSG Thomas Kielbasa, Florida National Guard Public Affairs / DESTIN, FL

AS PART OF THE ONGOING response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, fish and wildlife experts have taken to the air with Florida National Guard aviators to spot oil encroaching on the beaches of Florida's Panhandle.

Specialists from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission have been flying in a Florida Army National Guard C-23 Sherpa airplane and an LUH-72 Lakota helicopter over the Gulf of Mexico each day, looking for oil drifting into waters near the Florida coast.

RECON IN THE SKY

The Guard pilots fly systematic patterns over the water off the coast near Pensacola and Destin, and the Fish and Wildlife experts scan the surface for oil blobs and sheens nearing the beaches. When they locate oil, they mark the location and type of oil "product." Immediately after the flight, they upload all the information to a Florida fish and wildlife database, where it is distributed to other agencies concerned with the oil spill.

By using existing satellite data each morning, the spotting teams can get an idea of where the oil might be, and then confirm the location and extent when they get in the air, according to Bryan Schoonard, a research associate with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

"This has been very successful," Schoonard said during a recent spotting mission south of Pensacola, noting the flights give them a good look at "what's out there and what can come into state waters."

On June 22 the C-23 Sherpa crew flew three members of the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission to see if there was any oil in a fishery enclosure area south of Pensacola. The C-23 flew 1,000 feet above a 40-mile stretch



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission officials have been working with the Florida National Guard to look for oil in the Gulf Coast.

of coast, and soon Schoonard and his team spotted shiny patches of oil sheen and several flat, orange oil blobs—called "pancakes"—in the area.

Schoonard, who has been spotting from Florida National Guard aircraft for about a week, explained that satellites can only gather limited data, especially on cloudy days, but from a plane flying at about 1,000 feet, "... we get a better idea of what the product is, how heavy it is and what kinds of sheens are out there."

After the data is collected and analyzed, they can then plan for cleanup and determine if the threat is severe enough to close a fishery.

GUARD PROVES INVALUABLE
Farther out, the team spotted

larger patches of darkish-orange and dark-brown oil, and even thick tar mats "the size of swimming pools" in the blue Gulf waters.

"The C-23 allows us to chase the farther out stuff and it allows us to know what's coming in," he said. "We're not just limited to state water—sometimes we can go out farther—50 to 60 miles—and look at this."

Chief Warrant Officer Jay Burke, pilot of the C-23 Sherpa, said that these missions in support of the oil spill response really prove the worth of the fixed-wing C-23 Sherpa and its usefulness in emergency response missions.

"It's a great opportunity for us to

show that we are a viable asset, and that we need to be around for things like this," Burke explained. "We could even be doing other things, like moving people or cargo around, if needed ... We've been doing this for two weeks, but we could be doing it for six months."

More than 80 Florida National Guard Soldiers and Airmen are directly supporting Operation Deepwater Horizon, with missions including liaison support, aviation support, public affairs, communication support and reconnaissance of coastal areas, under the direction of the Florida Division of Emergency Management and U.S. Coast Guard. **GX**

For more on the oil spill, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/oil-spill-response

COURTESY OF THE FLORIDA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Pro Caliber Relationship

Guard and NFL team up

Story by New York State Division of Military and Naval Affairs / NEW YORK, NY

NEW YORK ARMY NATIONAL GUARD Soldiers teamed up with the National Football League (NFL) to run the High School Player Development (H.S.P.D.) program for some 175 city high school football players at Roy Wilkins Park in Queens, June 14–18.

"IT TEACHES YOU A LOT ABOUT LIFE."

>> Roger Goodell, NFL commissioner, on football

On June 17, after four days of rigorous field drills and meeting Army National Guard mentors, the students received a visit from NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell, who talked about the merits of the program. He explained how it bridges football skills and military values for greater academic and athletic achievement.

"This wouldn't be possible without the support of the National Guard," said Goodell to the athletes. "These Soldiers represent all the values that we represent in the NFL, and that's why we have this partnership. [We want to] make football available to you and, more importantly, [to help you gain] the life skills that we've talked about."

GREAT GAME

On-field components of the H.S.P.D. program include fundamental skill development by field position and individual competitions. As part of on-field training, players will focus on both an offensive and a defensive position, and eventually apply these skills to live drills.

The H.S.P.D. program, presented by the National Guard, provides

high school students the chance to develop fundamental football skills and to be successful in life through character development.

"The real issue of what we're here for is not to develop you as football players," Goodell said. "If you guys turn out to be NFL players, that's great. But we're here for an opportunity to [expose you to] a great game. It teaches you a lot about life. It teaches you about the lessons and the values you'll need to be successful on and off the field."

"Even if you're lucky enough to make it to the NFL, you won't play the game forever. All the things you've been learning here ... will stay with you the rest of your life," he said.

The program, free for the student-athletes, first came to New York in 2003 with two sites, about 500 participants and 40 football coaches.

This spring and summer, the program is

expected to reach more than 20,000 high school student-athletes nationwide at more than 125 sites in 34 states.

"This is a nationwide program," said Jerry Horowitz, program director. "It goes from New York to California, with the potential to reach out to 1.2 million school kids."

"The NFL recognizes that not all of the program participants will someday play in the NFL," he said, "but they all will be entering society, and we hope that we are making them better citizens."

NFL officials recognize the great success of the program and the wealth of opportunities it provides the students.

The program is not only a great opportunity for high school athletes to learn from the coaches, but also gives them the chance to meet with Soldiers and learn from them about the importance of teamwork and success.

"We really appreciate this partnership," Goodell told the Soldiers. **GX**

For more on H.S.P.D., go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/hspd



NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell poses with New York Army National Guard Soldiers during the High School Player Development program held in Queens on June 14-18.

RICHARD GOLDENBERG

Golden Coyote

Massive training exercise prepares Soldiers for anything

Courtesy of the South Dakota National Guard / BLACK HILLS, SD

THE SOUTH DAKOTA NATIONAL GUARD hosted its 26th annual Golden Coyote training exercise in the southern Black Hills June 14-26, providing explosive real-world training scenarios in support of overseas contingency operations and homeland defense.

With the cooperation of the National Forest Service and Custer State Park, the exercise allowed more than 1,700 Service Members to conduct combat support and combat service support missions in a realistic training environment and provide valuable services to the public.

Service Members from 41 units representing 12 states participated in the exercise, coming from multiple branches of service—Army, Navy and Air Force.

Service Members participated in Warrior training tasks and battle drills, such as urban combat operations, land navigation, survival, escape and evasion, first aid, casualty evacuation, and day and night convoy operations. Read on for more action from the 2010 Golden Coyote Exercise.

THIS TIME IT'S FOR REAL

Story and photo by SPC Kevin E. Marvig, 191st Military Police Company

On the second straight day of rain during Annual Training 2010, North Dakota's 191st Military Police Company drew crew-served weapons for the convoy lane they were going to train on that day.

The military police convoy headed to the training site through the wet and cold. When they arrived, everyone got out and assisted in mounting .50 cal machine guns on the top of their tactical vehicles. Next, they were briefed about the types of scenarios they might encounter, and how to handle each. After receiving the brief and practicing battle drills, the Soldiers struck out to begin training.

A short way down the road, the convoy got "hit" by a simulated improvised explosive device, resulting in two simulated injuries. The Soldiers reacted quickly, moving the two "injured" Soldiers to safety.

Down the road, the training continued when the convoy encountered simulated small-arms fire, which they handled with ease.

The next and final stop was a town to which they were sent to deliver medicine. The



Soldiers pull security around a Humvee during convoy training at Golden Coyote.

convoy ran into some confused citizens and a couple of men with weapons, but the calm and collected military police delivered the medicine with no casualties among themselves or the townspeople.

"It was good initial training for Soldiers new to the company," said First Lieutenant Kristopher P. Elijah, who commands the unit.

The training served as a good refresher for those who have previously deployed, while helping new Soldiers understand potential hazards and how to react to them in a combat situation.

LAND NAVIGATION IN THE BLACK HILLS

By SPC Joe Bungert and SPC Julieanne Morse, South Dakota National Guard Public Affairs Detachment

In an age of GPS devices, navigating with a map and compass is still an essential skill in the military. While all Service Members receive this training, many don't utilize these skills on a regular basis.

Soldiers with the 593rd Transportation Company, Nevada Army National Guard, practiced these skills at a land navigation course on West Camp Rapid, SD.

Staff Sergeant Donna Bloom, a human resource specialist with the South Dakota National Guard and an instructor on the course, said, "Every Service Member going through the course has had land navigation either at Basic Training or some other leadership school, so the instruction we give here is basically to ... refresh the students' memories."

Land navigation instructors stress two main topics throughout the course. First is the importance of associating the terrain a Soldier sees around him with the terrain features on his map. The second is that if the Soldier misses a step or makes a mistake in the navigation process, they could find themselves lost or in trouble.

This could be especially true if they are deployed to a hostile area.

"If you're stranded somewhere by yourself ... whether it's in a forest close to home or a Middle East desert ... knowing how to use a compass and read a map ... can definitely help you find your way back home or back to base," said Specialist Rory Nye, a truck driver with the 593rd.



SGT Daniel McVey of the Nevada National Guard's 593rd Transportation Company takes a bearing with a compass during land navigation training.



Military firefighters extinguish flames during a firefighting simulation June 14, 2010, at Ellsworth Air Force Base, SD.

FIRE AND RESCUE

By SSG Shannon Crane, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

In order to "train as you fight" in today's military, it's important for training exercises to be as close to the real thing as possible. But, how do you train effectively if your chosen military profession is to fight fires?

The answer lies in a slightly overcast day, some mockups of an airplane, a three-story building, a little jet fuel and a properly placed heating element. Combined, these ingredients can create the setting for realistic firefighting training.

Military firefighters from Illinois, Massachusetts and South Dakota experienced this volatile training cocktail firsthand at Ellsworth Air Force Base Monday, June 14, as part of this year's Golden Coyote training exercise. The teams worked to perfect their firefighting skills by extinguishing fires in two different training scenarios: an aircraft crash site and a structural fire.

"The aircraft burn operation is a fire-and-rescue simulation," said Warrant Officer Wade Lein, commander of the 216th Engineer Detachment (Firefighter Headquarters) and the 451st Firefighting Team, both of which are National Guard units in Sturgis, SD.

"It simulates an aircraft that has crashed. You have to put the fire out and rescue the personnel." Given the hazards of moving around in a freshly burned structure and exposure to high concentrations of jet fuel, Lein said the firefighters typically practice rescue techniques during other training events.

In the structural fire and rescue scenario, the trainers start a fire inside the building, and the firefighters are responsible for going into the

dark, smoky environment to search for survivors.

"They don't extinguish the fires in this scenario," Lein explained, "as it's more about becoming familiar with how a fire will spread through a building."

EVERY SECOND COUNTS

By CDT Kyle Wade, 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers sat stunned in their barracks as they realized they'd been attacked. Two men with squirt guns had run in, hosed down everyone and run off. They contemplated whether a rude joke had been played on them. Then they began to feel burning of the eyes and skin, difficulty

breathing, and nausea. At that moment, they realized they'd been attacked with a "chemical weapon."

This was just one of the scenes that played out in two separate South Dakota locations—Spearfish and Rapid City.

Thirteen military and civilian agencies took part in this large-scale weapons of mass destruction (WMD) training event, which focused on coordinating military and civilian resources in response to a simulated nuclear, biological or chemical attack.

The exercise began in both locations at 7:05 a.m.

In Rapid City was the above-mentioned simulated chemical attack. The "victims" were a military police unit. The Idaho National Guard's 101st Civil Support Team (CST), stationed in Boise, responded in protective suits with special equipment that allowed them to perform a reconnaissance of the affected area and extract the contaminated victims.

In Spearfish, the 82nd CST, coupled with local emergency response agencies, responded to a suspicious package. Upon a thorough investigation, the 82nd located envelopes containing a white powdery substance. An analysis concluded the substance was hoof and mouth disease.

Lieutenant Colonel John Emick, WMD exercise coordinator, said, "The actual intent of the exercise was really to get that interaction between these different agencies and different units." The best way to achieve this, he pointed out, is through "good, hard, realistic training." **CX**



Members of the 101st Civil Support Team and the 189th Aviation Regiment move a simulated casualty to be medically evacuated as part of the Golden Coyote training exercise.

Reaching New Heights

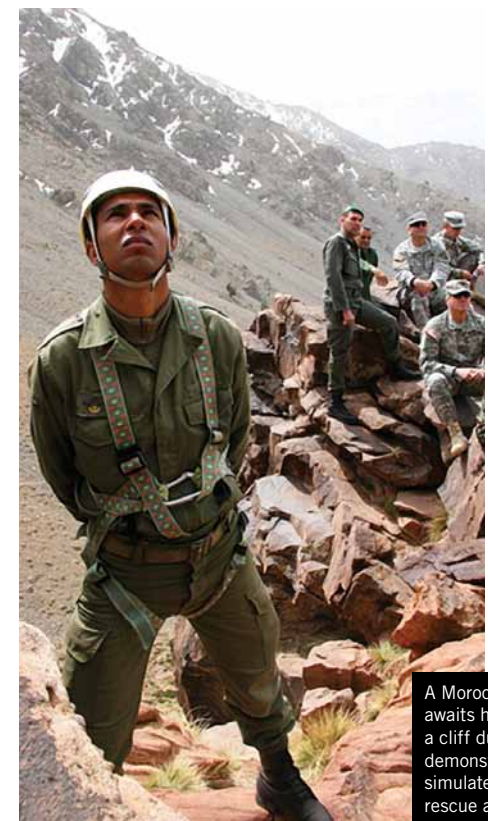
Utah-Morocco partnership hits a whole new level

Story and photo by LTC Hank McIntire, Utah National Guard Public Affairs / OUKAIMEDEN, MOROCCO

AS PART OF ITS ONGOING State Partnership Program with Morocco, a Utah National Guard command visit coincided with a unit-level exchange between the 19th Special Forces Group and the 1st Ski Battalion of the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces.

Adjutant General Major General Brian Tarbet was joined on the trip by leaders from the 151st Air Refueling Wing, 19th Special Forces Group and members of his staff. Tarbet travels to Morocco a number of times a year to maintain a regular dialogue with his senior colleagues in the Moroccan military and often invites Soldiers and Airmen to join him in order to familiarize them with the Utah Guard's partnership with Morocco, in place since 2003.

Eleven Soldiers of the Utah National Guard, nearly all of whom are from the



A Moroccan Soldier awaits his turn to ascend a cliff during a rappelling demonstration and simulated mountain rescue at Oukaimeden.

19th Special Forces Group, spent two weeks on Oukaimeden, one of only a handful of ski resorts on the entire continent of Africa.

MOUNTAIN OF KNOWLEDGE

At 10,000 feet, the altitude of the training location, the focus of the exercise was on disaster preparedness, snow movement and mountain-rescue techniques.

"We're covering medical and mountaineering skills in a downed-aircraft scenario," explained Chief Warrant Officer Three Rodney Holliday, C Company, 1/19th Special Forces.

In small groups and one-on-one, Soldiers of the 19th conducted classes with their Moroccan counterparts on first aid and land navigation. Tarbet and other Utah Guard leaders observed the training up close and were very impressed.

"As always, when our troops are involved with the Moroccans, I think they are our very best ambassadors," said Tarbet.

"We've been exchanging techniques back and forth," said Holliday. "We show them our equipment, they show us theirs. We're working together toward those goals."

"This Moroccan battalion is very experienced in high-altitude, cold-weather operations," added Major Reece Roberts, officer in charge of the Utah contingent. "They have shared with us their field-expedient methods because they don't have the deep pockets and resources that we have. We have been able to pick up ways of doing things and medical treatment and mountaineering techniques [that you can use] when you don't have all the nice gear that you could pick up at REI."

"[OUR TROOPS] ARE ARE OUR VERY BEST AMBASSADORS."

>> Adjutant General MG Brian Tarbet

While at at Oukaimeden, senior Utah Guard leaders were also treated to an impressive demonstration of rappelling and climbing techniques by the young, but very experienced, Moroccan Soldiers. The event was narrated by a 20-something Moroccan officer, who explained in flawless English each phase of the operation.

PARTNERS IN PEACE

"These partnerships pay off," said Tarbet. "They have been one of the very successful things the Guard has done for nearly two decades. The Morocco-Utah relationship has been one of those success stories. We love to work with them."

"In this combined exercise, we exchange a lot of things: training, ways of thinking and ways of behaving," said Senior Lieutenant Mohammed, company commander of the 1st Ski Battalion. "We have learned a lot from the Americans, and they have learned a lot from us."

"One of our core missions is training and working with foreign troops," said Holliday. "All of us have done that previously, so we're able to build on and improve the skills we've been learning in the past. We're using language skills, we're working together. We see their ways of doing things, which will prepare us to work better with other troops in the future. This experience will help us when we go back to the combat environment."

"I have been very impressed with the Moroccan Soldiers and NCOs here," observed Roberts. "They are very willing to learn, they are asking good questions, they are engaging and they have a good knowledge base. It's been very beneficial for us to work with them. We've really had a good opportunity to build what I hope will be long-term relationships." **GX**

For more on Special Forces, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/sfexperience



A Special Forces Soldier engages targets with his Slovenian counterparts during joint training in Slovenia.

Quick Draw

Colorado Soldiers Train With Slovenians

Story and photo by CPT Michael Odgers, Colorado National Guard Public Affairs / POSTOJNA, SLOVENIA

SURROUNDED BY the striking Southern Alps, Soldiers of the Colorado Army National Guard's 5th Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne), spent the first three weeks of June conducting Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) with the Slovenian National Army's Special Operations teams.

A JCET is a small-unit mission conducted by an Operational Detachment-A, which allows Special Forces Soldiers to train in their doctrinal missions—Foreign Internal Defense (FID) operations. FID involves working with a host nation's military and police forces to improve their technical skills so they may defend themselves from insurgency, secure their sovereign territory and prevent insurgent threats from becoming international terrorist capabilities.

Colorado Guard Soldiers and Slovenian National Army

Soldiers are deploying together to Afghanistan this year as an Organizational Mentor and Liaison Team to help train and mentor the Afghan army. They will train together, deploy together and return home together.

This JCET provided the opportunity for Colorado and Slovenia to better understand how the other operates, and familiarize themselves with each other's equipment and standard operating procedures.

EXCHANGING TRAINING

The training consisted of close-quarters-combat techniques, door-breaching, mobility live-fire and standing live-fire techniques, all culminating in a scenario-based exercise that challenged each participant.

The close-quarters combat (CQB) provided an excellent learning platform for the Slovenes

to demonstrate some nuances in room-clearing techniques.

"These guys are good—real good—when it comes to CQB and the flat range. They are as proficient, if not more so, than we are," said the ODA's weapons sergeant.

The JCET utilized an old Yugoslavian army range in an alpine prairie with stone-lined firing positions, surrounded by high grass and nowhere to place targets. But the Soldiers couldn't have been happier.

The day was spent conducting reflexive fire and transitional fire drills. Colorado and Slovene Soldiers advanced side-by-side toward a series of targets shooting constantly, and then instead of reloading, transitioned to their sidearms.

But the highlight of the day was the familiarization with each other's weapons. This involved both nations finding a counterpart and swapping weapons. The counterpart would give a quick class on the fundamentals of the weapon system prior to letting them loose. While the Slovenes appreciated the M4's economy of size, and the Colorado Soldiers liked the accuracy of the Fabrique Nationale's FN 2000, both services

preferred their own weapons.

The last range event was explosive breaching. Prior to the range, however, the Soldiers spent a day in the classroom learning how to calculate the size and type of breaching charges, minimum safe distances and understanding of the different types of explosives and their effects. The Slovenians were very eager to learn what the Special Forces engineer sergeant was teaching, as both their experience and authorization to train on explosives are limited.

The Slovenians practiced calculating, creating and, of course, destroying water-impulse charges, wood and steel door breaching charges, and window and masonry breaches. In addition to the charges, they practiced reacting to the explosion and immediately entering through the breached door before they lost the element of surprise. Even for those setting the charge, the explosion has a stunning effect that must be overcome.

"They were professionals, quick learners and great to work with," said the ODA engineer sergeant. "Of course, the fact that blowing stuff up is always cool didn't hurt." **GX**

Wisconsin Soldiers Welcomed Home

Story and photo courtesy of the Wisconsin Army National Guard / WISCONSIN

THOUSANDS OF WISCONSIN GUARD SOLDIERS marched through Stevens Point, WI, in June, kicking off the “Back from the Sand” celebration, where friends, community leaders and government officials thanked the families and the nearly 3,200 Soldiers who deployed with the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team for their service and sacrifice to Wisconsin and America.

“In my eight years as governor, [the Wisconsin National Guard] has been asked to perform more than at any time in history, and it has excelled,” Gov. Jim Doyle told the crowd during a formal ceremony.

“Yours is a storied unit and you have added to that history,” he said. “You have done your duty, and you have made Wisconsin proud.”

COVERING GROUND

During training and while in Iraq, the brigade was organized into 27 company-sized units. Rather than operating as a brigade, the 32nd was tasked with a variety of missions throughout Iraq. These missions included forward operating base administration, base defense, area security, quick reaction forces, freedom of movement security support, detainee guard force operations at theater internment facilities, closing the largest internment facility in Iraq, transferring detainees, operating an academy to train Iraqi corrections officers, inspecting detention facilities, securing and administering the International Zone in



Soldiers from the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team march in a parade during an event held in Stevens Point, June 19.

Baghdad, and turning over U.S.-controlled properties back to the government of Iraq. The brigade’s Soldiers operated around the clock, most of them working at least 12 hours a day—day after day, week after week, for eight full months in Iraq.

“It was a great honor and a great privilege to lead so many unbelievably great Soldiers,” said Colonel Steven Bensed, commander of the 32nd Brigade. “When I took command of this brigade, I asked you for loyalty, duty, integrity and initiative. You did all of those things and more. Thank you.”

The day-long celebration began with the parade, followed by the formal ceremony that included several state legislators, five members of Congress, National Guard leaders and a special guest from the Department of Defense: Dr. Clifford Stanley, undersecretary of defense for personnel and readiness.

“On behalf of the Secretary of Defense, on behalf of a grateful

nation, we are just so thankful for your service, for what you’ve done and for what you continue to do,” said Stanley.

Major General Raymond Carpenter, acting director of the Army National Guard, said, “This homecoming was an opportunity for us at the national level to say ‘thanks’ to the 32nd and to Wisconsin for their sacrifice for the last year and a half.”

Stanley and Carpenter also visited one-on-one with Soldiers and family members prior to the event, to personally thank them for their service.

Janell Kellet, the lead volunteer for the 32nd Brigade’s family readiness group, was impressed with Stanley’s visit.

“He knows what it’s like to be a military family and how it can be difficult, yet how our families can pull together and support each other,” she said of Stanley, a retired Marine. “He just really seems to get it.”

Stanley said he was listening to

family readiness group volunteers and brigade leaders, and bringing information back to the Secretary of Defense on topics such as tracking individual augmentees and understanding the effectiveness of policy matters such as mandatory demobilization briefings.

Otto Manthey, a WWII Veteran of Company A, 632nd Tank Battalion, in what was then the 32nd Division, broke into tears when he recounted his 654 days of combat service and his affection for those who still wear the Red Arrow.

“These young kids from the 32nd are coming back,” said Manthey. “That’s why I’m here.”

Don White agreed. A 20-year Veteran of the 32nd Division who joined in 1947, he came to the celebration after this year’s Red Arrow Old Timer’s Club convention at Fort McCoy.

“I wouldn’t have missed it,” he said. “I’m very proud to have served in the 32nd—what a swell bunch of guys.” **GX**

Open Water Save

Aviation Soldiers practice hoist training

Story and photo by SPC Anthony Jones, 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Oklahoma Army National Guard / OKLAHOMA

“BACK FOUR ... THREE ... TWO ... ONE ... and hold,” could be heard over the radio as Sergeant David Tillman, a crew chief with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 149th Aviation Regiment, calmly guided pilots of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter into position over mock victims floating in Lake Thunderbird near Norman, OK, June 6.

The unit was undergoing over-water hoist training, and Soldiers played the parts of the victims. Sergeant Richard Pindel, a flight medic with C Company, said the training not only provides great experience for unit members but also prepares them to respond to disasters similar to Hurricane Katrina, where the unit conducted hoist rescues of stranded civilians in New Orleans in 2005.

“Hurricane Katrina showed us there is a real call for this type of mission,” said Pindel. “This is a great opportunity to help our communities.”

Captain Russell Tidaback, a helicopter pilot and member of the Oklahoma National Guard State Aviation Office, said the training is the “run” phase of the “crawl, walk, run” method of training.

ALWAYS READY

“We should always be ready for missions like this,” said Tidaback. “This is the best type of training for our civil mission here at home.”

Several crew chiefs and flight medics participated in the training, which is part of the unit’s mission essential tasks list—a compilation of tasks a unit must be able to perform in order to accomplish its mission.

After being guided into position by Tillman, the pilots maintain the helicopter directly over the victims in what is known as a wind-calm area. The rotor wash from the helicopter blades kicked up waves, and spraying water added difficulty to the task.

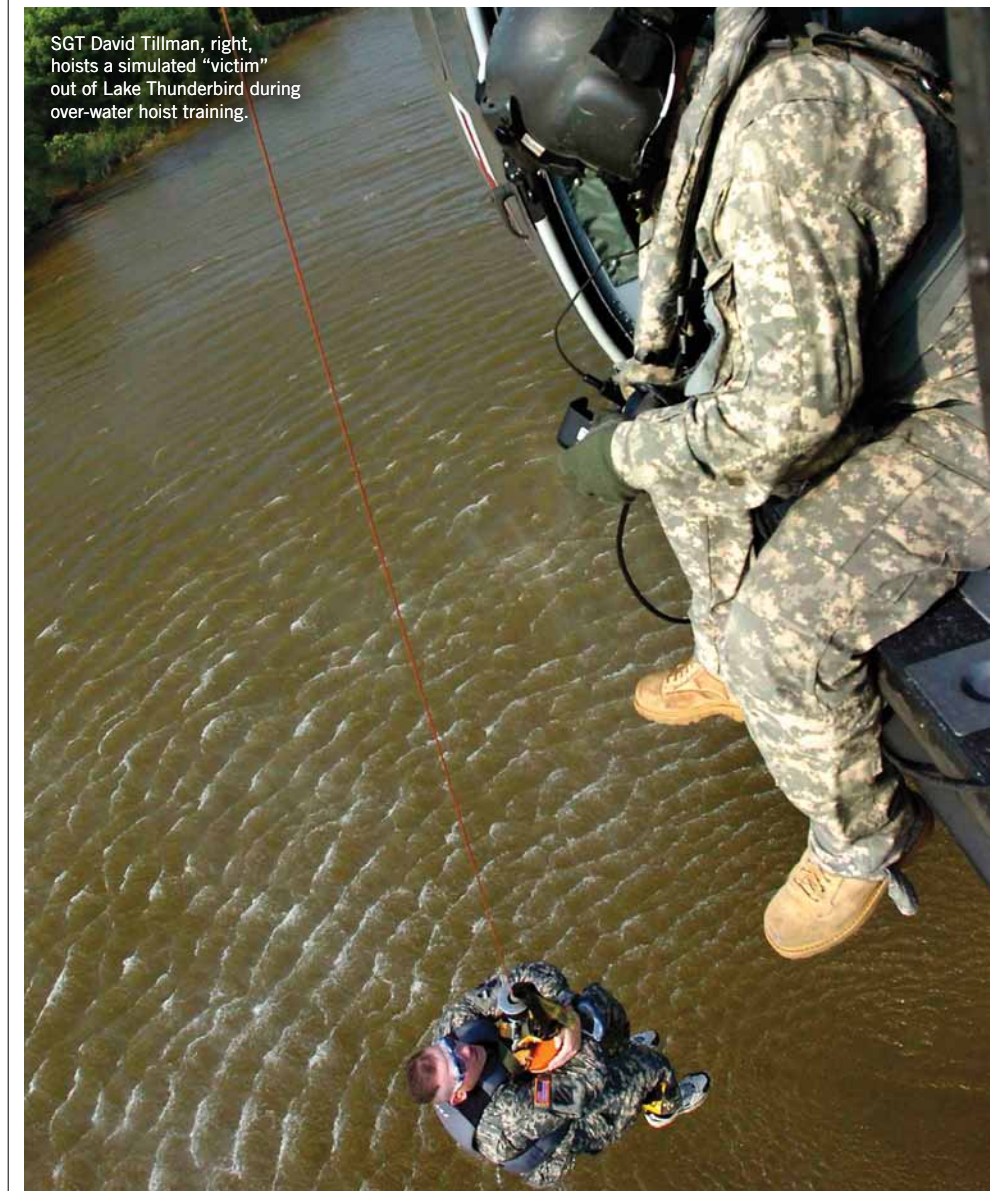
Once in place, Tillman then begins to lower Pindel using a water penetrator near two mock victims. After entering the water, he helps the

first victim onto the penetrator and signals Tillman to begin hoisting the Soldier to safety.

Sergeant Nathan Honeycutt, another crew chief who took part in the training, said it was his first time to conduct over-water hoist operations

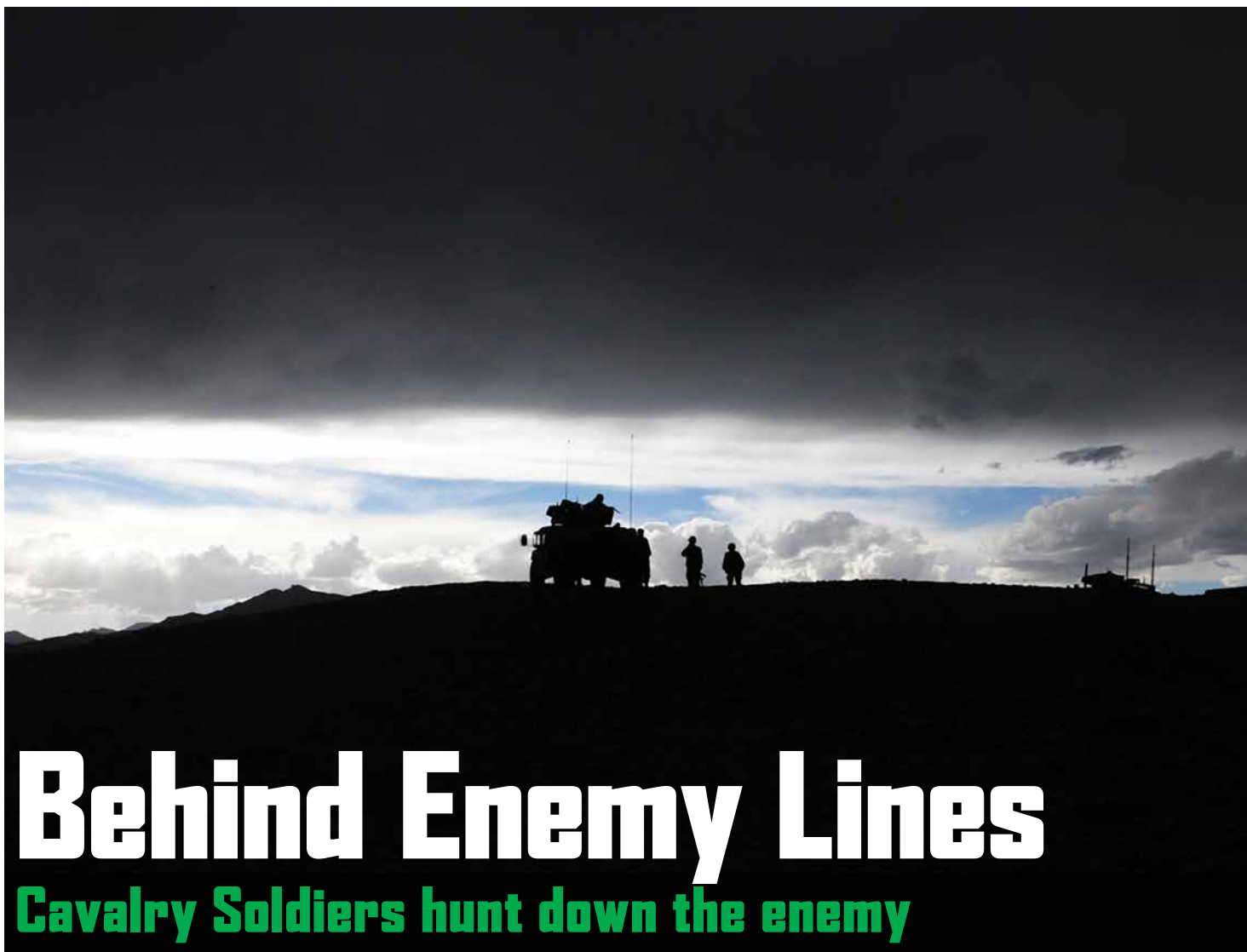
with a live person on the hoist.

“It’s a lot different than having a 250-pound weight,” he said. “You are more concerned about what’s happening when it’s your buddy on the other end of the line.” **GX**



SGT David Tillman, right, hoists a simulated “victim” out of Lake Thunderbird during over-water hoist training.

For more on aviation, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/hoistop



Behind Enemy Lines

Cavalry Soldiers hunt down the enemy

By SSG Whitney Hughes, 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (Mountain) / GHAZNI PROVINCE, AFGHANISTAN

▶ **WHEN 3RD PLATOON, B Troop, 1/172nd Cavalry Squadron**, nicknamed themselves the Gypsies, they probably knew they would be traveling in search of the enemy. But when they team up with the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), they don't travel light. They roll into combat packing a powerful combination of the Afghan National Army (ANA), Afghan National Police (ANP), National Directorate of Security (NDS), Polish close combat air support, and U.S. Air Force fighter jets. Alone, just one of these elements can be deadly to the enemy. Combined, they can deliver a devastating blow.

Taliban insurgents felt the brunt of this blow April 26 in Qala Ye Serkh village, and April 27 in Qala Wali village during combined cordon

and search operations. The operations were led by the 1st Infantry Kandak, 3rd Brigade, of the 203rd Corps ANA, with the mentorship of the cavalry Soldiers, and supported by the other ANSF, Polish and U.S. air elements. The operation was part of a three-day initiative, which was planned, organized and executed by the ANA Kandak and the cavalry Soldiers, to search for Taliban insurgents and illegal weapons.

ON POINT

"Our mission is to find suspects, push the enemy out of the village, separate the Taliban from the civilians, show the power of the government to the people, and show them the government is behind them to keep them safe," said ANA

Captain Saeed Zalmi, commander, 2nd Company, 1st Kandak.

The Afghan army provided outer security for the village while the NDS provided vital information to the police. The police, who, by Afghan law, are the only ones with search authority, conducted the actual search of the houses in the village.

"The commander was able to multitask and had overall control over the different [ANSF] elements," said Staff Sergeant Shawn Seymour, who mentored Zalmi and the 2nd Company directly. "I was impressed with how he controlled the operation. You could tell that he had the respect of his men."

On both days of the operation, insurgents

fired mortars at the police as they were exiting the village. The Afghan army responded with mortars of their own, wounding at least one insurgent. The only injuries sustained by the ANSF were the result of an improvised explosive device, which hit a police truck. Five policemen sustained minor injuries.

The medical evacuation helicopter team was called to evacuate an Afghan soldier who had a shrapnel injury to his knee. The evacuation, which was completed within minutes of the attack, was executed so efficiently it looked like a

training exercise. The soldier's injuries were not life-threatening, but he was flown out to ensure his safety and prevent further injury, said Private First Class Jared Blair, from Isle Lamotte, VT, the platoon medic.

While the Afghan army and police conducted their mission on the ground, the cavalry Soldiers provided security at the command post and gave suggestions to the commander during the operation.

SUPPORT AND ADVICE

"The purpose we serve is to mentor. We make suggestions and act as a combat multiplier," said Sergeant First Class Kevin Mulcahey of Rutland, VT, the lead mentor for the ANA Kandak and platoon sergeant for 3rd Platoon. Mulcahey was by the commander's side during the whole operation, helping him with key decisions.

In addition, the cavalry Soldiers also provided the link between Zalmi and the support elements executing the planning and communication on the ground with Polish artillery, U.S. Air Force air support, U.S. Army route clearance and medical evacuations.

The cavalry Soldiers also had another weapon in their arsenal—the Polish close combat air support, which was provided by two Hind helicopters. For this coordination, the cavalry

Soldiers had U.S. Air Force Lieutenant Colonel Alberto Gaston, a joint terminal attack controller from the 274th Air Support Operations Squadron based in Syracuse, NY, on the ground to coordinate directly with the Hind pilots.

HIDING FROM THE HINDS

Gaston keenly guided the pilots directly to the sight of the mortar attack, and the booms of the mortars were quickly silenced. When Gaston signed off with the Polish pilots at the end of the operation in the first day, he offered his insight into the enemy's thought process.

"Tommy Gun, thanks for your support today," he said. "I guess if I had two Hinds flying over me, I'd run and hide too."

Ironically, this sentiment was echoed toward the end of the final day of the operation, when the Kandak soldiers intercepted Taliban radio communications, and the Taliban themselves confirmed Gaston's intuition.

"They are telling them not to come out, and to hide because of the helicopters," a U.S. Army interpreter translated.

This just goes to show that as their nickname implies, the 3rd Platoon Gypsies are on the move, but when they arrive, they bring a force to be reckoned with, and when they go, they leave a lasting impression. **GX**

SPC Mark Leonard, the squad designated marksman for 3rd Platoon, Bravo Troop, 1-172 Cavalry Squadron, provides security with his M 14 Enhanced Battle Rifle April 27.



TOP: SSG WHITNEY HUGHES, 86TH BCT (MTN); BOTTOM: SGT JOHN YOUNG



SFC Kevin Mulcahey, the Platoon sergeant for 3rd Platoon, B Troop, 172nd Cavalry Squadron, points the location of Taliban insurgents to CPT Saeed Zalmi, Afghan National Army.

Wyoming Guard Manages Flood Risks

Soldiers use skills to make areas safer

Story and photo by SPC Courtney Gearhart, Wyoming National Guard Joint Task Force Public Affairs / LANDER, WY

A DOZEN WYOMING NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIERS used their civilian skills and experiences to identify safety concerns with flood mitigation efforts in Fremont County, WY, and ensure the safety of residents, volunteers and military alike this summer after flooding in early June.

These Soldiers performed as safety officers under the supervision of Dave Gieble, the Fremont County Flood 2010 incident command safety officer.

Elise Wilkinson, 8, shovels sand into a sandbag held by SGT Timothy Gomes, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, during flood relief efforts in Lander, WY.



“Our principal issue was to take care of people and property,” said Gieble, who is based at the incident command center in Lander, WY. The Soldiers reported back to him regarding any public areas that were deemed unsafe.

“The safety officers also made sure the heavy equipment was working properly, checked pillars underneath bridges for stability, and determined if sandbags would hold if the water rose to hazardous levels,” said Sergeant Richard Chief, of Lodge Grass, MT, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery.

LAY OF THE LAND

Chief said he drew from his experiences as a police officer for the Bureau of Indian Affairs on the Wind River Indian Reservation in Fremont County, where he worked for a year and a half.

“It helped me on the mission,” he said, noting that much of the area and victims dealing with floods are on the reservation. “Since I know the location really well, I didn’t need a GPS.”

“I was very pleased with the people they assigned to me,” said Gieble. “They approached their job with a sensitivity I like to see in a line officer.”

According to Gieble, the Soldiers’ civilian jobs and job training helped cut down the time it took to train them as safety officers.

DOOR TO DOOR

Training included introducing Soldiers to the local area. Specialist Andrew Schatza is from Riverton, WY, a city on the edge of the flooded area. The 2/300th Field Artillery Soldier said they conducted daily checks on residents threatened with flooding or who had decided to ride out the floods in their homes.

The safety officers’ duties range from checking on the water quality and quantity in the area to verifying escape routes in case of evacuations, said Chief.

For Schatza, his civilian experience with Source Gas Company, in Riverton, helped him to identify concerns not previously addressed.

“My concern was that the gas company wasn’t aware of the extent of the flood, so I wanted to make sure they were on the same page [as the incident command center],” said Schatza. “And that goes for all the utilities.” He said the gas company responded promptly to the issues. “The concerns I’ve had have gone to the top and been [handled].” **GX**

Blackfeet on Hallowed Ground

Veterans Visit Arlington National Cemetery

Story and photo by Clint Wood / ARLINGTON, VA

ON MEMORIAL DAY, 2010, Montana Army National Guard Staff Sergeant (Ret.) Earl Heavyrunner marched where few people have gone. He was part of the Blackfeet Veterans Honor Guard, which presented the National American Indian Veterans (NAIV) wreath to a sentinel of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier during the 142nd Memorial Day Observance at Arlington National Cemetery near Washington, DC.

The cemetery, established during the Civil War, contains the graves of more than 300 Native American Veterans and military casualties from each of the nation’s wars, including Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

“It was the highest honor of my life,” said Heavyrunner. “I don’t think there is anything else that can top it. I really don’t.”

“[It’s moving] when you get out there—looking down and seeing the four graves,” continued the Iraq Veteran, whose Combat Infantryman Badge was displayed above a row of five ribbons pinned on his white Honor Guard shirt. “Kind of puts a lump in your throat.”

Keith Heavyrunner, Earl’s brother and the regional commander of the Blackfeet Warriors Society, commented, “It was probably the first and last chance I’ll ever get to do it.”

Keith and Earl and two other sets of brothers represented the Blackfeet Nation. The Navajo and Sioux tribes were also represented in this Honor Guard.

WARRIORS AID YOUTH

Retired Guard Combat Vet, former military members lead clothing drive

By Keith Kawasaki

Retired Montana Army National Guard Staff Sergeant Earl Heavyrunner is teaming up with his brother, former Army sergeant Keith Heavyrunner, and a former Marine, Craig Falcon, to help the underprivileged Native American youth in Browning, MT.

By October, snowfall will bear down hard on the northern Montana city, and steadily increase throughout the winter. The U.S. average snowfall for the season is four inches. Browning can expect to hit well over 16 inches.

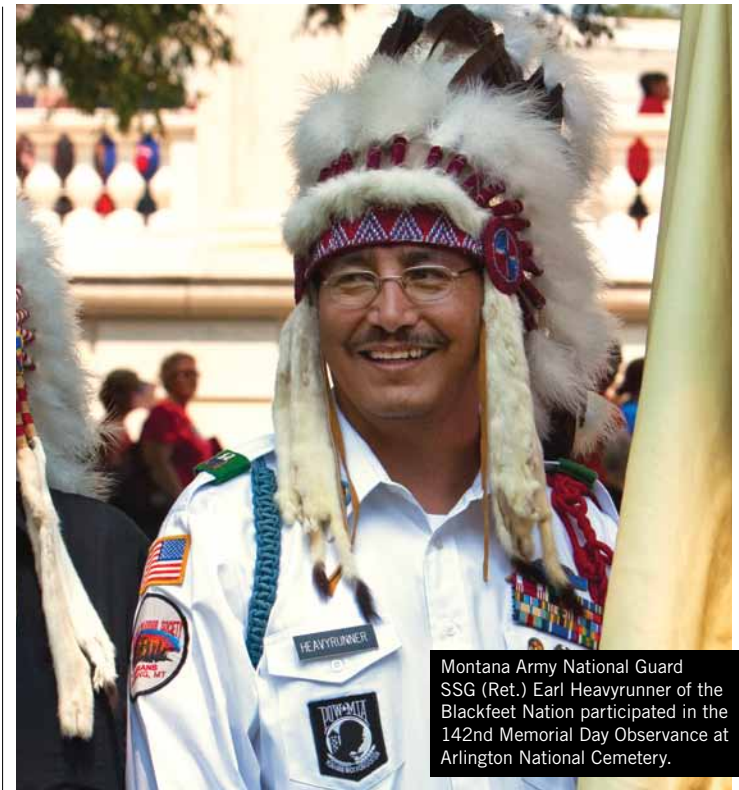
The Blackfeet Nation has called Browning home since well before

the foundation of the United States. Unfortunately, economic hardship plagues the tribe, and the youth are lacking proper clothing to protect them from the elements.

Under the non-profit organization Operation Glacier Warrior, the men, with the assistance of their community, are gathering new and gently used, youth-size jackets, sweaters, pants, boots, socks, gloves and blankets.

You can get in on the effort by sending items to:

**Keith Heavyrunner
PO Box 2511
Browning, MT 59417**



Montana Army National Guard SSG (Ret.) Earl Heavyrunner of the Blackfeet Nation participated in the 142nd Memorial Day Observance at Arlington National Cemetery.

IN TRADITIONAL FASHION

This Honor Guard is the third Native American contingent to make this presentation. Most members wore Native American war bonnet head-dresses. The wreath was red, white, yellow and black.

Don Loudner, national commander of the NAIV, said these colors symbolized four races—Native American, Caucasian, Asian and African-American.

Loudner added that he felt that Native Americans should be honored in this way. He said when the first Native American tribe was granted the honor, “it was on the behalf of all the Native American Veterans who served in the United States military.”

He noted that Native Americans have served in every conflict and war that the United States has been involved in for more than 200 years.

Native Americans also have the highest percentage of military service of any ethnic group in the United States.

The Blackfeet were allowed to bring in its Native American eagle staff and post it with the American Flag during the remembrance ceremony in the Memorial Amphitheater. This staff, featuring 13 eagle feathers representing the 13 moons in the Native American year, is a sacred and honored object.

The Honor Guard and the thousands of people in the audience listened as Vice President Joe Biden gave the keynote address. The Blackfeet were among several Honor Guards that posted their colors in the amphitheater, which seats more than 1,500.

“They recognize our eagle staff as our flag, so they allow us to bring it in,” said Loudner.

The day before, the Honor Guard members enjoyed a visit with the last known living American-born Veteran of WWI, 109-year-old Frank Woodruff Buckles, of Charles Town, WV. They also visited the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall.

As far as telling Army National Guard Soldiers what the experiences were like, Heavyrunner said, “It’s almost indescribable.” **GX**

COMBAT MEDICS SHINE

Medics Shine in Battle

By Julie Zeitlin

Combat medic SSG Emmett Spraktes prepares to be lowered to the ground during operations in Afghanistan.

COURTESY OF THE CALIFORNIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Staff Sergeant Emmett Spraktes was being lowered to the ground by cable from a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. The location was the craggy mountains of Afghanistan, and Spraktes and his crew were there to rescue at least five Soldiers who had been wounded in the battle below.

Because of the topography, there was no place for the aircraft to land. It hovered at about 100 feet above ground. Lowering Spraktes was tricky—the fight was still raging. The rescue would be a serious challenge. But, that’s the job of a combat medic: treating Soldiers on the battlefield.

We’ll tell you how Spraktes’ story turns out a little later. For now, let’s take a closer look at his job: the 68W combat medic.

COMBAT MEDICS: AN EXAMINATION

The 68W is the second largest MOS (military occupational specialty) in the Army, second only to infantry (11B). The job of the 68W is to save lives by providing emergency medical care and evacuation from a point of injury, along with limited primary care and health protection.

To be accepted to the 68W MOS, Soldiers must attain a minimum designated ASVAB score and pass specific physical tests (these requirements change, so check with a recruiter for the current standards in your

state). For example, they must be able to push or lift 60 pounds for short distances, and have no aversion to blood.

Once a Soldier has chosen 68W combat medic as their MOS, and after they’ve been accepted and gone through Basic Training, they will train for this specific MOS in their AIT (advanced individual training). AIT for combat medics takes place at Fort Sam Houston in Texas. Headed by James Aplin, a retired Army National Guard command sergeant major, the program is intense. Lasting 16 weeks, it

includes classroom work for the first seven weeks, and then becomes a mixture of classroom and field training exercises (FTXs).

During the program, participants learn Warrior skills, undergo rigorous physical training and are trained in CBRNE (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives). Some of the FTXs involve simulated scenarios, in which Soldiers get hands-on practice with a multitude of medical treatments. To create these scenarios, the program uses highly sophisticated human patient simulators—adult-sized dummies that simulate real human functions such as breathing and bleeding. For more about this high-tech tool, see “The Reality of Human Patient Simulators” sidebar on page 43.

At the end of this AIT session, Soldiers take an exam that they must pass in order to officially become a 68W. The success rate for passing is high—92 percent.

HIGH-TRAFFIC TRAINING

The 68W is a well-populated program at Fort Sam Houston. With 400-450 new students per new session, and 17 sessions per year, the site sees a grand total of about 8,000 combat medic students annually.

The medical training and certification for a military combat medic are the equivalent of those for the civilian EMT (emergency medical technician), and many Army National Guard combat medics are also healthcare professionals in their civilian jobs, or go on to become paramedics, EMTs, nurses and doctors after their military service term is up.

Although the combat medic AIT program is the same whether the Soldier is in the Army or the Army National Guard, Aplin emphasized an important distinction between serving as a medic in the Regular Army and being a medic in the Guard. “The medic skills are perishable if they aren’t practiced and used,” he stressed, referring to the part-time status of Active Army National Guard Soldiers. “It’s incumbent upon a commander to give their combat medics the time and resources to continue to train and sustain those perishable skills.”

Spraktes talked about this too. “If your [Army National Guard] company doesn’t support you in going to the hospital or getting into the field on a regular basis [for practice], they’re really doing themselves and [you] a disservice. So with the Guard, typically the flight medics are also people who do paramedicine on the outside on a regular basis. And you can absolutely see the difference.”

“SOLDIERS NEED ALL SEVEN [ARMY VALUES] TO GET THAT CHARACTER OF THE COMBAT MEDIC.”

>> Jim Aplin, Chief, U.S. Army EMS Program Management

If you’re thinking of becoming a 68W, don’t let the intensity of the program intimidate you. Most people entering the training are new Soldiers, 18-23 years old, just out of Basic Combat Training, and have little to no background in healthcare. In fact, every two weeks, about 500 of these young Soldiers arrive for training at Fort Sam Houston. By the time they leave, they’ll be ready for their job: combat medic, typically in charge of the care of about 40 Soldiers, although that number can fluctuate widely depending on the mission.

Combat medics choose the job for a variety of reasons. But they stay because they love it. Fifty percent stay in the MOS long term. Of those, another 50 percent become senior medics, NCO leaders, or officers working as physicians, physician assistants, nurses or medical service corps officers.

ALL-TIME LOW

Today, thanks to the combat medic, the Army has the lowest casualty rate in history. This is a categorical change from the earliest days of the military, when wounded Soldiers were often simply left at the spot where they fell.

Prior to the Civil War, medical practices were very rudimentary compared to today, and many lives were lost because now-basic concepts like sanitation were not yet understood. Microbiology and chemistry were virtually unknown. Modern anesthesia was years away yet—chloroform and ether were the painkillers. The words *surgery* and *amputation* were virtually synonymous.

It wasn’t until during the Civil War that advances in military medicine and medical training began to take place. One of the



By WWII, as a result of the combat medic MOS, injured Soldiers had an 85 percent chance of survival if they were wounded on the battlefield.

first inventions was an official system for evacuation. This was inspired by the excessive number of casualties at the Battle of Manassas—by some accounts, it took more than a week to remove all of the wounded. During this war, amputation was still the primary surgical procedure, with more than 50,000 performed.

By WWII, an injured Soldier had an 85 percent chance of surviving if treated by a medic within the first hour—a chance three times greater than in WWI.

The Vietnam War was the first time helicopters were used for medical evacuations. Medics on board would treat the wounded during transport to a field hospital. The survival rate for Soldiers evacuated within the first hour was 98 percent. Vietnam was also the first time medics were armed.

WHO MAKES A GOOD MEDIC?

What kind of person makes a good combat medic? According to Aplin, there are several qualities. First, there are the requirements. These include that there must be no history of felonies or criminal convictions. A candidate must have no aversion to blood. They need to be able to push or lift 60 pounds.

In terms of character traits, intellectually, medics must be adaptable and able to think on their feet. For instance, they may encounter an injury for which they don’t have the proper equipment on hand, so they should be capable of improvising. It is important to be somewhat outgoing, because medics must be familiar with their Soldiers.

“You have to know their allergies, medications, ailments, et cetera,” said Specialist Daniel Crowley, a combat medic in the Hawaii



For the first time in American history, females serving in WWII found themselves in roles as frontline medics and nurses.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS



SPC Daniel Crowley of the Hawaii Army National Guard ran combat medic missions while deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

“I TALK TO MY SOLDIERS THE WHOLE TIME I AM TREATING THEM. YOU HAVE TO TALK TO THEM AND COMFORT THEM.”

• SPC Daniel Crowley, Combat Medic
Hawaii National Guard

Army National Guard. “And, every time you go out, you have to relearn that with each different unit. You can’t be shy ... you have to make the effort to get to know them.”

In terms of personal character, an effective combat medic needs to have fully internalized the seven Army values—loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. The reason, Aplin explained, is that all seven come into play when treating a patient.

“We live by the motto, ‘I will never leave a fallen comrade,’” said Aplin. “We instill that early in a young Soldier’s career. That’s [part of] our ethos. We don’t leave our comrades behind.

“If you look at Army Medal of Honor winners in history, the largest number is in the medical department—primarily, combat medics,” he continued. “It’s because of the values... that have worked since the days of the Continental Army. That value system hasn’t wavered.”

And, Aplin adds, the seven values “... are interdependent. Soldiers need all seven of them to get that character of the combat medic.”

GENERAL PRACTICE

The day-to-day work of a combat medic changes based on the type of mission they’re assigned.

For Crowley, while deployed and stationed in Kuwait, that work was more than a full-time job.



The medevac helicopter has allowed medics on the ground to assess and treat wounded Soldiers and then get them to a hospital in record time.

“We usually worked 12-14 hour days,” he began. “I would wake up, work out, get chow and then begin prepping for the mission. Every day that I was there, this was the routine.

“One of the big issues in the hot season was keeping Soldiers hydrated. They could only carry so much water, and they worked long hours. I would be doing IVs in the tent to keep them hydrated. We dealt with a lot of rollovers [during convoys] while we were there—civilian contractors and Soldiers. Mostly, it was due to fatigue. Convoys would operate all day long, so people would fall asleep behind the wheel. With the rollovers, we saw a lot of back injuries and broken

hands. But ... we received really good rollover [instruction] at our mobilization training. A simulator taught us what to do if we rolled, and we learned the importance of our safety belts and harnesses.”

SSG Michael Crone of the Indiana Army National Guard was there for the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. “I was in school [when] I got the call that I was needed. I packed my bag, called the registrar’s office and reported for duty in about an hour.

“We basically performed door-to-door operations,” he described. “We would knock on doors and make sure people were OK, medically. We would provide them with food

THE REALITY OF HUMAN PATIENT SIMULATORS

Today, training to become a combat medic in the Army National Guard involves a highly sophisticated tool—the human patient simulator. These are the same dummies that are used for training civilian nurses, physician assistants, doctors and EMTs (emergency medical technicians).

Introduced at Fort Sam Houston in Texas about 10 years ago, these mannequins are computerized, life-size dummies capable of producing accurate responses to simulated injuries and treatments.

They are highly advanced, explained Mike Wilcox, a paramedic, EMT expert and authority on the human patient simulator. Among other human features, they can breathe, blink, perspire, bleed from an amputated extremity, respond to anesthesia—they can even scream. Their blood pressure and pulse can fluctuate. Most are lighter than actual adult humans—the majority are just 70 pounds—but they are life-size and

look anatomically correct.

The simulators are an enormously effective tool in the Soldiers’ medical training, relayed Wilcox. “We’ve been able to use them to reconstruct what an actual casualty on the battlefield might look like,” he explained. “Soldiers have an opportunity to see a victim with multiple wounds and treat them in a [virtual] setting.

“They’re scenario-driven,” he continued. “This makes it pretty interesting, because they have the ability to react to good or bad [medical] treatment. If the treatment is not handled correctly, the mannequin will begin to [fade]. It puts the Soldier in a pressure cooker. It forces them to think on their feet. They’re a tremendous tool to create realism. They allow our Soldiers to practice, develop and excel in their skills. When the Soldier is doing a great job, the simulator will respond to [that], and then the Soldier can save the patient.” — Julie Zeitlin



TOP: COURTESY OF SPC DANIEL CROWLEY; BOTTOM: PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JOSHUA J. SEYBERT

NATLIE GASS



SSG Emmett Spraktes, second from left, with his crew after being awarded the Silver Star medal for his actions in Afghanistan.



SELFLESS SERVICE LEADS TO SILVER STAR

Hovering 70 feet over a battle zone, about to be lowered to the ground on a cable dangling from his helicopter, medic Staff Sergeant Emmett Spraktes drummed up the necessary courage by picturing the parents of the injured Soldiers below.

"We're up there, and we know we can't land. There's a risk. But, I imagine looking into the eyes of a [Soldier's] parent and saying, 'I can't do this,'" Spraktes recalled. "How could I talk to the mother or father of one these boys and say, 'I was just too afraid to go?'"

Moments later, when the cable stopped moving only partway to the ground—making Spraktes a sitting target above the battlefield—it was his own children who came to mind.

"When I was hanging, I thought I would never get out of there. I was convinced this would be the end of me," he said. "I thought, 'This is all my children are going to know of me—everything we've had up to this time.'"

He called up to crew chief Staff Sergeant Thomas A. Gifford, "Tell my children I love them!"

"You love me?" came the confused response.

"Not you, you idiot!" Spraktes yelled. "My kids!" The men shared a momentary laugh amid the gunfire, and then the cable started moving again.

Spraktes reached the ground intact, but explosions and gun bursts echoed all around him. He went to work on the three injured patients as his UH-60 Black Hawk crew flew to safety. This was only the beginning.

After tending to the most severely injured patient, Spraktes called for the Black Hawk to return to his location to pick up the injured Soldier and fly him to a nearby base.

The Black Hawk delivered the patient, then returned and picked up two more injured Soldiers—again leaving Spraktes behind to care for and defend the Soldiers on the ground.

"By the grace of God, we were not hit," said co-pilot Chief Warrant Officer Scott St. Aubin. "I have no idea how you miss a giant Black Hawk helicopter. It was really surreal."

After dropping off patients for the second time, the Black Hawk returned to find that Spraktes was treating two Soldiers for dehydration. He again deferred his place on the aircraft to the injured Soldiers and sent the Black Hawk on its way, this time telling the crew he would stay on the ground and return to base on foot.

Spraktes' crew would hear nothing of it, though, and returned to the dangerous location for a sixth time to perform yet another combat hoist extraction, finally bringing Spraktes to safety.

"I told the pilots I wasn't leaving him," Gifford said. "I was just doing my job and trying to get our guys out. [Medical evacuation] is a very dangerous job—there's always somebody trying to shoot you down and stop you from what you're trying to do."

Spraktes was honored for his actions June 13 with the Silver Star—the third-highest award for valor given by the U.S. Armed Forces—and Gifford, St. Aubin and pilot Chief Warrant Officer Four Brandon Erdmann each received the Distinguished Flying Cross with "V" device for valor.

Erdmann is a member of the Wyoming National Guard. The other three awardees are members of the California National Guard's Company C, 1/168th General Support Aviation Battalion.

Spraktes was the first California National Guard member to receive the Silver Star in this century.

"This ceremony is about your selfless service while protecting our freedoms here at home," said Air Force Brigadier General Mary J. Kight, the adjutant general of the California National Guard, during a ceremony here at Mather Flight Facility. "These four Soldiers are American heroes. I am proud to serve with you."

—Brandon Honig, California National Guard

"THE COMBAT MEDIC IS AN ABSOLUTELY PIVOTAL POSITION."

>> SSG Emmett Spraktes, California Army National Guard

and water if they needed it. But, more importantly, we wanted to make sure they were OK with any required medications. Since a lot of the pharmacies were closed, tons of people were without their meds. As a combat medic, I can't write prescriptions, but I can relay their requests and prescriptions to ensure they get their medication. I can [also] assist them with their medications—help administer insulin and stuff like that."

Crone was deployed to Iraq with the 215th Area Support Medical Company from 2008–2009. "We were stationed at Joint Base Balad and I was part of an ambulance team. We had 16 individuals in our unit, all from my home unit in Indiana. We responded to everything from broken ankles and wrists, to mortar attacks.

"We would work shifts," he continued, "so that one ambulance was always at the ready. We had pretty much the same capability that an ambulance would have here in the States, so we could handle almost any situation.

"We would interact with civilians. We saw a ton of pediatric cases, mainly children who were burned for various reasons. In Iraq, they use a lot of propane heaters for cooking, so kids are constantly knocking them over and burning themselves. Their parents would bring them to us for treatment, and we would do what we could to help them."

Crowley described working with adult civilians, too. "We would give them food and drink. When we would set up security at intersections, we would try and talk to them," he said.

Combat medics even help those who would do them harm: the bad guys. "We treated enemy combatants if they requested our help," said Crone. "One day, this guy showed up missing some fingers, and he had burn marks over the remaining part of his hand. It was

pretty clear to us that he had been the one firing mortar rounds at us less than an hour before, and that the mortar fin had sliced his hand in half. When we asked him to explain what happened—how he lost his fingers—he was very vague. So we just treated him anyway, and sent him on his way. Sometimes, you just have to treat people, regardless of their status as an enemy combatant."

FLIGHT MEDICS

Flight medics conduct rescues and give treatment by and on aircraft—typically, helicopters. Combat medics who also want to be flight medics undergo special additional training to acquire the skills necessary to treat patients in midair.

Spraktes, a flight medic, described it in some detail.

"There's a lot more going on around you," he began. "You have to worry about making sure the aircraft is safe and that your sight is clear. You have to be familiar with the physiology—the things that occur to the human body at certain altitudes. You have to be aware of how the drifts work at altitudes, and be able to handle sensory deprivation patient assessment and treatment. You're spinning a lot of plates. Hopefully one of them doesn't fall down and break.

"At night in a helicopter, you can't see, feel, hear—even touch is changed because of the vibration. So you have to rely a little more on technology and alternate means of evaluating the patient."

Medical treatment in flight can get especially complicated in the case of a mass casualty incident (MCI)—meaning, there are several wounded people on board.

"Helicopters are a very limited space," Spraktes emphasized. "You're trying to control as much as you can and you're making choices. If someone looks like they're holding their own, you move on to the guy who isn't. Then



ADAM LIVINGSTON



SSG Michael Crone of the Indiana Army National Guard was part of an ambulance team at Joint Base Balad while deployed to Iraq.

you work on him and stabilize him. Then you go back and reassess the first guy. It's constant motion. You can't sit back when you've got those things going on."

SILVER RESCUE

During the Afghanistan evacuation, the only time Spraktes stopped moving was for those 15 seconds during that treacherous cable descent from the Black Hawk.

Once lowered to the ground, he went to work. "I could hear [U.S. Soldiers] giving me suppressive fire. When I hit the ground, there were like two or three of them [close by]. Can you imagine their view? Here's this guy coming down, bullets whizzing all around him, and finally he hits the ground. These guys stood up, raised up their arms and said, 'Man, that was [awesome]!' It made me laugh,

because it was like kids at a rock concert."

That day, Spraktes lifted out, treated and saved five injured Soldiers. He was later awarded the Silver Star medal for his heroic acts, and his flight crew was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross with "V" device for valor.

"The combat medic is an absolutely pivotal position," stated Spraktes. "Before our unit got to Afghanistan, the survival rate [for injured Soldiers] was 85 percent. When we got there, it went up to 98 percent. When we left, it went back down to 85 percent. That tells you it's a pivotal position." **GX**

To learn how to become a medic in the National Guard, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GX/combaticmedic



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



>> JEFF GORDON <<
GUARD GARAGE

In his second year of driving for the Army National Guard, Jeff Gordon has raced several special paint-scheme cars to honor the various programs and jobs in the National Guard. This fall, he will be busy driving two new paint schemes at a race near you.

On Sept. 11, 2010, Jeff Gordon will drive the No. 24 Dupont National Guard car with a special paint scheme recognizing the military intelligence MOS at the Richmond International Raceway during the "One Last Race to Make the Chase."

On Oct. 24, 2010, Jeff Gordon will drive the No. 24 Dupont National Guard car with a special paint scheme honoring military families at the Martinsville Speedway for the Tums Fast Relief 500.

For more on Jeff Gordon and his upcoming schedule, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/jeffgordon

COURTESY OF HENDRICK MOTORSPORTS



PATH TO HONOR

Are you eligible?



PATH TO HONOR broke 15,000 contracts (15,034) on Aug. 9, 2010, proving that the program is a useful tool for recruiters. The program has been steadily building steam since its inception in 2008 and has almost doubled its number of contracts each year. Path to Honor is a web-based application process designed to enhance the recruiting

mission of the Army National Guard. With the Path to Honor application, an applicant can complete their application 24/7, and the local RRNCO can view the application at any time during the process. The goal of Path to Honor is to provide prescreened and qualified applicants to the Army National Guard recruiting force.

CONTACT RESPONSE TEAM (CRT)

THE CRT DETERMINES National Guard eligibility for hundreds of potential applicants every day. Using national and state-specific guidelines, CRT operators ask each lead a number of questions concerning their medical, legal and moral qualifications, as well as assist

them with all questions. Once a lead is found to meet the minimum enlistment qualifications, they are transferred to Path to Honor, or connected by phone to a local recruiter. If a local recruiter isn't available, an appointment is made, and the recruiter receives

an email informing them of the appointment. The CRT's goal is to provide the recruiting force with quality service, and the team has been successful in handing over 31,700 leads to recruiters in the last nine months.

>> CRT OPERATOR GUS GRANDE



CW2 Gus Grande is currently flying with the Kentucky Army National Guard Counterdrug team. Gus flew Chinooks with the 101st Airborne Division and deployed multiple times in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

>> CRT OPERATOR AMANDA MORGAN



SGT Amanda Morgan of the Tennessee Army National Guard is a cadet in the Middle Tennessee State University ROTC program and will receive her commission as a second lieutenant in December of 2010.

COURTESY OF ADAM LIVINGSTON



CSM John D. Gipe is the senior enlisted advisor for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (ASD-RA) Dennis McCarthy.

Long-Term Commitment

Service Members' success is CSM John D. Gipe's goal

By Clint Wood

COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR JOHN D. GIPE has risen to one of the highest positions an enlisted Service Member can reach.

On Nov. 8, 2009, he began his role as the senior enlisted advisor for Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs (ASD-RA) Dennis McCarthy. Gipe advises McCarthy on all matters related to enlisted personnel for the seven Reserve component branches of the military. There are 1.2 million Reserve component Service Members, family members and employers.

Gipe is the ninth senior enlisted advisor assigned to this office.

"It's an honor and a privilege just be able to continue to serve," commented Gipe from his

office in the Pentagon in Arlington, VA, during an exclusive *GX* interview in June.

READY FOR THE ROLE

Gipe noted that having been command sergeant major of the Army National Guard from June 2005 to July 2009 assists him in this position. He cited being responsible for assisting the 54 States, Territories and the District of Columbia in achieving consensus on issues and working at the strategic level with general officers, as prime examples.

He reflected on how, in that role, he was also always working for the enlisted Soldiers, their families and their employers.

"Same thing here," he added. "Now, I've got 1.1 million Service Members and their families that I work for. That is what it's all about. That's what keeps me energized."

"You go out there and see all the great things that they are doing and their enthusiasm," he continued. "You just can't help coming in here every day and doing whatever you can. They can expect me to [work extra hard] to make sure they get what they need and set them up for success in the future. Long-term—that's what I'm after."

Gipe, who has been on a leave of absence from CSX Railroad in Kentucky since shortly after 9/11, told *GX* about four important programs that McCarthy's office is pursuing: The Contiguous Mobilization Study, enhancing Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), the DoD Yellow Ribbon Program and TRICARE Reserve Select.

He said McCarthy and his staff are putting the final touches on the Contiguous Mobilization Study. Basically, contiguous mobilization combines post-mobilization and mobilization training into one several-week time period. This is in contrast to non-contiguous mobiliza-

tion, where Service Members can spend several days throughout the year on a variety of orders executing their individual Warrior tasks before deploying to their mobilization site.

In other words, when they leave their civilian jobs en route to their pre-mobilization training, they will not return until their deployment is over.

"For the most part, based on the surveys we took, the Soldiers, their families and their employers want to do contiguous training," he said. "Soldiers want to be put on orders, do the train-up and deploy."

There are two reasons that this type of mobilization may be beneficial, Gipe noted. For one, it could allow Service Members to receive the highest basic allowance for housing rates. The other reason is that the GI Bill could take effect during training, dependent upon what type of orders they were on.

"It should count. They are training for the contingency operation," explained Gipe.

When asked how long train-up, mobilization and deployment will take, Gipe said about 13 months, depending on the type of unit.

Once Service Members return from a deployment, they may receive assistance in finding employment.

Gipe stated that McCarthy is looking at "beefing up" ESGR and its role between employer and employee. The goal is to empower ESGR to help facilitate finding employers good, high-quality, drug-free employees—basically, Reserve component Service Members.

He noted that the ESGR would not assume the role as a job-finder, but more as a facilitator.

Gipe said the ASD-RA also intends to assist Service Members even more in the reintegration process when returning from deployments.

McCarthy and his staff want all Service Members to participate in the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program—where they are assisted in the reintegration process. Currently, this program is mandatory only for Army National Guard members.

"It is critical that Service Members attend these events with their families so that they can understand those changes that everybody goes through," commented Gipe. "If we are going



Left: CSM John D. Gipe speaks with Soldiers and Airmen at Task Force Belle Chase in New Orleans, LA, in September of 2005. **Right:** CSM John D. Gipe visits with Army National Guard Soldiers at an entry control point in Baghdad, Iraq, on Oct. 17, 2008.

to mobilize the Reserve components, we've got to ensure that we are doing the right things when they return to the civilian sector. It's very important. It's critical."

TO THEIR HEALTH

Another critical piece of being a Reserve component Service Member is having good health insurance.

He said all such Service Members should definitely research TRICARE Reserve Select insurance. He noted that TRICARE is a very good program, including having inexpensive premiums and reasonable deductibles.

"It's a great opportunity to get good insurance for next to nothing," he said.

McCarthy's office also is supporting a program through legislation that would be beneficial to both the employer and the Service Member's needs.

Gipe stated that if this can get through the legislative process, it will be a win-win for everyone.

Reserve component Service Members also have a win-win situation with Gipe at the helm.

"I'm excited about being here every day and helping Service Members, their families and employers," commented Gipe. **GX**



CSM John D. Gipe, left, stands with members of the Mississippi Army National Guard's 890th Engineer Battalion after a noncommissioned officer induction ceremony in Iraq, Oct. 21, 2008.

Louisiana Graduation Warrants Celebration

Story and photo by SPC Tarell J. Bilbo, Public Affairs Representative, Recruiting and Retention Command

THE LOUISIANA Army National Guard welcomed five new warrant officers during an official appointing ceremony at the United States Army Aviation Museum in Fort Rucker, AL, on June 29. This was the largest group of candidates from Louisiana ever to graduate at one time from Fort Rucker.

After graduation, all candidates were promoted to the rank of warrant officer.

The graduates were: Warrant Officer One Michael C. Arceneaux of New Orleans; Warrant Officer One Ivan S. Bean of Jena, LA; Warrant Officer One Raymond J. Harris of Pineville, LA; Warrant Officer One Amanda L. Holmes of Baton Rouge, LA; and Warrant Officer One Jenny Morrow of Pineville, LA.

Candidates attended the Warrant Officer Candidate Course, which is developed and adminis-

tered by the Warrant Officer Career College at Fort Rucker. Training is conducted in a rigorous, high-stress environment where candidates are challenged mentally, physically and emotionally.

In addition to participating in physical training six days a week, candidates received formal instruction in leadership, Guard doctrine and tactics, drill and ceremonies, wear and appearance of military uniforms, military history, and professional ethics.

"Going through the training was hard, but it was worth it," said Morrow. "It really shows you what you're made of and how far you can push yourself."

Chief Warrant Officer Five Kim E. Janneck and Chief Warrant Officer Two Tammy M. Lang attended the ceremony.

"I'm just so proud of them," said Lang, who recruited the candidates. Janneck and Lang

also had the opportunity to pin the WO1 rank on the uniforms of some of the candidates. "This is really something to celebrate,"

Janneck said. "You can see the change in them after all they've experienced. They're going to be great warrant officers." **GX**



CW5 Kim E. Janneck and CW2 Tammy M. Lang join the Louisiana Guard's five newest warrant officers after an official appointment ceremony at Fort Rucker, AL, June 29.

For more on becoming a Warrant Officer, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/expertsatwork.

Patriot Academy Diversifies Student Body

By SGT David Bruce

IT HAS BEEN A YEAR OF MILESTONES for the National Guard's Patriot Academy. First was the opening on Aug. 26, 2009. It was a new concept—a second chance to gain a high school diploma for National Guard Soldiers set in a military environment.

On March 18 of this year, the Patriot Academy graduated its first class. Currently, a new class has started and a new precedent has been established. There are now female Soldiers attending the Patriot Academy.

Captain Steven Conway, Company A commander at Patriot Academy, said by the end of fall there will be 20 to 25 female students.

"As the program grows, so will the population of female students," said Conway. "The intent of the academy is to have approximately 75 female students on the ground at any time."

According to the Department of Defense, females account for approximately 13 percent of the Active Duty Soldiers. Presently, there are 128 students at the Patriot Academy. Of those, 22 percent come from minority groups and 12 percent are female.

That is not to say that the Patriot Academy has been completely without females.

"Since the beginning, we've had female cadre and female teachers. We want to build the

diversity of the academy and become more of a cross-section of the [American] population," said Conway.

As with all change, there will be complications and unforeseen occurrences in the process, but the addition of females to the student body has been a smooth transition, said First Sergeant John Craig, Company A first sergeant at the Patriot Academy.

"By becoming as diverse as possible, we strengthen the Academy in the long run," said Craig. "As we increase the diversity of Soldiers here, we can attract more students who might feel more comfortable in a mixed environment," said Craig.

Private Sarah Jax learned of the Patriot Academy through her recruiter as an alternative to the GED program.

"I'm excited about being here. It's good that the Guard is giving female Soldiers a second chance to get a high school diploma," Jax said. "There are only four of us right now, but there will be more." **GX**

SPC TARELL J. BILBO, LOUISIANA NATIONAL GUARD

Program Links Oregon Soldiers With Local Jobs

Story and photo by SPC Cory Grogan, 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team

SOLDIERS FROM THE OREGON NATIONAL GUARD'S 41st Infantry Brigade Combat Team attended a Yellow Ribbon Career and Benefits Fair on June 26 at Clackamas Community College.

The event, held at the Gregory Forum on the campus, is part of a series of reintegration programs designed to assist Oregon Soldiers following a yearlong deployment to Iraq.

DeLaurentiis said she is truly humbled by the recognition. She was also thankful her work has raised awareness of the sacrifices some make to protect and serve.

Oregon State Senator Martha Schrader said, "I am proud the largest-ever pro-Veteran legislation has been passed in the great state of Oregon."

The event was hosted by Team Clackamas, which includes Clackamas County Commissioner Jim Bernard and Clackamas Community College Dean Bill Zelke.

During his presentation, Bernard said that as a small business owner, he is going to commit to hiring a Veteran.

Private First Class Michael Mager of Forest Grove was looking for a job as a paramedic. He said military experience often helps potential Service Members in the civilian workforce.

He cited his own experience as an example—extensive military training and seven scenarios helping the wounded in Iraq. It taught him to never hesitate to help someone.

"I know what to do and have confidence without fear," said Mager. **GX**

"I AM PROUD THE LARGEST-EVER PRO-VETERAN LEGISLATION HAS BEEN PASSED IN OREGON."

>> Martha Schrader, Oregon State Senator

Over 100 employers, numerous support services and academic institutions attended the event. Oregon Senator Ron Wyden said the event was an unprecedented drive to connect the state's Guard members with jobs.

"These men and women are bringing home a toolbox of skills that employers will find helpful after they have put their lives on the line," he said.

HELP FROM HOLLYWOOD

At the event, Los Angeles, CA, filmmaker Suzanne DeLaurentiis was honored with an award rarely bestowed to civilians when Oregon's adjutant general, Major General Raymond F. Rees, presented her with the Oregon National Guard Commendation Medal for her work with Soldiers from the Oregon National Guard.

MG Raymond F. Rees, the adjutant general of Oregon, presents filmmaker Suzanne DeLaurentiis with the Oregon National Guard Commendation Medal for her work helping Oregon Soldiers.



ROTC Soundoff

Cadets Around America Talk About Service

By SFC Ken Suratt, Colorado Army National Guard ROTC Coordinator

THE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD receives the majority of its officers from two main sources: Officer Candidate School (OCS) and the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC).

The ROTC program has been successful because it allows individuals to simultaneously pursue both a degree and a commission in the National Guard as a second lieutenant. From the time a cadet signs their papers to start the process until the time they receive their commission, they're immersed in a constant learning and building process to make them the best officers possible. We asked several ROTC cadets their thoughts on leadership, the program and their goals for the future.

"I believe you should always lead from the front. By this, I do not mean you must be the most physically fit or the most intelligent of individuals. I believe you should carry yourself in a manner and perform your tasks in a way that when your followers look at you, they can't help but be inspired and motivated to perform at their full potential as well."

>> CDT Shelton McRae,
Florida International University

"I take pride in the training and facilitating of the professionalism of my fellow cadets through additional time and commitment outside the required course to enhance their development. My foundation for mentorship is the belief that you could be that guy that knew everything or the guy that taught everyone but training yourself is only part of the goal in the military. Your fellow Soldiers and their performance should be as important to you as your own, because in the end, it's the men and women to your left and right that will save you. That is why I strive to better myself—in the hopes of bettering the cadets around me."

>> CDT Tad Schnauffer,
University of Florida

"I try to mentor younger cadets both professionally and personally. I take an active role in their schoolwork and helping them select a major. I try to educate them on what to expect at LTC [Leadership Training Course] and LDAC [Leadership Development

Assessment Course], and how they can prepare for those schools during our Leadership Labs."

>> CDT Brian Hopf,
University of Southern Indiana

"My goal in ROTC is to become a commissioned officer, and to be prepared to lead the future Soldiers of the Florida Army National Guard by setting the same high standards for all. I try to take a serious role in the ROTC program and make goals that would be held to the highest standard."

>> CDT Jared Boswell,
University of West Florida

"I take an active role in letting my peers know about the benefits of going Guard and participating in the SMP* [Simultaneous Membership Program]. I tell them about the experience, leadership skills and camaraderie you can gain."

>> CDT Taishea Donald,
Bethune-Cookman University

"As future leaders, it is imperative that we search for a leadership style that suits us and allows for us to effectively lead our troops. The search for leadership skills is a long quest and, as leaders, we must always remain dedicated to perfecting our craft. I always push the younger cadets to strive for excellence in all their endeavors and always ensure that they are directing their subordinate personnel in the most effective manner possible."

>> CDT Keontra Cambell,
Florida A&M University

"I believe being part of ROTC and the SMP program has helped me become a better mentor both to junior ROTC cadets in the FSU Battalion and to Soldiers in



MY SUCCESS IN THE ROTC PROGRAM IS LARGELY BECAUSE OF THE SKILLS AND VALUES I LEARNED THROUGH SCOUTING.

>> CDT MATT BANNING
FURMAN ROTC, SOUTH CAROLINA
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

my unit—the 2/153rd Finance Detachment. I can actively and accurately answer questions from junior cadets about what life in the National Guard is like and the great opportunities it has to offer. In my unit, I serve as a mentor and leader to junior enlisted personnel by setting the example using skills I have learned from having been a junior enlisted Soldier, combined with the leadership and mentorship techniques I learned through ROTC."

>> CDT Kyle Masters,
Florida State University

Pennsylvania RSP Gets Soldiers Ready

Courtesy of the National Guard Bureau

"YES, DRILL SERGEANT," the young Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) Soldier said as he snapped to attention. He had responded to a drill sergeant's call for the first of a two-part administrative shakedown the day before shipping. The second check was administered by Sergeant First Class Goodchild, Recruit Sustainment Detachment 1 (RSD 1) training noncommissioned officer (NCO) out of Philadelphia, PA.

This routine wasn't new to the Soldiers. Every month since February, they have begun their RSP drill being grilled by their drill sergeant, their training NCO and select civilian personnel. This is being done to determine the necessity of changes, corrections or deletions to their respective personnel files. However, this drill was different. Eight of the 20-plus Soldiers were shipping to Fort Jackson, SC, the

following day to experience the real thing—Basic Training (BT).

There was a feeling of intensity among the eight Soldiers who would be shipping to BCT the next day. Yet, there was also a strong sense of confidence, knowing they'd been prepared by a staff dedicated to their success.

Private First Class Thomas Keane, a 17-year-old Norristown High School graduate with four years of junior ROTC, was particularly impressed with the realism placed on training by the RSD 1 staff. He recounted the intensity of one urban training episode, when a young pregnant woman dressed in Middle Eastern attire approached the patrolling Soldiers yelling, "My baby! My baby!"

"It looked so real," Keane stated, recalling the training IED exploding.

On a lighter note, when Keane was asked what he would suggest to change RSP training, he simply

shrugged his shoulders and said that he wouldn't change a thing. Then, with a grin, he said, "Well, more weapons training."

Like many fortunate young men and women, Keane knew exactly what he wanted to do and what it would take to get there. He decided to begin his career by joining the ROTC program at Arcadia University.

Although Keane had a jumpstart through junior ROTC, he praised the additional training he received at his RSP site. He noted that many of the subjects covered, like land navigation, customs and courtesies, and performing first aid, were presented with such a level of expertise and realism that he couldn't help but learn new skills and techniques only touched on during his junior ROTC experience. He went on to say that the whole drill sergeant experience added a new dimension to the training.

RSP UNIVERSE EXPANDING

The initial success of these eight Soldiers can be attributed to



RSP gives Soldiers a better chance at excelling during Basic Training and has helped the Army National Guard minimize pipeline losses.

Pennsylvania's RSD 1. Established in 2005, the detachment's RSP Soldiers grew to numbers exceeding 500. With those growing numbers, Sergeant First Class Mickens, RSD 1 Readiness NCO, became proficient at "fire and adjust" tactics. This gained the respect of strength maintenance personnel and others, validating the RSP concept.

With continued success, the staff also grew. Key personnel now include civilians who honorably served in the rank and file of our force structure and bring an abundance of knowledge, experience and continued commitment to the finest of NCOs and cadre.

When asked about the RSP team, Goodchild responded, "The answer is simple. Each member of our team has a genuine respect and admiration for our future Soldiers and will dedicate many hours to make them mentally prepared, administratively correct and physically fit."

The statistics back him up. Since January, the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's training pipeline losses have dropped by just under 10 percent. Are they happy with that figure? No! They plan to become more engaged in the Soldier Training Readiness Modules (STRM) training, available on the SMTIC HEART Portal, to provide well-deserved promotions for their RSP Soldiers. And throughout their armory, they display signs encouraging Soldiers to do PT with the drill instructors on Tuesdays and Thursdays so the young Soldiers will have a leg up on their physical training.

When asked the motivating factor for their statistical improvement, each NCO and cadre member stated their number one priority as "the Soldier." It was evident that this is a personal mantra, not an idle comment. **GX**

Family Tradition

Adjutant General Swears In Son

By Christian Anderson

ON MARCH 31, 2010, CADET MIKE WRIGHT was sworn into the Army National Guard, taking him one step closer to fulfilling his goal of becoming a fourth-generation Army aviator in his family.

His mother and father were there to support him. But his mom was there for more than just moral support. As adjutant general of the Pennsylvania National Guard, Major General Jessica Wright actually swore Cadet Wright into the 2/104th General Support Aviation Battalion, making this a historic occasion for the Pennsylvania Guard.

"I was extremely proud to swear in my son, and I was delighted with his decision to join the National Guard," Major General Wright said. "I spent 35 years in a profession that I absolutely love, and to see him follow in those footsteps makes me proud."

Cadet Wright, a member of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) at King's College in Wilkes-Barre, PA, felt grateful to have such a memorable ceremony mark the beginning of his Guard career.

BIG SHOES

"Having my mom swear me in was a big honor," he explained. "Not only is she my mom, but she's the leader of the Pennsylvania National Guard."

Chuck Wright, Cadet Wright's father, is a former Army aviator who retired at the rank of lieutenant colonel. Cadet Wright's grandfather and great-grandfather also flew for the Army. Add to that his mother's accomplishment of being the first female aviator in the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, and it seems Cadet Wright is cast straight from the family mold.

Mike's process of becoming a Soldier began while he was still in high school, when he decided he would pursue a commission in the ROTC in college.

"I knew through the ROTC I could serve my country and make a career in the military," Cadet Wright explained. "Plus I could get money for college, and acquire leadership skills and experience that would be hard to find anywhere else."

Cadet Wright noticed a difference in his life immediately after joining the Guard.

"Since enlisting, I've learned a lot from my fellow Soldiers, many of whom have served overseas," he explained. "Some of my fellow cadets look to me for guidance when we conduct training and field exercises for ROTC. They ask what I did at drill over the weekend, and they enjoy hearing about the training Soldiers do to stay proficient."

STILL MIKE, STILL MOM

Regardless of his status as a cadet and a Soldier, things will pretty much remain the same for the Wrights when he's home from school and training.

"He's still Mike to me and I am still mom to him," Major General Wright said. "I know if we are in uniform and in public, we will both be professional. But at home, I'm still mom."

Like any mom, Major General Wright is proud of her son. But the pride doesn't end there. She is very proud of all the men and women in the Pennsylvania National Guard.

"I think there's no better way to spend your time than to serve in the military, whether it's your whole life or a few years," she explained. "It is truly a gift of life to serve your country. I'm proud to call myself a Citizen-Soldier and stand alongside the other Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen in our ranks." **GX**

MG Jessica Wright swears in her son, Cadet Mike Wright, into the 2/104th General Support Aviation Battalion, Pennsylvania Army National Guard.



COURTESY OF THE PENNSYLVANIA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

Like Father, Like Son

Virginians Serve Together in Support of Operation Iraqi Freedom

By SPC Britney Bodner, 103rd Public Affairs Detachment

FATHER'S DAY in Iraq is often spent on a phone or webcam talking with family halfway around the world, or opening a package sent weeks in advance. But one deployed father in Baghdad had a rare opportunity to spend it with his son.

Sergeant Earnest Carila, noncommissioned officer in charge of the personal security detachment for Lieutenant General Kenneth Hunzeker, United States Forces-Iraq deputy commanding general for support, spent the day with his son, Specialist Ryan Carila, a chase driver for Hunzeker's PSD team.

Carila and Ryan arrived at Victory Base Complex in September 2009 with the Virginia Army National Guard's 229th Military Police Company, and were both chosen for Hunzeker's PSD team.

"OUR BOND AS FATHER AND SON IS STRONGER BECAUSE OF IT."

>> SPC Ryan Carila, on serving alongside his father

RARE OCCASION

It's very unusual for a father and son to work together on a PSD team, and it surprises everyone who hears about it, said Sergeant First Class Edward Kawamura, personal security officer for the PSD team.

"Working together in this instance is a great fit," Kawamura said. "They look after one another and make sure they have what they need for any mission."

"It's been a great experience," said Carila. "Not many people can deploy with their son on their first deployment."

Ryan thinks this experience with his father has been a very positive one.

"Our bond as father and son is stronger because of it," he said.

Carila said being deployed during Father's Day is hard for most Soldiers because they are a world away from their families.

MAKING MEMORIES

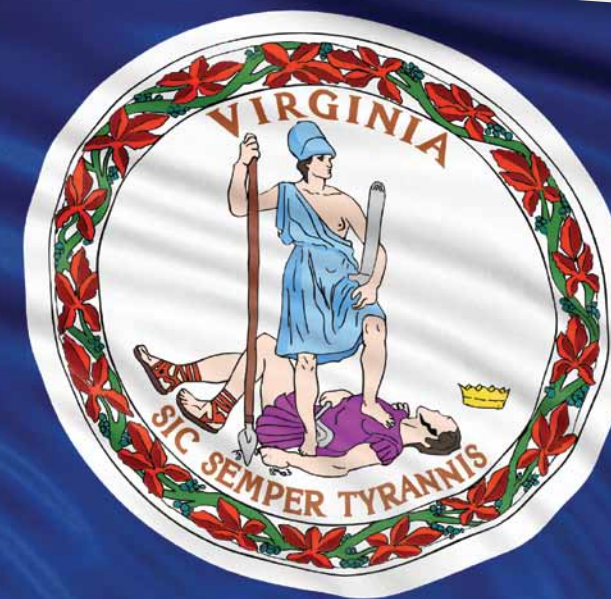
"It's reassuring that I have my son with me this Father's Day," Carila said. "The feeling of not only being serving my country, but to be able to serve it together, especially on Father's Day, is great and fills me with pride. He made it a much better day being here with me than if I was alone."

Even though father and son spent the day running missions with the PSD team, Ryan was able to treat his father to dinner at Subway.

For Ryan, this has been more than just a chance to spend time with his father—it has been a chance to create lifelong memories not a lot of people get to share with their parents.

SGT Earnest Carila poses for a photo with his son, SPC Ryan Carila, in front of the U.S. Embassy in Iraq on Father's Day, June 20.

"My son and I have had the opportunity of a lifetime, not only to serve together in Iraq, but to serve on the same team," said Carila. "I am proud of my son and it has been an honor to spend Father's Day with him on this deployment." **GX**





SGT Roger Henson has been a paramedic firefighter for the Brentwood Fire Department since 2005.

Working for a Safer Tomorrow Soldier Puts Skills to Use as Firefighter

By Christian Anderson

NO TWO DAYS are exactly the same for Roger Henson. As a sergeant and flight medic in the Tennessee Army National Guard and a paramedic firefighter at the Brentwood Fire Department in Brentwood, TN, he never really knows what the future will hold for him on any given day—except that he will be working to keep people alive and safe.

In a nutshell, that is what Henson's life has been all about: serving for the greater good and trying to help people when they are wounded or in danger. The lifestyle Henson chose can be hazardous, but his career seems like a natural fit. Taking the plunge into service when he was 17 years old, Henson enlisted in the U.S. Army shortly after graduating from high school.

"My dad served as a master gunnery sergeant in the Marine Corps in Vietnam. My grandfather

served in WWII. And I am named after a crew chief who was killed in Vietnam," he said.

Henson loved being a Soldier. Sure, Basic was tough, but he reveled in the challenge. Then came Airborne school, which presented its own challenges and was just as fun as Basic. He soon found himself attached to one of the finest fighting units in the United States military: 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment. Rangers are some of the most squared-away, high-speed Soldiers out there, and Henson just couldn't believe he was working with these guys. After spending a little over two years with the 1st Battalion, tragedy struck Henson.

"I was completing an obstacle course and fell, fracturing both of my wrists," he explained. "I ended up getting taken care of by the battalion medic. He was a great guy, and it made me want

to become a medic. So, I guess tragedy presented an opportunity for me."

Henson's stint with 1st Battalion ended during the fateful fall, but through a series of unusual twists, he was still able to pursue his dreams of helping people.

"I had reconstructive surgery on my wrists, so I ended up leaving Active Duty service," he explained. "After I healed, I used my GI Bill to go to paramedic school. It was a great experience, and before I knew it, I was working on an ambulance putting my skills to use in the civilian sector."

Henson settled into his civilian routine, married his high school sweetheart and bought a house. Everything was normal until one historic morning when Henson's world seemed to stand still.

ADAM LIVINGSTON

"9/11 happened, and like everybody else, I re-enlisted, this time in the Army National Guard," he recalled.

Instead of going back to his 11B job, Henson went to Fort Sam Houston for 68W training. Since he was already a paramedic, much of this training was remedial, so Henson was allowed to complete the course in half of the 16 weeks it usually takes a new medic. He ended up receiving the Honor Graduate award for his class.

After completing the necessary training, Henson deployed with the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The 278th deployed in 2004 when the insurgency was white-hot, and Henson was soon forced to put his combat medic skills to use. Attached to B Company, 1/128th Infantry out of Wisconsin, Henson found himself on countless foot patrols, often outside of the 128th's Area of Operations.

"When I first got to Iraq, the battle for Fallujah was going on, so we were looking for bad guys going in or out of Fallujah," Henson explained. "It was really cool because we worked with Special Forces and conducted close to 30 raids with them during that time."

"I was the only medic in 2nd platoon, so I did over 200 patrols with them," Henson told *GX*. "We would go out every day and divide the platoon in half, but the medic would go out on every patrol."

During these patrols, Henson found himself treating the civilian populace, since Iraq's concept of modern medicine was almost nonexistent. He also found that treating a civilian was a possible way to save a Soldier's life.

"There was this lady who couldn't walk, so I talked to her and assessed her. She had multiple sclerosis, but I am not a doctor, I am a paramedic. I can't fix multiple sclerosis, but what I can do is find her a wheelchair from one of our clinics. So I gave her a wheelchair and she was able to get around her village, which she hadn't seen in like 10 years because she had been immobile," he recalled.

"I have gotten hearing aids for people, and I have gotten glasses," Henson explained. "And that's to gain their trust so they'll maybe tell us if there's an IED being planted out there. Because they know we are going to take care of them. The medics are always going to be there to help them out."

Before he knew it, the Fairview, TN, native was back in Tennessee applying for jobs as a paramedic. He saw an opening at the Brentwood Fire Department and applied. After graduating from the Firefighter's Academy, Henson took his role as paramedic firefighter for Ladder No. 1.

COURTESY OF SGT ROGER HENSON

The men and women who join the department must learn to trust each other, just like a rifleman will trust his battle buddy. Fire, and its accomplice smoke, can disable an individual quickly, so these Ladders must lean on each other.

Henson says the day as a firefighter can be scattered between emergency response calls and periods of downtime. The catch is there is no real downtime for a firefighter. In between calls, firefighters are expected to check their equipment and keep it up to standard. The fire trucks need to be cleaned and checked daily. Then there are fire inspections, fire hydrants to be serviced, certifications to keep up and physical fitness to maintain. Basically, these guys and gals are working hard every day during the "24 hours on, 48 hours off" shifts.

Henson's fellow firefighters knew he was the right man for the job, especially Engineer Jeremy Giroux.

"We are very proud to have Henson in our Ladder," Giroux said. "The first day he showed up, he was calling me 'sir.' He is still very disciplined and eager to do his job the best always."

Some of the leadership at the Brentwood Fire Department noticed how Henson's military experience has rubbed off on the rest of the Ladder.

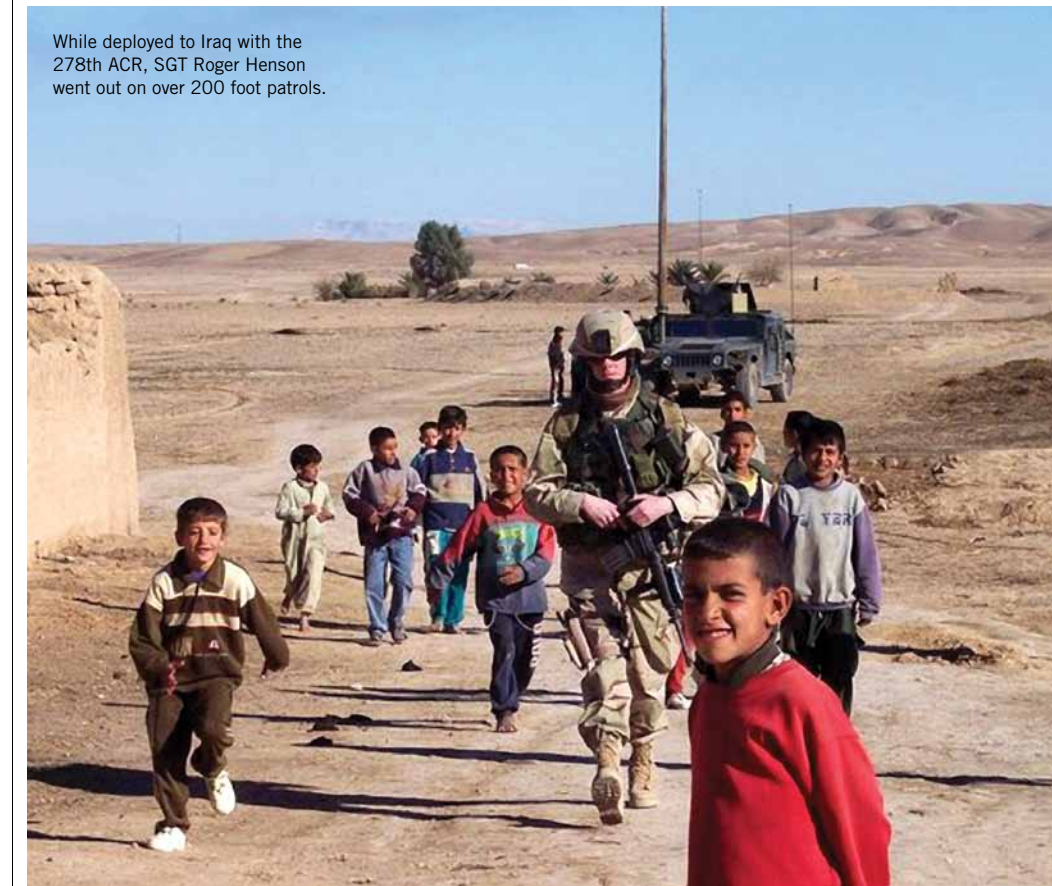
"I think his Guard service is invaluable to the Brentwood Fire Department," Captain Mark Duffield explained. "He really loves what he does. He brings a world of experience from his military service, and it makes us a stronger Ladder."

Henson, a father of three, easily shrugs off any praise he receives because he feels success is a byproduct of great leadership, and he strives to surround himself with others who work hard.

"I think the key to leadership, and success in general, is to surround yourself with the people who want to develop you. And they can't do that if they're not better than you. But you hold them to higher esteem and higher credibility than yourself," he said.

"You always need heroes and people to look up to in any profession. Once you don't have that anymore, you need to get out of that job. Whether it's here or somewhere else, you still need someone to look up to, to do your job better." **GX**

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



While deployed to Iraq with the 278th ACR, SGT Roger Henson went out on over 200 foot patrols.



Post-9/11 GI Bill

A Year in Review

By Johanna Altland

It has been just over a year since the launch of the much talked about Post-9/11 GI Bill. In a recent news release celebrating the 66th anniversary of the GI Bill, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that it has issued \$3.6 billion in benefits payments to more than 285,000 students and their educational institutions under the new GI Bill. It is wonderful to hear that so many current and former Service Members are taking advantage of this new funding opportunity.

Let's take a look back at the launch of the bill, the somewhat bumpy road we've traveled and

what changes we may expect to see in the future.

PROGRAM LAUNCH

Officially known as the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Act of 2008, the Post-9/11 GI Bill was launched on August 1, 2009. This bill was designed to provide educational assistance to those Service Members who've served on Active Duty on or after September 11, 2001. At the time, many viewed this bill as the next generation of the existing Montgomery GI Bill that first began in 1944 as the GI Bill of Rights.

The new Post-9/11 GI Bill pays tuition and fees, not to exceed the

maximum in-state undergraduate tuition and fees at a public institution of higher learning in the state where your school is located; a monthly housing allowance for those who qualify; a books and supplies stipend, not to exceed \$1,000 per year, for those who qualify; and a one-time rural benefit of \$500 for those who qualify. As with the Montgomery GI Bill, eligible Service Members will generally receive up to 36 months of benefits.

UNFORESEEN CHALLENGES

Almost immediately after the launch, the VA became overwhelmed with the number of applications it received for the Post-9/11 GI Bill. One month after the start of the bill, the VA approved over 200,000 certificates of eligibility and awarded \$50 million in payments to educational institutions and students.

However, at the beginning of the 2009 fall college semester, many students and colleges were waiting on benefit payments. To address this issue, \$3,000 emergency checks were authorized to those students who needed payment. Some schools, like Grantham University, pitched in to help ease the burden.

"We deferred tuition payments for up to 120 days and waived any standard tuition down payment for students who were awaiting payment of benefits under the new GI Bill," said Chris Lee, director of financial aid and Veterans services at Grantham University. "Our VA Certifying Officials also guided students through the process of requesting emergency funds."

In late 2009, the VA hired additional employees and awarded a

temporary contract to an organization to assist with claims processing.

In January 2010, the VA started efforts to recoup the money that was provided in the form of \$3,000 emergency checks. This caused confusion and frustration, as some students didn't realize that they would have to pay back the emergency funds and didn't understand how the funds were being deducted. However, the VA worked with students to set up payment plans as necessary to help ease the financial strain.

WHAT THE FUTURE HOLDS

In late May, the Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Daniel Akaka, introduced the Post-9/11 Veterans Educational Assistance Improvements Act. This bill details some of the enhance-

ments that should be made to the GI Bill in order to take this benefit to the next level. Among the improvements suggested by Akaka is to make members of the National Guard and Reserve, who were inadvertently omitted from the Post-9/11 GI Bill, eligible for full benefits. In addition, the payment of benefits would be expanded to cover vocational programs, on-the-job and apprenticeship training, and all types of non-college degree training. Other enhancements include:

- » \$1,000 book allowance for Active Duty Service Members and spouses using transferred benefits
- » Provide a living allowance for those attending an online university
- » Eliminate state-by-state tuition and fee caps, replacing it with a national average

» Modify how the living allowance is calculated, so payments are based on the number of credits taken

With the launch of any new program, especially one with the magnitude of the Post-9/11 GI Bill, there are always improvements to be made and lessons learned for the future. While there are still some kinks to be ironed out, educational payments appear to be back on track and the VA is gearing up for the fall semester.

Despite the rocky road that students faced over the last year, this new bill has, without a doubt, enhanced the educational opportunities for many Service Members and Veterans. **GX**

For more information, go to GIBill.Va.gov.

BENEFITS AT A GLANCE

	Montgomery GI Bill	Post-9/11 GI Bill
Payment Rate for Full Time	Maximum of \$1,321 per month; paid to student	Rate based on in-state undergraduate tuition and fees charged at the most expensive public institution of higher learning in the state in which you are enrolled; paid to school
Eligibility	Active Duty service after 6/30/85 with honorable discharge	Active Duty service for at least 90 aggregate days since 9/11/01 with an honorable discharge; Service Members with 30 continuous days on Active Duty, who were released for a service-connected disability are eligible
Stipends	None	Housing stipend equal to BAH for E-5 with dependents*; uses ZIP code of college or university; book and supplies stipend up to \$1,000 per year**
Months of Entitlement	36 months	36 months
Expiration	10 years from release from Active Duty	15 years from release from Active Duty
Transferability	Yes – Limited to qualifying Active Duty or Selected Reserve with six years of service who re-enlist for four more years	Yes – Limited to qualifying Active Duty or Selected Reserve with six years of service who re-enlist for four more years
Training Types	Institution of higher learning; distance education; non-college degree; OJT and apprenticeship; flight training; correspondence; licensing and certification; national testing program; entrepreneurship training; co-op training; work-study program	Institution of higher learning; distance education; licensing and certification — limited to one test; work-study program — if part of a degree program

NOTE: Army National Guard programs and benefits are subject to change. For the latest information, please contact your local recruiter. * If you are on Active Duty, training at half-time or less, or are enrolled in distance learning programs, you do not qualify. ** If you are on Active Duty, you do not qualify.

6 Questions to Ask Before You Move

Courtesy of USAA

Thinking about moving to a new home or a new part of the country?

Whether you're retiring, considering a new job, or simply longing for something different, ask yourself the following questions to determine if you're making the right move at the right time.



1 CAN YOU AFFORD IT? Sometimes, the excitement of a big move can overcome your ability to think logically—and financially. Estimate the cost of living in your new home, and then consider these two guidelines:

Your total housing costs—including principal, interest, property taxes and insurance—shouldn't exceed 28 percent of your total pre-tax monthly income.

Your total debt payments—including your mortgage, auto loans, credit card payments and other obligations—shouldn't exceed 36 percent of your total pre-tax monthly income.

Beyond these factors, you'll also need to consider what it will take to furnish and maintain your new home.

2 HOW DOES THE COST OF LIVING COMPARE? Before committing to a move, it's important to understand how far your dollars will take you in your new location. Use an online cost of living calculator to see if your move is a financial plus or minus.

3 HOW WILL MY FAMILY BE AFFECTED? Moving has big implications for every member of your family—new friends, schools, churches and recreational options. If you currently live near extended family, consider how that separation will affect your family dynamics.

4 HOW'S THE REAL ESTATE MARKET? If your move involves buying or selling a home, you'll need to decide whether the conditions are right. If it's a tight market, you may want to sell your current home before buying the new one—avoiding

the budget-busting possibility of carrying two mortgages at once.

5 DOES THE COMMUNITY ADDRESS YOUR KEY NEEDS? Make a list of attributes that are important to you in a location, in order of priority. If you're married or have a family, ask each member of the household to create their own. Among the things to consider: weather, recreation, hobbies, churches, schools, sporting events, concerts, restaurants, medical care and proximity to airports.

6 WILL IT REQUIRE A CHANGE IN LIFESTYLE? If you've lived in the city all your life and are daydreaming about quiet country living—or vice versa—make sure that's really what you want. To properly sample your new lifestyle and location, consider taking an extended vacation in the new area. Retirees may even want to rent a furnished home or apartment for a few months before making the leap. **GX**



This story is part two of a two-part series on addiction in **GX** magazine. To read part one, see **GX** vol. 7, issue 4, or visit GXonline.com.

Addiction: The Road to Recovery

Part 2 of 2

By Kevin T. Mason M.D. MPH, and Ann Stark, Army National Guard Decade of Health

TWENTY-TWO MILLION AMERICANS—8.9 percent of the population aged 12 or older—are struggling with an addiction, according to a survey conducted by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in 2008. That year, an estimated 70.9 million Americans aged 12 or older were users of tobacco.

According to alcohol awareness information provided at the TRICARE website, heavy alcohol consumption is a significant problem in the military. It affects Service Members and their families.

There is a link between substance abuse and combat stress. Also, many of those deployed return from combat to discover personal challenges or life changes. They may think alcohol and drugs help, but these substances carry substantial risks to health, well-being and relationships.

FIRST STEPS TO RECOVERY

Addiction is a chronic disease. Getting past denial, choosing health and asking for help are very difficult. But, these are the first steps to recovery.

Addiction results in physiological imbalances that compromise physical health and potentially shorten life. Proper diet and physical activity restore the body, mind and spirit, and encourage recovery.

There are many resources and tools that offer immediate information and support. Popular recovery methods include the Transtheoretical Model of Change and the 12-Step Program. Whatever method is used, the basic elements are the same and require following progressive stages of behavioral change in body, mind and spirit.

There is a defining period where the person must tap into their inner strength and build resilience. Change requires brutal honesty, willingness to

If you or someone you know needs help, here are a few resources you can try:

- A healthcare provider
- A behavioral health provider
- A Veterans hospital
- Alcoholics Anonymous or Narcotics Anonymous
- A psychologist or therapist
- A spiritual advisor
- Family members or friends

assume responsibility for poor choices, and asking for help. Getting the right help is all-important.

The old adage “misery loves company” is true, and often, the most difficult decision is to leave behind addicted friends. Coping with temptations requires a strong support network and continual development of coping skills and resilience.

A NEW LIFE

Substance abuse can tear families, friendships and relationships apart, and cause irreparable damage. Escalation in fighting and arguments, lying to cover up absences or money problems, communication problems, and domestic confusion or

violence are all potential side effects of addiction.

Seeking professional help can increase the odds of recovery. The National Guard’s Prevention, Treatment and Outreach (PTO) program provides training, education and outreach to Guard members to prevent substance abuse. It also provides links to treatment services and community-based resources, and offers support to families.

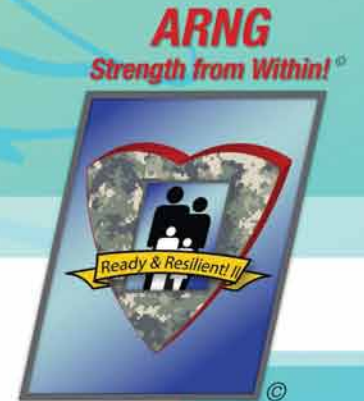
PTO focuses on the “humanistic mission” and strives to identify high-risk target groups, focus on multiple prevention strategies and resources, and provide support and guidance through assistance pathways. The PTO initiative is currently being implemented in 28 states and territories.

Self-forgiveness is key to recovery. It allows the person to move on and build a new life. **GX**



For more info, go to DecadeOfHealth.com/thebigfive.

When making a lifestyle change Small Steps...



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**Always Ready, Always There...
Always Healthy.**



A Soldier assigned with the 744th Transportation Company, 54th Troop Command, New Hampshire Army National Guard, fires an M249 machine gun during a weapons qualification range in Fort Pickett, VA, on Feb. 16, 2007.

NEW HAMPSHIRE
ARMY NATIONAL GUARD



LIVE FREE OR DIE

Having grown up in New Hampshire and still calling it home, I'm glad to share with you the long legacy of the New Hampshire Army National Guard. *By Jason Hall*

COURTESY OF SSG JAMES H. CHRISTOPHER III

Stretching back to 1623, the roots of the New Hampshire Guard began when settlers from the colony of Massachusetts moved north and formed a militia in their new settlement at the mouth of the Piscataqua River, modern-day Portsmouth, NH. In nearby New Castle, the colonial militia built an earthwork fort in 1631 to protect the settlers. This first defensive position was eventually replaced by a masonry fort named Fort William and Mary, which contained several brass cannons.

During the early days of the new colony, the British settlers maintained friendly relations with the indigenous Native American tribes. However, due to mistreatment of the tribes by the British, relations began to sour and completely dissolved in 1675 with the attack at Oyster River, modern-day Durham, NH. During the raid, a small band of Native Americans attacked the village, burning homes and slaughtering men, women and children. They took captive those individuals who were unscathed.

Four years after the massacre, New Hampshire was granted its own charter and was no longer part of the colony of Massachusetts. The new government of New Hampshire quickly formed a regulated colonial militia, requiring all men ages 16 to 60 to report to monthly musters. Thus marks the official beginning of what would become the New Hampshire Army National Guard.

THE FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR

As British settlements spread, England's longtime rival, France, also had colonies in North America. It was only a matter of time until the two world powers clashed for control of the continent.

In 1754, the tense situation erupted into an open conflict that would come to be known as the French and Indian War. Originally begun over border disputes between Great Britain and France, the conflict also was a continuation of the fighting between the British colonists and certain Native American tribes, with some tribes supporting the colonists. The New Hampshire militia served in the British Army during the duration of the war and participated in several major campaigns, including one of the greatest British victories of the war, the capture of the fortified city of Louisburg in June 1758.

The war with France produced several military leaders from New Hampshire, one of the most notable of which was Major Robert Rogers, of the First British Ranger Company. Taking lessons from Native American warriors, Rogers' Rangers embarked on activities including "scouting, tracking, destruction of



> **Left:** The 14th president of the United States, Franklin Pierce is the only president who was from New Hampshire.

> **Right:** A true frontiersman, Robert Rogers fought in both the French and Indian War and the Revolutionary War, using guerilla tactics to defeat his enemies.

“DEATH IS NOT THE WORST OF EVILS.”

>> John Stark, in a letter to the attendees commemorating the Battle of Saratoga



property ... to keep the enemy away from the settled areas.”

The Rangers proved to be a great asset to the British Army by providing valuable reconnaissance and acting as a fast strike force. After the war, Rogers published his “Rangers Rules,” which is regarded as the first field manual for irregular warfare and Special Forces. The legacy of Rogers and his New Hampshire men lives on today in the United States Army Rangers, who draw their name from Rogers’ Rangers.

SHOT HEARD ‘ROUND THE WORLD

Following the French and Indian War, relations between the American colonies and England began to deteriorate as the mother country imposed ever-increasing taxes on her subjects in North America to pay for the war.

The first overt act against the king occurred on Dec. 14, 1774, when a group of approximately 400 militiamen, under the command of Captain Thomas Pickering, attacked the British garrison at Fort William and Mary in Portsmouth, NH. The British defenders numbered a mere six men, and when fired upon by the mob of angry colonists, they were forced to surrender the fort. The militiamen confiscated over 100 barrels of gunpowder and dispersed it to locations throughout New England, including the town of Concord, MA.

Four months later, on April 19, 1775, British Army Regulars were on a routine raid to Concord to recapture gunpowder and arms taken by the colonists, including that which had been taken from Fort William and Mary. However, the day turned out to be anything but routine when colonial militiamen formed on

the green in Lexington in an attempt to prevent the British from making it to Concord. The “shot heard ‘round the world” was fired that day, though it can be argued that it had actually been fired by New Hampshire militiamen four months earlier at Fort William and Mary.

Lexington and Concord acted as a spark that ignited the American Revolution.

In the days immediately following this first clash, colonial militiamen streamed into the neighborhoods surrounding Boston, laying siege to the British forces garrisoned in the city. The militiamen who left their homes in New Hampshire to join their fellow countrymen were led by John Stark, the newly appointed colonel of the New Hampshire Brigade.

Stark had previously served during the French and Indian War as a lieutenant in Rogers’ Rangers. Legend has it that, at the age of 24, Stark was kidnapped by an Abenaki raiding party and forced to run a gauntlet “between hatchet-swinging braves.” Instead of just taking the blows, Stark picked up a stick and began hitting back. The Abenakis were so impressed by his bravery that they adopted him and taught him their language and fighting skills. These skills and experiences would serve him well in both the French and Indian War, and the Revolution.

“DEATH IS NOT THE WORST OF EVILS”

Gunpowder that had been taken from Fort William and Mary in 1774 would be used in 1775 at the Battle of Bunker Hill, the first major engagement between the colonial forces and British Army.

On June 17, 1775, Stark’s New Hampshire Brigade of approximately 1,400 officers and men were posted behind stone and rail fences along Breed’s Hill, in Charlestown, MA, just across the water from Boston. Approaching them were hundreds of British soldiers who were intent on rolling over Stark’s men and mounting the hill in order to capture an earthwork fort that the colonists had built during the previous night.

The 1st and 3rd New Hampshire Regiments held their ground and within minutes of the attack had inflicted over 100 casualties on the enemy. Though the British would regroup three times and eventually be victorious that day, the world had seen that these ragtag colonists were able to stand toe-to-toe with the most powerful army in the world at that time.

Stark resigned from the army due to the Continental Congress refusing to promote him to the rank of brigadier general. Realizing that Stark’s expertise and experience were critical to the war effort, the legislature of New

Hampshire made Stark brigadier general of the New Hampshire militia.

On Aug. 16, 1777, Brigadier General Stark led his New Hampshire men, along with militiamen from Vermont and western Massachusetts, to another victory over the British forces. At the Battle of Bennington in Vermont, Stark’s command thwarted the efforts of British General Johnny Burgoyne and decimated nearly one-tenth of the enemy.

The victory at Bennington helped lead to the later American victory at the Battle of Saratoga, which is considered the turning point of the war that helped convince France to come to the aid of the Americans. In 1808, well after the end of the American Revolution, John Stark was invited to attend a commemoration of the battle. Though he was unable to attend, the 81-year-old Stark sent a letter that contained a toast that has become world-famous. In the toast, Stark stated, “Live free or die. Death is not the worst of evils.” Stark’s words live on today in the state motto of New Hampshire, “Live Free or Die.”

In 1812, tensions between the United States and England generated another war. During the War of 1812, which lasted from 1812 to 1815, New Hampshire provided militiamen who proved their mettle on the battlefield. One such native son was Captain James Miller. Miller commanded an artillery battery in the New Hampshire state militia when he was noticed by Regular Army officers, who recognized his superior leadership skills. Miller was promoted to lieutenant colonel and transferred to the Regular Army’s 21st United States Infantry.

On July 25, 1814, Miller found himself in the middle of the Battle of Lundy’s Lane, present-day Niagara Falls, Ontario, Canada. One of the bloodiest battles of the war, Lundy’s Lane remains the bloodiest battle ever fought on Canadian soil. During the battle, British artillery was wreaking havoc on the American lines. When ordered to capture the British guns, Miller replied, “I’ll try, Sir.” Miller led his men within a few yards of the enemy and fired a surprise volley on the British gunners, which killed most of the enemy. Miller immediately led a bayonet charge, which drove off the remaining British soldiers.

The 21st Regiment was later combined with other Regular Army regiments to form the modern-day 5th Infantry Regiment, U.S. Army. Though not a National Guard unit, this Regular Army regiment’s motto comes from the words spoken by New Hampshire militia Lieutenant Colonel James Miller, “I’ll Try, Sir.”

THE MEXICAN-AMERICAN WAR

The growth of the United States began to increase dramatically following the War of 1812.

After the annexation of Texas in 1845, the relations between the governments of Mexico and the United States began to sour. Open conflict was declared in 1846 and lasted until 1848.

It was during the Mexican-American War that a relatively unknown individual from New Hampshire would lay the groundwork to seek the highest elected position in the land. Franklin Pierce was a lawyer at the outbreak of the war, and he quickly enlisted in the New Hampshire militia. Like James Miller before him, Pierce was transferred to the Regular Army, where he quickly rose to the rank of brigadier general.

During a battle against the Mexican forces, Pierce ordered a massive artillery barrage against massed Mexican soldiers. Though completely out of range, with none of the cannonballs coming close to the enemy, the audacious show of artillery strength caused the Mexican soldiers to flee from their position. Just four years after the end of the war, Franklin Pierce was elected president of the United States, the only person from New Hampshire yet to do so.

THE CIVIL WAR

President Pierce, and the president after him, James Buchanan, tried in vain to keep their young country from splitting itself apart at the seam. With the election of President Abraham Lincoln, Southern states began to secede. In April

1861, with the bombardment of Fort Sumter in Charleston, SC, the American Civil War began.

Lincoln immediately called for volunteers to put down the rebellion, and New Hampshire was one of the first states to have militiamen enter the fray. Though the number of units raised pales in comparison to other states, New Hampshire provided more Soldiers per capita than any other state during the Civil War. In all, 17 infantry regiments, one cavalry regiment, one heavy artillery regiment, one light artillery regiment, and two independent companies of sharpshooters served in the war.

The 2nd, 5th and 12th New Hampshire (NH) Infantry Regiments fought gallantly during the Battle of Gettysburg. The 5th NH was part of 1st Brigade, 1st Division, Second Corps. The brigade commander, Colonel Edward E. Cross, had been the former commander of the 5th NH during the battles of Antietam and Fredericksburg. At Gettysburg on July 2, the second day of the battle, Cross led his men into the “Wheatfield” to counter the massive Confederate attack on the Union Army’s left flank. In less than three hours of desperate fighting, the 177 men of the 5th New Hampshire lost 86 officers and men. Among them was their beloved commander, Colonel Cross, struck in the stomach by a bullet. Cross was carried to a field hospital behind the lines to await the inevitable. Recalling the city of Concord, the state capital of New Hampshire, Cross uttered these words to his men just before he died a few minutes past midnight on July 3:

A 155 mm howitzer of New Hampshire’s 172nd Field Artillery Battalion fires from under a camouflage net among the hedgerows of Normandy, France, shortly after the D-Day invasion in June 1944.



COURTESY OF NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

COURTESY OF THE LIBRARY OF CONGRESS

“I wished that I would live to see the arriving in Concord on Aug. 3, rebellion suppressed and peace restored ... I think the boys will miss me.”

Unfortunately, Cross’ dying wish that the war would be over by August 3 did not come true. The war dragged on for another two years, and by the time it was over, the 5th New Hampshire Infantry Regiment held the unwanted distinction of having lost more men over the course of the war than any other Union infantry regiment.

WORLD POWER ON THE RISE

In the years following the Civil War, the men of the New Hampshire state militia enjoyed a most welcome time of peace. The peace was interrupted in 1898 by the Spanish-American War, which saw New Hampshire Soldiers deployed to serve their country once again.

As the 19th century turned into the 20th, the United States was poised to become a far greater international power than had ever been imagined. WWI, then known as The Great War, began in 1914. However, the United States hoped to stay out of this war and heed George Washington’s advice, given over 100 years earlier, to avoid any “foreign entanglements.” But it would be a threat from the country’s neighbor to the south that would entangle the United States. In 1916, the bandit Pancho Villa was attacking American towns all along the border with Mexico. The entire

**“I WISHED THAT I WOULD LIVE TO SEE ...
REBELLION SUPPRESSED
AND PEACE RESTORED ... ”** >> COL Edward E. Cross



National Guard of the United States was mobilized to counter this insurgency. The men of the newly designated New Hampshire National Guard were sent to Laredo, TX, to guard the border. This deployment provided valuable training and experience to the Soldiers that would prove critical following the United States’ entry into WWI.

New Hampshire joined the National Guards of Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, Maine and Vermont to form the 26th Infantry Division. Known as the “Yankee Division,” the 26th fought in many of the major American campaigns of the war, resulting in 22 Soldiers from New Hampshire receiving the Distinguished Service Cross. Twenty-two-year-old Private First Class George Dilboy would posthumously receive the nation’s highest award, the Medal of Honor. Dilboy and his family had immigrated to the United States from Greece in 1908 and settled in Keene, NH. During the Battle of Belleau

Wood, Dilboy and the rest of the 26th Division were locked in fierce combat with entrenched German forces. On July 18, 1918, Dilboy single-handedly attacked three German machine gun positions, and continued firing on the enemy despite being mortally wounded. Believed to be the first Greek-American to be awarded the Medal of Honor, Private Dilboy’s citation reads:

“After his platoon had gained its objective along a railroad embankment, Pfc. Dilboy, accompanying his platoon leader to reconnoiter the ground beyond, was suddenly fired upon by an enemy machine gun from 100 yards. From a standing position on the railroad track, fully exposed to view, he opened fire at once, but failing to silence the gun, rushed forward with his bayonet fixed, through a wheat field toward the gun emplacement, falling within 25 yards of the gun. With undaunted courage he continued to fire into the emplacement from a prone position, eliminating two of the enemy and dispersing the rest of the crew.”

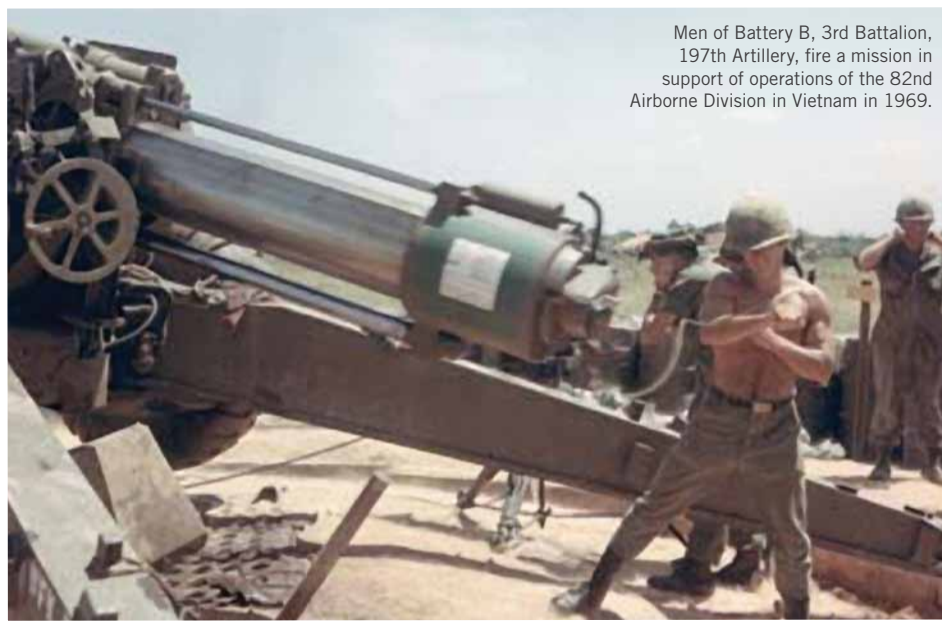
The commander of all American forces in France, General John Pershing, stated that George Dilboy was “one of the 10 greatest heroes of [WWI].”

WWII

After the war, the New Hampshire National Guard went through a major reorganization, with the infantry units restructured as two separate artillery units, the 172nd Field Artillery and the 197th Coast Artillery.

With the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, HI, on Dec. 7, 1941, the 197th Coast Artillery was deployed to Australia in March 1942, to provide anti-aircraft artillery support for the harbor of Fremantle. The men of the 197th surprised both Army and Navy commanders when they were able to repair a U.S. submarine that had been damaged during combat. Unknown to the Navy officers at that time was that several men of the 197th had worked at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, in Portsmouth, NH, and had actually helped to build the

Men of Battery B, 3rd Battalion, 197th Artillery, fire a mission in support of operations of the 82nd Airborne Division in Vietnam in 1969.



UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters from the 54th Troop Command, New Hampshire Army National Guard, transport Humvees by sling load Feb. 16, 2007, at Blackstone Army Airfield in Fort Pickett, VA, during the joint service exercise Operation Granite Triangle.

COURTESY OF CPL JOSHUA BALOG



SFC Allen Corey, Company C, 3/172nd Infantry, leads his platoon during a training Air Assault mission at Fort Pickett, VA, during annual training Feb. 20, 2007.

COURTESY OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE NATIONAL GUARD

submarine they were repairing. Later, the 197th would join in General Douglas MacArthur's push through New Guinea and the recapture of the Philippines from the Japanese.

The 172nd Field Artillery gained practical training experience in the sand dunes of Camp Blanding, FL, prior to deploying to France. The skills obtained in Florida proved invaluable when the 172nd landed at Utah Beach one week after D-Day. The 172nd fought for 10 months, pushing the German forces out of France, across Belgium and into Germany, and firing over 97,000 rounds in combat.

The post-WWII life of a New Hampshire Guard member involved a new type of conflict—the Cold War. However, there were times when the Cold War flared up and conflicts ensued. Though no New Hampshire Guard units were mobilized or deployed for the Korean War, many New Hampshire Guard Soldiers volunteered to join Regular Army units and fought in Korea. Guard units would not be deployed as a whole until the Vietnam War.

JUNGLE BATTERY IN VIETNAM

Many may not realize that there were National Guard units mobilized and deployed to Vietnam to serve in combat roles.

The first National Guard combat unit sent to Vietnam was New Hampshire's 3rd Battalion, 197th Field Artillery, with members from Manchester, Nashua, Portsmouth, Franklin, Laconia and Somersworth. On September 20, 1968, over 500 Guard Soldiers of the 3/197th, along with their 155 mm howitzers, arrived in Vietnam and were assigned to the 23rd Artillery Group. Three 155 mm howitzers, and their gun crews, from B Battery, 3/197th, were combined with three from the Regular Army's A Battery, 2/13th Field Artillery, to form D Battery, 2/13th Field Artillery. Battery D would become known as the famous "Jungle Battery," whose main mission was to provide fire support for Special Forces units.

During their year of combat service in Vietnam, the Soldiers of the 3/197th fired over 137,000 rounds of ammunition, earned 28 Purple Hearts and lost nine men. Of those killed in action, five died in a mortar attack on Aug. 26, 1969, only a few days before the unit was to return home to New Hampshire. The five men, all from the city of Manchester, were Sergeant First Class Richard P. Raymond, Staff Sergeant Richard E. Genest, Sergeant Gaetan J. Beaudoin, Sergeant Guy A.

Blanchette and Sergeant Roger E. Robichaud.

In addition to combat service, like all state National Guards, the New Hampshire Guard has provided service to the citizens of New Hampshire during times of civil unrest and natural disasters. During countless blizzards, floods, forest fires, and hiking and mountain climbing accidents, they've provided critical search and rescue, first aid, and medevac services. They continue to stand ready to answer the call to enter into harm's way, home and abroad, which included service in Louisiana in 2005 in response to the damage caused by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

Overseas deployments would once again come to New Hampshire Soldiers during

lization for Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom represented the largest New Hampshire Guard call-up since WWII. The men and women of the New Hampshire Guard have been engaged in missions in Afghanistan and Iraq including infantry and security actions, providing medical care, and building schools for local children.

In November 2009, New Hampshire's Company C, 3/238th Aviation Regiment (medevac), arrived in Iraq. Using their helicopters to evacuate patients to medical facilities, the men and women of Company C have saved the lives of not only American Service Members, but also Iraqi civilians. In January 2010, Specialist Aaron DeAngelis, a crew

PRIVATE FIRST CLASS GEORGE DILBOY: "ONE OF THE 10 GREATEST HEROES OF [WWI]."



the 1990s, starting with Operation Desert Storm in 1991. In order to keep the rapidly advancing ground troops supplied, the 744th Transportation Company hauled hundreds of tons of ammunition and food over Main Supply Route Dodge, known as the "Killer Highway," into Kuwait and Iraq, earning them a Meritorious Unit Commendation.

From December 1995 to August 1996, New Hampshire's 114th Public Affairs Detachment supported Operation Joint Endeavor in Bosnia. Participating in the National Guard State Partnership program, members of the New Hampshire Guard were sent to Belize to assist The Belize Defense Force in setting up a new officer candidate program.

9/11

The beginning of the 21st century saw the worst terrorist attack on American soil. Immediately following the 9/11 attacks, New Hampshire Soldiers participated in Operation Noble Eagle by providing a visible force of security at several municipal locations, including Manchester Airport and the port of Portsmouth. The subsequent mobi-

chief in the unit, stated, "We are needed here. Last month we helped three Iraqis in a car accident." He further pointed out that "They would have died if we weren't here. There's no air ambulance in Iraq, it's just us."

Team leader Captain Jay Richards is optimistic about the future for Iraq, noting, "My first tour to Iraq was busier than this one—more [improvised explosive device] wounds and gunshot wounds. As the nation has gotten more stable, the injuries are less severe and more routine. With the drawdown, we're doing less, so there aren't as many casualties. On top of that, the Iraqis are doing more to advance the security, making it safer overall."

The men and women of the New Hampshire National Guard continue to provide service to their state and nation, as they have for over 300 years. The spirit and service of the members of the New Hampshire Army National Guard are best expressed by Sergeant Steve Couture when speaking of his deployment to Iraq as part of 3/238th Aviation Regiment:

"This mission's great, I'm here to get people help. It's good when you can sit back and know that you did your job and helped." **GX**

Back to Basic

THE TRANSFORMATION FROM CIVILIAN TO SOLDIER

GX Enters the Gunfighter Phase of Basic Training

Part 2 of 4: Fort Benning, GA

Story and photos by Clint Wood

IN THE LAST ISSUE OF **GX**, future Army National Guard Soldiers learned about attending Army Basic Training (BT) at Fort Leonard Wood, MO, during a Military Police Corps field training exercise. This was the opener of a four-part series covering training at four BT sites—Fort Leonard Wood, MO; Fort Benning, GA; Fort Jackson, SC; and Fort Sill, OK.

This second part of the series is taken from two grueling days spent at Fort Benning in July, where the mercury flirted with triple digits one day and hit it the next. Fort Benning, which started conducting Basic Training during WWII, is known as the “Home of the Infantry.”

The 182,000-acre base is the home of hooah infantry units, including the U.S. Infantry School, Ranger Training Brigade, Airborne School and Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation. Famous military officers like

generals Dwight D. Eisenhower, George S. Patton Jr. and Colin Powell have trained here.

There are two BT brigades—the Infantry Training Brigade (ITB) and Basic Combat Training Brigade (BCTB). The 14-week ITB includes both a 10-week Basic Training and infantry Advanced Individual Training (AIT). The 10-week BCTB trains Soldiers whose military occupational specialty is not 11B, or infantryman. Once these Soldiers graduate BT, they attend AIT at other duty stations.

In the two days of coverage, **GX** participated in several training exercises. These included the Eagle Confidence Tower complex and familiarization firing of the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and M240B Machine Gun. We also were there when the Soldiers first arrived at the 30th Adjutant General Reception Center and on the morning they were picked up by their permanent drill sergeants.

WELCOME TO THE ARMY

Buses crammed full of future Soldiers pulled up to the new 30th Adjutant General Battalion Reception building on Sand Hill at sunset. Drill sergeant Staff Sergeant Josh Apel boarded one of the buses.

“All right, men, I would like to be the first to congratulate you on your decision to join the United States Army,” said Apel. “As soon as I say ‘go,’ I want you to check the overhead bins for trash. Get off the bus, get your bags and form up on the left side of the building. Go.”

As the Soldiers begin retrieving their bags and forming up, Apel and his fellow drill sergeants began instructing them to “hurry up.”

Once they formed up, they walked single-file into the building and sat down on the benches provided. They received a briefing.

In the next few days, they received their first haircut, underwent medical and dental checkups, and were issued their first set of Army Combat Uniforms (ACUs).

Private Nathan Gray of Pennsylvania conceded he was nervous during the opening minutes of this reception, but the Guard’s Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP) prepared him.

“I’m excited, more than anything,” said Gray. “It’s going to be fun.”

Private James Loconto of Oregon, 23, wasn’t bothered by the “hurry-up” mind-set.

“I was the first one over there,” he noted. “I grabbed my bag and ran. I figured I should get used to it.” Loconto chose infantry because of his love for shooting, hunting and spending time outdoors.

For more information on Basic Training, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/BenningBCT

Drill sergeant James McWilliams said he and his fellow reception drill sergeants do not instill discipline in these Soldiers the same way as their permanent drill sergeants will.

FEEDING THE BEAST

During the M249 and M240B familiarization firing in the prone position, Soldiers learned how to feed 100 rounds into each weapon.

Private First Class Nicholas Miller of Indiana said feeding the weapons was easy. He said he had to ensure that he kept his hand underneath the ammunition belt and held it up off the dirt.

As far as shooting these fully automatic weapons six to nine rounds at a time, he said it was “amazing and crazy.”

Private Christopher Williams of South Carolina said shooting both of these weapons was an adrenaline rush. He also noted that having firepower like this would neutralize several insurgents at one time.

Private Samuel Metz of Minnesota said he was excited to feel the power of both weapons.

DON'T LOOK DOWN

A ropes course on the Eagle Confidence Tower challenged even the most experienced “height junkie.” The complex included a 90-foot rappel tower.

Private Carlos Diaz of Pennsylvania, who has bungee jumped and is a self-confessed thrill-seeker, said the commando crawl of the ropes course was harder than he expected. He and his fellow Soldiers had only been in Basic Training for a week.

More than 20 feet in the air, Soldiers had to lie prone on top of a sloping rope with one leg hanging on the rope and the other dangling off it.

“You’re 20 feet in the air and you look down,” said Diaz as sweat rolled down his face. “It takes a lot of strength and guts and confidence to do something like this. I’m very proud of all these Soldiers completing this, and I’m proud of myself, too.”

Private Stephen Denbraver of California admitted he was scared of heights but was able to build up a lot of speed in the commando crawl.

“When I was doing it, it felt like I was flying right down [the rope],” he said.

Unfortunately, he may have been going too fast. He had to turn over to avoid falling onto the safety net.

But he still understands the concept of this course. “I can tell why they make us do these courses,” he said. “It builds confidence. And that’s what we need in battle.”

Drill sergeant Jason Buchanan, who has been deployed twice to Iraq, said these challenges are meant to build confidence in Soldiers.

“I would much rather take a Soldier into combat who has confidence in his equipment and in his abilities to complete a task, than one who doesn’t have that confidence,” he said matter-of-factly. “Once they understand that they can complete these tasks, that confidence is boosted through the

roof. This is where you find out who that person really is.”

THE PICKUP

A company of more than 100 Soldiers stood in formation in a breezeway near the former reception battalion building on a bright, sunny Friday morning.

As a sergeant read off the Soldiers’ roster numbers, they sounded off with their last names and immediately sat down on their duffel bags. After everyone was accounted for, they were asked several questions, including whether they were issued four sets of ACUs and cleared by medical and dental.

They sounded off each time with “Yes, sergeant,” which echoed between the walls.

After it was confirmed that they had several items, including their identification cards, earplugs and mouth guard, their drill sergeants took charge.

“You better start sounding off, men,” bellowed a very stern

drill sergeant. “You sound like garbage. Get on your feet. Secure your bags.”

Carrying their duffel bags, the Soldiers walked to the area where buses were waiting to take them to their billets.

Private Antonio Mendoza of California said he was ready to start this phase of Basic Training. Private Jacob Heid of Illinois also said he was ready to “get it done.”

Specialist Chris Trahan, 39, of Colorado said it best.

“I am ready to go to Basic Training today and get my butt kicked,” Trahan said. “It’s going to be hard, but it’s going to be really good, and I’m looking forward to graduating from Basic Training and AIT in October.”

And once again, like hundreds of thousands of Soldiers before him, Trahan will fulfill the mission of Fort Benning: to produce trained Soldiers and adaptive leaders imbued with the Warrior Ethos. **GX**



A Soldier fires an M4 carbine during the Battle, March and Shoot phase of Basic Training at Fort Benning, GA, in July 2010.

Soldiers at Airborne School load a C-130 Hercules in preparation for a live jump at Fort Benning, GA.



School of Hard Knocks

Fort Benning Trains Guard's Finest

By Christian Anderson

FORT BENNING. It's the home of the Infantry. It's where Soldiers earn their Airborne wings and Ranger tabs. But above all that, it's where the Army National Guard forges Soldiers into Warriors. It's where the Guard puts its best to the test. Much training is going on at Fort Benning at any given time of the day. Here is a look at several schools at Benning and what they do.

AIRBORNE SCHOOL
After WWII, Airborne School became a permanent fixture at Fort Benning, with thousands of Guard Soldiers earning their jump wings there over the past sixty-plus years. The school, currently operated by 1st Battalion (Airborne), 507th Infantry, is open to both genders and all branches of service. In this all-volunteer course, Soldiers spend three weeks learning everything

they need to know about jumping out of a perfectly good airplane. The training is separated into three phases (ground, tower and jump week), and wraps up with five jumps—one at night—to prove the Soldiers are proficient in airborne operations. Upon graduation, Soldiers receive the coveted Basic Parachutist Badge, more commonly referred to as Jump Wings.

COURTESY OF U.S. ARMY

BASIC COMBAT TRAINING (BCT)
This is where the real fun begins for recruits in the Army National Guard. After a fresh haircut and some instruction from their drill sergeants, Soldiers earn their keep in the Guard under the hot sun and oppressive humidity at Fort Benning. Recruits from a handful of military occupational specialties come to Fort Benning to become Soldiers, but Benning is most

COURTESY OF SSG JIM GREENHILL

widely known for creating infantry Soldiers. As of recently, infantry Soldiers find themselves in a course called Onew Station Unit Training, where Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training are combined for a 14-week course.

RANGER SCHOOL

The first phase of Ranger School is held at Fort Benning, where Ranger candidates are tested for their physical fitness and mental toughness. During the "crawl phase," or Benning phase, Soldiers must pass a Ranger Physical Fitness Test (RPFT), complete night and day land navigation, demonstrate their demolitions and combatives skills, and tackle a 12-mile ruck march. If they make it that far, they perform Squad Combat Operations Maneuvers, obstacle courses and more land navigation exercises. After graduating from the Benning phase, Soldiers complete two more phases: mountain and Florida.

IN AIRBORNE SCHOOL, SOLDIERS SPEND THREE WEEKS LEARNING EVERYTHING THEY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT JUMPING OUT OF A PERFECTLY GOOD AIRPLANE.

SNIPER SCHOOL

After relocating around the country for almost 40 years, the Army Sniper School found its home at Fort Benning in 1987. Soldiers learn stalking, intelligence, tactics and marksmanship, and how to navigate a battlefield. Soldiers learn these techniques from battle-tested snipers, and put their newly acquired skills to use under the supervision of their instructors. The Sniper School holds many national and international competitions, and sets the standard for marksmanship and competitive shooting.

WARRIOR TRAINING CENTER

The Warrior Training Center (WTC), run by the Army National Guard, has become an integral school at Fort Benning. Training Soldiers in critical function and special skills, including pre-Ranger, air assault, pathfinder, pre-master gunner and combatives skills, the WTC provides not only the National Guard, but also the U.S. Army and Army Reserve, with highly skilled and qualified personnel ready for any mission. **GX**



SSG Jacob Stimson demonstrates the correct technique for employing an M18A1 Claymore mine to competitors in the 2007 Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year Competition at the Army National Guard Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, GA, on Aug. 2, 2007. Stimson is an instructor in the center's Pre-Ranger Course.

SAVING THE COAST

Louisiana Soldiers Take On Deepwater Disaster

Story and photos by Clint Wood

What better way to tell the story of the Louisiana Army National Guard's response to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, than going there and spending time with the Soldiers?

That's what GX did for two hot and muggy days in the middle of May. We interviewed a young Soldier driving a 5-ton dump truck down the beach, two Soldiers erecting Hesco baskets and two Soldiers building a shoreline protection system.

These missions were in response to the April 20 explosion and fire on the drilling rig Deepwater Horizon. The blast killed 11 workers and sent massive quantities of oil pouring into the Gulf of Mexico.

Specialist Chadwick Oliver said, "We're almost like superheroes. Not only are we helping our state out, but we're saving the environment."

A LONG TWO MILES

For 20-year-old Private First Class Nicholas Gautreau, driving a 5-ton dump truck along the Elmer's Island shoreline was a new experience. He was delivering sand to build a land bridge barrier. Filling a several-hundred-foot gap on the island would hopefully keep the oil-tainted water from reaching wetlands crucial to Louisiana's fishing industry.

The construction of this barrier made national news and brought words of confidence from Louisiana Gov. Bobby Jindal during a press conference.

Gautreau's task—driving two miles round trip for seven to eight hours a day—was not easy. The cab was hot and noisy, and the shoreline was by no means smooth. There was also a continuous banging of the truck's unlatched windshield against the cab's frame.

But that didn't matter to Gautreau, who joined the Guard at age 18. He was proud of his mission. "I joined the military to help out my country



SPC Roy Walker fills the top tube of a water diversion system, called a Tiger Dam, on Southwest Pass, as part of the Army National Guard's oil cleanup efforts along the Gulf Coast.



A Louisiana Army National Guard Soldier attaches sandbags to a UH-60 Black Hawk during an airlift mission near Venice, LA.



“WE ALL HANG IN THERE TOGETHER AND GET THE JOB DONE.”

>> PVT Richard Brignac

and my state. Anything I can do to help, I want to do.”

After Gautreau dropped off a load of sand, Specialist Jeremy Lanclos would use his bulldozer to pack it into place.

Lanclos, a lawn-care technician and Citizen-Soldier for the last four years, has friends who own camps on Grand Isle. “I feel like we are here for a good purpose,” he said.

A GREEN BASKET TASK

The last time Private Gary Rodriguez saw the beaches of Port Fourchon was through the windshield of his semi-truck. For more than 11 years, he was among the 1,000 truckers delivering oil field equipment to and from this port, which currently services over 90 percent of the Gulf of Mexico’s deepwater oil production.

In the late afternoon’s sweltering heat, Rodriguez and several other Soldiers were taking a break from erecting Hesco Concertainer units. In four days, they’d erected a 2-mile stretch of the green baskets, which hold back oil-tainted water from Bay Champagne. Bay Champagne, one of 1,300 lakes in Louisiana, is critical to the fishing industry.

The units are nothing more than linked baskets filled with sand. Almost every base in Iraq and Afghanistan uses them as protective barriers from small arms and indirect fire. They were originally designed for uses on beaches and marshes for erosion and flood control.

Rodriguez said putting these baskets together was like working with an erector set—a children’s construction toy for building items using metal beams, screws and bolts.

“You just grab a piece and it unfolds like a towel,” he described. “Then you secure it down to the next one and keep on going.”

Private Richard Brignac explained that two Soldiers at a time carried each 120-pound basket.

“It’s a good process, once you get up to six guys on one mission,” he explained. He said his team was averaging less than three minutes to erect a unit.

“We all hang in there together and get the job done,” noted Brignac, whose relatives own a fishing resort nearby. This area is known as the tuna fishing capital of the world.

Brignac has been visiting this area since he was five. “I know I’m doing good,” he said. “We are allowing people to come there and fish.”

THE TIGER DAM

Elsewhere, several Soldiers were being airlifted daily on UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters for a mission near Southwest Pass near Venice, LA.

These Soldiers were from the 1st Battalion of the 244th Aviation Regiment, based in Hammond. The helicopters were from this unit.

The Pass, the main shipping channel in the Mississippi River Delta since 1853, was in a very remote locale. This meant the Soldiers’ workdays were dependent on flight schedules and the weather. The ride to the Pass took about 10 minutes. On this day, the winds were powerful, causing the doors to bang against the frame.

After landing, the Soldiers sprinted from the helicopters to avoid being blasted by the sand from the rotor wash. Their mission was to build a several-mile-long shoreline protection system—known as the Tiger Dam water diversion system. The dam was a second line of defense to the boom line and protected natural marshlands from the oil spill. Their only shelter from the hot sun was a small canopy.

Tiger Dam systems are interlocking rubber bladders filled with water. They create a continuous barrier.

Building these systems is a four-step process. A support-strap crew placed straps on the beach every five feet; a layout crew placed orange tubing in two rows on top of the straps; and a pump crew used a gas-powered water pump to pump water out of the Gulf of Mexico to inflate the tubes. A safety screen was used to avoid fish or crustaceans from being sucked into the pump.

Specialist Roy Walker, a combat engineer, took his task in building this system seriously. With the hose that was connected to the pump slung over his shoulder like a firefighter, he sprinted down the beach in hip waders and a life jacket to fill one of the top tubes. The top tube is a special containment unit that is first pumped with water, then emptied after a few minutes and prepared to be filled with oil and muddy debris that may wash up against the dam.

When asked about his hasty approach to his task, Walker replied that he knew his fellow Soldiers were holding the tube, waiting for him to fill it. “I would hate to be sitting there holding it, waiting for someone who’s lollygagging,” he pointed out.

When asked how he feels knowing this was a historic mission, he responded, “I feel real good in the sense that I’m here, getting to help out not just my state, but my country.”

The most physically demanding task, mainly reserved for the most-fit Soldiers, was drilling four-foot anchors into the beach, five feet apart. Once this was done, straps were tied to them, securing all bladders into place. The anchors

Commanding Task

Captain Jeffrey Giering was not only overseeing the 928th Sapper Company, but two other engineer companies as well. The operation was part of the Hesco Concertainer mission at Port Fourchon, LA—Louisiana’s southern-most port.

Linked-basket units, each comprised of five Hesco baskets, were used to hold back oil-tainted water from Bay Champagne. This body of water—one of Louisiana’s 1,300 lakes—is critical to the fishing industry.

Giering said the companies had another mission—a sling-loading operation.

“In the past three days, we put together over 1,000 units of Hescos, which are 15-foot sections,” he described. “We’re in the process of filling those, and we’re waiting for about 300 more units so we can finish.

“The concept is to help mimic the natural sand dunes as best we can,” he continued.

prevented the system from shifting when the currents came in.

A team of three Soldiers undertook this task. One Soldier held onto the auger's two handles to ensure the anchor was drilled straight into the beach. The other two held onto bars on each side of the auger.

Oliver, a heavy equipment operator for the last four years, said the auger had a lot of torque. "The easy way to do it is to use your body weight. But, even [with that], you still have to muscle it," he said.

Two teams did this mission daily for about four weeks. They averaged drilling 80 anchors a day.

WORDS FROM THE WISE

When I asked Oliver how he stayed motivated, he said by talking with Soldiers who have been deployed overseas. "They really know how to talk to younger Soldiers and keep our minds set on the mission," he explained.

Specialist Jacob Brister, a concrete and asphalt equipment operator, knows how important this mission is.

"This is our state," he said. "It's where we live. It feels good to be able to help out."

For Private Justin Morris, who graduated from Engineer Advanced Individual Training in February 2010, this mission meant standing under a hovering Black Hawk for a few seconds as the helicopter's rotor wash kicked up debris, including grass and rocks.

Morris, who was wearing a Kevlar helmet, was among Soldiers attaching sandbags, via cable, to the helicopter near Buras, LA. The sandbags weighed up to 4,000 pounds. He'd executed 40 of these missions, and he said the task was easy—except for the rocks and grass hitting him in the face. "You get a breeze from the chopper," he said.

The helicopters dropped the sandbags into one of the eight gaps on Pelican Island in coastal Plaquemines Parish, LA. More than 3,300 sandbags were delivered.

"The idea is, Mother Nature gave us these barrier islands, which are the best protection against tidal surges and hurricanes, and our first line of defense against this oil spill," said Jindal. "What we're trying to do is refortify them."

"I can tell my kids or my grandkids that I was part of the group that helped save the marshlands and the environment," Brister said. "Somebody has to get out there and do it." **GX**

Louisiana Army National Guard Soldiers work late into the afternoon to fill Hesco baskets with sand at Port Fourchon, LA. The wall of baskets stretched for about two miles.



**"THIS IS OUR STATE.
IT'S WHERE WE LIVE.
IT FEELS GOOD TO BE
ABLE TO HELP OUT."**

>> SPC Jacob Brister

Not in Kansas Anymore

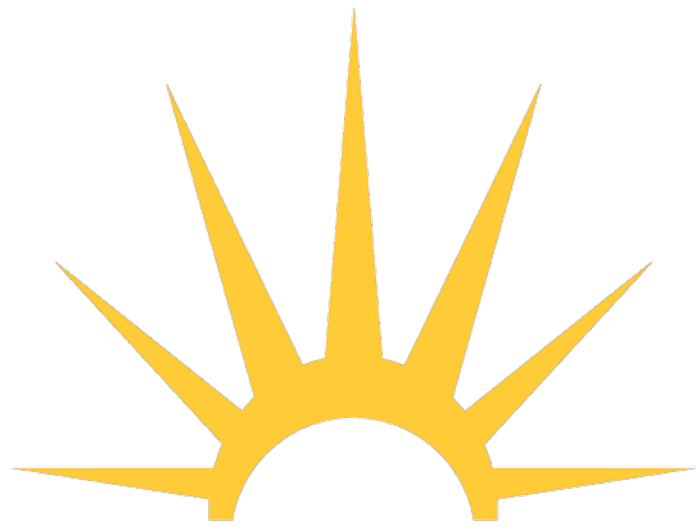
Her first drill with the Louisiana Army National Guard meant First Lieutenant Rebekah Anderson rode a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter to and from work.

Anderson, a Kansas Army National Guard Soldier, was the officer in charge of the North Tiger Dam mission on the very remote Southwest Pass near Venice, LA. Her missions included laying out four miles of the water diversion system known as Tiger Dam. The dam was a second line of defense to the boom line and protected natural marshlands from the oil spill.

"The National Guard's first priority is homeland defense, and this is homeland defense," she explained. "We are defending the marshland and a portion of this state against an element that could harm it.

"It's a great feeling knowing that you're helping here at home and directly impacting the citizens of the state you're residing in," she concluded.

For exclusive video, go to
www.NATIONALGUARD.com/LAoilspill



THE CITY THAT NEVER QUILTS

New York's 442nd Prepares for Second Iraq Deployment

Story and photos by Clint Wood



**442nd
Military
Police
Company,
New York
Army
National
Guard**

45%

of the Soldiers recently graduated from Advanced Individual Training.

20%

of the Soldiers are college students.

25%

of the Soldiers have been deployed.

33%

of the Soldiers in the company are law enforcement professionals.

SGT Keith Morgan of the 442nd Military Police Company provides security in a "sniper attack" during a mission rehearsal exercise at Fort Dix, NJ.

These Soldiers from the 442nd Military Police Company execute a stack in a “sniper attack” during a mission rehearsal exercise at Fort Dix, NJ.



“WHEN YOU WORK HARD IN THE MILITARY, YOU REAP THE BENEFITS WHEN YOU COME HOME TO AMERICA.” >> CPT Tara Dawe



CPT Tara Dawe will command the 442nd Military Police Company in its second deployment to Iraq. She was a specialist and Humvee gunner in the company's first deployment.

IN A FEW WEEKS, America will observe the ninth anniversary of 9/11. The horrific attacks left a profound scar on the hearts of New York Army National Guard Soldiers.

So, who better to ask about that fateful day than members of the New York Guard's 442nd Military Police Company?

GX interviewed them in May, at Fort Dix, NJ, as they trained for their then-upcoming deployment to Iraq, which took place in June. They were in the midst of a mission rehearsal exercise during our visit.

Among the Soldiers we chatted with was Captain Tara Dawe.

DARK DAY

On the morning of 9/11, Dawe, a New York City Police Department (NYPD) officer, was at home in Brooklyn, preparing to drive to Staten Island for election-day detail.

Dawe's mother called to tell her about the planes hitting the World Trade Center. Dawe opened the front door and saw debris in the air.

“I couldn't believe it,” said Dawe.

She was soon on orders. She was to report

first to the Brooklyn Police Precinct, then to Ground Zero. Once at Ground Zero, she boarded a boat for the New Jersey shore, where a mass casualty evacuation area was being set up.

“That was hard, just sitting there. You've got this whole [area] set up to wait for people to come [so you can] take them to the hospital,” she explained.

Dawe still remembers little things about that day, like the temperature.

“I'll never forget that day,” she commented. “It assures me that I'm doing the right thing [being in the National Guard].”

DRIVEN

Dawe joined the Florida Army National Guard at age 17. She was part of the 442nd's first deployment to Iraq in 2003 as a squad auto-

matic weapon Humvee gunner.

She later became an officer, she explained, in order to learn the ins and outs of operations. “[I want to understand] why things happen the way they happen,” she said.

On this deployment, she is leading more than 170 Soldiers. Their assignment is to act as a Police Transition Team, advising the commander of the Iraqi National Police on how to fight the counterinsurgency.

When asked how it felt to lead so many Soldiers into combat, she said her greatest concern is for their mental and physical readiness.

“Every single day, I worry about it,” she admitted. “Every single day, it's hard to go to bed. I ask myself, ‘Did I prepare enough? Did I get my Soldiers prepared enough? Did I give them the right equipment?’”

BATTLE BUDDIES

She may worry, but her noncommissioned officers have complete faith in her ability. First Sergeant Alfredo Mendez deployed with the 442nd the first time, but in a different platoon from Dawe. His missions included reinforcing Dawe's platoon's training of Iraqi Police (IP).

“We're a great team,” Mendez said of Dawe. “We're battle buddies.”

Mendez demonstrated his dedication to the mission by spending an average of 15 hours a day ensuring that his Soldiers received proper training, and looking out for their morale and welfare.

“I get a sense of pride because I know I'm actually helping them,” said Mendez. “I can see [the changes in them]. They become better at what they do through repetition and training.”

Staff Sergeant Steven Seidenstein, an NYPD police officer and platoon sergeant, was also impressed with the Soldiers—especially those in his platoon. Seidenstein, who deployed to Iraq with the 101st Airborne Division, said his Soldiers are motivated and are enjoying high morale. Sergeant Damaris Quinones, a transportation security administration agent, confirmed this.

“I have a lot of confidence in my squad and platoon, that whatever we have to do over there, we can do,” said Quinones.

Dawe's goal for her Soldiers while overseas is to “bring them all home with a sense of accomplishment. When you work hard in the military, you reap the benefits when you come home to America,” she said. **GX**

For more info on the Military Police, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/GOMP.



Man on a Mission

Dale Jr. drives the "8 Soldiers 8 Missions" car during the Coke Zero 400 at the Daytona International Speedway on July 3, 2010.

These eight Soldiers were honored on Dale Jr.'s "8 Soldiers 8 Missions" car:

SFC Chris Dempsey

Infantryman;
Operation Enduring Freedom
Arizona Army National Guard

SPC Joseph Ruiz

Infantry Scout;
Operation Iraqi Freedom
New York Army National Guard

1LT Reed Preece

Armor Officer;
Operation Iraqi Freedom
Pennsylvania Army National Guard

SSG Ryan Brubaker

Infantryman;
Operation Iraqi Freedom
Montana Army National Guard

SSG Daniel Caldwell

Infantryman;
Operation Iraqi Freedom
Alabama Army National Guard

SSG Justin Lampert

Combat Engineer;
Operation Iraqi Freedom
North Dakota Army National Guard

SPC Richard Ghent

Military Police;
Operation Iraqi Freedom
New Hampshire Army National Guard

SPC Tabitha Foster

Combat Medic;
Operation Enduring Freedom
Kentucky Army National Guard

SPORTS

GX checks in with Dale Jr., Dan Wheldon, Team 1636 and a rugby referee.

86

FITNESS

SGT Ken gets you "Fit to Ship in 30 Days!"

90

GEAR

Effective Fire: The M109A6 Paladin

98

High-Speed Horsepower

A Look at Dale Jr.'s Engine

By Clint Wood

WHEN DALE EARNHARDT JR. fires up the No. 88 National Guard/AMP Energy Chevrolet Impala SS before a NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race, fans immediately notice the deafening roar.

The absence of a muffler or catalytic converter to slow the exhaust is not the only thing that separates this 850-horsepower engine—and others like it—from the engine in a modern-day American high-performance coupe.

SUPERIOR HORSEPOWER

First, the biggest engine in the coupe, even equipped with a supercharger, can produce only 260 horsepower. (A supercharger is an external air compressor, mounted on top of the engine,

that forces more air into the engine, in turn producing more power.)

NASCAR cars have no superchargers and use carburetors instead of fuel injectors. Carburetors mix gasoline and air, and then push huge volumes of this mixture into the engine. Fuel injectors force only fuel into engines, resulting in a more accurate mixture, but restricting the volume that can be used quickly.

9,000 RPM

Second, a street car produces about 6,000 RPM (the rotations or cycles the engine makes in one minute) when a driver mashes the accelerator to the floor. By comparison, a washing machine

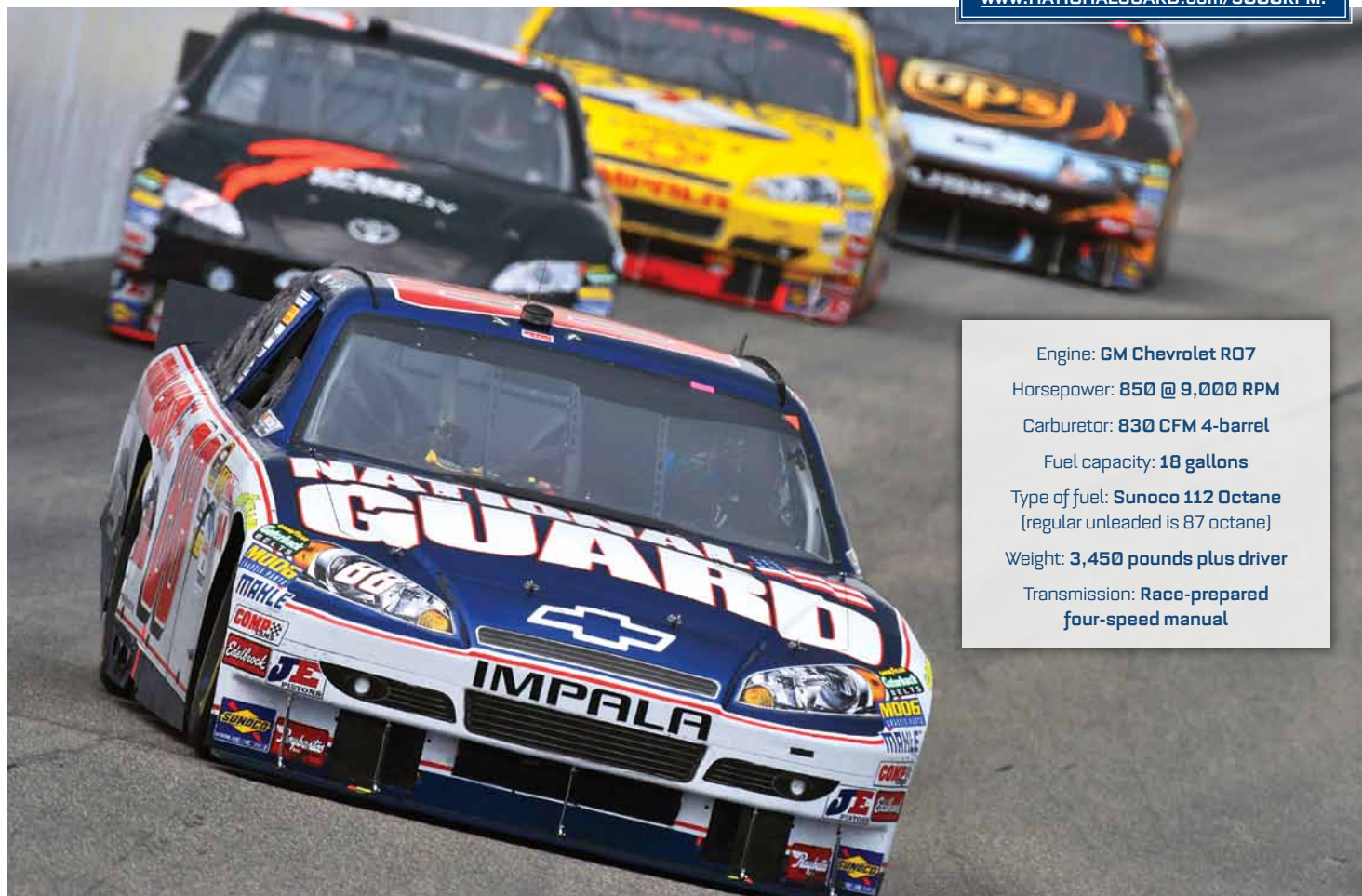
in its spin cycle can produce up to 2,000 RPM. The Hendrick Motorsports National Guard/AMP Energy Chevrolet driven by Earnhardt produces 9,000 RPM.

HIGHER COST, SHORTER LIFE

Third, a NASCAR engine that costs \$60,000 is built to last about 800 miles.

For all racing fans and first-time viewers of a NASCAR Sprint Cup Series race, either live or on TV, it's important to remember that these cars aren't your normal "street cars." **GX**

For more on Dale Jr., go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/9000RPM.



Engine: **GM Chevrolet R07**
Horsepower: **850 @ 9,000 RPM**
Carburetor: **830 CFM 4-barrel**
Fuel capacity: **18 gallons**
Type of fuel: **Sunoco 112 Octane**
(regular unleaded is 87 octane)
Weight: **3,450 pounds plus driver**
Transmission: **Race-prepared four-speed manual**



Dan Wheldon, left, and Panther Racing owner John Barnes, right, help pay tribute to SGT Andrew Barden, who was honored as the National Guard Panther Racing "Hometown Hero" at Iowa Speedway.

Meeting Heroes

Dan Wheldon Spends Time With Soldiers

By Clint Wood

IN HIS STORIED INDYCAR racing history, Dan Wheldon, driver of the No. 14 National Guard car, has experienced some amazing feats. But none is more impressive than winning the prestigious 2005 Indianapolis 500 en route to capturing that year's Indy Racing League IndyCar Series points championship.

What really impresses Wheldon is meeting the Army National Guard Soldiers honored as National Guard Panther Racing's "Hometown Heroes" at each IZOD IndyCar Series domestic race.

"That's an unbelievable program," Wheldon told *GX* in a phone interview. "It still amazes me how these Hometown Heroes [interact] with the people they speak to. They are so humble."

Panther Racing honors a Hometown Hero at each domestic IZOD IndyCar Series race. The Soldier is given a ride in the Indy Racing

Experience two-seater driven by Wheldon; immortalized on a special "hero card" featuring his own picture and biography, which Wheldon signs at the IZOD IndyCar Series autograph session; and saluted during the driver introductions.

"When you consider what they've done, to be that humble just blows my mind," said Wheldon, who finished second in the Indianapolis 500 the last two years racing a special camouflage-paint-scheme Guard car. "They're obviously completely focused on everybody else around them and not themselves."

"IT'S ABOUT EVERYBODY ELSE"

Wheldon said he really enjoys the stories of these Soldiers of their overseas deployments, including Iraq and Afghanistan, and is honored to sit by them during the autograph sessions.

"They are just so immersed in being what I would consider a team player and an asset to their country that they really don't even focus on themselves or worry about their own safety," he said. "It's about everybody else."

"They are some of the most special people I have met. I'm just proud to be part of it." **GX**

For more on Dan Wheldon, go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/HometownHeroes.



Going the Distance

Soldiers Persevere Through Sports Program

By 2LT Holly Di Giovine and SGT Roberto Di Giovine

2LT Holly Di Giovine gets ready for a triathlon in her 1636 kit.

GREAT IDEAS ARE OFTEN EXCHANGED through chance meetings: people passing in the hallway with good intentions of getting together to make the ideas a reality. Members of the South Carolina National Guard (SCNG), sharing an interest in cycling, envisioned getting together for group rides in official team uniforms. After months of emails, Facebook posts and planning, Team 1636 was officially born—and its mission has grown beyond its initial conception.

Beyond sharing uniforms and an interest in cycling, Team 1636 has become a developmental project defined as both a team and a club. Its mission is to promote a personal responsibility to fitness among Army and Air Guard Soldiers, and a positive image of the National Guard to the community. Operating at two levels allows novice and experienced cyclists, runners, triathletes, endurance and adventure runners, and combative fighters to compete in their individual disciplines, while proudly displaying their loyalty to the SCNG by wearing the team's uniforms and apparel.

ATHLETES AND MENTORS

The team side of Team 1636 includes outstanding, national-level and local age-group athletes. These members bring experience, motivation and credibility to the team. The club members of Team 1636, who are new to the world of endurance/individual sports, benefit even more as they set personal physical goals and pursue a more active,

healthy lifestyle. The success of Team 1636 hinges on the ability of these individuals to challenge not only themselves, but also those in their circle of influence within their units and beyond.

Soldiers and Airmen of Team 1636 are not just athletes; they are also mentors. Those with a passion for being active and challenging their comfort zones have the responsibility to reach out to others who struggle in this department. Many individuals are inactive because they simply can't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Excuses stack up, keeping people from believing that change is possible. Having someone provide the tools to overcome these obstacles can jump-start the goal-setting process, leading to self-improvement. This change begins with planting the seed that we are capable of more than we expect of ourselves. Team 1636 offers training and nutrition programs, tips, advice, mentoring and, most of all, personal support.

MILITARY STANDARDS, PERSONAL GOALS

Service members can't afford to be unhealthy or out of shape. While every branch of the military offers standards and regulations to keep its personnel in shape, each Soldier is responsible for taking the personal initiative to implement a training plan and create their own additional standards. Team 1636 can help bridge the gap between military standards and achieving goals that motivate the individual.

Every Guard Soldier or Airman can join Team 1636, which will provide counseling by phone, by email or through the website (Team1636.com), and guide the member to set personal goals. These goals are often symbolized by registering, training for and completing a sporting event, such as a 5K run, half or full marathon, or triathlon. Team members in turn accept the responsibility to offer the same positive support to those around them.

Team 1636 welcomes athletes who can serve as mentors, as well as those who are ready to make changes in their own lives. Join us to train, race and wear the colors of the SCNG. Set the example in your community. While Team 1636 has an ambitious long-term goal of sending one or more athletes to the Ironman World Championship, what it's really all about is being effective role models while training Soldiers and Airmen to be in the best shape of their lives.

*Although Team 1636 was created and developed by Soldiers for Soldiers and Airmen, and is sponsored by the South Carolina National Guard, it is not an official SCNG program. It is a personal initiative, and it doesn't necessarily reflect SCNG's ideas or policies. The SCNG supports Team 1636 but is not in any way responsible or liable for the team's actions. Team 1636 simply unites SCNG Service Members who love sports and strive to share their passion with others. **GX***

COURTESY OF SGT ROBERTO DI GIOVINE

Making the Call

Soldier Dives in as Rugby Referee

Story and photo by SGT Will Hill

POUNDING HEARTS, and screams of pride and anguish could be heard as 30 elite Warriors—Service Members from across the nation—bashed, kicked and shoved toward victory.

One man stands calmly in the center of it all: the referee.

As 20 teams competed in this relentless two-day battle for the title of the nation's finest military rugby team, it was the referees' duty to ensure the laws of rugby football were enforced.

Army National Guard First Lieutenant David Bryant, battle captain for the Mobilization Operation Center at Camp

Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center, IN, was selected to be one of the few referees to judge the USA Rugby Military Club Championship at Fort Benning, GA, April 29 and 30.

BEST OF THE REFS

Bryant is an international referee ranked top 30 out of approximately 30,000 referees in the nation, according to Ray Davis, tournament chairman.

"I chose Dave because he is an excellent referee," said Davis, who helps select the referees. "His military training has made him a much better referee because he

has become more disciplined and has greater attention to detail. I feel that if he continues, he will end up making the USA Rugby National Panel Referees."

Bryant said his father influenced him to play rugby when he was six. He played throughout high school and went on to play for Indiana University.

"I think a lot of my [referee] skill comes from playing so much," he said. "I have been playing my entire life, and it made a big difference because of the level I played at all around the world."

He said he took the referee course when he was 20 to perfect his skill and to become fully immersed in the knowledge of the game. Six years later, he took the level-two referee course.

"I took the level-two referee course when I was 26 and found out I was the youngest level two in the country," he said.

Upon realizing this, he started to form new goals. He wanted to be on the USA Rugby National Panel Referees, the top referees in the nation.

RUGBY IN SLOW MOTION

Bryant said that being in the Guard has its advantages. Military life requires him to stay in shape. Refereeing rugby does as well, because he has to constantly keep up with the ball.

"The biggest difference between rugby and other sports is that the referee has to be tethered to the ball," said Bryant. "We have to be there on top of every tackle and every try or score."

London native Peter Sheedy, who refereed with Bryant, said Bryant has all the attributes of a top-class referee.

"Better referees tend to see things go slowly, whereas other referees get frantic, nervous and rushed," Sheedy said. "To referees like Dave, everything is nice and slow, like in *The Matrix*, when Keanu Reeves suddenly becomes Neo and everything slows down. That's what it's like when you're a good referee."

Bryant is passionate about rugby, and his love for the game can be seen on the field.

"Rugby is, hands down, the best team sport there is," Bryant said. "Everyone is on offense and everyone is on defense. All types of people can play the game. It's the second most-played team sport in the world. The tradition, the camaraderie—I mean, it's second to none."

Blood, sweat and tears stained the rugby football field as one man judged the brutality and gracefulness of the rugby championship from the center of the field. Fort Benning won the

USA Rugby Military Club Championship. Although this game has come to end, Bryant's passion drives him on to referee games around the world. **GX**



1LT David Bryant referees a match between Marines and Soldiers during the USA Rugby Military Championships at Fort Benning, GA.

OPERATION Fit for Basic FIT TO SHIP IN 30 DAYS!



By Ken and Stephanie Weichert • Photos by Adam Livingston

FROM: SGT Stevenson
TO: SGT Ken

I am a recruiter for the Alabama Army National Guard. Once a month, I lead fitness and tactical classes for the Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP). I've been using your program Operation Pushing for Points for more advanced RSP Warriors and have seen fantastic results. Pushing for Points is a great program for APFT improvement. It helped me go from a 210 to a 280 in 30 days. However, I've found that it can be too difficult for newer Warriors.

Can you develop a program just for RSP Warriors, one that gets them ready for BCT? Thanks for what you do.

Respectfully,
SGT Stevenson
Alabama Army National Guard

FROM: SGT Ken
TO: SGT Stevenson

Thank you for letter. We love to hear success stories! Our fitness column is our personal service to the men and women who serve this great nation.

Your idea for a specialized training program for RSP Warriors is fantastic! In this issue, we will share one of the lesson plans from the pilot program implemented in Tennessee called Warrior Fit Camp. It takes RSP Warriors through the crawl, walk and run phases in order to safely increase fitness levels while preparing for BCT.

Please share your progress with us. We admire the dedication you show as you train your Warriors to become a part of the best fighting force in the world.

HODAH!
SGT Ken



The following program could be issued to each RSP Warrior prior to final formation.*

*Perform a thorough warm-up prior to each workout and a cool-down at the end of each workout (see instructions for warm-up and cool-down exercise examples on page 96).

EQUIPMENT NEEDED:
Frisbee (2)
Backpack (1)
Medicine Ball (1)

MONDAY

Perform three sets of the following exercises (the warm-up and cool-down exercises are performed once).

► PUSH-UP IMPROVEMENT PLAN #1

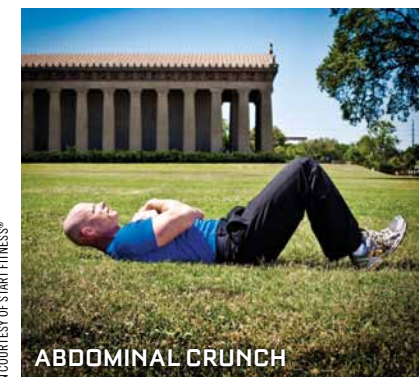
1. Begin the push-up exercise in the close grip position. Continue as long as you can in this position. Assume an authorized rest position.
2. Slide your hands outward to the normal grip position. Continue as long as you can in this position. Assume an authorized rest position.
3. Slide your hands outward to the wide grip position. Continue as long as you can in this position. Go to muscle failure!

>> **Note:** If you reach muscle failure before you reach your time goal, continue the exercise in a modified position.

Basic: 30-60 seconds	Intermediate: 61-120 seconds	Advanced: 121-180 seconds	Extreme: 181-240 seconds
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Want to listen to it or watch it on video?
Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness,
Upper Body, Push-Up Improvement Plan #1.



► ABDOMINAL CRUNCH (HALF SIT-UP), ARMS ACROSS THE CHEST

START: Lie down on your back with both legs together and bent 90 degrees at your knees. Place your heels on the ground and point your toes upward. Place your arms across your chest and place your hands on the front of your shoulders, arms against your chest.

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominal muscles and raise your upper body until your shoulder blades come off the ground. Next, return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you raise your body, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

Warning: Do not pull on your neck with your hands. Keep your elbows wide and your face pointing upward during the exercise.

Basic: 30-60 seconds	Intermediate: 61-120 seconds	Advanced: 121-180 seconds	Extreme: 181-240 seconds
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[MONDAY (Continued)]

▶ MODIFIED BACK BEND (BACK EXTENSION)

START: Lie down on the front side of your body on a soft, flat surface with arms bent 90 degrees at the elbows, elbows aligned with your shoulders, palms down and feet 12 inches apart.

ACTIONS: Tighten your lower back and glute muscles and slowly arch your lower back, raising your arms, chest and legs off the ground. Hold for a few seconds at the highest point. Return to the start position and repeat. Exhale through your mouth as you arch, and inhale through your nose as you lower your body.

Basic: 30-60 seconds	Intermediate: 61-120 seconds	Advanced: 121-180 seconds	Extreme: 181-240 seconds
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▶ RUNNING INTERVAL TRAINING (Not pictured)

Running Interval Training is running at moderate and fast speeds.

EXAMPLE: Choose to run on a treadmill, track, or well-known route. After a thorough warm-up, run at a moderate speed (jogging) for 30 seconds and sprint as fast as you can for 30 seconds. Repeat this sequence for the remainder of your run. Or, if on a track, sprint the stretch and jog the curve.

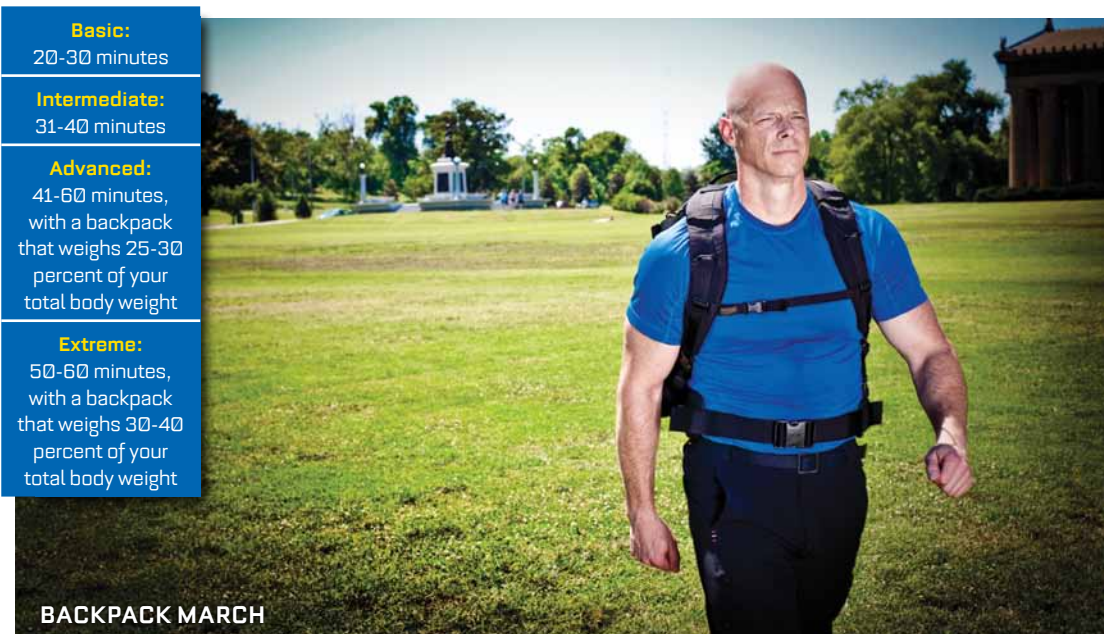
>> **Note:** Be certain to time your sprint drills. That way, you can challenge yourself to sprint for longer periods of time each week.

Basic: 5-6 minutes	Intermediate: 7-10 minutes	Advanced: 11-15 minutes	Extreme: 11-15 minutes, with a backpack that weighs 10-20 percent of your total body weight
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Want to listen to it? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness, Aerobics, Running Interval Training



MODIFIED BACK BEND



BACKPACK MARCH

Basic: 20-30 minutes
Intermediate: 31-40 minutes
Advanced: 41-60 minutes, with a backpack that weighs 25-30 percent of your total body weight
Extreme: 50-60 minutes, with a backpack that weighs 30-40 percent of your total body weight

[TUESDAY]

▶ BACKPACK MARCH OR RUN

START: Fill a backpack with items until it weighs approximately 15-20 percent of your total body weight. Put the pack securely on your back.

ACTIONS: Start walking or running until you have reached your goal.

>> **Note:** Stay hydrated! Be certain to carry water.

Warning: Remember to wear reflective gear and to face the traffic at all times.

[WEDNESDAY]

Perform two sets of the following exercises (the warm-up and cool-down exercises are performed once).

▶ SINGLE-LEG PUSH-UP

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet, with your back and legs forming a straight line. Shift your balance to one leg, elevate the other leg and place one foot over the other, balancing the top foot on the back of the foot that is on the ground. Maintain a neutral spine, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lower your body straight down by bending both elbows until your upper arms become parallel with the ground. Return to the start position and repeat. Inhale through your nose as you lower your body, and exhale through your mouth as you return to the start position.

Basic: 30-60 seconds	Intermediate: 61-120 seconds	Advanced: 121-180 seconds	Extreme: 121-180 seconds, with a backpack that weighs 10-20 percent of your total body weight
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▶ VERTICAL LEG CRUNCH

START: Lie down on your back on a soft, flat surface, arms straight and against the sides of your body, palms on the ground. Elevate your legs and align your feet and knees with your hips, feet flexed and knees slightly bent. Raise your arms and point your fingers toward your toes. Note: Keep a slight bend in your knees.

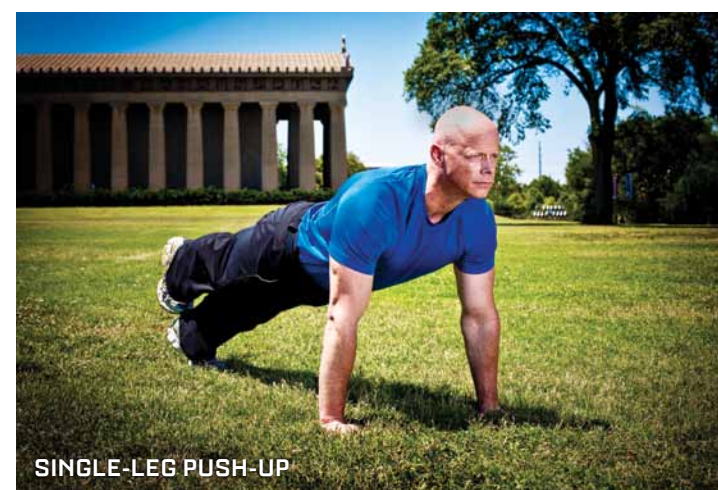
ACTIONS (Vertical Leg Crunch): Tighten your abdominal muscles and raise your upper body, reaching your fingers toward your toes. Return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you reach upward, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

>> **Note:** Add the Box and Reach Drill to this exercise in order to strengthen the sides of your body.

Basic: 30-60 seconds	Intermediate: 61-120 seconds	Advanced: 121-180 seconds	Extreme: 181-240 seconds
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VERTICAL LEG CRUNCH



SINGLE-LEG PUSH-UP



ACTIONS (Box and Reach Drill): The box and reach drill is a four-count exercise where you reach over the outside of your left thigh with both arms with palms facing your legs, return to the start position, reach over the outside of your right thigh with both arms with palms facing your legs and return to the start position. Performing all four movements once is one repetition. Continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you reach, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.



BOX AND REACH DRILL



[WEDNESDAY (Continued)]



Basic: 10-30 seconds
Intermediate: 31-60 seconds
Advanced: 61-120 seconds
Extreme: 60-120 seconds, with a backpack that weighs 10-20 percent of your total body weight

▶ MODIFIED SEAL WALKING DRILL

START: Stand on two Frisbees or glide discs (this drill can be performed without the use of discs). Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Maintain a neutral spine, feet 12-18 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, elbows slightly bent.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, walk your body forward using a pulling motion with your arms only. Keep your back and legs as straight as possible and allow the Frisbees or discs to slide against the ground. Continue until your goal is reached. Breathe naturally.

>> Note: This exercise is modified by keeping the fingers pointing forward during the entire drill in order to prevent potential injury to the wrists.

▶ RUNNING ENDURANCE TRAINING (Not pictured)

Running Endurance Training is performed at moderate speeds.

Basic: 8-12 minutes	Intermediate: 13-20 minutes	Advanced: 21-30 minutes	Extreme: 20-30 minutes, with a backpack that weighs 10-20 percent of your total body weight
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>> Note: The best way to condition your body for the 2-mile run as part of a fitness test is to condition your body to run longer distances.

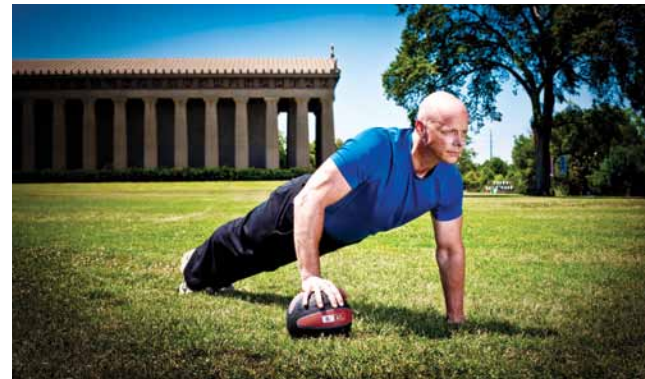
THURSDAY

Perform three sets of the following exercises (the warm-up and cool-down exercises are performed once).

▶ UNEVEN PUSH-UP

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Next, place your left hand on a platform that is 4-12 inches higher than the ground. Maintain a neutral spine, feet together or up to 12 inches apart, hands shoulder-width apart, legs and right arm straight.

ACTIONS: While keeping your abdominal muscles tight, lower your body straight down by bending both elbows until the upper part of your right arm becomes parallel with the ground. Return to the start position and continue until your goal is reached. Switch arm positions and repeat. Inhale through your nose as you lower your body, and exhale through your mouth as you return to the start position.



Basic: 20-30 seconds (each side)	Intermediate: 31-60 seconds (each side)	Advanced: 61-120 seconds (each side)	Extreme: 60-120 seconds, with a backpack that weighs 10-20 percent of your total body weight (each side)
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Want to listen to it or watch it on video?
Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness, Upper Body, Uneven Push-Up.



[THURSDAY (Continued)]



SUPINE LEG LIFT



▶ SUPINE LEG LIFT

START: Lie down on your back on a soft, flat surface, arms straight and against the sides of your body, palms on the ground. Elevate your legs 10-20 inches from the ground, feet flexed and knees slightly bent.

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominal muscles and raise your legs until they are aligned with your hips. Return to the start position. Continue until your goal is reached. Exhale through your mouth as you elevate your legs, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.

Warning: If you feel discomfort in your lower back, do not bring your legs as close to the ground. Make necessary adjustments in the range of motion in order to prevent strain in the lower back.

Basic: 30-60 seconds	Intermediate: 61-120 seconds	Advanced: 121-180 seconds	Extreme: 181-240 seconds
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▶ RUNNING SPEED TEST (Not pictured)

START: Assume a "standing start position" by placing your toes behind the start line with one leg 12-18 inches behind you. Shift your weight to the front leg and bend your lead knee 90 degrees. Bend your trunk forward with the opposite arm in front and slightly elevated.

ACTIONS: Run at a fast pace until you reach your goal. Breathe naturally.

>> Note: Be certain to time your running speed test. That way, you can challenge yourself to run faster the next time you perform this drill.

Basic: 1-2 minutes	Intermediate: 3-6 minutes	Advanced: 7-15 minutes	Extreme: 16-25 minutes
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SATURDAY

Perform three sets of the following exercises (the warm-up and cool-down exercises are performed once).

▶ DIVE BOMBER PUSH-UP

START: Balance your body on your hands and feet with your back and legs forming a straight line. Position your feet several inches outside the width of your hips, hands slightly more than shoulder-width apart, legs and arms straight. Next, raise your hips upward until you reach 90 degrees at your hips, head aligned with your arms.

ACTIONS: Lower your body to the ground slowly by bending at the elbows until your face reaches the ground. Move downward then forward and finally upward by slightly dragging your upper body across the ground until your abdominals are over your hands, pressing your upper body upward until your arms are straight and your lower back is arched back. Return to the start position by reversing the steps. Inhale through your nose as you lower your body, and exhale through your mouth as you push up.



Basic: 30-60 seconds	Intermediate: 61-120 seconds	Advanced: 121-180 seconds	Extreme: 121-180 seconds, with a backpack that weighs 10-20 percent of your total body weight
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Want to listen to it or watch it on video?
Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness, Upper Body, Dive Bomber Push-Up.



[SATURDAY (Continued)]

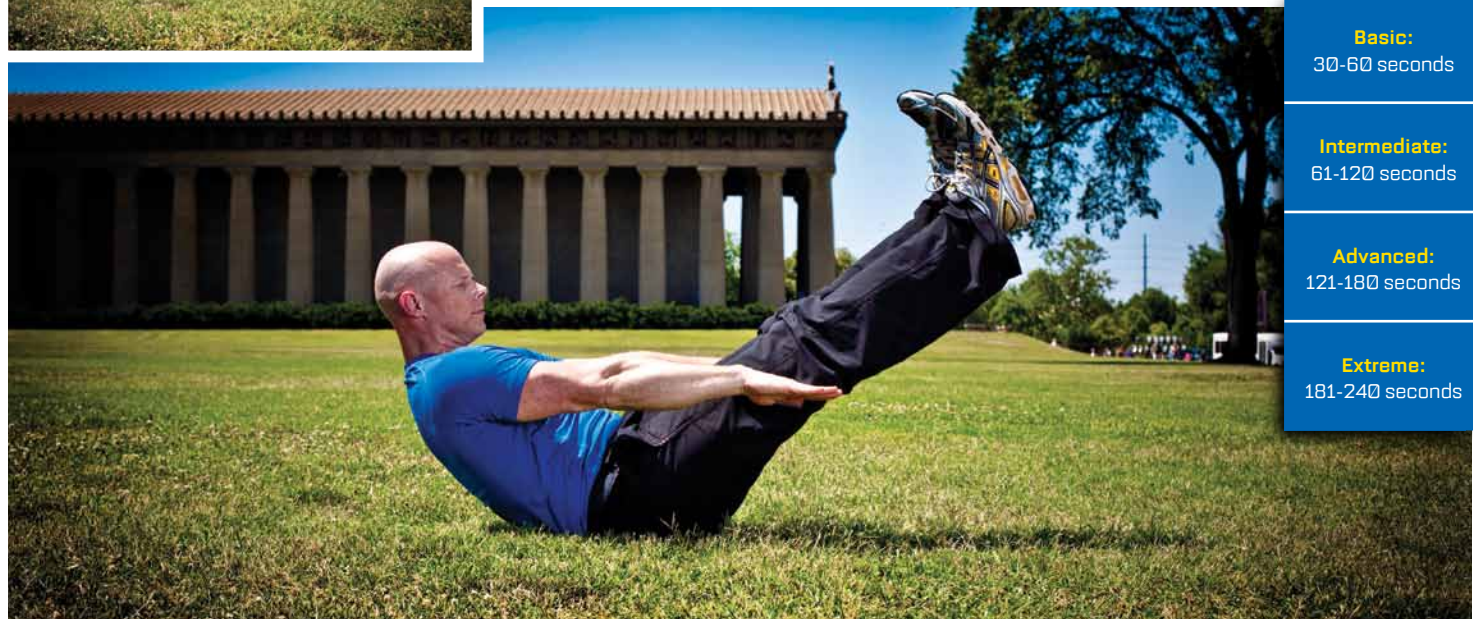


ABDOMINAL "V-UPS"

START: Lie down on your back on a soft, flat surface, arms straight and against the sides of your body, palms on the ground.

ACTIONS: Tighten your abdominal muscles and slowly raise your legs and upper body at the same time until your feet and chest align with each other. Simultaneously, raise your arms until they

become parallel with the ground. Hold this position for a moment and slowly return to the start position. Note: Your upper body and legs will form a "V" before returning to the start position. Exhale through your mouth while elevating your legs and upper body, and inhale through your nose as you return to the start position.



- Basic:**
30-60 seconds
- Intermediate:**
61-120 seconds
- Advanced:**
121-180 seconds
- Extreme:**
181-240 seconds

RUNNING INTERVAL TRAINING (Not pictured)

- Basic:**
5-6 minutes
- Intermediate:**
7-10 minutes
- Advanced:**
11-15 minutes
- Extreme:**
11-15 minutes, with a backpack that weighs 10-20 percent of your total body weight

Note:
FRIDAY and SUNDAY are rest days

WARM-UP PHASE

AEROBICS:

Perform 6-8 minutes of aerobics exercises, such as Running in Place, Side-Straddle-Hops "Jumping Jacks" or High Steps/Knees.

STRETCHING:

Perform 4-6 minutes of flexibility exercises.

COOL-DOWN PHASE

STRETCHING:

Perform the flexibility exercises from the Warm-Up Phase.

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

STAMINA STOPWATCH



The Stamina Stopwatch includes the estimated time it will take to complete each set of the fitness program.

Quick Fix:

1 full set = approximately 30 minutes

Fast and Furious:

2 full sets = approximately 45 minutes

Combat Ready:

3 full sets = approximately 60 minutes

NUTRITION ADVICE



- 1** To lose additional body fat, try reducing your intake of breads, pastas, dairy products and sugar.
- 2** Check with your physician before making any changes to your diet or exercise plan.
- 3** Want to read more diet advice? Go to www.NATIONALGUARD.com/fitness/healthy, and download our Savory Survival Guide.

IMPACT REPORT

I lost 28 pounds in 60 days through your program, and now I am ready to join the National Guard. Thanks for all of your help!
Hooah!
> **Dustin Williams**,
San Francisco, CA

I increased my push-ups from 12 to 51 in 30 days through your program. Now, I am ready to ship to Basic Training!
Hooah!
> **PFC Sam T.**,
Florida Army National Guard

I failed my PT test each time until I started your program. In 30 days, I went from zero to hero! I am ready to kick some serious booty at Basic.
Hooah!
> **PFC Kim G.**,
Indiana Army National Guard



KEN AND STEPHANIE WEICHERT

A six-time Soldier of the Year and Veteran of both Operation Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm, Ken Weichert and his wife, Stephanie, a certified personal trainer, founded the START Fitness® program, a San Francisco-based group exercise and hiking business that delivers military-inspired, boot-camp style workouts to Soldiers and civilians. The program now trains and certifies basic, senior and master instructors. Ken is currently a staff sergeant in the Tennessee Army National Guard.

Watch fitness videos and download workouts at www.NATIONALGUARD.com/Fitness or email SGTKen@GXonline.com.

FIT FOR BASIC 7-DAY WORKOUT CALENDAR

Perform a thorough warm-up prior to each workout and a cool-down at the end of each workout.

MONDAY

Perform 3 sets of the following exercises.

- >> Push-Up Improvement Plan #1
- >> Abdominal Crunch (Half Sit-Up), Arms Across the Chest
- >> Modified Back Bend (Back Extension)
- >> Running Interval Training

TUESDAY

- >> Backpack March or Run

WEDNESDAY

Perform 2 sets of the following exercises.

- >> Single-Leg Push-Up
- >> Vertical Leg Crunch
- >> Modified Seal Walking Drill
- >> Running Endurance Training

THURSDAY

Perform 3 sets of the following exercises.

- >> Uneven Push-Up
- >> Supine Leg Lift
- >> Running Speed Test

FRIDAY

- >> Rest day

SATURDAY

Perform 3 sets of the following exercises.

- >> Dive Bomber Push-Up
- >> Abdominal "V-Ups"
- >> Running Interval Training

SUNDAY

- >> Rest day

Repeat the FIT FOR BASIC 7-DAY WORKOUT each week until the month is complete.

Fast Facts

> DIMENSIONS:

- Combat Weight: 63,600 lbs
- Length: 384 in
- Width: 124 in
- Height: 127.4 in
- Fuel Capacity: 133 gal

> PERFORMANCE:

- Speed: 40 mph
- Vehicle Range: 214 miles
- Transmission: 4 forward, 2 reverse
- Suspension: Torsion bar high-strength with high-capacity shock absorbers

> SYSTEMS:

- Navigation: Inertial positioning navigation system with integral AFCS
- Optics: Night vision compatible
- NBC protection
- Individual crew protection with heating and cooling
- VIC-1, VRC-89 or SINGARS

> ARMAMENT:

- Cannon Range Unassisted: 24 km
- Cannon Range Assisted: 30 km
- Ammunition Capacity: 39 complete rounds
- Firing Response Time: <60 seconds
- Sustained Rate of Fire: 1 round/3 minutes
- Maximum Rate of Fire: 3 rounds/15 seconds; 8 rounds/minute

THE CREW

The Paladin has a crew of four: a commander, driver, gunner and loader. The crew can perform all their roles inside the vehicle, so they are fully protected from enemy small-arms fire and harsh weather. With air conditioning and heating units, the Kevlar-lined turret keeps the crew safe from enemy fire as well as nuclear, chemical and biological warfare.

BIG GUNS

There are a few short words to describe why the enemy fears the Paladin: 155 mm howitzer. The Paladin's M284 cannon can fire a shell 13 miles unassisted and 18 miles with a propellant shell. Not to mention, it can shoot fast. The Paladin can lob up to eight rounds per minute for its first minute of fire, and then another round every minute thereafter. So not only does the Paladin pack a big punch, but it also throws a lot of them quickly.

SHOOT AND SCOOT

Thanks to a 440-horsepower diesel engine, the Paladin can move around the battlefield at speeds of up to 40 mph. It can come to a complete stop, shoot a round in as little as 45 seconds, and be back on the move in under a minute—hence, the term "shoot and scoot." This technique allows the Paladin not only to keep up with frontline units that are advancing rapidly, but also to evade the enemy if they are actively seeking Paladin units.

Effective Fire:

The M109A6 Paladin

By Christian Anderson

SINCE ITS DEBUT for the Army National Guard during the Revolutionary War in 1775, artillery has become a battlefield staple. Once modern tanks were introduced in WWI, the Guard had—and still has—two very effective and different tools to engage the enemy and keep their Soldiers on the frontlines covered.

So what happens when you combine a tank and howitzer? You get the Paladin: a highly mobile artillery piece that packs a huge punch.

PHOTO BY ADAM LIVINGSTON

RISKING FIRE TO SERVE

Story by Stephanie Inman ★ Photos by Johnny Bivera

After watching a National Guard commercial featuring Soldiers “saving the day,” Major Nathlon Jackson enlisted because she wanted to serve. Then, on Jan. 11, 2010, Jackson charged into a fire to save a stranger’s life. At that moment, she stopped just admiring these heroic Soldiers and became one.

MAJ Nathlon Jackson went above and beyond the call of duty to save a complete stranger.



MAJ Nathlon Jackson enlisted in the Maryland Army National Guard as a specialist in 1997.

Jackson, 39, a logistics officer at the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, VA, was leaving for lunch when she noticed smoke coming from a nearby house. “I thought it was kind of odd that the smoke wasn’t coming from the chimney,” she said. Concerned by the smoke, Jackson thought the house’s owner might need assistance. “So I just crossed the street and started

to knock on the door, just to see if someone was in there.” Jackson continued to knock at the door. Moments passed, but still no answer. Suddenly, a neighbor ran into the street, yelling at Jackson. She said a woman, Shirley Rollins, was trapped in the house. Jackson pounded harder on the door as the neighbor hurried to get a spare key to the house. “At this point, I am just thinking, ‘Someone is in here. We need to get them out of here.’” Jackson pushed open the mail slot on the door, hoping to see Rollins in the living room, but only saw smoke. Jackson yelled out, “Hello? Hello? Is anyone in there?” No one returned her call.

The neighbor returned with the key and informed Jackson that Rollins must be in her upstairs bedroom. Without fear or hesitation, Jackson burst into the house on a mission: to get the woman out safely. She ran up the stairs and into the bedroom, where she was hit by the force of the smoke and fell to her knees.

“The smoke was so thick, it was like someone was smothering me,” she told *GX*. “You couldn’t even see your hand before your face—that’s how thick this smoke was.”

Even with the smoke, Jackson never gave up hope. Down on her knees, coughing and choking, Jackson finally glimpsed two legs dangling from the bed. “The smoke was so thick, with her sitting up, I couldn’t see the upper part of her body. I could just see her legs,” she said. Jackson called for Rollins, “Come to my voice. Ma’am, come to me. Come to my voice.” But Rollins didn’t respond.

Jackson crawled to the bed and groped around in search of an arm, a leg or anything to grab hold of. Finally, Jackson’s hands locked onto Rollins and dragged her off the bed. They stumbled out of the bedroom and slid down the

“I held on to her and I was just telling her that we were going to be OK, we were just going to sit here and wait for the ambulance to come.”

>> MAJ Nathlon Jackson

stairs as the smoke and fire gained strength throughout the house.

Jackson relied on memorable childhood lessons such as “stop, drop and roll” and “get low” to guide her. After the two women landed in a pile at the bottom of the stairs, Jackson asked Rollins if she could walk. Rollins couldn’t formulate a coherent thought or sentence, so Jackson lifted Rollins and carried her outside. “She had a lot of mucus and black soot just coming out of her nose,” Jackson reflects. “Her eyes were glazed over. She was disoriented. I don’t really believe she knew what was going on. Her face was red and blotchy. She had burns on her face, but they were like a sunburn.”

The present danger ebbed as the two women reached the curb. But even with the situation diffused, Jackson didn’t leave Rollins’ side. “It was a cold day, so I took my Gore-Tex off and I put it around her to warm her up. She didn’t have any shoes on and basically had on a top and some sweatpants,” Jackson explains. “I held on to her and I was just telling her that we were going to be OK, we were just going to sit here and wait for the ambulance to come.” When the ambulance arrived, the medics loaded Rollins in. Before the ambulance doors shut, Rollins reached up to Jackson and gave her a hug around the neck, a sincere sign of gratitude.

A SECOND ACT OF GOOD WILL

But this isn’t the first time Jackson has saved a life. In 2006, Jackson was in Alaska with the DC Army National Guard. She was working on a news story about an environmental project. As she was eating in a seafood restaurant, a woman at a neighboring table began to



MAJ Nathlon Jackson and Shirley Rollins finally got to meet each other, with the help of Rollins’ neighbor, Stephanie Gimi.

choke. “Here were the same signs they taught us in Basic Training. She was grabbing her throat and turning colors. Her daughters at the table were just looking at her. It happened so fast.” Jackson instinctively jumped to her feet and grabbed the woman. “I was nervous. Here was a woman who literally was turning another color. It was just instinct: Jump up. I didn’t have time to think about anything else.”

Jackson successfully cleared the woman’s throat using the Heimlich maneuver, a skill she learned at Basic Training. Jackson just has a knack for being at the right place, at the right time.

But even with two heroic acts to her name, Jackson shrugs off the deeds as nothing extraordinary.

SIGNING UP TO SERVE

In 1997, Jackson enlisted in the Maryland Army National Guard at 25 years old. She was working as a food service manager when a high-energy commercial came on, showcasing the National Guard’s humanitarian efforts in a community.

“It definitely was an eye-catcher. I just remember saying to myself, ‘Wow, I could do that.’”

Jackson knew that as a former high school athlete, she could handle the physical challenges of a Soldier. “I remember going and finding a recruiter, and that recruiter explaining the National Guard’s mission,” she said. “Because I wanted to keep the job that I currently had, the Guard was a good fit for me.”

Jackson attended Basic Training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO. Although Basic was tough, Jackson remembers it fondly. She overcame each obstacle, whether it was grueling treks or lack of sleep, and became a model for her fellow Soldiers.

“I was certainly one of the older Soldiers or trainees there, so because of that, I got a lot of leadership roles,” she said. Jackson found motivation from her drill sergeant, who preached values such as perseverance, teamwork and decisiveness.

The military has been a constant influence throughout Jackson’s family, weaving its way through four generations. Growing up, Jackson admired her relatives in the military, including a great-uncle who retired after 30 years. “I can recall being impressed as a little girl with their military photos—just seeing the sense of pride.” Now, that same pride can be seen radiating within Jackson as she follows in her family’s footsteps. “As I travel home on the Metro, if I am in uniform, that day isn’t going to pass without someone thanking me for my service.”

Even at home, Jackson is surrounded by an array of heroes. She has been married to Lieutenant Colonel Robert Weir, a fellow National Guard Soldier, for seven years. “We met at a training meeting. I was the commander and offered to help, because he was a former Marine and knew nothing about the Army,” she said. “And it just went from that point forward.”

Her husband has three children, including a son studying political science at West Point.



MAJ Jackson received the Soldier's Medal for her heroism and bravery in rescuing Shirley Rollins from a house fire.

Jackson has custody of her three nieces and one nephew. One of her nieces is currently serving in the Air National Guard. The children, Jackson says, were very concerned about Rollins, constantly asking about her welfare.

ESCAPING UNSCATHED

Jackson attributes some of the success in Rollins' rescue to her National Guard training. "It's just assessing the situation, recognizing what the issues are with the person in distress, and making very quick decisions on how to help them," she explained. During the fire, Jackson examined Rollins' breathing, alertness and ability to stand. Then using skills she learned in the Guard, Jackson made split-second decisions to get Rollins out safely.

Rollins spent about a month in critical care, according to Jackson, and suffered from a bad case of smoke inhalation. Due to her condition, Jackson said, Rollins was temporarily unable to speak. Luckily, Jackson escaped the fire with only a minor case of smoke inhalation. Her husband reminded Jackson how fortunate she was to have only spent a few hours in the emergency room.

"He kept saying, 'I am really happy you are here. You could have really gotten hurt.'" That thought never occurred to Jackson during the rescue. "I didn't think about that. All I was thinking about was helping her."

Jackson called the neighbor periodically to hear updates on Rollins and was eager to meet her. The two finally met on July 20, and the experience was both exciting and emotional.

As excitement from the rescue died down, Jackson settled back into her routine of serving. "When I really look over my life, every organization I am involved in is a giver to the community: my church; the sorority when I was in college; and one of the most outstanding organizations, the National Guard. I don't know if it's just fate, but that's just how it is," she said. Jackson's parents taught her the philosophy: You can never help someone with a closed hand. It's a principle she employs on a regular basis, whether she's in ACUs or civilian clothes.

During Jackson's free time, she mentors student athletes at her old school, Friendly High School, in Fort Washington, MD. She saw many of her peers fall into the wrong crowd. So by sharing her own experiences, Jackson hopes to encourage these students to succeed.

"I encourage them to stay focused on their goals because one false move can change their life."

As a student, Jackson played basketball and volleyball, and competed in shot put and discus. Her pride in and dedication to her country were evident even in high school. "It's ironic. We were called the Patriots. I look back now at my high school jacket and there is a big patriot on there, which is the same emblem as the National Guard's." Now, as a Title 10 Soldier serving on Active Duty, she is the epitome of a true patriot.

A TRUE HONOR

While some people call Jackson a "hero" for saving a woman from a burning building, Jackson is careful not to latch onto that title. "Well, people call me a hero because of that, and that's fine. But for me, I did it out of compassion for another person. I am not trying to minimize the act. But to me, it's something anybody would have done." But a pat on the back finally came for the woman who placed herself in harm's way for another.

Jackson received the Soldier's Medal, an award designed to honor acts of heroism, on Aug. 18, 2010. By accepting this award, Jackson joins an elite class of recipients, including Army General (Ret.) Colin Powell.

"As I travel home on the Metro, if I am in uniform, that day isn't going to pass without someone thanking me for my service."

>> MAJ Nathlon Jackson

"It is a blessing. One of my friends told me, 'Wow, you are the first female to get that medal.' But I am sure that I am not the first female to have helped someone."

Pride rippled through Jackson's family as she received the prestigious award at the Army National Guard Readiness Center. This is the highest honor she has received, Jackson says.

"It is overwhelming. It is just very prestigious. I can't even fill the shoes of this person that everybody is making it seem like I am." **GX**

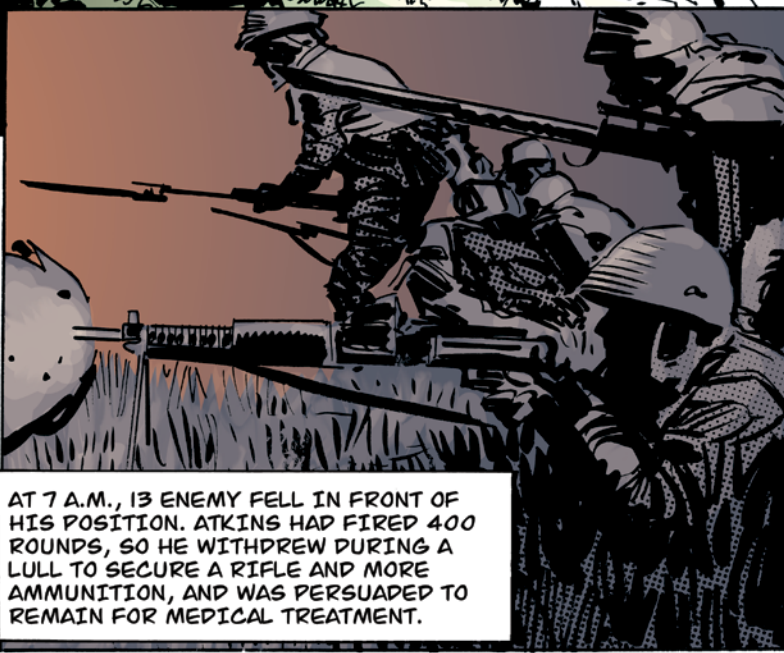


MAJ Jackson was glad to finally meet Shirley Rollins, the woman she saved from a fire in January. Rollins' neighbor, Stephanie Gimi, right, set up the meeting.

FEARLESS!

PRIVATE THOMAS E. ATKINS, WISCONSIN ARMY NATIONAL GUARD, AND TWO COMPANIONS WERE ON THE VILLA VERDE TRAIL, LUZON, PHILIPPINES, MARCH 10, 1945, AT A POSITION OUTSIDE THE 1ST PLATOON'S PERIMETER. AT 3 A.M., TWO JAPANESE COMPANIES ATTACKED, SEVERELY WOUNDING ATKINS AND INCAPACITATING HIS COMRADES. ATKINS HELD HIS GROUND AND RETURNED HEAVY FIRE.

AN ENEMY MACHINE GUN, SET UP WITHIN 20 YARDS OF HIS FOXHOLE, FAILED TO DRIVE HIM OFF. THE JAPANESE REPEATEDLY MADE FIERCE ATTACKS, BUT FOR FOUR HOURS, ATKINS REMAINED IN HIS FOXHOLE, BEARING THE BRUNT OF EACH ASSAULT, MAINTAINING STEADY FIRE UNTIL EACH CHARGE WAS REPULSED.



AT 7 A.M., 13 ENEMY FELL IN FRONT OF HIS POSITION. ATKINS HAD FIRED 400 ROUNDS, SO HE WITHDREW DURING A LULL TO SECURE A RIFLE AND MORE AMMUNITION, AND WAS PERSUADED TO REMAIN FOR MEDICAL TREATMENT.

WHILE WAITING, HE SAW A JAPANESE SOLDIER NEARBY. SEIZING A RIFLE, ATKINS ELIMINATED HIM. MOMENTS LATER, HE SAW AN ENEMY GROUP MOVING UP BEHIND THE PLATOON'S LINES. HE SAT UP, DELIVERED HEAVY RIFLE FIRE AND FORCED THEM TO WITHDRAW.



ATKINS' BRAVERY AND DETERMINATION TO HOLD HIS GROUND WHILE WOUNDED HELPED PROTECT HIS COMRADES FROM THE ENEMY. HE RECEIVED THE MEDAL OF HONOR ON OCTOBER 30, 1945.



END



EXPERTS



NEEDED

BETTER PAY
HIGHER GRADE
BE A LEADER

PROMOTE YOURSELF

Become A Warrant Officer

To continue your Path to Honor, talk to your Warrant Officer Recruiter
or visit us online at www.NATIONALGUARD.com/warrantofficer





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