



# THE ON GUARD

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Newspaper of the National Guard



McKinley visits  
New England Air  
Guard units

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## Iraq tours extended for 4,000+

### “Surge” plan extends some troops deployed to Iraq for up to 125 days

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – At least 4,000 National Guard Citizen-Soldiers will spend an extra four months in Iraq as part of the president’s troop increase announced in a address to the nation Jan 10.

The Minnesota Army National Guard’s 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, deployed to Iraq since March 2006, will have its tour extended up to 125 days, the Department of Defense announced the next day.

The announcement affects about 3,000 Minnesota Guardmembers. The extension until July also affects more than 1,000 Guardmembers from 27 states who are deployed with the 1st Brigade. In all, about 4,000 Guardmembers are affected, according to Lt. Col. Kevin Olson, public affairs officer, Minnesota National Guard.

“The 1st Brigade, which consists of the Minnesota National Guard and a number of other National Guard units, were se-

lected because of their agility and their ability to get the job done right,” Olson said.

The 1st Brigade represents a fraction of the more than 20,000 National Guardmembers in Iraq, National Guard Bureau officials said.

The Pentagon announcement of the 1st Brigade’s extension came the morning after President George W. Bush announced in his address from the White House Library that he had committed more than 21,500 additional American troops to Iraq, the majority to Baghdad.

“We acknowledge that it is a sacrifice for our families and places a great deal of burden on them,” Olson said.

The Minnesota National Guard is aggressively reaching out to support affected families, he said. Those efforts include:

- Military family life consultants working with struggling families.
- A full-time mental health coordinator who Olson said is energizing mental health providers across the state to support deployed Guardmembers’ families.

LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, told The Hill on Jan. 11 that Guardmembers would be ready to

UNITS EXTENDED *continued on:*  
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### Support rushed to extended troops’ families

ARLINGTON, Va. – Department of Defense and National Guard officials are providing assets in Minnesota and 27 other states for families of deployed Guard Soldiers whose tours of duty have been extended in Iraq.

Thomas Hall, assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs, said DoD would offer “a very vigorous” support program for members of the Minnesota Army National Guard’s 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, and their

families. DoD announced Jan. 11 that the unit, deployed to Iraq since March 2006, would be extended.

Hall and Col. Anthony Baker Sr., chief of the National Guard Bureau’s Family Program, promised assistance for the 4,000 troops and their families who live in more than half of the 54 states and territories where Guard units are located.

“Family Programs offices within the states, territories, SUPPORT *continued on:* Page 9

### Governors, adjutants general support new defense policy

By Lt. Col. Les’ A. Melnyk  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The nation’s governors and adjutants general have expressed their universal support and appreciation for the recently announced change to Department of Defense policy that will limit total mobilization time of Guard and Reserve units to 12 months.

In a Jan. 11 conference call attended by representatives from every state, the territories of Guam and the Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia, LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, answered questions and addressed concerns about the deployment extension in Iraq of Minnesota’s 1st Brigade, 34th Infantry Division, and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates’ announcement that several Defense policies were changing.

About 4,000 Soldiers assigned to the 1st Brigade are affected by the extension and will now remain in Iraq for up to an additional 125 days, until no later than August. Most will be extended for between 30 and 60 days. About 3,000 of these troops are from the Minnesota Army National Guard, with the remainder drawn from several other states.

“The requirement to extend boots on the ground time was understood, accepted and will be supported by National Guard

NEW POLICY *continued on:*  
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Photo by Senior Master Sgt. John Rohrer

### Cattle call

Wyoming Air National Guard loadmasters aboard a C-130 Hercules transport watch as a one-ton hay bale lands near a herd of cows during an emergency feeding mission in southeast Colorado Jan. 3. The hay was dropped near La Junta, Colo., to feed livestock stranded by a severe snow storm. See story, photos and the Guard’s efforts in affected states on page 8.

Hundreds of Soldiers and Airman support Ford funeral, page 12

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# Pandemic: Ounces of prevention could pay off

ARLINGTON, Va. – There's nothing like the end of the world, or the very real possibility, to really get your attention.

It happened to me more than 44 years ago, in October 1962, during the Cuban Missile Crisis when the Cold War seemed very likely to explode in our faces. I was 14, a freshman in high school, and I was convinced I would not live to be a sophomore. My family lived 15 miles from Bangor, Maine, where Dow Air Force Base, a Strategic Air Command base for B-52 bombers, was located.

My father pronounced one too many times that he bet one of those Soviet missiles, maybe more, was aimed right at Bangor. We were going to be toast – if we were lucky. I was scared beyond words. There seemed to be no place to run; no place to hide. I spent so much time praying on my knees during those 12 frightening days that I almost wore holes in the floor beside my bed.

I'll never forget the feeling of profound relief that replaced the fear when the Soviets backed down and announced they would pull their missiles out of Cuba.

All of this talk about the possibility of an influenza pandemic – a global epidemic – reminds me of the Cold War. We cope with it. We live in denial. We believe that nothing bad will happen. Then, something like a missile crisis hammers home the idea that such an incomprehensible event could indeed occur. Remember 9/11? I rest my case.

Maj. Gen. Gerald Harmon from the South Carolina Air National Guard is a family physician who is convinced that a flu pandemic could devastate this country. It's not a matter of if, but when, said Dr. Harmon who has become director of the new Surgeons Office at the National Guard Bureau. He is also the bureau's chief surgeon and the National Guard assistant to the Surgeon General of the Air Force.

A flu pandemic might not fit your definition of the end of the world in the same vein as a nuclear holocaust. Still, it could be serious enough to make you want to listen to Gerald Harmon. You might also want to think about doing something extra for your family and for the National Guard family this year. You might want to give your family the gift of



**By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell**  
 Senior Editor

preparation.

"I believe we have to take the possibility of pandemic flu very seriously," Harmon said. "I believe it will happen within the next few years – during my career. It may not happen during the next few months, but it won't be decades, either."

Avian flu, or "bird flu," is the influenza that international health officials fear the most should it mutate into a strain that could be passed from person to person. H5N1 is the

after people started passing the flu around, Harmon said. It would take that long to develop, manufacture and distribute the new vaccine, he added. The World Health Organization has predicted that such an outbreak could cause between 7 and 360 million deaths. That is scary stuff.

These are some of the scenarios. The pandemic could last for at least six months. Our medical and mortuary systems would be overwhelmed. Schools would be closed. People might not be able to leave their homes to buy food or get cash from bank machines. A third of the work force, including police, firefighters, and healthcare people, would be out of action – sick themselves or taking care of sick members of their families or simply staying home with their children. The economy could be turned upside down. In some respects, it could be as bad as if the missiles had been launched in 1962.

I don't understand the biology, but this kind of thing has happened

want to know everything that I can do so that I do not feel as vulnerable as I did in October 1962.

I also want to be able to do my bit as a National Guard Soldier, because the Guard would have to step up to help the civilian force care for the sick, distribute medicine, food and water, and support the local sheriff and other law enforcement people, Harmon projected. The incredible response by Guard members from across this country to hurricanes Katrina and Rita in September 2005 leads Harmon to believe that Guard members would want to roll out again.

"I have never seen a single sign of people not responding," Harmon said. "Guard people understand what it means to serve their communities. They have taken an oath. They are ideally situated to help local civilian authorities because they are imbedded in their communities."

But they also have to remain healthy to perpetuate that tradition which dates back 370 years to 1636. So this is what the doctor orders – or at least strongly recommends.

Stay in shape. Guard Soldiers and Airmen have to remain fit to decrease the likelihood of getting sick in the first place. "We have to maintain a fit and healthy force," Harmon said.

Get your flu shots. Inoculations for the traditional flu may not keep you from catching the Avian flu, but the available vaccines might make it less severe. Think of your flu shot as chicken soup. It couldn't hurt.

Do what your mother told you. Wash your hands – a lot. Before you eat. After you go to the bathroom. After you blow your nose.

Cough into your sleeve or a handkerchief. "Any protection is better than none," Harmon said.

Prepare for a hurricane. Stock up enough canned goods, water, batteries, toilet paper, and other consumables for a couple of weeks. Set aside some cash. Then, leave the stuff alone. Forget you've got it until you need it.

If all of these preparations seem like overkill for a pandemic that hasn't struck yet, ask yourself this: Would you rather get yourself and your family ready for something that doesn't happen, or would you rather not be prepared if it does? It's your family, and it's our National Guard. We have to stay ready and able to help our people.

## Pandemic preparedness

- Plan:** Have a family plan, including how children will be occupied during lengthy confinements at home.
- Prepare:** Make sure shots are up to date. Stock nonperishable foods, bottled water, medications, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health-approved N-95 face masks, impermeable gloves, eye protection and other emergency supplies.
- Practice hygiene:** Cover coughs and sneezes; put tissues in the trash; use a sleeve if you don't have a tissue; wash hands; keep living and work areas clean. And during an epidemic or a pandemic: avoid crowds, limit travel and work from home.

subtype of the virus that is most deadly to humans. It hasn't become contagious among people, so far as we know. However, the World Health Organization claims that nearly 60 percent of the few hundred people in 10 countries who have gotten the flu from direct contact with birds have died.

There is no vaccine, and there wouldn't be for about a half year

before, Harmon reminds us. It was called "swine flu" in 1976. Thankfully, that did not become as much of a health crisis in this country as people feared because of mass vaccinations, he said. Still, I listen to people like Dr. Harmon when they say a flu pandemic will probably happen again, and that every community would have to fend for itself. It's not that I want to live in fear. I



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# Montenegro partners with Maine Guard

## Among goals: Advise as country transitions from conscript military to all-volunteer force

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

PODGORICA, Montenegro – The ripples from the first muster of Dec. 13, 1636, have reached the shores of the Adriatic Sea, where the world’s youngest country on Dec. 7 joined America’s oldest military service in the National Guard’s State Partnership Program.

“This is an historic first step initiating a strong bilateral defense relationship between the United States and Montenegro,” LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, said at the formal announcement of the partnership in the nation’s capital, Podgorica,

once named Titograd.

“I want to express my gratitude to the United States of America for its support,” Montenegrin President Filip Vujanovic said during a meeting with Blum. “I’m very glad about the cooperation between the state of Maine and the state of Montenegro. It will further strengthen the cooperation as a whole between Montenegro and the USA.”

“This is the first, very historic step, on establishing mutual partnership relations in terms of defense between the United States and Montenegro,” said Lt. Col. Gen. Jovan Lakcevic, Montenegro’s chief of defense. “As the states of Montenegro and Maine are very similar when it comes to their landscapes, the same goes for the National Guard of Maine and the Montenegrin military. We look alike. We have many similar Army units. We have a lot of potential for military cooperation.”

The first muster of three militia regiments

in the Massachusetts Bay Colony 370 years ago marked the birth of the National Guard. Montenegro declared independence on June 3 and quickly partnered with the National Guard.

The State Partnership Program (SPP) pairs 55 countries with the National Guard in U.S. states and territories. Montenegro is partnered with Maine.

Other Balkan countries also are members of the SPP, and Blum said during his Montenegrin visit that he hopes a Balkan SPP Regional Workshop, tentatively scheduled for May 2007, will bring together these nation-states and their National Guard state partners.

“The State Partnership Program has acted as a catalyst for stability in regions where stability has been sought for centuries and was never achieved and now is possible,” Blum said.

➔ Read more at [www.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ngb.army.mil)

## Montenegro’s 2006 timeline to independence

- May 31: Citizens choose independence in referendum monitored by European Union.
- June 3: Independence formally declared.
- June 12: Montenegrin independence recognized by the United States.
- June 28: Joins United Nations.
- July 13: National holiday celebrates independence.
- Nov. 29: Invited to join Partnership for Peace, a stepping stone to full NATO membership.
- Dec. 7: Joins National Guard State Partnership Program.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dawn M. Price

## On patrol in Iraq

Staff Sgt. Brock Hutzler, from the Illinois Army National Guard, attached to Multi-National Division - Central South, Camp Echo, Iraq, prepares his M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and ammunition prior to departing camp to conduct a joint coalition forces mission in Al Hamzah, Iraq.

## Texas Guard responds to bird deaths

By Chief Master Sgt.  
Gonda Moncada  
Texas National Guard

AUSTIN, Texas – In a scene reminiscent of emergency measures seen in cities across the country after 9/11, downtown Austin was temporarily blocked to people and traffic so authorities could investigate the unexplained deaths of more than 60 birds Jan. 8.

Together with the Austin Police and Fire Departments, Hazmat, EMS, FBI, USDA, Travis County Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response, the Texas National Guard’s 6th Civil Support Team arrived at the scene by 6 a.m. after reports came in of numerous dead birds downtown and people becoming ill.

The team was tasked to identify any potential hazards to the public, conduct area air monitoring, collect dead birds and assist with the analysis of any samples collected from the scene.

The Austin Police Department and a USDA official were able to confirm at noon that there were no health threats to the public, and traffic was restored even before the press conference ended.

The 6th CST is one of 55 teams stationed across the nation and is a rapidly deployable, full-time active duty Army and Air National Guard

unit available to respond to incidents involving possible weapons of mass destruction, as well as other disasters and catastrophes.

The team represents both federal and state governments by providing support to local emergency responders and has been training for the “real thing” in many different cities throughout the country.

Its mission is to support civil authorities by identifying unknown chemical, biological or radiological substances, assess current and projected consequences, provide

advice on response measures, obtain additional state and federal support, and mitigate hazards.

Consisting of 22 Soldiers and Airmen, the team is trained to deploy, by ground or air within one hour of notification. The team’s goal is to be on scene within a total of four hours in a 250-mile radius from the unit’s base at Camp Mabry.

The 6th CST’s fully equipped mobile laboratory is capable of analyzing chemicals and biological agents on-site; usually within 45 minutes to 2-1/2 hours.



Texas National Guard photo

Members of the 6th Civil Support Team in full protective gear ride a Gator, a rugged motorized vehicle, in downtown Austin, Texas, Jan. 8. The team responded to a report of 60 dead birds in the urban area.

## Air National Guard defining moments-February

1949

Congress rejected a Truman administration initiative to merge the ANG into the Air Force Reserve.

1954

To launch a nationwide ANG recruiting drive, Col. Willard W. Millikan, commander of the District of Columbia’s 113th Fighter Bomber Wing, set a Los Angeles to New York City speed record of four hours, eight minutes and five seconds in

an F-86 borrowed from the Air Force.

1969

Graduating from the Lackland Military Training Center at San Antonio, Texas, three women became the first ANG women in history to complete Air Force basic training. They were Kathy Kovacs and Michele Kutton from Illinois and Vicki Markotay from Missouri.

1998

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen an-

nounced that he had requested a Presidential Selective Reserve Call-Up to support operations against Iraq in Southwest Asia.

2003

Thomas F. Hall, assistant secretary of defense for Reserve Affairs, announced that there would be a “rebalancing” of missions between the active duty and reserve components of the armed forces because of the high demands being placed on the latter.



# ★ Guarding America ★

## ARIZONA

More than 600 members of the Grand Canyon State Guard's 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment deployed in January for Operation Enduring Freedom. They will train at Fort Bragg, N.C., before shipping off for more than a year in Afghanistan. Many of the infantry-trained 158th soldiers are expected to handle security details in Afghanistan, though their missions have not yet been released.

## GEORGIA

Three Peach State Air Guard units received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, the highest unit award presented by the Air Force. They are the 116th Air Control Wing at Robins Air Force Base, the 202nd Engineering Installation Squadron in Macon, and the 283rd Combat Communications Squadron at Dobbins ARB. The 116th, the nation's only blended wing, was the recipient of its 13th AFOUA. The 202nd was recognized for deploying communication installation and engineering teams to four countries in the Middle East in direct support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. The 283rd was recognized for its support of the 1st Air Force and U.S. NORTHCOM's Deployable-Homeland and Air Cruise Missile Defense proof of concept in California.

## ILLINOIS

Two Prairie State Guardswomen identified a gas leak while mobilized to support storm relief efforts in Decatur and Macon County in December. Spc. Stephanie Stretch, a military police investigator, and Sgt. Meghan Silveus, a supply sergeant, both assigned to the 233rd Military Police Company based in Springfield, identified the gas leak as they went door-to-door in downtown Decatur. In two days of going door-to-door, members of the Illinois Army National Guard were able to go to more than 20,000 homes and identified several potential gas leaks.

## KENTUCKY

The Bluegrass State announced the for-

mation of the 123rd Contingency Response Group (CRG) – the first Air National Guard unit of its kind in the nation. Designed as a deployable “airbase in a box,” the 123rd will have the capability to provide everything necessary to open a runway, load and unload aircraft, provide security, housing and all the necessities to run an airfield. This capability will be used in a dual mission role supporting both the Global War on Terrorism and Homeland Defense. Over \$33 million was saved by reorganizing the existing manpower and facilities at the Louisville Air Guard Base.

## MASSACHUSETTS

The U. S. Air Force recently announced that the Bay State's Air National Guard and the Boston metro region were selected as one of the six locations to host “Air Force Week,” Aug. 18-26. Massachusetts is home to the 102nd Fighter Wing, Cape Cod, and the 104th Fighter Wing, Westfield. Activities are scheduled around the Boston area and will culminate with the 2007 Cape Cod Air Show scheduled Aug. 25-26. The show will feature the elite Air Force demonstration team, the Thunderbirds.

## MISSOURI

Show Me State Soldiers from the 1175th Military Police Company, based in St. Clair, with a detachment at Jefferson Barracks, conducted door-to-door foot patrols along with the St. Charles Fire Department in areas of the city hardest hit by the ice, cold temperatures, and loss of power from recent winter storms. The Soldiers and firemen checked an area with more than 30,000 homes, alerting officials when medical assistance was needed.

## NEVADA

The Silver State's adjutant general, Brig. Gen. Cindy Kirkland, pinned on a second star Dec. 6 and was promoted to the rank of major general. The pinning took place in the office of Gov. Kenny Guinn, the commander-in-chief of the Nevada National Guard. Kirkland commands the 3,500 soldiers and airmen assigned to the Nevada Guard in 11 communities across the Silver State. She is one of only two female adjutants general in the U.S. military.

## OHIO

The Buckeye State's 178th Fighter Wing in Springfield announced a new mission Dec. 11 that involves joining with the Royal Netherlands Air Force (RNLAf). As part of the Air Force Total Force Integration initiatives, the Ohio Air Guard is teaming with the active duty Air Force to build partnership capacity with a strong NATO ally. They will host an international F-16 training mission at Springfield Municipal Airport Air Guard Station. Under a Foreign Military Sales program, they will provide flight instruction, facilities, flight operations, and maintenance support to the RNLAf. Ohio Air Guard instructor pilots will train Dutch pilots in F-16 flight operations and combat tactics.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

The Palmetto State plans to open a military museum Feb. 6. It's located behind the Bluff Road National Guard Armory in Columbia and will identify, collect, research and preserve historically significant properties and maintain them as usable resources for scholars and other interested individuals. The museum will instill and maintain visitor's interest, savor our military heritage, further community relations and

enhance esprit de corps among the men and women serving in the South Carolina National Guard and civilian work force. It will also provide educational services to include programs, classes, exhibits, audiovisual and publications for the military and civilian population.

## SOUTH DAKOTA

Raymond W. Carpenter of Rapid City was promoted to major general Jan. 5 at the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va. Carpenter, a Guardsman from the Mount Rushmore State, is currently serving as the special assistant to Lt. Gen. Clyde A. Vaughn, the director, Army National Guard. He joined the Navy after graduating from the Vietnamese Language School at the Defense Language Institute. He served for nearly a year at the Naval Support Activity in the port city of Da Nang in South Vietnam and helped with the refugee relocation program.

## TENNESSEE

Volunteer State's Guardsmembers in Greeneville commemorated the 198th anniversary of the birth of the 17th President of the United States, Andrew Johnson, Dec. 29. This year's ceremony was held on Monument Hill at Greeneville's Andrew Johnson National Historic Site. The Tennessee Army National Guard Funeral Honors Team rendered a 21-gun salute. The team bugler played “Taps” as a wreath was laid at Johnson's grave.

## WYOMING

Three Equality State Army National Guard Soldiers were recently recognized for their outstanding service. Spc. Jason A. Webb of the 960th Maintenance Company, headquartered in Torrington, was named as the Soldier of the Year. Spc. Jesse M. Williams of the 1041st Engineer Company, headquartered in Rock Springs, was chosen as the Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Capt. Bruce Hays of the 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery, headquartered in Sheridan, was chosen as the Company Grade Officer of the Year.



Watch a video of this story at [www.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ngb.army.mil)

## 370th birthday painting captures Guard history

By Alyson L. Stowe  
Missouri National Guard

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. – “It's a gift to Soldiers in the Guard and their families,” said Springfield native John Fulton, creator and artist of a watercolor painting presented to the Missouri National Guard during a ceremony Dec. 13 at the Missouri Military Museum commemorating the National Guard's 370th birthday.

The painting is titled “Our Legacy is Freedom.” It is currently on display at the museum.

“The painting is a series of small vignettes of Guard stories since 9/11,” Fulton added. “The collage technique tells the big picture – the heart and soul of the Guard and its history.”

Represented in the 26-inch by 41-inch watercolor are events from Iraq and Afghanistan, including an image of women voting indicated by the purple ink on their fingers, to Hurricane Katrina recovery efforts, shown by Soldiers providing fresh water and supplies to victims.

# JSTARS pass 20,000 hours for OIF

## Guardmembers part of this airborne battle management aircraft mission

By Tech. Sgt. Steve Staedler  
379th Air Expeditionary Wing

SOUTHWEST ASIA - Soaring on a clear night 30,000 feet above Iraq, the 22 crewmembers aboard the Boeing 707 E-8 Joint Stars aircraft from the 12th Expeditionary Airborne Command and Control Squadron passed 20,000 flying hours Nov. 30 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"To me it's more than just a number," said Lt. Col. Henry Cyr, commander of the 12th EACCS. "It represents an enduring presence of a JSTARS overhead during OIF. Add it up and that turns into several years of continuous coverage to forces on the ground."

In doing the math 20,000 hours actually adds up to 833 days of flying time since the war started in early 2003. The flying is a team effort, shared on 90-day rotations between the 12th EACCS, the 16th EACCS and the 128th EACCS — all stationed at Robins Air Force Base, Ga.

The JSTARS is an airborne battle manage-



A Boeing 707 E-8 Joint Stars departs from a base in Southwest Asia.

ment aircraft specializing in command and control, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance gathering. Information gathered can be passed in real time to troops on the ground conducting combat operations.

Much of the intelligence collected during ISR missions are compliments of a 24-foot long radar underneath the aircraft, which gives crew members on the flight the ability to scan an area several hundred miles or zoom into a precise location for closer inspection.

Cyr said the JSTARS strength is being able to monitor and play back radar over a specific locale and provide analysis of an event that took place in that area. This information can be passed down to ground troops to assist them in carrying out their missions more safely and effectively.

"Troops on the ground never had radar flying of this capability over head before and because of that they can fine tune their operations," Cyr said of what the JSTARS bring to the fight. "Instead of looking around scattered shot on the ground we can direct them to a particular area and look at those locations more in depth."

The missions accomplished during the past 20,000 flying hours have evolved to meet changing dynamics of the war in Iraq. Initially, JSTARS was called to provide direct combat support for ground troops as they made their way into Iraq. From there the role changed slightly to supporting convoys and other assets on the ground, but that mission was switched to other aircraft in the AOR better suited to handle those scenarios. Now, JSTARS is flying mostly ISR missions.

A key component of the JSTARS is the diversity in its team. Truly a blended wing, the three squadrons are comprised of active duty and Guard Airmen. Flights also have Army



Photos by Senior Airman Ricky Best

Staff Sgt. Mark Porter and Senior Airman Nicole LaGrow, both with the 12th Expeditionary Airborne Command and Control Squadron, upload software as they perform radio and computer checks in preparation for a flight. On this flight over Iraq, the JSTARS passed 20,000 flying hours in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

and, in the past, Marines on board working together to fulfill its role of supporting ground troops.

Tech. Sgt. Arthur Yancey, a radar surveillance technician with the 379th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, is full-time Guard member with 23 years of service, the last 10 with the Georgia Air National Guard. A cross-trainee from a B-1 bomber career field into JSTARS just three years ago, he said the capabilities of the aircraft and its technologies are "awe inspiring."

"I'm always learning something new every day with this career field," Yancey said. "This radar system is phenomenal."

And it is using that "phenomenal" radar system, and the collective efforts of the three squadrons that make the JSTARS an extremely reliable, consistent asset in the AOR in supporting ground troops. Twenty thousand hours later, the mission is still going strong and contributing to troops up range.

"I'm just glad to be doing something for my country," said Capt. Paul Farlow, 12th EACCS who piloted the 707 on its milestone mission. "My father was a Korean War veteran and he instilled in me a sense of pride in giving something back to your country."

"Twenty thousand flying hours — a lot of good is coming out of that," he said.

### FINDING A FAMILY READINESS COORDINATOR NEAR YOU IS JUST A FEW CLICKS AWAY

The National Guard Family Program office in each state is designed to assist family members of all service members, regardless of the military organization or status, with information and referrals. Family program offices in the 54 states and territories, wing family program coordinators and a host of other resources for families can be found at:

[www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org)

To get to this searchable site, click the family member icon, then click on the green "Local Community Resource Finder" on the right



Photo by Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika

### Taking the field

Soldiers from the U.S. Army Recruiting Command, Camp Atterbury, Ind., and members of the Indiana Army National Guard wave American flags as they are recognized at the first round playoff game between the Indianapolis Colts and Kansas City Chiefs in the RCA Dome in Indianapolis, Ind., Jan. 6.

# Under fire, training became instinct for Silver Star recipients

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The heroism of African-American Guardmembers traces back to the Civil War.

Sgt. William H. Carney, 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, was the first African-American awarded the Medal of Honor. Sgt. Maj. Christian A. Fleetwood, 4th Regiment, U.S. Colored Volunteer Infantry – and who organized the first black company of the D.C. National Guard – also received the Medal of Honor for Civil War actions.

Carney and Fleetwood left a heritage of the kind celebrated since 1926 in February during Black History Month.

Guardmembers are still adding to that heritage.

Sgt. 1st Class Chad Stephens and Sgt. Jason Mike are among 19 National Guard Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen who have received Silver Stars in the Global War on Terrorism.

“You look at the military as a melting pot,” Mike said. “As far as being black, white, Hispanic, Asian – it’s never an issue. Our squad consisted of a Puerto Rican, a Mexican, two white females, three white males and then myself, being an African-American.”

“I’m proud of the African-American heritage and history, but the military gets rid of that whole entire scheme of things and breaks it down to, ‘You know what, this is my brother-in-arms, sister-in-arms, you do what you do to get each other back home alive.’ Where can you go where you have a squad of so many ethnicities that come together to do one job, one mission, one team? You don’t see that anywhere else ... but you see that in the military.”

The Silver Star is the third highest decoration given for valor.

Stephens and Mike say the heroism they displayed in Iraq was rooted in their Army training.

“Training is the main thing,” Stephens said. “Every one of my Soldiers, we trained hard. Capt. Christopher Cash (the unit commander) trained us hard before we left. When we were here in the States, every Soldier hated him ... but when they got to combat they knew that he did the right thing by pushing them to the limit. They respected that.”

Stephens, a North Carolina Guardsman with the 1st Battalion, 120th Infantry, 30th Infantry Brigade, received his Silver Star for actions leading his platoon in Baqubah on June 24, 2004, a day that would



also result in the infantryman receiving a Purple Heart.

Mike, a Kentucky Guardsman with the 617th Military Police Company, received his Silver Star for his response to the ambush of his convoy on Alternate Supply Route Detroit on March 20, 2005. At one point during the ambush, this medic rendered aid to injured members of his squad while alternating fire from an M249 Squad Automatic Weapon and an M4 carbine to engage enemy forces on his right and left.

“Once [the ambush] started to happen, it was pretty much all instinct,” Mike said. “All the training that you do in the military – the repetitive things, the range, the things that you do prior to mobilization – all that began to kick in. Really, there was nothing in my head that was thinking, ‘hey, I’m scared.’ All I had to do was pretty much just straight shot, do your job and try to get yourself and your fellow comrades home alive.”

Motivated by the terrorist attacks of 9/11, Mike enlisted in the Army National Guard in April 2002. “After Sept. 11th, I knew that I had to do something greater than just play football, so that’s why I joined the military,” the former Jacksonville University player said. “I have been given so much by this country; what more could I do other than to give my service? I hadn’t done anything to pay this nation back. The first thing I thought was maybe I need to sacrifice my dream of playing football ... and give something back.”

Stephens had already been in the Army National Guard more than a decade before Mike enlisted. He enlisted in 1985, a year before he even graduated high school, and he served in Operation Desert Storm and Desert Shield during a stint in the regular Army.

“I knew what I was going into,” he said. “I didn’t know whether my Soldiers were ready for this. I tried to explain to them what they were

getting themselves into, being an infantryman, going in. My main thing was, I was worried about them.”

Stephens continued to worry about the people around him more than himself, even during the action that cost the lives of two members of his unit and earned him the Silver Star. Even after the hair burnt off his head, shrapnel penetrated his left arm, his eyes were singed shut by the heat from an explosion of a rocket-propelled grenade entering the turret of his Bradley Fighting Vehicle, Stephens continued to put his men above himself.

“I couldn’t see, so I reached over for my gunner. He wasn’t in his seat. He was laying on the floor unconscious, so I pulled him up to me. When I pulled him to me, I started hollering at him, because I couldn’t see and I knew we had to return fire. I didn’t know how badly he was hurt, but I knew we had to return fire. ... He came to.” Stephens motivated the wounded gunner. “He hopped right back up in the gunner’s seat and started shooting,” Stephens said.

“Before I was put in this situation, I thought a lot of the training that we did was really irrelevant,” Mike said. “I thought it was really pointless, didn’t see much meaning behind it, busy work. Never knowing the importance and the seriousness with which I should take the training.”

Mike also credits his training with giving him the calm that he felt in the face of potentially overwhelming numbers of enemy forces.

“After being in that situation and seeing that there’s a method to the madness, I think that training is second to none. Everything that the military does is lessons learned, things that they’ve learned in prior conflicts. You do it so much that it becomes instinct. Everything that I did that day was purely because of the training: That’s the only reason that I came out alive.”

Mike has a message for Guardmembers who have not yet faced combat: “Take all training seriously and take away as much as possible.”

And Stephens says he would give his Silver Star – would give anything, in fact – to have the two men back who died that day.

One was Spc. Daniel Desens, Jr., 20.

The other was Capt. Christopher Cash, 36, the commander who had given his men the training that saved their lives.

“Two of the best Soldiers that I will ever meet in my life,” Stephens



Courtesy photo

Sgt. 1st Class Chad Stephens speaks after receiving his Silver Star.

**“I’m proud of the African-American heritage and history, but the military gets rid of that whole entire scheme of things and breaks it down to, ‘You know what, this is my brother-in-arms, sister-in-arms, you do what you do to get each other back home alive.’”**

–Sgt. Jason Mike, Silver Star recipient



Courtesy photo

## Former U.N. ambassador praises military’s inclusiveness

WASHINGTON – Andrew J. Young Jr., a former aide to the late civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., praised the U.S. military’s culture of inclusiveness during an Army observance of King’s upcoming birthday held Jan. 5 in Alexandria, Va.

The U.S. military fulfills King’s dream of equality and social justice for all by its practice of promoting servicemembers due to individual merit, rather than by ethnic makeup, Young said at the event that was sponsored by and held at the U.S. Army Test and Evaluation Command headquarters.

Servicemembers “appreciate the diversity of this nation, and you fight to defend the freedoms and opportunities of all of our citizens,” he said. “And, that is what makes the military a leader in our society.”

Young, 74, has had a distinguished public service career that includes serving as a U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, the mayor of Atlanta, and as a congressman from Georgia.

Young said that, like King’s years of efforts to achieve civil rights for all Americans regardless of race, the U.S. military didn’t achieve equal opportunity for all servicemembers overnight.

The U.S. military began its march toward equality back in the late 1940s, Young recalled, when President Harry S. Truman ordered the armed services to desegregate. Before Truman’s 1947 directive, military units had been segregated by race.

Yet, civil rights for all were still lacking in America a decade after World War II had ended. King began his non-violent campaign to achieve civil rights for African-American citizens, Young noted, soon after Montgomery, Ala., resident Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to sit in the back of a public bus on Dec. 1, 1955.

In 1957, King helped to establish the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a group that harnessed the efforts of black churches to conduct non-violent protests and lobbying for civil rights reform.



Young

# Senior enlisted advisor clear about his mission

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – He wears a U.S. Army uniform, but Command Sgt. Maj. David Ray Hudson once was in the U.S. Air Force. That makes him uniquely qualified to be the senior enlisted advisor to the chief of the National Guard Bureau.

“My primary concern is enlisted issues: joint enlisted issues,” Hudson said during a recent interview. About 85 percent of the nation’s 457,000 Army and Air Guardmembers are enlisted. Hudson is the second senior enlisted advisor to the chief, LTG H Steven Blum. The first was Command Sgt. Maj. John Leonard, who retired in August.

Whether Blum is visiting Guardmembers abroad, such as at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in November, or at home, such as in all four southwest border states in December, odds are good that Hudson is at his side.

The command sergeant major is there to advise Blum about enlisted issues and to answer questions from enlisted Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen. He said warriors are one of his top five priorities. “Warriors’ encompasses both our Airmen and our Soldiers,” Hudson said.

His other four priorities: Enhancing the National Guard’s mission at home and abroad; helping with the National Guard Bureau’s transition to an increasingly operational role;



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill

**Command Sgt. Maj. David Ray Hudson, the senior enlisted advisor to LTG H Steven Blum, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, talks with troops deployed to Operation Jump Start on the California border with Mexico Nov. 27.**

advocating for Guardmembers’ families; and supporting civilian employers.

“Employers in the United States today are doing some phenomenal things with the way that they support warriors,” he said.

It’s important that employers understand

how greatly their support is appreciated and that they remain clear on the National Guard’s mission, he said. “Our warriors also have a responsibility to assist with employer recognition and keep their employers informed about their required Guard duties. It should be a two-

## A day in the life of ... the senior enlisted advisor

Twelve-hour days are part of the drill for Command Sgt. Maj. David Ray Hudson, senior enlisted advisor to LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau. This was his schedule during a recent, typical day in Washington.

- 0530:** Depart residence at Fort Myer; travel to Fort McNair
- 0600:** Do morning PT with NGB chief; discuss miscellaneous warrior issues
- 0730:** Meet with office staff and receive morning brief from executive NCO on the day’s activities
- 0900:** Meet with ESGR leadership
- 1030:** Review legislation affecting enlisted warriors with Legislative Liaison personnel
- 1200:** Discuss Outstanding Soldier and Airmen of the Year awards for 2007 during lunch with Army Guard Command Sgt. Major John Gipe and Air National Guard Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith
- 1330:** Discuss joint enlisted issues with director of Joint Staff
- 1430:** Meeting at Pentagon with members of Office of Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs
- 1530:** Meet with NGB chief’s staff before afternoon stand-up [briefing]
- 1600:** Afternoon stand-up
- 1700:** Back to office; wrap-up with office staff
- 1730:** Go home, run several miles with dog Tucker

way street. We keep our employers informed and tell them how much we appreciate their help, and they support us when we are called to duty for our state and country.”

⇒ Read more at [www.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ngb.army.mil)

## Minnesotan trades crown for cammies

By Samantha L. Quigley  
American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON - A 22-year-old college student recently traded her beauty-queen tiara for the Kevlar helmet she’ll wear when she deploys with her Minnesota Army National Guard unit to Iraq.

For the past six months, Jessica Gaulke’s life has been about college classes and making appearances as Minneapolis’ 2007 Aquatennial Queen of the Lakes, but soon it will focus on helping lead Iraq to a peaceful democracy.

The Augsburg College senior studying sociology will be deploying as Spc. Jessica Gaulke with the 2nd Battalion, 147th Assault Helicopter Battalion. The unit is scheduled to start training at Fort Hood, Texas, this spring in advance of a yearlong tour in Iraq.

“I’m feeling strong to go. The training I’ve received is good training, and I’m prepared,” Gaulke said. But her military obligation, which she accepted in February 2002 when she joined the National Guard, has ended her rein as Queen of the Lakes.

Although it was never her lifelong ambition to win a beauty pageant, she said the abbreviated experience has been wonderful. So, although she admits it was bittersweet to hand



Spc. Jessica Gaulke

over her crown Jan. 4, she said she feels no resentment.

“I’ve heard this whole time that, ‘You could go. You never know when you’re going to go, but you could go at any time and they don’t even have to give you notice,’” Gaulke said. “I’m thankful for the six months that I’ve had (as Queen of the Lakes). Of course, I would have liked to finish the year out, but what I’ve experienced has been amazing.”

During the six months as Aquatennial Queen of the Lakes, she juggled her National Guard drill duties and schoolwork with her public appearances, she said.

“I do it pretty well, actually. I’ve had to do a couple of changes in my car going from drill to parades,” Gaulke said. “I think maybe this is changing the whole outlook on the pageant system and scholarship programs because it’s not all about the glitz and glam.”

## Excitement heating up over new extended cold weather gear

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

FORTGREELEY, Alaska – Members of the Alaska Army National Guard are sizzling with excitement about their new cold weather gear that keeps them toasty warm even when temperatures dip to double digits below zero.

The new Generation III Extended Cold Weather Clothing System takes the latest insulating and wicking materials that have become hot

tickets among skiers, snowmobile riders and other extreme-sports enthusiasts and adapting them for soldiers operating in demanding arctic conditions, explained Army Maj. Joe Miley, operations officer for the Alaska Guard’s 49th Missile Defense Battalion.

Unit members got the new, layered system about two weeks ago, just in time for the coldest part of the season here, when the “Delta winds” bring in sustained 60-mph winds,

with higher gusts, and temperatures can hit minus-60.

Those conditions make soldiering pretty demanding, explained Army Sgt. Seth Paul, a military policeman for the unit who patrols the Missile Defense Complex on some of those bone-chilling days. They gel up diesel fuel in vehicles and fray or split belts, freeze up weapons systems, and render radios unusable.

Such conditions can take an even bigger toll on troops, particularly those serving outside over extended periods.

The new ECWCS gear, with 12 components that can be mixed and matched depending on the conditions and how active a soldier is, offers the critical protection soldiers here need to do their jobs, Miley said.

The system begins with silky long underwear that’s made of lightweight, moisture-wicking polyester designed to keep the wearer dry. The mid-weight shirt and pants provide light insulation during warmer days or an extra layer in colder conditions.

The hands-down favorite piece of gear among the Guardsmen here, the green fleece jacket, offers a snuggly replacement for the Army’s heavy black fleece jacket. “It’s lighter and warmer, and it’s modeled after animal fur,” Paul said.



Photo by William D. Moss

**Sgt. Seth Paul (left) and his wife, Sgt. Katja Paul, both military police officers with the Alaska Army Guard’s 49th Missile Defense Battalion at Fort Greeley, call the Army’s new Generation III Extended Cold Weather Clothing System the perfect answer to extreme conditions.**

# Guard to the rescue after winter storms

## Rescues motorists, feeds cattle in Plain and western states

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen in eight states rescued people and hauled hay to livestock following a severe end-of-year winter storm that stretched from America's northern to southern borders.

Hundreds of Guard members in Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas and Washington – sometimes assisted by other states – spent their holiday season rescuing stranded motorists, carrying medical supplies and restoring power. In Colorado, Kansas and New Mexico, Guard members dropped hay from helicopters to starving cattle.

At least 13 people in five states died in the storm.

“That responsibility is one of our primary missions, and we have always responded,” Air Force Maj. Gen. Mason Whitney, Colorado's adjutant general, told the American Forces Information Service. “That's the strength of the National Guard. We are the forward-deployed forces in communities across America for the homeland defense and emergency response mission.”

The Joint Operations Center at National Guard Bureau – which coordinates Guard operations worldwide – and other sources provided this picture of Minutemen and women helping citizens dig out from as much as three feet of snow.

In Colorado, vehicles stranded by a pre-Christmas snowstorm that dumped 30 inches in the mountains and nine inches on the plains rendered Interstate 25 impassable, and Guardmembers helped state troopers clear the road. Drivers were stranded on I-25, US-52 and I-70. Hundreds of miles of interstates were closed.

About 60 Colorado National Guard members rescued dozens of stranded motorists after the most powerful snowstorm in almost four years.

“They're telling me it's zero visibility,” Whitney, the Colorado adjutant general, told The Associated Press. “They'll kind of bump into something, and it'll turn out to be a car with people in it.”

The Guard conducted search and rescue missions, provided emergency medical transport and carried supplies to Red Cross shelters.

Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen took food and water to thousands of travelers trapped at Denver International Airport, closed more than two days by the storm.

Five days after the Colorado Guard stood down from that first storm, it swung into action again before the severe blizzard conditions of Dec. 28-29, as its joint forces headquarters issued a warning order as the second storm approached.

Colorado Guard leaders anticipated that the new storm centered on Denver and Colorado

**“This is the only one in the Air Force, so if they want this technology, it's coming from Reno.”**

-Master Sgt. Craig Madole, 152nd Intelligence Squadron, Nevada Air National Guard, telling a Nevada reporter about his C-130 Hercules equipped with infrared and a zooming camera lens in the quest to save three climbers missing on Mount Hood

Springs on top of previously accumulated snow could again threaten lives and further disrupt travel. Even before assistance was requested, the Colorado Guard prepared dozens of high ground clearance vehicles and aviation assets to aid local emergency responders. Some 166 Guard members stayed overnight at armories to be in position ahead of time.

Challenges included snowfall that varied from seven to 30 inches and was blown by 70 mph wind gusts, forming drifts up to six feet high across roads. Hundreds of motorists were stranded, including tour bus passengers rescued by the Guard on US-287 in Prowers County. Roads again closed, including interstates. The same storm moved down to New Mexico and then on to the Texas panhandle.

Guard members took food, water, blankets and cots to shelters that ran low on supplies. People were trapped in their homes. Power

was cut off. The domino effect of disrupted transportation corridors caused grocery stores across the Rocky Mountain states to run short of food for days. Gov. Bill Owens declared an emergency.

More than 126 Colorado Guard members patrolled on the ground and in the air to rescue stranded motorists, provided medical aid to five people and medical transport and distributed medicine, baby formula and other critical supplies to isolated areas along the state's Front Range.

“It's amazing to see how people work so well together under stressful conditions,” Capt. Jason Stuchlik, 2nd Battalion, 157th Field Artillery, told The Pueblo Chief. Previously, Stuchlik's unit was part of the National Guard's historic response to Hurricane Katrina. “We are seeing another extreme, from hot to cold,” he said. “The Katrina effort has made us more prepared for this situation.”



Photos by Sgt. Scott Griffin

**Top: A Colorado National Guard helicopter distributes hay to herds of cattle stranded in the snow in the southeast area of the state. The mission began on Jan. 2 with seven helicopters, six from Colorado and one from Oklahoma. Below right: Oregon Guard helicopters joined in the search for three missing climbers on Mt. Hood, in the background. Below inset: Lt. Col. Caesar Garduno receives coordinates while flying over Mount Hood Dec. 16. He and his Air National Guard crew were joined by an Air Force Reserve pararescueman.**



Photo by Maj. James R. Wilson



Photo by Steven Nehl (courtesy of the The Oregonian)

### Other states receiving Guard help

#### NEBRASKA

-About seven members helped utility workers restore power to about 35,000 people left without power for up to a week after the storm downed an estimated 38 major transmission lines in central Nebraska

-OH-58 Kiowa helicopter and a Black Hawk helped power officials assess damage

-Western and north-central Nebraska faced freezing rain, heavy snow and strong winds; some trees had a three-inch layer of ice

#### NEW MEXICO

- high-wheeled vehicles and helicopters provided emergency medical assistance and rescued stranded motorists, hunters and residents of remote areas

-The record-setting storm turned the desert white and canceled flights. This occurred after a year that had already seen the state's Guard members patrolling the border with Mexico as part of Operation Jump Start

-A Black Hawk rescued a stranded heart transplant patient

- Black Hawks provided welfare checks and dropped hay

-members surveyed damage and delivered supplies for infants to numerous homes

#### OKLAHOMA

- CH-47 Chinook helicopter joined Humvees as about 21 Guard members conducted air drops and search and recovery operations in Cimarron County (western part of the state)

- sent five members to Colorado to operate a Chinook providing humanitarian and livestock supplies

#### OREGON

-Chinook and two Black Hawks were joined by a C-130 Hercules aircraft from the Nevada National Guard in a quest to save three climbers missing on Mount Hood; one climber's body was found Dec. 17; the search for the other two will resume in the spring

#### WASHINGTON

-about 17 troops provided generators and other logistics to care centers for elderly people, wastewater treatment plants and other facilities windstorms knocked out power



**New plane, mission**

Right: Tech. Sgt. Dan Robison of the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Maintenance Squadron, loads 30 mm ammunition into an A-10 Thunderbolt of the 103rd Fighter Wing, Jan. 7. As a result of the Base Realignment and Closure Act, the 103rd will lose its A-10s and convert to the C-21, a smaller, twin-engine aircraft that provides cargo and passenger airlift capabilities and can transport patients during aeromedical evacuations. Lt. Gen. Craig McKinley, director of the Air National Guard, visited the unit to assess needs and issues faced by its members during the transition. Bottom: Senior Airman G. Douglas Henry, of the 103rd looks on as Staff Sgt. William Lamphere repairs part of an A-10's landing gear.



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy



**Air Guard leaders explore ways to reset the forces**

By Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith  
National Guard Bureau

BALTIMORE – The challenges for resetting the Air National Guard became more apparent to its senior leaders here Dec. 11-13 when Lt. Gen. Craig McKinley, director of the Air National Guard, hosted the senior leadership conference. Minuteman Heritage – Preparing for New Horizons was the theme.

More than 1,000 leaders from all 54 states and territories, including adjutants general, wing and unit commanders, command chief master sergeants and others, listened to a detailed ex-

planation about the Air Guard's future force.

Resetting the force includes realigning missions, manpower, equipment and training to meet the needs of the 21st century. McKinley provided several examples of how Airmen are already resetting the force, including flying Predator unmanned aerial vehicles. He also expressed his confidence in the leadership's ability to move forward.

Leaders from all 54 states and territories were told of the proposed reset of the Air National Guard from a national perspective.

Officials said all states and territories will

be affected by the reset. It addresses the combined effects of the Base Realignment and Closure Act, Total Force Initiatives and the Quadrennial Defense Review. Future mission changes will affect full-time and traditional positions across the nation, a main concern of the leadership here.

"This has not been an easy process. Because of what BRAC and QDR have done, we need to get through it," McKinley said.



**NEW HERITAGE PAINTING:** LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, addressed Air Guard leaders in December and unveiled the newest National Guard Heritage Painting: "In Katrina's Wake." The painting by Gil Cohen portrays the National Guard's relief operations at New Orleans Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Belle Chasse, La., Sept. 1, 2005, following Hurricane Katrina.



**"... dedicated, disciplined, organized, trained, experienced, versatile, and adaptable people -- that is the real Air National Guard."**

*-Lt. Gen. Craig McKinley, ANG director, speaking at the ANG Senior Leadership Conference Dec. 13*

**From page 1:  
UNITS EXTENDED**

serve if called upon to support the president's new strategy.

"If the nation needs us, we will do it," Blum said. The National Guard has responded to every call for forces since Sept. 11, 2001, with more than 250,000 Citizen-Soldiers already mobilized.

"The Guard and Reserve have been wonderful in the way that they've performed their assignments," Gen. Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said at the White House Jan. 11.

"The increase in military forces will be phased in," Secretary of Defense Robert Gates said at the White House Jan. 11. "It

will not unfold overnight. There will be no 'D-Day.' It won't look like the Gulf War."

The 1st Brigade was sent to Iraq last March in Minnesota's largest deployment since World War II. Their theater immersion training began in the fall of 2005. They were scheduled to serve in Iraq for one year.

Since the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the National Guard has been defending the homeland, engaged in Operation Enduring Freedom, part of the warfight in Operation Iraqi Freedom, on the ground in Bosnia, Kosovo, the Sinai, the Horn of Africa and at Guantanamo Bay, among other places.

Simultaneously, the National Guard has continued its wide array of homeland missions.

**From page 1:  
SUPPORT**

and National Guard Bureau are mobilizing every resource possible to assist families during this critical time," Baker said. "Family Program Offices are working with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, the Army, government and non-government agencies, veterans service organizations, Military One Source, and other entities to ensure families are properly supported.

"Our goal in Family Programs is to ensure no family falls through the crack or is left behind and that we reach out to our families regardless of geographic location," he added.

Teams of experts, including counselors, were en route to Minnesota by mid-January to lend assistance, Hall said. Also, the state's Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve network was primed to work with affected employers.

National Guard officials said that newsletters would be sent to family members providing them with Family Program contact information, family assistant center locations and important telephone numbers and directing them to the Guard Bureau's on-line community Web site: [www.guardfamily.org](http://www.guardfamily.org).

Some states were conducting town halls to answer families' questions about services and support.

# Keeping the goods flowing

## Iowa squad runs gamut of convoy escort missions

By Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood  
1/34 Brigade Combat Team

CAMP ALASAD, Iraq -- Staff Sgt. Michael Warmenhoven and his squad from Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry of the Iowa National Guard have run the gamut of convoy escort security missions for the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division.

The squad spent its first four months at Camp Adder with the 1-34 Brigade Troops Battalion and later the 134th Brigade Support Battalion.

There they rode in Humvee gun trucks escorting semi trucks and trailers driven by civilian contractors to points north, including Logistical Support Area Anaconda.

In September, the squad returned home to Al Asad where his company escorts convoys to Jordan and back. The 300 mile, one-way trip take almost two days to complete.

This western port of entry allows the fastest route in the region. It takes less than a week to move these commodities compared to a minimum of 45 days from Kuwait and Turkey.

Warmenhoven of Marion, Iowa, said the only thing similar about convoy escort missions in eastern and western Iraq is the long days of driving.

Differences include the nationality of the drivers, their attitudes and experience, and the amount of traffic on the road.

On the Adder runs, if something broke down, the drivers would have it fixed or have a solution by the time you made it to the problem truck," he said. "Out here, the drivers tend to add to the problem and it takes a lot of shouting to get them motivated to do anything."

This "motivation" can start before sunrise. The Soldiers inspect the trucks and trailers in a civilian contractor yard. These inspections include looking for contraband, illegal passports, and unauthor-



Semi trucks and trailers escorted by Soldiers of Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, stretch for several miles during a security halt on Nov. 27 on this road in western Iraq.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

Staff Sgt. Michael Warmenhoven of Marion Iowa, Company B, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, powers up his Blue Force Tracker in his Armored Security Vehicle Nov. 27 at Camp Korean Village, Iraq.

ized passengers.

Once the inspections have been completed and the drivers have received a safety brief, the convoy of empty trucks, or "deadheads," rolls out the gate.

For the first few hours, this convoy will travel along a narrow road carved up on each side by roadside bomb blast holes. As Warmenhoven's vehicle turned onto this road, his driver, Spc. Jonathan Bengston of Iowa Falls, Iowa, wished his fellow Soldiers to "have fun."

Several hours later, his convoy would arrive at Camp Korean Village where the Soldiers will prepare for their next trip to Forward Operating Base Trebil, Jordan. The trucks are parked in a large staging yard filled with hundreds of vehicles. The Soldiers will have any maintenance concerns fixed by a dedicated staff of mechanics.

The Soldiers would conduct another safety check before departing this tiny Marine Corps outpost in route to FOB Trebil. Once the convoy reaches the FOB, the empty trucks are dropped off. The Soldiers would then escort trucks full of commodities like fuel and food to CKV where they would stay overnight.

The next morning the convoy leaves for Al Asad. Warmenhoven said some of these runs home have taken as long as 14 hours because of roadside bombs or trucks breaking down.

The extended travel time often causes the Soldiers to arrive at Al Asad at night, Warmenhoven's former favorite time to be on the road.

Warmenhoven said he liked the night convoys for two reasons, the cooler temperatures and the Soldier's night vision capabilities. The former allowed him to push the convoys to higher speeds.

# Soldiers go for a roll in Mosul; trainer will save lives

By Maj. Juanita Chang  
Task Force Lightning

MOSUL, Iraq -- "Rollover, rollover, rollover, grab the gunner!" yelled the Soldiers as they felt their humvee surpass critical angle. Next thing they knew, they were upside down and struggling to exit the vehicle.

Fortunately for them, they were participating in rollover drills using the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, or HEAT, and nobody was hurt.

Over 250 U.S. troops have been severely injured in rollovers since Operation Iraqi Freedom began in March 2003, with over 90 of them dying from their injuries. More than 14 of those have involved drowning, safety experts said.

"There is no other way to prepare yourself for such a situation other than to use this trainer," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tommie Rautenkranz, 169th Fires Brigade, Colorado Army National Guard.

"We learned how important it is to keep your equipment secure while you are in a vehicle," Rautenkranz said. Even though the passengers are seat-belted in, they could still be seriously injured by other objects flying around in the passenger compartment.

Trainers on this device highlight three focus areas. First is to let Soldiers feel what the critical angle is, that is, the angle at which the

vehicle will begin to roll. That way, Soldiers can be aware of it and avoid situations which may surpass that angle.

Second, is seatbelt confidence and operation. With all the weight of a Soldier pulling on a seatbelt while suspended upside down, it

is much more difficult to release the seatbelt.

Finally, the third stage of surviving a rollover safely is the egress, or exiting the vehicle.

"We learned that you must undo your seatbelt before you pop open the door, otherwise,

you have no leverage to open the door," said Rautenkranz.

Soldiers are instructed on the importance of bracing themselves and their equipment in the event of a rollover and to make sure that their fellow crewmembers are safe, too.

"Weapon placement is crucial because when you flip over, if it is not secure, it will hit you or someone else," said Spc. Herman Ada, of the 25th Infantry Division (Light) from Schofield Barracks, Hawaii.

"And if there are not two people in the back seat the gunner is going to have a hard time," Ada added. "If there is nobody to pull him in and nobody to stop him from slamming around, he's going to get hurt," said Staff Sgt. James Ingram, also from 25th Infantry Division.

Trainers here encourage Soldiers to go through the HEAT as many times as they need to in order to become confident in their ability to escape safely in the event of a rollover.

"If this were to happen outside the wire, we may have to do this under fire, with the vehicle on fire, or in water," said Staff Sgt. Thomas Nixon of the 25th ID(L). "I'd much rather experience it here in a controlled environment than have to do it for the first time while someone is shooting at me."

"This will save lives," Nixon said.



Photo by Maj. Juanita Chang

Sgt. Bryan Crossno, of the 169th Fires Brigade, Colorado Army National Guard, operates the Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer, or HEAT, which simulates a vehicle rollover and allows Soldiers to train on how to react while in a controlled environment Dec. 9.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood

# Giving the enemy a bad day

## Minnesota platoon conducts mortar operations in Iraq

By Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Wood  
1/34 Brigade Combat Team

CAMP FALLUJAH, Iraq -- In just a couple of minutes, Soldiers of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 136th Combined Arms Battalion, can make the enemy have a bad day.

That is the time it takes four Soldiers working as a team to set the fuse on a round that weighs 35 pounds, set the deflection and elevation on the gun and “hang” the round or fire it. The mortars are fired from positions just inside the perimeter of the camp.

“We get called pretty regularly. Mostly to provide illumination at night for the combat outposts here. We also provide the counter battery fire for the insurgents that are firing the IDF [Indirect Fire] onto the camp,” said platoon sergeant, 1st Sgt. Richard Ellwood of Duluth, Minn.

He said his platoon’s mission is to provide indirect fire for the Soldiers and Marines around the Anbar Province.

“We support them with high explosive and illumination rounds 24/7,” he said.

His platoon of about 30 Minnesota Army National Guard Soldiers fires 120 mm, 81 mm and 60 mm mortars.

This platoon also dug all the fighting positions for its mortars. They fortified their bunkers with reinforced concrete, wood timbers, and layers of sandbags.

“If you’re in that bunker and a round impacts, you’re going to be safe,” said Ellwood, who has been involved with mortars for 15 years.

The reason that the platoon built their own bunkers was that the Marines that the platoon replaced did not have 120 mm mortars. The platoon’s mortars were brought from Minnesota. They have trained on them since the mobilization began.

“We’re pretty fortunate that this is what we trained for and we’re doing it here,” Ellwood said.

“Basically we’re firing back at the enemy. That’s all you could want as a mortar team in Iraq,” said Spc. Jared Smith of Duluth, Minn.

Firing back at the enemy has been a memorable experience for Spc. Bryan Bjerklie of Goodrich, Minn.

He said when the round goes off, “it takes your breath away.”

The concussion of the round knocks things off the walls in the fire direction center located a few meters from the fighting position, said Bjerklie.

The platoon has also supported mounted patrols. In either mission, this platoon’s mission is vital to saving lives of Soldiers and Marines, said Ellwood.

When soldiers are on patrols or combat outposts and need accurate indirect fire support, the mortar platoon provides that. When the Soldiers are in contact with the enemy they need fire support right now. They need those rounds to be impacting onto the enemy’s location,” he said.

1st Sgt. Richard Ellwood of Duluth, Minn., Company B, 2nd Battalion, 136th Combined Arms Battalion, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, holds a 120 mm mortar high explosive round earlier this month at Camp Fallujah, Iraq.

# Plane impressive in first ever deployment

By Tech. Sgt. Steve Staedler  
379th Air Expeditionary Wing

What started out as a four-month test program ended up lasting two years — with outstanding results.

The first ever deployment of the Air Force’s new C-130 J model airplanes came to a close Jan. 11 as the fleet returned to their Air National Guard bases in California, Maryland and Rhode Island.

“I think we’ll be missed here,” said Lt. Col. M. Cory Lunt, assistant director of operations for the 746th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron. “I’ve been told by many people that they appreciated the J models quite a bit, and the added capabilities of the stretch model have been very useful.”

The J model has two features distinguishing it from its predecessors: six blades instead of four on its four propellers, and a stretch version measuring an extra 15 feet in length.

The J model arrived here in December 2004 to start a four-

month testing period. Since this was its first deployment, many, including Air Mobility Command and Lockheed -- the aircraft’s manufacturer -- were interested in how the new airframe would operate in the desert environment. The results were so well received that the aircraft stayed.

Throughout the next 18 months the J model performed exceptionally, with mission-effective rates above 95 percent. Such a high percentage means cargo and passengers are arriving on time — every time.

“When a mission here doesn’t go, it’s a much bigger deal than when a training mission back home doesn’t go,” said Lt. Col. Michael Donnelly, a maintenance officer. “People here and up range are counting on us, so we’re going to work harder to make sure our aircraft are ready to fly.

“This is where it counts. You don’t cancel missions here. If you show up late or miss a leg it means somebody isn’t receiving their cargo or not getting into or out of theater when they planned.”



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Steve Staedler

Tech. Sgt. Michael Scott, crew chief from Maryland Air National Guard, walks beside a new C-130 J model as it’s towed into place for its final sortie after a two-year deployment to an undisclosed location in Southwest Asia. The plane’s first ever deployment came to a close Jan. 11 as the fleet returned to home bases in California, Maryland and Rhode Island.

## From page 1: NEW POLICY

leadership,” said Blum.

The Guard’s leadership in the states reacted enthusiastically to several policy changes announced prior to Jan. 11 by Gates.

Chief among these were that, from this point forward, Guard and Reserve mobilizations will be managed on a unit basis, not an individual basis. Gates also announced that involuntary mobilizations would be for a maximum of one year. That is “in contrast to the current practice of 16 to 24 months,” he said.

The defense secretary also stated that the goal would be to have five years of demobilization following every year of mobilization. He acknowledged, however, that “today’s global demands will require a number of selected Guard and Reserve units to be remobilized sooner than this standard.”

Gates further directed the development of an incentive program to compensate individuals who are required to mobilize or deploy early or remain on duty beyond the time limits

set by the new policy. Details of the program have not yet been announced.

“What it means is that Soldiers that are extended will be paid for that overtime, so to speak,” Blum said. So would Guard troops who get mobilized more than once every six years.

Governors and senior National Guard leaders have called for policy changes of this type for the last few years. Many Soldiers complained about the amount of time spent away from home in mobilization training before deploying overseas. With the announcement of the new policies limiting total mobilization time to one year, Blum stated “your Citizen-Soldiers will only be away from their families or jobs and their hometown units for the maximum period of one year in the future, starting with the next mobilizations coming up.

“The World War II and Cold War post-mobilization model is dead. The new model is right for an operational force of 21st century Citizen Soldiers,” Blum added.

Reducing total mobilization or remobiliza-

tion time will have a dramatic impact on how Guard units train for and deploy to combat. Training conducted during inactive duty weekend drills and annual training periods will gain importance as a measure of readiness.

Unit commanders and their adjutants general will be the certifying officers for individual through squad-level readiness in all areas – medical, personnel, equipment and training, with the director of the Army National Guard, Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, validating the readiness level.

“This will mean that governors, as commanders in chief, and their adjutants general will take on greater roles in preparing and readying and certifying their forces prior to mobilization” said Blum.

Additionally, the need to conduct certification prior to mobilization provides extra stimulus for the DoD to focus on re-equipping Guard units after they return from overseas deployments.

“It will mean that resources and equipment will have to move to the National Guard pre-

mobilization so that we are ready when we’re called to mobilize for that one year,” Blum told the officials.

Unit readiness would be enhanced by the new policy specifying that whole units, rather than individuals, would be called up. Soldiers also complained about the tendency of cobbling mobilized units together from many sources, destroying the cohesion that was built up in peacetime.

“The new mobilization policy detailed by Secretary Gates was universally accepted and sincerely appreciated by the governors and adjutants general participating (in the teleconference)” said Blum.

“This is a historic and long-anticipated policy change that has been directed by our secretary of defense” said Blum. “It is clear evidence that he has listened and heard and considered our input and has made courageous and tough adjustments that have been long requested by governors, adjutants general, members of Congress, and the reserve component’s senior leaders.”

# Hundreds help to lay former president to rest



Photo by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller

Top: The 126th Army Band, Michigan Army National Guard, performed at President Ford's funeral at the Gerald Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, Mich. Over 800 Guardmembers in several states helped to honor Ford, the 38th president of the United States, who passed away on Dec. 26. Bottom left: U.S. Army Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 119th Field Artillery Regiment, Michigan National Guard, fire a 21-cannon salute as the casket of the former president arrives at Grand Rapids, Mich., Jan. 2. Bottom right: A makeshift memorial was set up in front of the Ford Museum.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Jeremy Lock



Photo by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller

By Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – National Guard men and women across the nation paid their respects and supported the country's tribute to Gerald R. Ford, the 38th President of the United States, who died at the age of 93 on Dec. 26.

Ford's services extended from his retirement home in Rancho Mirage, Calif., to Washington, D.C., to his final resting place at the Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, Mich., where he grew up to become a 12-term member and minority leader of the U.S. House of Representatives.

A total of 804 Guardmembers took part, according to the National Guard Bureau. They served as military escorts, pall bearers, in firing parties and in military bands.

Guardmembers from the District of Columbia and surrounding states volunteered to serve as escort drivers and baggage handlers during the New Year's weekend. They also supported missions in the National Capitol Region as the former president lay in state until Jan. 2.

The Michigan National Guard provided overwhelming support to Ford's burial on a hillside just north of the Ford Museum in Grand Rapids. At least 600 Guard members supported the final ceremonies there Jan. 3, including Ford's interment.

Ford's longest term of federal service was as U.S. representative for Michigan's Fifth Congressional District. He served in the House of Representatives from 1949 to 1973.

The Michigan Army Guard's 126th Army Band provided music for three ceremonies, the American Forces Press Service reported. Band members considered Ford an old friend.

"We played for Ford's 90th birthday, the dedication and rededication of Ford's museum and library," said 1st Sgt. James Zwarenstejn, the drum major and a member of that band for his entire 37-year military career. "This is bigger, though. For it to be on a worldwide stage, and for someone so important to this state, [it] is just a tremendous honor for us to be involved."

"We are taking a very active role in the funeral for President Ford," said Chief Master Sgt. John Loser, Michigan's public affairs superintendent, believing it be a first for the state.

"The men and women of the Michigan National Guard are greatly honored to serve in this ceremony to bring home our former president and Michigan native to his final resting place in Grand Rapids," said Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler, adjutant general of the Michigan National Guard.

President Ford took the oath of office as president on Aug. 9, 1974. Prior to that, Ford was the 40th Vice President of the United States under President Richard Nixon. He was confirmed and sworn in on Dec. 6, 1973. As part of the "Greatest Generation," Ford served in the Naval Reserve during World War II.



President Ford

## Michigan Guardsman keeps state funeral connected

By Staff Sgt. Alec Lloyd  
American Forces Press Service

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. – Like many Michigan National Guardsmen, Army Sgt. Mike Christian was awakened by a midnight phone call informing him of the passing of former President Gerald R. Ford.

Unlike other Soldiers and Airmen across the state, Christian's job began almost immediately, for it was the task of his unit to supply the wiring, hardware and computer support to permit the deployment of more than 500 National Guard members to Grand Rapids.

One of six members activated from the state's Joint Force Headquarters to set up the Forward Joint Information Bureau and Forward Joint Operations Center, Christian and his unit spent long hours running wire and checking connections to ensure that activated units deploying to a hotel would be linked into the state and national communications structure. They have

laid more than 7,000 feet -- or a mile and a half -- of telephone wire and fiber optic cable.

While the work was demanding and sleep was fleeting -- for the first two days he got only four hours of sleep per night -- Christian said he was proud to be a part of former President Ford's state funeral honors.

"It's a piece of history, and he was a Michigan fan," Christian said, noting that Ford was an outstanding athlete at the University of Michigan and a long-time supporter of the school. "I'll do anything for another Michigan fan."

A resident of Charlotte, Christian will soon deploy overseas with the 177th Military Police Brigade. "I volunteered," he said.

He has already deployed to Iraq for 14 months, from October 2004 to November 2005. He is a full-time technician at JFHQ in Lansing and will provide administrative support during his upcoming tour.

⇒ Read more at [www.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ngb.army.mil)



U.S. Army photo

Army Sgt. Mike Christian, of the Michigan National Guard, runs wire to support the deployment of more than 500 National Guard members to Grand Rapids to support the state funeral of former President Gerald R. Ford. Ford was buried in Grand Rapids on Jan. 3.

## New driver for National Guard

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Casey Mears says the honor is all his.

“It’s just a big honor,” Mears said shortly after he was introduced as the National Guard’s new race car driver at the Army National Guard Readiness Center on Jan. 12. Mears will drive the No. 25 National Guard/GMAC Chevy Monte Carlo SS in the 2007 NASCAR Nextel Cup and the No. 24 National Guard Chevy in the Busch Racing Series. This is the first year that the Guard will have cars competing in both divisions.

“It’s just so different than any other normal sponsor,” Mears said. “You’re not just representing a brand, you’re representing a portion of the country, what the country stands for and all the men and women that fight for us. We get to do what we do because we’re protected by the National Guard, so it’s just a big honor to be representing them and hopefully hold

them up proud and do well.”

Driving for Hendrick Motorsports, Mears is the successor to Greg Biffle, driver of the No. 16 National Guard Ford for the past three seasons. Biffle’s accomplishments included winning six races and finishing 2nd in the Nextel Cup series in 2005. “We’ve gone through a great three seasons with the No. 16 car,” said Lt. Gen. Clyde A. Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard.

Defending Nextel Cup champion Jimmie Johnson and Jeff Gordon and Kyle Busch also drive for Hendrick Motorsports. The Daytona 500 will kick off the 2007 Nextel Cup season on Feb. 18.

The 28-year-old comes from a racing family: His father is Roger Mears, Indianapolis 500 and off-road veteran; his uncle is Rick Mears, four-time Indy winner; his grandfather also raced. Casey began racing BMX bicycles when he was 4, then he graduated to ATVs.

⇒ Story, video at [www.ngb.army](http://www.ngb.army).



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill

Casey Mears, the National Guard’s new Guard race car driver, poses with Lt. Gen. Clyde A. Vaughn, the director of the Army National Guard, and Lance McGrew, crew chief, at the Army National Guard Readiness Center, Arlington Hall, Jan. 12.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Patrick Cloward

Sgt. John Franklin, a combat engineer, is training to make the 2008 Olympic Team. He said he owes all of his achievements to his family, his coaches and the Missouri Guard.

## Missouri boxer vying for Olympics

By Staff Sgt. Patrick Cloward  
Missouri National Guard

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – What does it take to make the 2008 U.S. Olympic boxing team? One Missouri Army National Guard Soldier may look back and say it was when he was mobilized and worked from 8 p.m. to 4:45 a.m., attended college classes until noon and then trained from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., somehow squeezing sleep in.

He may say it was the Missouri National Guard who supported him along the way or U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program (WCAP) at Fort Carson, Colo., that provided paid training and coaching.

He may say it was his family or his personal conviction to his dream.

Then again, Sgt. John Franklin, a combat engineer with Bravo Company of the 110th Combat Engineer Battalion in Kansas City, may never make the team. Such is the world of the elite athlete.

“I always wanted to box,” said Franklin, the No. 3 amateur flyweight in the nation. Originally, though, football was his primary focus.

Like many, he joined the Guard to help pay for college, especially one that was providing him a partial scholarship for football.

But soon after enlisting with the 110th, he was mobilized to Fort Sill, Okla., and that’s where he rekindled his love for boxing.

“When I went to Fort Sill, I found a boxing gym and went there faithfully every day,” he said. “I also went to school at Camry University.”

“If I had not joined the National Guard and just went to college, I probably would have played football or baseball and never boxed,” said Franklin.

Franklin finished his deployment and returned to serve in Missouri and the 110th for more than two years. On the advice of his boxing coach, he succeeded in joining the All-Army Boxing Team in Fort Carson, Colo., as a representative of the Missouri National Guard. Eventually, he became the first National Guard Soldier to win an Armed Forces Gold Medal in the All-Army Boxing Championships at Fort Huachuca, Ariz. in 2005. That helped him qualify for the WCAP.

He said that if he doesn’t make the team, he’ll probably give it one more shot and come back to recruit and then turn pro.

## Not much biting: Fishing team member keeps sharp while deployed



Photo by Spc. Debrah Robertson

Sgt. Melinda Hooper, a flight operations specialist with the 114th Aviation Regiment of the Arkansas Army National Guard, practices casting her fishing line into the desert. With no lakes or rivers to fish, Hooper uses the open desert terrain for practice.

By Spc. Debrah Robertson  
40th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BUEHRING, Kuwait -- A flight operations specialist with the 114th Aviation Regiment of the Arkansas National Guard is dutifully deployed to Kuwait supporting Third Army/ U.S. Army Central Command.

That doesn’t mean this Army Guard Fishing Team member can’t get in a few casts and stay sharp.

When Sgt. Melinda Hooper is not working at Camp Buehring’s airfield, she spends her afternoons casting into the desert. With an optimism that astonishes her fellow Soldiers, Hooper is happy to serve the Army even if that means fishing for rocks until her redeployment.

“She’s our fishing sergeant,” said Lt. Col. Karen Gattis, the regiment’s operations officer, with a smile.

Known to many of her fellow Soldiers as a great source of good fishing stories, Hooper often carries her fishing pole to work with her. Her pole has become a topic of many conversations, said Sgt. Joshua Schmidt, an aviation operations specialist with the 114th.

“Everyone has their fishing story,” said Hooper. “My whole family fishes,” she said.

Her parents bass fish professionally and her big brother is on the Bass Fishing League All-American team, she said.

“I’m living through him right now,” said Hooper. “[My family’s] accomplishments keep me going.”

Although, the Guard takes Hooper away from her favorite sport, her drive to join was strong. After a huge ice storm hit her small hometown of Ben Lomond, Ark., one December, the Army National Guard swept in to save her community. Hooper knew she wanted to be in the Guard after seeing the Soldiers save her community from 13 days of isolation and near disaster.

Joining the Guard allowed Hooper to serve not only her country, but her community as well. Putting her fishing tour on hold, Hooper came to Udairi Airfield in Buehring to help with airfield operations.

“You have to support each other,” said Hooper of her fellow Soldiers. “Everyone has their role. When I got the call to serve [in

Kuwait] I knew I couldn’t leave them.”

Everyone who serves has put aside their dreams for a while, said Hopper.

“My dreams and goals will be there when I get back,” she said. “I look left and I look right and see that we’re all in this together.”

### Air Guard Bass Fishing Tourney on for April

The 134th Air Refueling Wing of McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base, Tenn., is hosting the 12th Annual Air National Guard Bass Tournament. The tournament will be held on Douglas Lake with the launch/weigh-in site at Douglas Dam., Sevierville. The tournament is April 9-13. Official practice days are April 9-10 and competition is April 11-12. Contact Master Sgt. George Sales, DSN 266-3466; (865)985-3466; [george.sales@tnknox.ang.af.mil](mailto:george.sales@tnknox.ang.af.mil).

**Commentary**

**Roth IRA better than TSP for military members**

**By Capt. Todd Domachowski**  
Vermont National Guard

First off, TSP (Thrift Savings Plan) is a retirement account that allows you to invest pre-tax money and have your money grow tax-deferred until you are ready to retire (59 1/2 is the earliest you can touch it without penalty). Withdrawals after 59 1/2 will be taxed at your ordinary income tax rate. TSP goes on the premise that you will be in a lower tax bracket when you retire so you will pay fewer taxes then in current day.

TSP rules are basically the same for government civilians (including technicians) and military with one huge exception: matching contributions. Civilians receive an automatic 1% from the government whether they contribute their own money or not. Then, if civilians contribute their own money, they receive dollar for dollar matching on the first 3 percent of pay they contribute and 50 cents on the dollar for the next 2 percent of pay. If civilians contribute 5 percent of their pay they will receive the maximum matching contributions from the government. The military doesn't receive matching contributions, although certain career fields may upon approval of their service secretary.

Receiving or not receiving matching contributions in TSP makes the difference in choosing the best option for saving for retirement. Government civilians number one option is TSP, due to the free money they receive. If they contribute 5 percent from their pay, they get 5 percent free -- that can't be beat. However, since the military member doesn't receive matching contributions, their number one option should be different. The ROTH Individual Retirement Account (IRA) is a better choice for the military member.

A ROTH IRA is a retirement account in which you invest after-tax dollars (only if you earn less than \$110,000 for single members; \$160,000 for married filing jointly) and from that point on all earnings are tax free! As long as you are at least 59 1/2 years old and have had your ROTH IRA for 5 years, your withdrawals will be 100 percent tax free. A ROTH IRA works great with the military because of our tax breaks. Since we don't get taxed on BAH (Basic Allowance for Housing) or BAS (Basic Allowance for Subsistence), you get a significant tax break which usually puts you in a lower tax bracket. So in essence what you are doing

with a ROTH IRA is paying your taxes up-front and enjoying tax free growth.

Reasons why the ROTH is a great choice for the military member:

- (1) Federal tax brackets are lower now than in the past, so take advantage of your low tax brackets now, because you don't know what they will be like when you are 59 1/2.
- (2) Mobility: meaning you can take it with you wherever your career takes you, whether it is in the military or not, it's not tied to your employer.
- (3) Almost unlimited investment choices: you are not limited to pre-selected investment choices.
- (4) Did I mention TAX FREE growth?

NOTE: If you are participating in TSP, your money has to stay in TSP until you separate/retire from the government or military, although you can take out loans while employed. Please remember that whether you are in TSP, a ROTH IRA or any investment, that there is risk involved. You must weigh that investment risk with your financial goals.

*Domachowski has written "A Military Member's Guide to Investing from E-1 to O-10."*

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PAY GRADE	YEARS OF SERVICE														
	<2	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26
<b>COMMISSIONED OFFICERS</b>															
O-10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1821.20	1830.12	1868.16	1934.48
O-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	1592.88	1615.80	1648.96	1706.84
O-8	1127.08	1163.96	1188.48	1195.32	1225.88	1276.96	1288.84	1337.36	1351.24	1393.04	1453.44	1509.20	1546.44	1546.44	1546.44
O-7	936.52	980.00	1000.16	1016.16	1045.12	1073.72	1106.84	1139.84	1172.96	1276.96	1364.80	1364.80	1364.80	1364.80	1371.72
O-6	694.16	762.56	812.60	812.60	815.68	850.68	855.28	855.28	903.88	989.84	1040.28	1090.68	1119.36	1148.40	1204.76
O-5	578.64	651.84	697.00	705.48	733.60	750.48	787.52	814.68	849.76	903.52	929.08	954.40	983.08	983.08	983.08
O-4	499.28	577.96	616.52	625.12	660.92	699.28	747.04	784.32	810.16	825.00	833.64	833.64	833.64	833.64	833.64
O-3	438.96	497.64	537.12	585.60	613.60	644.40	664.36	697.12	714.12	714.12	714.12	714.12	714.12	714.12	714.12
O-2	379.24	431.96	497.52	514.32	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88	524.88
O-1	329.24	342.64	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20	414.20
<b>COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WITH OVER 4 YEARS ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE AS AN ENLISTED MEMBER OR WARRANT OFFICER</b>															
O-3E	0.00	0.00	0.00	585.60	613.60	644.40	664.36	697.12	724.72	740.56	762.12	762.12	762.12	762.12	762.12
O-2E	0.00	0.00	0.00	514.32	524.88	541.60	569.80	591.60	607.84	607.84	607.84	607.84	607.84	607.84	607.84
O-1E	0.00	0.00	0.00	414.20	442.36	458.68	475.40	491.84	514.32	514.32	514.32	514.32	514.32	514.32	514.32
<b>WARRANT OFFICERS</b>															
W-5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	779.44	806.20	833.00	860.00
W-4	453.60	488.00	502.00	515.80	539.52	562.96	586.76	609.88	633.84	671.40	695.44	718.96	743.32	767.32	791.84
W-3	414.24	431.52	449.20	455.04	473.60	494.84	522.88	550.56	580.00	602.08	624.08	633.52	643.28	664.56	685.76
W-2	364.36	385.16	403.40	416.60	427.96	459.16	483.00	500.68	518.00	529.84	539.84	558.80	577.64	596.72	596.72
W-1	321.76	348.08	365.72	377.12	407.48	425.80	442.04	460.16	472.16	483.04	500.72	514.16	514.16	514.16	514.16
<b>ENLISTED MEMBERS</b>															
E-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	548.08	560.52	576.16	594.60	613.12	642.88	668.04	694.56	735.04
E-8	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	448.64	468.52	480.80	495.52	511.44	540.24	554.84	579.64	593.40	627.32
E-7	311.88	340.40	353.44	370.76	384.20	407.36	420.36	433.36	456.56	468.16	479.16	485.88	508.64	523.36	560.56
E-6	269.76	296.80	309.92	322.64	335.92	365.88	377.52	390.44	401.80	405.80	408.60	408.60	408.60	408.60	408.60
E-5	247.20	263.72	276.44	289.52	309.84	327.32	340.20	344.28	344.28	344.28	344.28	344.28	344.28	344.28	344.28
E-4	226.60	238.20	251.08	263.80	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04	275.04
E-3	204.56	217.44	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56	230.56
E-2	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52	194.52
E-1 >4	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52	173.52
E-1 <4	160.52	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

**New features on myPay**

ARLINGTON, Va. -- Defense Finance and Accounting Service officials recently announced several improvements to myPay providing customers continued ease for on-line transactions.

A new feature has been added on the Savings Deposit Program (SDP). The SDP allows service members serving in designated

combat zones an opportunity to deposit a specific amount of money in a high interest rate account.

"Previously, only deposits could be made," said Pat Shine, a DFAS official. "Service members can now request withdrawals from the account through myPay and we've added a link to the withdrawal form from the SDP statement."

Another improvement provides members

access to a printer-friendly option. While all myPay customers can print their own LES' and W2s from the Web whenever and wherever, the printer-friendly option allows for higher quality print copies of all documents.

Shine explained that myPay wants to keep customers up-to-date on new information and notifications related to their pay. "We need current e-mail addresses to send pertinent information to our customers," he said.

**Headsup!**

**Single TRICARE Web site**

A new, one-stop Web site incorporates both the TRICARE online site and the old TRICARE.osd.mil page. The new official site for all information is <http://www.tricare.mil/>. Officials have reorganized the site with beneficiaries in mind. They can now go to one site to look up benefit information, schedule an appointment at their military treatment facilities, or track claims.

**Bank of America alert**

A known e-mail scam targeting military Bank of America customers is actively being circulated throughout the Internet. If you receive any e-mails appearing to be from the BoA, be suspicious. Do not click any links contained within the e-mail. If you suspect that you have been a victim of this scam, contact the BoA immediately. Attacks of this nature are referred to as "phishing" attacks. For more information, visit "Inside Army Knowledge Online (AKO)" - Security Tips and review the linked document - <https://www.us.army.mil/suite/doc/4850346&inline=true>.

**Scholarships for children**

The Defense Commissary Agency (DeCA) announced that the application process for its Scholarships for Military Children program has now begun for 2007. Applications for the \$1,500 scholarships are available at 264 commissaries worldwide, or can be downloaded through links at <http://www.commissaries.com/>, <http://www.militaryscholar.org/>, or <http://www.dodea.edu/>.

**Finding scholarships**

There are many scholarships available to military family members. The Better Business Bureau Military Line suggests you not pay someone to find scholarships for you, because these researchers will use the same Internet sources that you will use -- so why pay them to do so? For suggestions on where to find scholarships for which you might be eligible, visit: <http://www.enewsbuilder.net/>. For information to help military families avoid financial pitfalls, visit: <http://military.bbb.org>.

**Expanded IRA eligibility**

Under the Heroes Earned Retirement Opportunities (HERO) Act, Soldiers can now count tax-free combat pay when determining whether they qualify to contribute to either a Roth or traditional Individual Retirement Account (IRA). Previously, Soldiers whose earnings come entirely from tax-free combat pay were generally barred from using IRAs to save for retirement. For additional information, visit: <http://www.army.mil/news/> or [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov) and enter keyword: military.

**Video e-mail for deployed**

Soldiers and families can now communicate by video e-mail through the Army Knowledge Online (AKO) intranet portal. AKO video messaging allows all deployed active duty, National Guard, and Army Reserve Soldiers to create video messages on a computer with a Web cam. The message is then stored on a server and sent to the recipient via a link.



“Gallant Charge of the Kentuckians at the Battle of Buena Vista, February 23, 1847.” Color lithograph by Sarony and Major, NYC, 1847 -- from the Anne S.K. Brown Military Collection. In an age before photos could be published in newspapers, prints such as these were the only way most Americans, many of them illiterate, could get some idea of the war news. Below: “Death of LtCol Henry Clay, Jr. ... .” Color lithograph by J. Ward, Boston, 1848.

## It happened in February

### Events that made National Guard history

*Selected entries from the National Guard's 365-day event calendar found at [www.NGB.Army.mil/](http://www.NGB.Army.mil/)*

**1st, 1951** - Increment Two of the partial mobilization of selected Air Guard units has 18 squadrons entering active duty during the Korean War. While six squadrons already called up in 1950 will serve in Korea, none of these new formations will be deployed to combat, although many of their pilots will be sent as individual replacements to Korea.

**10th, 1945** - Illinois' 33rd Infantry Division begins its Philippines operations by launching its successful drive against the towns of Rosario and Aringay on Luzon Island.

**22nd, 1732** - President George Washington is born. He gained fame on the national stage as an officer of the Virginia militia during the French and Indian War which led to his appointment as the commander in chief of the Continental Army during the Revolution, which in turn led to his election as America's first president.

**24th, 1991** - The long awaited ground offensive of Operation Desert Storm starts with an overwhelming assault across the Saudi desert to outflank the Iraqi forces trapped in Kuwait.

## MEXICAN WAR BATTLE SETS STAGE FOR VICTORY

By John Listman

National Guard Bureau

On a cold winter morning 160 years ago this month, the small village of Buena Vista in northern Mexico was unknown to the outside world. But that would change by month's end, due to a decisive battle that would change American history and propel a little known general into the White House. And much of the credit for these successes rested on a handful of state volunteer regiments, forerunners of today's National Guard.

The United States and Republic of Mexico went to war in the summer of 1846 over a boundary dispute between Mexico and Texas. President James Polk ordered Gen. Zachary Taylor to move his small army to a position north of the Rio Grande (the boundary claimed by the U.S.). Mexican troops soon attacked the Americans but were repulsed. Polk got Congress to declare war on Mexico and instructed Taylor to move into northern Mexico.

In September, the American Army captured the city of Monterrey. Taylor allowed the garrison to march away where it linked up with other Mexican forces moving north under President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna. At the same time, Polk ordered Taylor to dispatch most of his Regular Army units to join Gen. Winfield Scott's army preparing to invade Mexico from the Gulf.

Taylor was ordered to remain at Monterrey but disobeyed and marched his force deeper into Mexico. His army at this time consisted of about 4,800 troops, less than 500 of them regulars, mostly artillerymen. All seven of Taylor's infantry regiments and two of his four cavalry regiments were composed of volunteers. These were: 1st and 2nd Illinois Infantry, 2nd and 3rd Indiana Infantry, 2nd Ohio Infantry, 2nd Kentucky Infantry and the 1st Mississippi Infantry (known as the "Mississippi Rifles") under the command of Col. Jefferson Davis, future president of the Confederate States. In addition, there was a company of Texas volunteer infantry attached for the battle to protect a battery of the U.S. Fourth Artillery. The two cavalry regiments were the 1st Arkansas and 2nd Kentucky.

In mid-February 1847, Santa Anna, upon learning that most of Taylor's troops had been dispatched to join Scott, marched

his army, numbering 20,000 men, to crush Taylor's army. As the Mexicans approached on the afternoon of Feb. 22, Taylor pulled his troops back into a defensive position in a mountain pass and village named Buena Vista.

As the troops waited, nervously watching for the enemy assault, they saw a small party approaching their lines, bearing a flag of truce. Santa Anna offered to spare their lives and allow them to return home if they surrendered. Sgt. Benjamin Franklin Scribner of the 2nd Indiana standing close by recorded in his diary that Taylor retorted, "If you want us, come and take us!"

Little action occurred that day, mostly just exchanges of artillery fire with slight effect on either side.

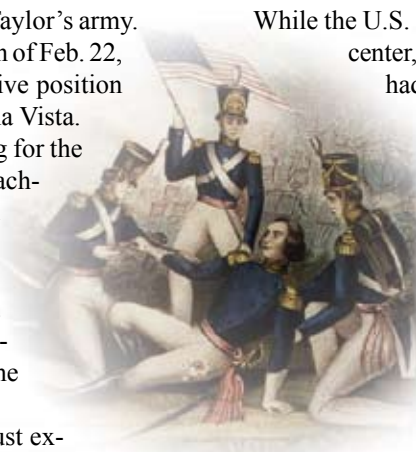
But at 9 a.m. the next morning the enemy army launched its attacks. A column of more than 3,000 veteran Mexican soldiers

### “IF YOU WANT US, COME AND TAKE US!”

-U. S. Gen. Zachary Taylor's response to Mexican President Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna after he offered to spare the lives of the 4,800 American troops and allow them to return home if they surrendered. Santa Anna's army was 20,000.

assaulted the American left, held by the 2nd Indiana and the 2nd Illinois and a battery of regular artillery. The weight of the Mexican attack, supported by artillery, pushed the volunteers back, but they firmed up and held their line. Scribner wrote: "About this time the battery on our left opened upon us a deadly fire of grape [small iron balls encased in a container], which raked our flank with terrible effect; still we stood front to front [with the Mexican advance] and poured our fire upon the infantry, which did us but little injury, as they shot too high."

As these American troops held their ground, Davis led a charge of the Mississippi Rifles, slamming into the Mexican's right flank, throwing back their attack with high losses. Davis, though wounded in the foot, remained at the head of his regiment for the balance of the battle. He soon moved his troops to support the weakening American center as another Mexican assault pushed it back in some disarray.



While the U.S. forces were holding on the left, those in the center, including the 1st Illinois and 2nd Kentucky, had been badly mauled and fallen back to a hacienda in Buena Vista to reorganize. As the American artillery fired several volleys of canister, wreaking havoc on the attacking Mexicans, the infantry regrouped and launched their own charge. They were joined by the Mississippi Rifles.

During this attack, the colonels of both the 1st Illinois and 2nd Kentucky were killed along with Lt. Col. Henry Clay Jr., son of the former secretary of state and speaker of the House of Representatives, Henry Clay.

As the Mexican attack wavered under the combined fire of the American artillery and infantry, both volunteer regiments of cavalry charged into the Mexican's flanks, finally putting them to rout. Despite its withdrawal from the field, the Mexican force still greatly outnumbered the American army, which Taylor stopped from pursuing.

Santa Anna retreated that night, leaving the field to Taylor, the site of his greatest victory. American losses were 290 dead and 456 wounded. Mexican losses were much higher: 594 dead, 1,039 wounded and 294 captured.

While small in scope, the Battle of Buena Vista was nevertheless very important in two ways. First, it set the stage for America's eventual victory in the war, due to the disastrous retreat of Santa Anna's forces to defend Mexico City against Scott's invasion from the Gulf. Besides the losses resulting from the battle, thousands of additional Mexican soldiers died or deserted during the retreat. Santa Anna's army never recovered its full fighting ability and America would gain a vast western territory with its final victory. Second, his success at Buena Vista propelled Taylor to the presidency in 1849. In his "Official Report of the Battle of Buena Vista" to the secretary of war he gave great credit to the volunteer organizations for the victory, hence putting him into the White House.

The difference between the  
National Guard in 1636 and 2007  
is not why we go, but where.



Rescuing blizzard victims. Fighting terrorists. Forming partnerships with countries. Protecting our nation. Saving lives. Supporting civil authorities. Reducing human suffering. Since 1636, the Guard has served America as both a wartime force and the first military responders in times of domestic crisis. The 452,000 men and women of the National Guard stand ready, reliable, essential and accessible.

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