



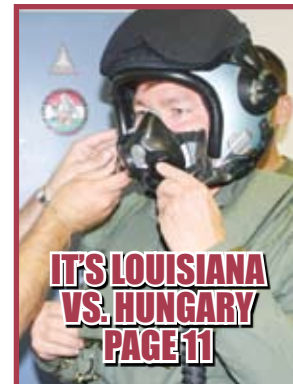
# THE ON GUARD

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Newspaper of the National Guard



**IT'S LOUISIANA VS. HUNGARY**  
**PAGE 11**

## McKinley tapped as next chief

### Blum recommended as NORTHCOM deputy

By Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith  
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON – Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates recommended Air Force Lt. Gen. Craig R. McKinley as the next chief of the National Guard Bureau and promotion to full general, and LTG H Steven Blum as the next deputy commander for the U.S. Northern Command (NORTHCOM) during a Pentagon briefing July 16.

If nominated by the president and confirmed by the U.S. Senate, McKinley would become the Guard's first four-star general. Blum, the current chief, would become the first National Guard deputy commander of NORTHCOM, based in Colorado Springs, Colo.

McKinley is currently director of the 106,000-member Air National Guard, a post he assumed in May 2006. Blum has been Guard Bureau chief since April 2003 and served as NORTHCOM's chief of staff for eight months before that.

"General McKinley is well qualified for this important and historic new assignment," Gates told Pentagon reporters. "He has held command positions at every level of the Air Force during his 34 years of military service."

Gates said the nomination for a fourth star is in keeping with the recommendations of the Commission on the Guard and Reserves and the fiscal year 2008 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA).

McKinley would serve as the principal advisor to the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on National Guard issues. The NDAA also establishes the Guard Bureau as a joint activity of the DoD.

The law further stipulates that the deputy commander of NORTHCOM be a National Guard general unless the command's top officer is already one.

"This is truly a historic and magnificent selection," stated Blum. "Craig will provide the leadership that will take the National Guard to the next level. He is a competent, caring and proven leader. Craig has and will continue to have my complete confidence and full collaboration."

"The elevation of the National Guard chief to four stars recognizes the enhanced

**MCKINLEY continued on:**  
**Page 10**



Photo by Staff Sgt. Oscar M. Sanchez-Alvarez

## Iowa urgency

Iowa Soldiers build a 7-foot sandbag levy to protect an electrical generator station from rising floodwaters in Hills, Iowa, in June. Record flooding inundated the state and much of the Midwest. See "Fire and Rain" on pages 8-9.

## Guard, Border Patrol celebrate partnership

### Jump Start ends, relationship to continue

By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON – The National Guard and the U.S. Border Patrol marked the end of one mission and the continuation of a two-decade partnership at a ceremony here July 11.

The commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) – which includes the Border Patrol – joined the chief of the Border Patrol and the chief of the National Guard Bureau (NGB) at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center to mark the end of Operation Jump Start (OJS).

"I'm not going to call it the end," said W. Ralph Basham, CBP commissioner. "I'm going to call it the continuation of one of the greatest partnerships that I personally have ever had the pleasure of being involved with."

At its peak, OJS saw up to 6,000 National Guard Citizen-Soldiers and –Airmen assisting

the Border Patrol to increase security and vigilance along the nation's southern border, according to NGB officials. OJS began June 15, 2006, and officially ended on July 15.

"Looking out here and seeing a sea of blue and green, it brings a warm feeling to one's heart to know that we're all in the same mission together, in the same fight together," Basham said, calling the end of OJS the close of one chapter in a long, continuing relationship.

OJS gave the Border Patrol National Guard assistance in strengthening border security and fulfilling non-law enforcement duties while up to 6,000 additional agents were hired and trained.

"We can all now admit that we did, in fact, need your help," Basham said, addressing the National Guard. "We needed your help

**CBP PARTNERSHIP continued on:**  
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## Border successes

The National Guard's accomplishments during the two-year Operation Jump Start:

- More than 29,000 troops from all 54 states and territories have supported OJS since mission began in 2006
- "Badges Back to the Border" goal was achieved in January when 581 Border Patrol agents returned to law enforcement duties
- Assisted with over 176,000 alien apprehensions
- Assisted with 1,116 vehicle seizures
- Assisted with seizure of over 321,000 lbs. of marijuana and cocaine
- 101 illegal alien rescue assists
- More than 28,000 hours of flight time logged for aviation assistance missions
- Improvements in tactical infrastructure:
  - More than 38 miles of fencing
  - More than 19 miles of road
  - More than 96 miles of vehicle border barriers
  - More than 717 miles of road repaired

Projected mission cost: \$1.2 billion; \$211 million spent in FY '06, \$687 million in FY '07; \$304 million budgeted for FY '08

**A RED HORSE rises in Ohio: Page 6**



# Casualty assistance: It will bring out the best in you

**ABOUT THE ON GUARD**

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**SUBMISSION**

E-mail your stories by the first day of each month for possible inclusion in next month's issue. We prefer that photos be high-quality digital (300 dpi or more) and e-mailed to:

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"You make me want to be a better man" is one of my favorite movie lines. It's what Jack Nicholson told Helen Hunt in the 1997 film "As Good As It Gets." The fact that Nicholson played an aging, eccentric and self-centered writer is probably why the movie, and that line, struck a chord with yours truly. Nicholson could have been playing me – especially the part about "aging."



My much more recent experience as a casualty assistance officer had the same affect. It made me want to be a stellar Soldier, a more humane being, a better man. More to the point, the duty challenged my abilities to do precisely that.

Casualty assistance is the additional duty for which members of the military, usually officers and senior NCOs, help the families of people who have died while serving their country. You help families deal with the details of the paperwork and the funeral and interment while they are enduring what may be the most difficult time of their lives. In many cases these days, families meet their casualty assistance officer while they are in shock and are just beginning to mourn the loss of a man or woman who has been killed in Iraq or Afghanistan.

As far as I'm concerned, it is the most sacred and honorable duty that a layman Soldier can perform. You are helping people who



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

suddenly need a lot of help. Few people are more vulnerable, and more in need of help, than they are after someone they love has died – especially on a faraway battlefield. They are devastated because there has been no closure with their loved one who has invariably and unexpectedly been struck down in the prime of life or, worse, before he or she has really begun to live.

"Perhaps the most distressing aspect of death for many Civil War Americans was that thousands of young men were dying away from home," writes Harvard University president Drew Gilpin Faust in her new book "This Republic of Suffering" (Knopf), a fascinating study about the enormity of death during the Civil War. I believe that 21st century Americans are equally as distressed when they learn about the deaths of their young men and women in foreign lands.

The fact that most people understand the risks of war, the possibility that sons and daughters,

brothers and sisters, and husbands and wives may be killed while they are deployed, does not seem to cushion the blow when they learn that their Soldiers will not be coming back to them alive. Their only consolation may be that their Soldiers died while serving their country and for a cause in which they believed.

Such was the situation this spring when a family from the West Coast had to deal with the death of a daughter and sister. She was a medic, and she was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq toward mid-May. She was 24. The funeral, with full military honors, was held later that month in her hometown. The parents brought her remains to Washington, where I met them, and the young woman was buried at Arlington National Cemetery on a sun-blessed morning in mid-June. She was laid to rest in Lot 60, with others who have made the ultimate sacrifice during this Global War on Terrorism, to the sharp reports of The Old Guard's rifles and the mournful notes of "Taps."

There is no need here to further infringe on their privacy by identifying the family or the Soldier. Much of their story has already been reported by the media. The rest is too personal to be part of the public record. Besides, I was there in a capacity other than as a journalist.

But I can tell you how the responsibilities that go with being a casualty assistance officer affected me and, I will bet, a lot of others who have been asked or tasked to do that job.

It is one of this life's most

rewarding and humbling experiences. The U.S. Army is expecting you to take care of a family you do not know and which must rely on the kindness and guidance of strangers.

You lead from behind. You have to reserve hotel rooms, check out the route to the cemetery, and make sure that everyone gets to where they need to be well before the appointed hours. You work behind the scenes, almost invisibly, to avoid distracting any attention from the family. And you have to be prepared to deal with just about anything.

The parents want to be absolutely sure that their loved one will be interred in Lot 60. You keep calling the cemetery until you hear the answer "Yes," then you give the parents that bit of comforting news. The family wants photos of the graveside service. You find a photographer. The family wants others who attend the morning service to join them for brunch afterwards. You find a restaurant that can accommodate 15 or 20 people. Then you inform the restaurant that the brunch is off because the family has decided to remain at the gravesite longer than expected and other people had to go to work.

It goes without saying that you polish and vacuum your car from grille to taillights because that will be a primary means of transportation; that you make your dress uniform impeccable because that's what you will wear every time you deal with the family. Trust me. You will never wear it with more pride.

There are three things that help:

- The U.S. Army Casualty

**CASUALTY continued on: Page 10**



**Correction**

The article on page 13 of the June issue entitled "Ohio Airman receives state award for bravery" incorrectly listed Maj. Laura Powers as the writer and photographer. It was written by Airman 1st Class Amy Adducio, and the photo was taken by Master Sgt Clifford A. Fulton.





# Texans called up for Hurricane Dolly

By 1st Sgt. Lek Mateo  
Texas National Guard

RAYMONDVILLE, Texas – Residents of the Rio Grande Valley were still feeling the effects of Hurricane Dolly after the second hurricane of the 2008 season tore through south Texas July 23 with damaging winds and torrential rain.

The Category 2 hurricane caused severe flooding in several coastal cities and displaced several hundred families whose homes were destroyed or made inaccessible.

More than 800 members of the Texas Military Forces comprised of the Texas Air National Guard, Army National Guard and Texas State Guard joined forces with local, state and federal emergency responders in a massive relief operation to help communities recover.

They established and manned 15 stationary food, water and ice distribution sites and helped administer seven of the Red Cross and other emergency agency shelter sites.

Texas Military Forces had mobile distribution teams working in conjunction with the Red Cross, Salvation Army, Department of Public Safety and other agencies.



Photo by Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson

**Texas Army Guard Soldiers carry a woman stranded by flood waters to a waiting truck in Rio Grande Valley, Texas.**

Commanding the military task force was Col. John Nichols of the 149th Fighter Wing in San Antonio who said that this is definitely a joint organization and that he is proud to lead it.

“This is truly Texans helping Texans and we are ready for this kind of contingency operation,” said Nichols.

Sharon Stanton, who was out of power for three days, waited patiently for hours in her car until she reached the front of the line where several

Guardmembers and civilian volunteers quickly loaded her car with precious water and ice.

The La Feria, Texas, resident said that she knew that relief was on the way when she started seeing convoys of large green National Guard Humvees and trucks arriving in her town hours after Dolly struck.

“The National Guard pretty much has got it together and they know what they’re doing and that assures me that things are going to get better,” Stanton said.

Pfc. Michael Morales of the 449th Aviation Support Battalion based in San Antonio has been in the service for about a year. This was his first hurricane relief mission.

He and several civilian volunteers worked feverishly in the oppressive heat and humidity loading tons of water, food and ice into what seemed like endless lines of cars at a distribution site in Harlingen.

He acknowledged that the work was arduous and backbreaking but was nothing compared to the suffering that residents went through and that receiving a simple thank you and a smile from those seeking help made the task worthwhile and rewarding.

## Last student completes ANG aircrew school

By Master Sgt. Bob Oldham  
Arkansas National Guard

LITTLE ROCK AIR FORCE BASE, Ark. – Student No. 4181, Air Force Reserve Staff Sgt. Amie Starcher of the 95th Airlift Squadron, Pope Air Force Base, N.C., walked up on stage, received her wings, saluted smartly and was the last Air Force loadmaster or flight engineer to graduate July 11 from the Air National Guard’s Enlisted Aircrew Academic School here.

Over the last 20 years, the school has trained 4,182 entry-level loadmasters and flight engineers, but its student flow from the Air Force has dried up due to the establishment of an enlisted aircrew center of excellence (COE) at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas.



Starcher

“We say that she’s No. 4181, but all of our students have always been more than a number,” said Col. Jim Summers, 189th Airlift Wing commander. “Our instructors at the school cared about every student that ever walked through the doors. Our students received individual attention from Day 1. It’s unfortunate for us that the Air Force decided to establish the COE in San Antonio. As always, we salute smartly, just as she did on stage, and press on.”

## ANG Web sites migrating to standard form

By Master Sgt. Greg Rudl  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Air National Guard Web sites are migrating to a more consistent design that’s more user- and maintainer-friendly.

The Air Guard has joined the regular Air Force and Reserve in consolidating and standardizing its public Web sites using Air Force Public Web (AFPW), a program that gives wings a professional-looking Web template and easy-to-use system to fill it up with content and manage it.

ANG sites are being modeled after Air Force Link (www.af.mil), the official site of the Air Force, so that “the general public knows an Air Force site when they see one,” AFPW literature states.

A National Guard Bureau official said in early July that 25 wing sites have switched already and 18 more are in the process out of 88 wings. A NGB AFPW migration team is expected to have more than 50 changed over by September.

## Texas airlifts released contractors held in Colombia

By Tech. Sgt. Gregory Ripps  
Texas National Guard

SAN ANTONIO – Three Texas Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopters and their crews played a small role in the drama involving three hostages rescued from guerilla forces in Colombia by flying them to the hospital.

In the early afternoon of July 2, the San Antonio Army Aviation Support Facility (SAAASF) at Martin Dale Field received a call from U.S. Army South. At the time, two of the Texas Army Guard helicopters were on standby for potential wildfires.

“We were basically told to stand down, that we had a mission change, to pull out the Bambi Buckets and put in the seats,” said Capt. Jeremy Eubanks, operations officer at the SAAASF who piloted one of the helicopters. “Later, we found out it related to transportation for the [rescued] hostages.”

The mission was simply to transport individuals from Lackland Air Force Base, in southwest San Antonio, to Brooke Army Medical Center, on the city’s east side. As it turned out, only one of the helicopters and a spare were needed, but all three made the trip.

The three helicopters were repositioned on Lackland when a C-17 aircraft carrying the former hostages touched down late that night. The trio boarded one of the helicopters that carried them to Brooke shortly before midnight for medical examinations.



Photo by Sgt. D.B. Garee

## Bridging the gap

Michigan’s 1437th Multi-Role Bridge Company in Sault Ste. Marie completed its new equipment training June 27 on the Dry Support Bridge. In about 90 minutes, Soldiers can have traffic rolling across a 40-meter gap. The bridge can handle up to 100-ton wheeled vehicles and 80-ton tracked vehicles.

## Guard unveils new Lakota helicopters

By Donna Miles  
American Forces Press Service

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. – Officials at the National Guard’s Eastern Aviation Training Site here unveiled the new UH-72A Lakota light utility helicopter July 17.

This central Pennsylvania post will be the only Army training site for the military’s newest light utility helicopter, which entered service in 2006 for homeland security and other non-combat missions, said Army Spc. Matt Jones, a full-time National Guard employee at the site.

Army Guard units in Louisiana and Mississippi also received



Lakota light utility helicopter

Lakotas recently, with the latter being the first in the Guard to get them in late June.

Ultimately, the Lakota will replace UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to be transferred for operational missions, as well as the last of the Vietnam-vintage UH-1 Huey helicopters

that remain in the military arsenal, Jones said.

The Lakota is the military version of the Eurocopter EC-145 commercial aircraft, designed to fly light general support operations such as search and rescue, personnel recovery, evacuation, counterdrug and limited command and control operations for the Department of Homeland Security. It carries up to 11 people.

Pilots who fly it reported it’s a powerful aircraft that handles well in all weather conditions, including storms that most aviators avoid. The Lakota also burns significantly less fuel than the Blackhawk or other similar aircraft, Jones said.



# Guarding America

## Alaska

In a joint effort, the Last Frontier State's Company A, 207th Aviation and the town of Kotzebue's Civil Air Patrol rescued two hikers June 30 northeast of Kotzebue. The hikers were on a trip from Kivalina to Ambler when one of them badly injured his foot. The two men were able to avoid further injury by using a satellite messenger to call for help.

## Arkansas

Soldiers with the Natural State's 77th Aviation Brigade participated in a joint exercise in late June with the Air Guard's 154th Weather Flight in preparation for a new mission for hurricane season. The brigade's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 114th Security and Support and other selected personnel are tasked as the command and control element for possible hurricane relief in Louisiana this year. As part of lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina, the Guard recognized the need for better command and control during such an emergency and chose Arkansas to fill that requirement.

## California

The Golden State's 129th Rescue Wing performed a medical evacuation June 18 for a crewmember experiencing a medical emergency aboard the cargo vessel APC Peru. Responding to a call from the Coast Guard, two HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters and two MC-130P Combat Shadow aerial refueling tankers met the vessel approximately 500 miles off the coast of California. During the rescue, specially-trained pararescuemen rappelled from the helicopter down to the cargo ship and provided emergency medical treatment to stabilize the patient. The crew then hoisted the patient up to the helicopter and transported him to a hospital.

## Delaware

Fifty Soldiers from the First State's 153rd Military Police Company returned in June after serving a year in Baghdad. This was the largest single-unit deployed for the state's support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom and the largest troop deployment from the state since World War II. Members of the 153rd trained Iraqi police, served on police transition teams and performed security details for high-ranking leaders, including Gens. David Petraeus and Raymond Odierno.

## District of Columbia

Newly appointed Maj. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz, the commanding general of the D.C. National Guard, officially took command from Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley at a ceremony July 19 at the D.C. Armory in Washington.

## Kansas

Sunflower State Gov. Kathleen Sebelius ceremonially signed legislation July 10 that improves benefits to military members and

funds the expansion of the Guard's museum in Topeka to include a 35th Infantry Division museum and education center. The bill increases the one-time activation payment made to state employees currently on or called to full-time military duty as a member of the Guard or Reserves to \$1,500 and raises the wage differential payment to \$1,000 gross payment per pay period, among other things.

## Louisiana

Soldiers from the Pelican State's 527th Engineer Battalion delivered two pallets of water July 23 to the town of Jonesville from Camp Beauregard where they were conducting annual training. A state of emergency was declared in the town of approximately 3,000 July 22 when a failed water pump left the small Catahoula Parish community with no running water.

## Maryland

Soldiers of the Free State Army Guard's 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment were acknowledged for their support of Operation Iraqi Freedom during three Freedom Salute ceremonies in July. They initially deployed to Iraq in June 2007 and returned in February. Each eligible Soldier received an encased American flag, a lapel insignia, a commemorative coin and a certificate of appreciation from the Army National Guard. The Soldier's spouse or significant other will receive a lapel insignia.

## Michigan

The Great Lakes State's 110th Fighter Wing in Battle Creek will receive three national awards for superior performance. Air Guard units from throughout the country compete annually for the honors, which are presented by the Air Force Association and the National Guard Association of the United States. One award, the Air Force Outstanding Air National Guard Flying Unit Award, will be presented to the wing during the AFA's 24th Annual Air and Space Conference and Technology Exposition in Washington Sept. 15.

## Minnesota

The North Star State's 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry was welcomed home in July following a 12-month deployment in support of the Kosovo International Security Force and NATO peacekeeping operations in Kosovo. The 400 Soldiers conducted peacekeeping operations there as part of Task Force Bayonet and were instrumental in keeping peace during that nation's declaration of independence. While deployed, the Soldiers completed more than 12,000 security patrols, set up 1,500 vehicle control points, discovered five weapons caches, turned over 23 suspected rebels to the Kosovo Police Service, established more than 340 listening/observation posts and provided logistical support for two patrol bases.

## Montana

TriWest and the Treasure State Army and

Air National Guard recently launched a pilot program to help Guardmembers and their families deal with post-deployment stress. TriWest administers the military's Tricare health care program in 21 western states. The program gives servicemembers at armories in Helena and Great Falls face-to-face and confidential opportunities with TriWest mental health providers to discuss post-deployment stress issues. The providers also participate in monthly, unit-level health training.

## New York

The Empire State's 109th Aerial Port Flight collected nearly \$500 worth of sports equipment for Qingulata Atuarfia Elementary School in Kangerlussuaq, Greenland, in June. Guardmembers from the 109th Airlift Wing deployed there distributed the equipment along with toys donated by Toys R Us. The students also got a tour of the ski-equipped LC-130 Hercules.

## North Dakota

An F-4 Fighting Phantom that is displayed directly inside the main gate of the base of the Peace Garden State's 119th Wing was struck by lightning in July. The aircraft's radome (ray-dome), which is located in the nose of the jet, was slightly damaged by the strike. No one was injured in the incident. The 119th Wing, at the time called the 119th Fighter Wing, flew the F-4 from 1977 to 1990.

## Ohio

The Buckeye State Army Guard and the Army Reserve broke ground July 1 for a joint Armed Forces Reserve Center at Defense Supply Center Columbus. The new \$29 million facility will encompass more than 150,000 square feet of training, administrative, logistical and equipment storage space. It is scheduled to house 900 Soldiers from six units—three each from the Guard and Reserve, including headquarters elements from the 174th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, 37th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and 16th Engineer Brigade.

## Oregon

A Beaver State UH-60 Blackhawk flew near the top of Mt. Hood at an elevation of approximately 10,800 feet to rescue an injured climber. Flight medics were lowered to the climber's location to stabilize the patient before the Blackhawk transported the climber to a trauma center.

## Rhode Island

The Ocean State's National Guard Open House and Air Show was held June 28-29. Performers included the Black Daggers, the official U.S. Army Special Operations Command Parachute Demonstration Team, the Royal Air Force Red Arrows and the Shockwave Jet Truck. The state's Combined Arms Demonstration Team delighted fans with its air and ground operations. All proceeds from the air show were donated to charities throughout southern

New England.

## South Carolina

The Palmetto State Guard was awarded the American Legion's Distinguished Public Service of the Year Award June 27 during the Legionnaires' state convention at the Columbia Convention Center. The award recognized the tremendous contributions Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen have made since the terrorists' attacks on 9/11. To date, more than 8,800 Guardmembers in the state have been called to serve in the Global War on Terrorism.

## South Dakota

Iraqi Army leaders visited Mount Rushmore State's Battery B, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery maintenance section at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq, July 17 to learn how to build and manage a successful maintenance operation. The unit was selected to demonstrate procedures to the Iraqi leaders because it outscored all other maintenance sections at the base and surpassed every maintenance benchmark set before it. The Iraqis learned organizational techniques and methods used to track maintenance performed on unit equipment.

## Utah

The Beehive State's 116th Convoy Security Company held a Freedom Salute Ceremony for its Operation Iraqi Freedom veterans July 12. Approximately 160 Soldiers received the Freedom Salute Award to publicly acknowledge their service in support of OIF from May 2007 to April 2008. The Soldiers provided security for coalition convoys, covering hundreds of thousands of miles under dangerous conditions to ensure that troops and equipment arrived safely at their destinations.

## Virginia

A special response force of the Old Dominion National Guard was validated in June to provide support to first responders and civil authorities if the state is attacked with weapons of mass destruction. The special response force, known as the CERF (pronounced surf), trained for months to prepare for the evaluation by the Joint Interagency Training Center. CERF stands for Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear and Explosive (CBRNE) - Enhanced Response Force.

## Wyoming

The Equality State's Capt. Michelle Mulberry and her employer Cheyenne Regional Medical Center were selected for the George W. Bush Outstanding Traditional Guardsman Award. The national award is presented by the Air Force Association to recognize outstanding partnerships between traditional Air National Guard Airmen and their civilian employers. Mulberry is a flight nurse assigned to the 187th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron and an emergency room nurse at Cheyenne Regional Medical Center.



# Chief: OJS will be model for future leaders

From page 1:  
CBP PARTNERSHIP

desperately, as a matter of fact, to build a bridge [from] where we were two years ago in June 2006 [to] where we are now.”

That sea of blue and green at the Reagan Building reflected a joint environment within and beyond the Guard: Some of the green was worn by Citizen-Soldiers; the blue was worn by Citizen-Airmen; still more green was worn by Border Patrol agents.

The Guard has provided engineering, counterdrug and other support to CBP for more than 20 years and will continue to do so, leaders in the partnership stressed.

“Within law enforcement, there is one word that we put a lot of weight on,” said David V. Aguilar, chief of the Border Patrol.

“That is the word ‘partner.’ ... Today, I am very, very proud to use that word ... with the National Guard, as true partners. ... Today, I am very proud to call every individual that wears the uniform of the National Guard, has ever worn it or will wear it, or is in any way affiliated with the National Guard ... our true partners, and for that we truly thank you.”

Among many achievements, OJS freed up 581 Border Patrol agents to perform law enforcement duties, a program dubbed Badges Back to the Border. OJS “allowed our Border Patrol to get out there and do the job that they were trained to do,” Basham said.

Citizen-Soldiers and –Airmen gave the Border Patrol logistical and administrative support. They operated detection systems, provided communications, analyzed border-related intelligence, built new infrastructure,

conducted training and provided additional aviation assets and ground transportation.

“If this country didn’t have a National Guard, we’d be scrambling to invent one this morning,” said LTG H Steven Blum, the chief of the NGB. “If you think about what your Guard does for you here at home, overseas and every day in every state and territory, it just makes me incredibly proud of what we do.”

Aguilar said that when OJS was announced in 2006, some people were skeptical, questioning the mission. Aguilar gave examples: “What are they doing? What are they thinking putting the National Guard on the border? Cannot and could not be done. ... Should not be done. ... They will never get it done.”

Now, Aguilar said he encounters completely different statements: “They have made a world of difference. The border is unlike what it was before. ... What are they doing leaving the border so soon? Why are they leaving? ... What are they thinking?”

Aguilar said it was the success of OJS that changed how people talk about it. “The partnership has worked,” he said. “We have made America safer. ... As we have in the past – the Guard, the Border Patrol – we will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder ... guarding and protecting our country.”

Blum said OJS will endure as an example of how to do things right. “Operation Jump Start is going to be a model that future leaders will look at, and students of our Constitution will look at, that worked in a very complex, motion-filled, nuanced mission with international implications and national security implications at a time where our nation was nervous and our foreign partners were nervous,” he said. “And yet the interagency, intergovernmental, interstate federal system that was envisioned by our Founding Fathers over 232 years ago manifested itself in reality for the last 24 months in the most magnificent display of selfless professionalism.”



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill

David V. Aguilar, the chief of the Border Patrol, left, holds a Minuteman, and NGB Chief, LTG H Steven Blum, right, holds a pair of spurs typical of those worn by mounted Border Patrol agents after an Operation Jump Start (OJS) end of mission ceremony July 11. In the middle is W. Ralph Basham, commissioner of U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

## HEADS UP!

### GI Bill increase

The Department of Veterans Affairs has announced that the Montgomery GI Bill will soon be increased by 20 percent – a total increase of nearly \$220 a month over last year’s rate. The full-time student payment rate of \$1,321 multiplied by 36 months brings the total GI Bill benefit to over \$47,500. If you are eligible for the GI Bill and have benefits remaining, you get this increase no matter when you became eligible or began using it.

[www.va.gov](http://www.va.gov)

### Language help

The Defense Language Institute Foreign Language Center activated its new Language Materials Distribution System Web site July 1, making available hundreds of language survival kits and other materials free of charge to deploying servicemembers. The Web site offers Language Survival Kits – pocket-sized booklets with audio CDs in over 30 languages ranging in topics from public affairs, cordon and search, to medical terminology. The center also offers language DVD programs that use cutting-edge technology and computer animation to teach 80 hours of self-paced lessons and are designed to teach survival phrases in Iraqi Arabic and Afghan Dari and Pashto.

[www.dliflc.edu](http://www.dliflc.edu) (Products tab)

### Mental health video

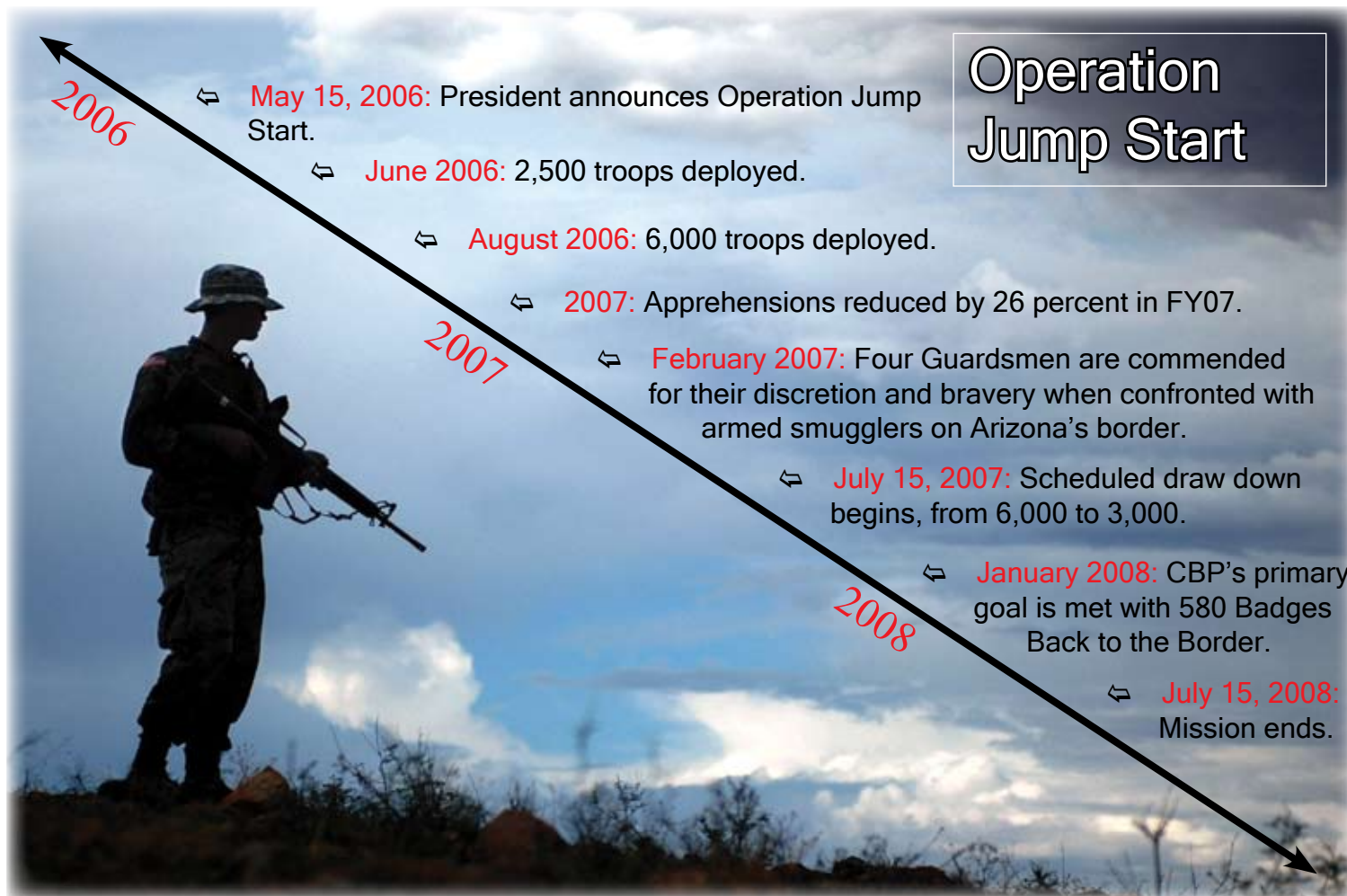
“Different Kind of Courage: Safeguarding and Enhancing Your Psychological Health” is a new educational video depicting how servicemembers and their families may be affected by combat and deployment stress. The video explores concerns such as post-traumatic stress disorder, alcohol abuse, nightmares and other difficulties faced when a loved one is deployed. The video is a new component of the Mental Health Self-Assessment Program, a DoD-funded initiative that offers the opportunity to take anonymous mental health and alcohol self-assessments online, via telephone, and at special events held at installations worldwide.

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

### Outdoor excursions

Outward Bound, an international non-profit outdoor education program, is offering fully-funded outdoor adventure excursions to all Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom veterans regardless of military status. These five-day excursions offer adventure activities such as backpacking, rock climbing, canyoneering, canoeing and dog sledding in wilderness areas in several states. Scheduled courses are from September to February 2009, and future courses will be scheduled soon.

**Doug Hayward (866)669-2362, ext. 8387; [obvets@outwardbound.org](mailto:obvets@outwardbound.org)**





# New Orleans residents praise Guardmembers on patrol

By Sgt. Michael L. Owens  
Louisiana National Guard

NEW ORLEANS – Since the formation of Task Force Gator, a contingent of Louisiana Guard Soldiers and Airmen who support the New Orleans Police Department, many residents feel they have a new-found friend.

Ninth Ward resident Gertrude Leblanc, 72, recently moved into her rebuilt house after her home of 43 years was destroyed by flood waters from Hurricane Katrina. “They are my best friend,” she said of the patrolling Soldiers.



Photo by Sgt. Michael L. Owens

Bywater resident John Gaines talks to a Task Force Gator Airman moments after his motorcycle was stolen.

Since many of her neighbors have not returned to the city, she looks forward to seeing and talking with the Soldiers daily while sitting on her porch.

Throughout their shifts, the Guardmembers walk the streets and talk with residents about almost everything.

“My husband and I take frequent walks along the (Mississippi) river and cannot go two minutes without seeing one of the Soldiers. It really makes you feel safe,” said Janet Baedicke, who lives in the middle-class Bywater neighborhood in the downtown area.

Baedicke, along with her husband, live in Monroe, La., during the week, but on weekends they enjoy coming to New Orleans where they also own a home. She has a son that left New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, and she thinks that the Guard’s presence helped persuade him to return after he vowed never to come back.

Another resident that is grateful for the Guard’s presence is John Gaines. He also lives in the Bywater neighborhood and credits the troops for responding quickly after his motorcycle was stolen.

“I called 911 thinking that the New Orleans Police would show up, but in a matter of minutes three military police cars were at my front door. When you are in need, it makes you appreciate their efficiency,” he said.

Brig. Gen. J. Ben Soileau, commander of the task force, also praises his troops. “They are doing a great job and work very hard to accomplish the mission here,” he explained. Soileau took over in March.

Many residents say they enjoy having the National Guard as a part of their city. “I wish they could stay forever,” said Leblanc. Many of the residents throughout the city echo those words and feel that they have an extra security blanket that is helping to keep the city safe. 🇺🇸

# A RED HORSE rises in Ohio

By Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith  
National Guard Bureau

MANSFIELD, Ohio – The Air National Guard’s oldest civil engineer squadron of its kind doubled its size here July 20 with the historic activation of a new 200-person detachment, 37 years after the squadron’s inception.

Although a morning storm at Mansfield Air Guard Base shortened the activation ceremony for Detachment 1 of the 200th Rapid Engineering, Deployable, Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineer (RED HORSE) Squadron (RHS), hundreds of its red-capped civil engineers still watched their unit’s new flag unfurled outside.

Airmen from the squadron’s headquarters at Port Clinton, Ohio, outside Camp Perry, who have more worldwide deployments under their belts than most can recall, joined them. Then a bulldozer of lightning, thunder and heavy rain pushed their formation indoors.

“It’s not very often you get to see a flag going up anymore,” said Maj. Daniel Tack, detachment commander, inside from the pouring rain with nearly 400 others who were in formation.

Officials said it was a historic moment for Air Guard civil engineering because the detachment now makes the 200th a fully-manned, 404-person RED HORSE and one of only two such National Guard squadron-detachment combinations within a single state.

RED HORSE squadrons build and repair air bases. They can rapidly deploy to recover an air base after a natural disaster or enemy attack.

The Air Force formed the first RED HORSE units in 1965. Today, each RHS is manned by combat-ready Air Force civil engineers skilled in various construction, fabrication and repair fields. Their support elements, including vehicle maintenance, food service, supply and medical personnel, make them self-sustaining.

The National Guard has deployed its RED HORSE squadrons for wartime and homeland missions since 1972.

Two, 200-person units – a squadron and a detachment – form a full, 400-person RED HORSE.



Photo by Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith

With the activation of a new 200-person detachment, Airmen from the Ohio’s 200th RED HORSE squadron stand in formation during a flagging ceremony July 20.

With the addition of Mansfield’s detachment, there are now eight RED HORSE units in the Air Guard. Six of these Guard units form three, full RHSs, while two others, the 219th RHS in Montana and the 254th RHS in Guam, are associated with active-duty units.

Recent RED HORSE changes stem from the Base Realignment and Closure Act. They include Ohio’s 200th RHS and Pennsylvania’s 201st RHS. Both squadrons increased to full size units from BRAC and stood up their detachments in April.

“Those changes bring an incredible capability to the Air National Guard,” said Master Sgt. Daniel Eakman, the Air Guard’s RED HORSE functional manager. “These guys can go out in any homeland defense mission, and they come with a lot of equipment and a lot of highly specialized folks and engineers, which are in high demand.”

Tack confirmed that the Ohio detachment was official in April, but because its Airmen were already deployed along Arizona’s southern border in support of Operation Jump Start, they waited until July to hold their flagging ceremony.

“This was the first date we had available to bring the entire squadron together to recognize the standup,” said Tack. 🇺🇸

# 2008 Employer Support Freedom Award recipients announced

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Department of Defense has announced the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award recipients.

The Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve.

The 2008 recipients include:

- ❖ **Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma** – Durant, Okla.
- ❖ **Chrysler Motors LLC** – Auburn Hills, Mich. (ANG nominated)
- ❖ **City of Austin** – Austin, Texas (ARNG nominated)
- ❖ **Coastal Windows Inc.** – Waipahu, Hawaii
- ❖ **Dominion Resources Inc.** – Richmond, Va.
- ❖ **Jersey City Fire Department** – Jersey City, N.J.
- ❖ **Lochinvar Corporation** – Lebanon, Tenn. (ARNG nominated)
- ❖ **Oakland County Sheriff’s Office** – Pontiac, Mich. (ARNG nominated)
- ❖ **Oshkosh Corporation** – Oshkosh, Wis.
- ❖ **Regional Emergency Medical Services Authority** – Reno, Nev. (ARNG nominated)
- ❖ **Robinson Transport Inc.** – Salina, Utah (ARNG nominated)
- ❖ **State Farm Mutual Automobile Insurance Co.** – Bloomington, Ill. (ARNG, ANG nominated)
- ❖ **Union Pacific Corporation** – Omaha, Neb. (ARNG nominated)
- ❖ **Winner School District** – Winner, S.D. (ARNG nominated)
- ❖ **Womble Carlyle Sandridge & Rice PLLC.** – Winston-Salem, N.C.

A record 2,199 National Guard and Reserve members or their family members from across the country nominated their employers for their outstanding support. A national selection board comprised of senior DoD officials and business leaders selected the recipients for this year’s awards.

The Freedom Awards will be presented to these employers Sept. 18 at the Ronald Reagan Building and International Trade Center in Washington. 🇺🇸

**A STRONG NATIONAL DEFENSE BEGINS WITH YOU.**



Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a Department of Defense agency that seeks to promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees. We recognize outstanding support, increase awareness of the law, and resolve conflicts through mediation.





# New York mechanics maintain engines for America's air power

By Staff Sgt. Mareshah Haynes  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq – The roar of F-16 Fighting Falcons is more than just noise to the jet engine mechanics assigned to the 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron Tiger Aircraft Maintenance Unit (AMU). To these deployed New York Air National Guard members, it's the sound of a job well done.

The Airmen who work in the propulsion shop ensure the jets' engines are in top operating condition, maintaining one of the Air Force's key capabilities: air superiority.

The Tiger AMU's jet engine mechanics inspect engine components daily for cracks, missing coating, normal wear and tear and anything else that could pose a problem. They also perform inspections and routine maintenance on the aircraft at regular intervals.

"After every flight the engines are downloaded," said Senior Master Sgt. Patrick Muldoon, propulsion element supervisor. "We process them in the computer to see if there are any faults. If there are, we troubleshoot them."

The computer is a diagnostic machine similar to those used on car engines in auto shops.

The 14 mechanics of Tiger AMU inspect 12 aircraft engines daily. Each jet must be inspected to make sure it's always mission-ready. Such a task requires intense and specialized training.

"The technical school is 13 weeks, and after that there's at least one year of hands-on training before [mechanics] are somewhat efficient," said Tech. Sgt. Mike Mullan, a jet engine mechanic assigned to the Tiger AMU. "[Students] actually take apart the motor that we use, the G10-100. They tear it down and rebuild it. The guys who have been coming out of tech school are very sharp. It's surprising some of the skills these guys have."

The training given at the school combined with the continuity and expertise of Guardmembers helps to make the Tiger AMU mechanics a balanced team.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Mareshah Haynes

**New York Senior Airman Andrew Molina inspects the liner of an augmentor – commonly known as an afterburner – for missing coating and rivets at Joint Base Balad, Iraq, July 7.**

"Being in the Guard, [some] people have been in the shop 20-plus years," Muldoon said. "Some of the active-duty shops just don't have as much experience."

In part because of their training and experience, the mechanics from New York have encountered no major engine problems since arriving here in May. They take a proactive approach to prevention by controlling foreign object debris – anything on a flightline from a rock to a piece of trash that could be sucked into a jet engine.

"We've heard that a lot of people have FOD issues," Mullan said. "We haven't seen them here. We run a FOD boss 24-hours-a-day and do FOD walks." During a FOD walk, Airmen form a line and walk side-by-side to ensure runways

are clear of debris.

Mechanics work long hours under harsh conditions, but there's more to the job than just turning wrenches.

"I don't think people realize how much technology and electronics are involved in the motors," Muldoon said. "They relate it to a car, but they don't realize how many moving parts are in a jet engine – how detailed it is. There's so much engineering and design with these motors."

"A lot of the time we don't see the end result of what the pilots are doing," Muldoon said. "But if I know we did something that got the plane up in the air and saved a Soldier's life – some 20-year-old kid – that's what it's all about."

## Michigan general trains, recruits Iraqi policemen

By Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy  
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON – Lasting security in Iraq is one of the top challenges facing those in the country and one of the benchmarks for the withdrawal of U.S. forces from the region.

One way to attain lasting security is through a well-trained and professional police force, Maj. Gen. Jerry Cannon of the Michigan Army National Guard's 46th Military Police Command said in a teleconference with journalists and bloggers July 2.



Cannon

Deployed to Iraq and assigned as the director general for the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team, all aspects of training and building both a national police force and local police falls under his purview, and it's a job that he said he is ready for.

"I'm not new to law enforcement," said Cannon, who was once a county sheriff. "But this gives me a great opportunity to be a part of the



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy

**Iraqi National Police Officers stand in formation prior to graduation ceremonies in 2007.**

major transitions that are going on in the country of Iraq in terms of public safety and security."

Some of those major transitions include defining the role of the Iraqi National Police Force. "It's a great organization," Cannon said. "They fill the void between the Iraqi Army and the Iraqi local police. They are like the Italian Carabinieri. They [have] a national role and they are very quick to deploy and very agile."

The national police are currently engaged in a number of significant operations, and there are plans to expand the force by adding another division, which would bring their total number up to about 40,000. Cannon said there are also plans underway to increase the entire Iraqi police force, including the local police, by more than 100,000.

But one of the biggest challenges Cannon faces in achieving that goal is finding people to fill those roles. "Force generation is going to be the biggest challenge," he said. "Getting the right people hired and getting them screened and vetted and getting them into the (police) academies."

One of the ways Cannon sees to fill those numbers is through the "Sons of Iraq," a volunteer organization throughout Iraq that has taken on the role of a beefed-up neighborhood watch

**GENERAL TRAINS** *continued on:*  
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## GWOT briefs

### Police unit returns

One hundred thirty-five members of Rhode Island's 169th Military Police Company returned home June 26 from Al-Anbar province, Iraq, where they spent 10 months training Iraqi police officers. The 169th, based in Warren, is the oldest Guard unit in the state, with a history dating back to the Revolutionary War. While in country, the unit members patrolled with Iraqi officers and helped set up police stations.

### Training 'Sons of Iraq'

Members of North Dakota's 191st Military Police Company recently assisted a group of cadets from the Sons of Iraq to become the newest members of the Bab Al Sheikh station in Baghdad as officers in the Iraqi Police. The Sons of Iraq are locally-recruited security forces working side-by-side with Iraqi and U.S. forces to patrol neighborhoods and battle insurgents. The training included first aid, room-clearing techniques, dealing with domestic violence, police ethics, human rights protection, conducting checkpoint operations, community policing, along with weapons and physical fitness training. Community involvement is critical to creating stable communities within Iraqi cities.

### Called up

The 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team of the Pennsylvania's 28th Infantry Division was one of six combat units the Defense Department alerted for deployment to Iraq from January to March 2009. DoD officials made the announcement in early July and said that these are normal rotation forces, and all of the units have the capability of performing full-spectrum combat operations.

### Re-enlistment and run

New York Soldiers stationed at Camp Phoenix, Afghanistan, marked Independence Day with a re-enlistment ceremony and 5-km run. For these Soldiers of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix, the 4th of July was just another day of service as they enjoyed classic summer picnic fare in the Camp Phoenix dining facility.

### Lifesaving mission

Seventy Soldiers with Arkansas' 213th Area Support Medical Company returned home June 26. They provided Level II medical care to troops in south central and southeast Iraq.

-Based on unit news releases



When fires caused by lightning strikes started June 21 in northern California, few predicted that just a month later more than 2,000 separate fires would burn more than 1 million acres, an area roughly equivalent to the size of Rhode Island. Thousands of Guard Soldiers and Airmen responded from California and other states, flying aerial refueling missions, working fire lines, providing security and more.

# Fire and Guard battles both in



Photo by Sgt. Stuart Brown

California Army Guard Soldiers learn to “duck and cover” from their CAL FIRE mentors during training to become ground hand crews. The maneuver could save their lives. They will mainly be used to strengthen fire lines and support agency firefighters. Right: Soldiers march to their drop point to look for hot spots.

## Thousands of California troops trained for ground fire duty

### First time in over 30 years for such mission

By Staff Sgt. Andrew Hughan  
California National Guard

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – An additional 2,000 National Guard troops were ordered to state active duty by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger July 11 to boost the state’s ongoing firefighting efforts and prepare for the threat of additional fires over the next several months, according to a press release from his office.

“We already have 400 Guardmembers on the front lines, and once these new troops are trained and certified, they will be ready to pitch in at a moment’s notice throughout the fire season,” Schwarzenegger said.

On July 10, the federal government also committed to sending out-of-state firefighters to train these additional California Guard personnel in critical firefighting techniques.

This is the first time since 1977 that Soldiers have been used to fight fires on the ground in California.

“Having their assistance is going to be critical as we go forward into this summer of fire fighting,” said CAL FIRE Capt. Mark Whaling. “They have the same basic fire training that every new firefighter has, so if any of these fires escape their containment

lines they will be able to control them so we can get the tired crews back to base camps for rest.”

These additional troops went through training here at McClellan Airfield with the U.S. Forest Service and were expected to be available over the next few weeks.

“The Soldiers will be doing duties that CAL FIRE regularly does. It’s just that the volume of fire this year is so much with so many fires ... this is the challenge the Guard will help us meet,” Whaling said.

CAL FIRE trained the Guardmembers on fire breaks, brush clearing, proper tool usage and safety. The troops also received basic conditioning that consisted of trail hikes in full gear to prepare for what promises to be very difficult work ahead.

“It’s a great experience so far. There is a definite science and process to firefighting that you don’t know about until you’ve been on a hand crew out here for a while,” said Sgt. Mark Walch.

Walch is a high school teacher in Chico and a Soldier with Alpha Company, 297th Support Battalion, who dropped the summer classes he was taking and reported to the Oroville Armory within hours of the mobilization.

“The fires in Butte County are threatening my

### Fighting the fires in northern California

**JUNE 21:** Fires start, caused by lightning strikes from thunderstorms

**JUNE 26:** Modular airborne fire fighting system (MAFFS) equipped C-130 Hercules flying operations begin at McClellan Airfield near Sacramento

**JUNE 27:** Wyoming Air Guard Airmen and two of their C-130s aircraft arrive at McClellan

**JULY 1:** About 200 California Guard members called up to provide direct ground support to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)

**JULY 10:** An additional 2,000 California troops ordered to state active duty

**JULY 11:** A MAFFS equipped C-130 from the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group flying out of McClellan drops its millionth gallon of fire retardant

**JULY 22:** Joint Task Force Sentinel, a composite unit flying out of Mather Field near Sacramento, reports dropping nearly four million gallons of water; at its height of operations, it’s made up of more than 200 personnel and two dozen aircraft, including UH-60 Blackhawks and CH-47 Chinooks

**JULY 26:** Two Louisiana Blackhawks are positioned to fight fires in the Yosemite Valley reported to be 10,000 acres in size

“With one bulldozer, I can clear about 150 men’s worth of work.”

-Staff Sgt. Larry Enos of the California Guard who helped build fire breaks

“I am hoping that the fires get put out as fast as we can get them out so we can save peoples houses and land.”

-Maj. Justin Walrath, MAFFS C-130 pilot

“The second day I was here, I was at the BX, and three little girls came up with a cell phone and took some pictures of me and said, ‘Thank you for saving our land’.”

-Master Sgt. Jamie Conrad, 302nd AEG operations section

hometown of Paradise, so it’s doubly important to me to be here. I’m a small cog in the wheel, but every little thing counts,” Walch said.

The Soldiers will be grouped into 20-person teams and distributed around the state to wherever the fire officials need them and where the Soldiers can be used most effectively and safely.

“These types of fires are an endurance race, so they will help us stretch our resources so we can move forward and contain the existing and

new fires as they pop up,” Whaling said.

One CAL FIRE official believes the Guard is an excellent and recurring source of trained and experienced firefighters to help contain and control fires in the state.

“I see this as the future,” said CAL FIRE assistant captain Dan Burns. “Once the training is complete, we have a record of every Soldier and will be able to recall them and get them to the lines quickly. I see this as only the beginning.”

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Robin Meredith



# and Rain n West and Midwest

The rains and subsequent flooding in the central Plains in June were so bad that many compared it to the Great Flood of 1993. In some areas it was worse. At its peak, more than 5,700 National Guardsmen and women responded to flooding in several states.

## Flooded states and what the Guard did

**ILLINOIS:** Four hundred Soldiers and Airmen were mobilized June 14-15 to work on the levees north and south of Quincy; about 100 Airmen from the 183rd Fighter Wing and the 182nd Airlift Wing were mobilized on June 15; at the height of relief work, more than 1,000 Guardmembers assisted with communications and sandbagging

**IOWA:** More than 4,200 Guardmembers teamed with agencies from across the state to battle what was called the 500-year flood in the central and southern part of the state

**INDIANA:** More than 1,300 Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen worked to keep the water out and protect critical infrastructure and historic sites; work included filling at least 60,000 sandbags and positioning more than 23,000, providing potable water to civilians and protecting water and sewage facilities

**MISSOURI:** With three dozen levees threatened, including the Hannibal levee on June 22, more than 800 Guardmembers were on duty providing communications, command and control, sandbag positioning, damage assessment, debris removal, security and fuel distribution

**WISCONSIN:** Hundreds of Guardmembers provided communications, generators, security and transport; the Guard also assisted with aerial damage assessments, filling and grading washed-out roads and debris removal



A breach in a sandbag levee around the Ottumwa, Iowa, power plant catches the attention of Pfc. Jordan Renkin of Company C, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry. The 133rd, along with local citizens, went through more than 12,000 sandbags in protecting the power substation.

Photo by Sgt. Chad D. Nelson

## Iowa support team pulls poisons from flood waters

By Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith  
National Guard Bureau

DES MOINES, Iowa – Although terrorists are not responsible for the rain waters that flooded the Midwest in June, at least one National Guard counter-terrorism unit was wet and waist-deep in a battle here to protect communities.

Tapping into their emergency support knowledge, the Iowa National Guard's 22 Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen of the 71st Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD)-Civil Support Team (CST) waded through the state's flood waters June 16 to July 1 helping officials assess chemicals and other potentially-hazardous materials (HAZMAT) floating through towns and cities.

Nearly 6,000 Guardmembers assisted civil authorities and responded to callouts by governors in five states for the destructive and record-setting floods.

The Iowa Guard's federally-funded CST normally responds to events known or suspected to involve the use of chemical, biological or radiological agents. But they used their hazardous materials expertise, as well as their communication systems and their relationships with state and federal agencies, to identify and secure more than 130 hazardous substances dislodged by the flood in unnamed containers, gas cans, barrels and 1,000-gallon chemical tanks.

"Customarily, we train and function in the counter-terrorism role," said Army Lt. Col. Timothy Glynn, CST commander.

That role changed when more than 45,000 people were displaced in Iowa with at least 600 miles of rivers overflowing their banks. Glynn said the flood challenged his specialized response team to find a way to assist civil authorities



Photo by the Iowa National Guard

Two members from the Iowa National Guard's 71st Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team take a water sample for analysis June 19 from a flooded area.

aside from their standard role in WMD events.

"We had to figure out what our place was," he said. "It's too easy to suddenly think, 'let's go fill sandbags,' when you have a highly specialized group of trained individuals."

Oddly, protecting the public and the environment from dangerous substances crossed over from a terror response role to a natural disaster response role for the CST.

There were over 50 counties in Iowa under federal disaster declaration. With thousands of unknown, dangerous substances literally floating away from garages and industrial sites, officials said the state faced a major challenge locating

and identifying its HAZMAT.

The CST decided to help the state's Department of Natural Resources set up a command center for their HAZMAT response, which provided data and voice communications. The CST also established contacts with hazardous materials storage sites to see if they had any problems, on behalf of the state. They even sent out survey teams in trucks and boats to locate and identify HAZMAT items along rivers near Des Moines, Iowa City, Cedar Falls and Cedar Rapids.

Glynn said they teamed up with conservation agents to recover more than 5,700 suspected containers. From those, they identified 58 HAZMAT containers found on land and 69 found in the water. They also discovered and identified 15 through aerial reconnaissance missions with the Civil Air Patrol.

"It worked well," said Glynn. He explained that a short disaster response period affected the amount of state and federal infrastructure and personnel in place for the floods. For some agencies, Glynn said, they did not have full response teams available for two weeks, so the CST filled the gaps until civil authorities could take over.

Glynn said he would hand off the CST mission to EPA officials.

"As the National Guard, we're ready to help and respond ... to plug a gap that exists with the civil authorities, and that's what we did," said Glynn. "As soon as they are able to ramp up, then we graciously back out."

The National Guard operates 55 CSTs, including one in each of the 54 states and territories, with two in California. The nation's first was certified and fully operational in August 2001. The Iowa Guard's 71st CST was certified and fully operational in January 2002.



## From page 7: GENERAL TRAINS

program.

“There is a concerted effort as part of the unification and reconciliation efforts to include the Sons of Iraq into the government of Iraq in a variety of ways,” he said. “Some of them will be with security forces either with the army (or the police force). There has been a great effort in making that happen.”

No matter where the police recruits come from, once they have been accepted into the police force they then go through one of 18 police academies. The training at those academies is conducted by a variety of coalition partners. There are plans underway to turn more and more of that training over to Iraqi leadership with a train-the-trainers model, said Cannon.

But for lasting effects to take place there needs to be more than just a well-trained police force.

“The formula is not only that the police are

ready to assume their role in providing for the security of this nation,” said Cannon, “but that the people are willing to accept them and trust them and have confidence in them and this idea and concept that we call the rule of law.”


Cannon feels that progress is being made toward that end. “We have a poll that measures the confidence that the people have not only in their government but in their police and I can tell you ... the trend is upward,” he said. “It’s going to, obviously, take awhile to get it to a level where we would all say that it is a success, but I can tell you we know where the [police force] began ... and we already consider it a great success.”

Even so, Cannon still faces many other challenges on a daily basis. “This is just such a dynamic and fluid operation and there is actually nothing you can plan for,” he said. “Things are changing almost day-to-day. So, projections that we had made and plans we had hoped to implement last week, something in between now and then has changed and we’re constantly having to adapt.

“If you can imagine, how do you grow a police force this large in such a short period of time and try to overcome the obstacles that they have to face? Any large police department in the United States, if we had to double or triple or quadruple their size, imagine the problems that you would have to face, and that’s what [the Iraqi police] are trying to do.”

But for Cannon, part of the ability to overcome those obstacles comes from not only his more than 40 years experience as a military police officer, but also from his more than 35 years of civilian law enforcement experience.

“Having been an administrator, I was a county sheriff, I can look at both sides of the [infrastructure and funding] issue, both as a provider [of those funds] and as someone that is requesting funding to provide those services. I think my experiences are going to serve me well.”

Cannon said it is an exciting time to be in Iraq. “Everything is going in the right direction,” he said. 

## From page 1: MCKINLEY

importance of the Guard to America’s overall national defense,” said Gates. “The elevation also recognizes the vital role the chief will have as a bridge between the state and federal components of our government and the active and reserve components of our military.”

The chief is the senior uniformed Guard officer responsible for formulating, developing and coordinating all policies, programs and plans affecting more than half a million Army and Air National Guard personnel, including civilian employees.

The last Air Force general to serve as chief was Lt. Gen. Russell C. Davis, who held that position from 1998-2002.

Blum’s nomination as NORTHCOM’s deputy commander is in keeping with the recommendations of the Commission and the congressional requirement that the commander or deputy commander of NORTHCOM be a Guard officer.

“It reflects the critical role the Guard plays in our homeland defense, the unique experience and expertise a Guard officer of General Blum’s caliber will bring to this position,” said Gates.

Gates also called Blum’s nomination a “historic first” and he praised his service as chief.

“For more than five years, General Blum has been a dynamic and effective leader of America’s National Guard community during a time of wrenching change for our Citizen-Soldiers,” said Gates. “As chief, he has been a tireless advocate for America’s Guard men and women to see that they receive the right training, equipment and support for the demanding range of missions the Guard has taken on since Sept. 11th and will face in the years to come.”


Since the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the National Guard has transformed from a strategic reserve to an operational force, and Blum has been praised for his vision and leadership during the change. 



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen

## Record deployment

Pfc. Jossie Cruzalegui, second from left, 50th Chemical Company, 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, New Jersey Army National Guard, smiles as she shakes hands with Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, left, the adjutant general of New Jersey, while boarding an aircraft that will take her to Fort Bliss, Texas, for training prior to deploying to Iraq. This is the largest deployment of New Jersey Army Guard Soldiers since 1940.

## From page 2: CASUALTY

Assistance Training Course: It gives you the basics about the job. You have to pass the course online before you can serve as a casualty assistance officer.

- Guidance from the Casualty Assistance Office: My supervisor at Fort Myer, Va., gave me detailed instructions about what I was expected to do and a white binder with the information I needed to contact most of the people who could help me.


- Experience: It certainly helps if you have dealt with death before – as a family member or friend who has already gone through the funeral process or as a former

casualty assistance officer. I have helped bury my father and my best friend. I had previously been a casualty assistance officer for an Arlington interment before I met the family in June.

Primarily, however, you have to be able to adjust to whatever the situation may demand. It’s called being flexible. For example, my supervisor told me to tend to the mother and father. But the reality demanded helping the entire family – including the Soldier’s sister and her brother and his wife – during those few days in June.

There is an unwritten rule about this additional duty called casualty assistance. Everything else gets put on hold. You don’t think about the office, e-mails, messages or

anything else that would take your attention away from those you are determined to help. They become your reason for serving. If, like me, you are inclined to wait until the last minute to be somewhere, you change your ways so you can be where you need to be at least 15 minutes early.

Yes, your heart will jump into your throat if you get called for casualty assistance. Your mind will race through every possible excuse to get out of this duty before you brace yourself with the realization that honoring a fallen comrade in arms by helping the family is the right thing to do. And, when it is over, you will consider it one of the most satisfying things you have ever done. 

## THE MCKINLEY FILE

- Received his commission in 1974 as a distinguished graduate of the ROTC program at Southern Methodist University

- Has served in numerous assignments in flying and operations, as well as command positions at group, wing, sector and field operating agency levels

- Served as commander, 1st Air Force, Air Combat Command; and commander, Continental U.S. North American Aerospace Defense Command Region

- A command pilot with more than 4,000 hours, primarily in the T-38, F-106, F-16 and F-15

- Has been pilot in command in the C-131 and C-130

- Prior to assuming his current position, served as assistant deputy chief of staff for Plans and Programs, Headquarters U.S. Air Force, Washington, D.C.



**Partnership news**

**Illinois-Poland**

Members of the Illinois Army Guard Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear, and High Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force (CERF) traveled to Warsaw, Poland, for a Bio Safe exercise June 8-14. Their mission was to exchange information with the Polish Armed Forces on mass casualty decontamination, then observe biological sampling and identification of the procedures practiced by Polish and Slovakian reconnaissance teams.

**S. Dakota-Suriname**

Ninety-three Soldiers from South Dakota's Army Guard arrived in Suriname in July to participate in the Beyond the Horizon 2008 exercise. Members of the 155th Engineer Company, the 153rd Engineer Battalion and the 730th Medical Company planned to conduct various projects in the region. The exercise encompasses construction projects, medical, dental and veterinary services in Honduras, Trinidad and Tobago and Suriname. A comprehensive humanitarian assistance exercise is taking place in Suriname between June and September.

**Georgia-Georgia**

About 300 Georgia Army Guard members arrived in Tbilisi, Georgia, July 14 for Immediate Response 2008, a three-week international exercise to help build relationships with coalition partners from several Eastern European nations. Soldiers and Marines from the United States, Georgia, Azerbaijan, Armenia and Ukraine will conduct this joint training exercise at Vaziani Military Base and the surrounding area. The state of Georgia is being represented by the 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry.

**Michigan-Latvia**

Almost 25 Michigan Airmen provided support and medical services to Latvia in June. The medical services team made up of Airmen from the 110th Fighter Wing, the 127th Medical Group and the Alpena Combat Readiness Training Center deployed for two weeks. The Guardsmen worked with their counterparts to provide medical health care screenings, dental fluoride treatments and optical services to include dispensing glasses. The Airmen assisted the Latvians in bringing aid to rural areas of their country not easily accessed by local health care workers.

# Louisiana's fighters take on Hungary's in 'Load Diffuser 2008'

**Exercise spotlights fighter pilot skills and diplomacy**

*By Master Sgt. Suzanne Chaillot*  
Louisiana National Guard

KECSKEMET, Hungary – A classic battle of man and machine took place here June 12-29 in the form of aerial dogfights of supersonic fighter aircraft.

The Dissimilar Air Combat Training (DACT) exercise called 'Load Diffuser 08' included Louisiana Air National Guard's 159th Fighter Wing.

"This exercise pitted the Hungarian Air Force's (HuAF) MiG-29 Fulcrums and JAS-39 Gripens against the U.S. Air Force's F-15 Eagles," said Col. Michael Lopinto, F-15 pilot and commander of the 159th FW. "We flew 10 fighters and one C-130 with over 176 of our personnel to take part."

Fighting against the Russian-built MiG-29 and the newly-acquired Gripens offers a unique opportunity for American fighter pilots to validate and hone their combat skills.

The history of the MiG-29 started in 1969 when the Soviet Union learned of the Air Force's F-X program that resulted in the F-15. "Much of our training is based upon the MiG-29 as an adversary," Lopinto added, "so the opportunity to train against them and learn from their pilots is an honor."

In the early 1990s, the HuAF acquired 28 MiG-29s from Russia as part of the payment of Russian debts to Hungary. The country joined NATO on March 12, 1999. In the move for modernization, Hungary decided in 2001 to buy 14 Gripens. The first wave of the Swedish-built



*Photos by Master Sgt. Suzanne Chaillot*

**Lt. Col. Scott Tyler, a 159th Fighter Wing F-15 pilot, gets fitted for a ride in a MiG-29 by life support technician Sgt. Bylar Kiss of the Hungarian Air Force during exercise Load Diffuser '08.**

aircraft arrived in Kecskemet on March 21, 2006 to supplement its fleet of MiG-29s. Only a small number of MiG-29s remain active today.

DACT was the focus of the deployment. "We demonstrated the capabilities of the F-15, and the HuAF did the same with the Fulcrum and the Gripen," said Lt. Col. Scott Tyler, F-15 pilot and vice commander of the 159th. "On every

sortie U.S. and HuAF pilots applied lessons learned from previous flights and became better warriors as members of the NATO team."

This was the first time a deployment of this size took place at Szentgyörgyi Dezső Air Base, the only jet fighter unit of the Magyar Honvédség.

"My first dogfight against a MiG-29 was the greatest sortie of my life," said Tyler. "We fought as

warriors but debriefed as friends." Tyler, an instructor pilot, also flew in the back seat of the Gripen for hands-on training.

High morale and esprit de corps echoed from each 159th FW pilot and crew chief that worked together to generate sorties. In 10 flying days, the wing flew up to 14 sorties a day. Pilots climbed down from the cockpits after their flights and the looks on their faces told the story.



*Photo by Spc. Sam Beavers*

**Ohio Master Sgt. Rod Goss teaches Serbian soldiers how to use explosives to breach a door June 14 at Camp Grayling, Mich.**

## Ohio, Serbia continue cooperation

CAMP GRAYLING, Mich. – There is more than one way to open a door.

Soldiers from the Ohio Army National Guard's B Company, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group showed their counterparts in the Serbian 63rd Parachutist Battalion just that June 14 while conducting joint demolitions training here at Camp Grayling, a National Guard joint maneuver training center in northern Michigan.

The two countries' elite troops were training together for the second time during an exchange with the National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program, which teams Guard states with developing democracies throughout the world to build long-term relationships and foster trust and cooperation between countries.

Their first exchange was conducted nine months earlier in Nis, Serbia, as the two countries celebrated their first anniversary of military cooperation.

"The relationships that have been established have gone beyond me and General Ponos (Lt. Gen. Zdravko Ponoš, chief of Serbian Armed Forces)," said Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio's

adjutant general. "Members of our staffs have built personal relationships and maintain contact via e-mail. Members of the 63rd Parachutist Battalion and our Bravo Company [2-19th] are building relationships. This partnership just keeps getting stronger."

The exchanges here at Camp Grayling and in Columbus, Ohio, and the one in September 2007 involved several contingents. This one also included training and operations personnel as well as public affairs teams.

The focus of the training delegation during the visit was a general officer and sergeant major orientation, Wayt said. The delegation traveled with Wayt to Fort McCoy, Wis., where Ohio's 371st Sustainment Brigade had been training for two months to deploy to Iraq to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"We wanted to show them the post-mobilization training concept, plus how officers and noncommissioned officers prepare units for deployment," Wayt said.

- OHIO NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE



# Wyoming's intel analyst cracks gang code

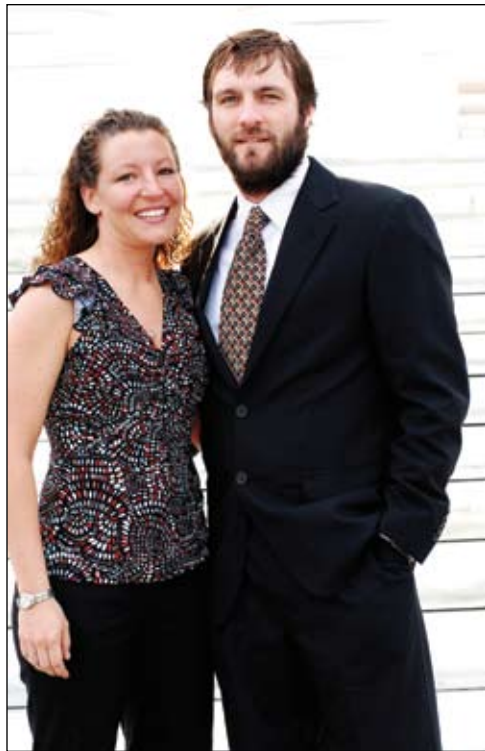


Photo by Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith

Staff Sgt. Scott Geisser, the Air National Guard's NCO of the Year, and his fiancée Tera Bates visit the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery June 16.

## Bearded Airman among Air Nat'l Guard's best

By Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Staff Sgt. Scott Geisser seems to be anything but your average “clean-cut” Airman with a thick brown beard and mustache. Even so, the Air National Guard's top leaders praised him as one of the six Outstanding Airmen of the Year (OAY) for 2008.

“I think somebody said that I looked like the Taliban,” said Geisser when asked about his unusual appearance for a servicemember.

Geisser, a combat controller from the 125th Special Tactics Squadron in Portland, Ore., is the Air Guard's Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, but he was preparing to deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom during the annual OAY events in June. In fact, he boarded a plane for Afghanistan immediately following the celebrations.

Geisser said his facial hair, which takes him weeks to grow, allows him to fit in with other coalition forces overseas that are fighting the war on terror, including the Afghani troops he will soon be working, fighting and training with.

“It makes it easier to blend in and not stick out like a sore thumb,” said Geisser.

Since beards take a while to grow, officials allowed Geisser to keep his beard and wear a business suit as he toured the National Capital Region and attended several awards ceremonies and functions. With him, but clean-faced and in their uniforms, were the Air Guard's other five OAYs.

Geisser is the fourth Airman from the Oregon Air Guard to achieve an OAY distinction. An Oregon Airman has been among the last three year's OAYs and all were recognized as one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airman of the Year.

“Oregon has a strong program,” said Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith, the Air Guard's

BEARDED AIRMAN *continued on:*  
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By Officer Candidate Christian Venhuizen  
Wyoming National Guard

CHEYENNE, Wyo. – Small Town USA is a hallmark of the entire state of Wyoming. Most communities don't exceed a population of 20,000. Everyone knows everyone else and looks out after each other.

Even the capital city of Cheyenne, the state's most populated city at around 60,000, doesn't come close to the metropolis of Denver, just a 100 miles south.

So when talk of gang activity comes up, there's a sense of disbelief.

“For several years we didn't see a whole lot [of criminal gang activity],” Cheyenne Police Lt. Mark Munari said, “but now it's increasing.”

Munari said his department first dealt with Colorado gangs encroaching into Wyoming's borders about 10 years ago. That activity, while not as intense as Denver's, has picked up – so much so that the police sought help from the Wyoming National Guard.

### The analyst

Staff Sgt. Jessica Williams is an intelligence analyst for the 115th Fires Brigade, based in Cheyenne.

After graduating from the University of Wyoming with a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and a master's degree in public administration, she went to work for the FBI at the National Gang Intelligence Center in Washington.

Williams' love for the Cowboy State was so intense, she retained her status with the Wyoming unit. Every couple of months she would fly west to drill in week-long stints.

“I was hoping for a transfer to the Wyoming/Colorado region after a couple of years in Washington,” she said. “I felt like D.C. was not a life; it was an existence.”

Instead of transferring, in February Williams was offered a year-long tour with the Wyoming National Guard's CounterDrug Program. She took a leave of absence from the FBI and headed home, but she had no idea what she was up against.

The National Guard CounterDrug Program conducts a full spectrum campaign that bridges the gap between the Department of Defense and non-DoD institutions in the fight against illicit drugs and transnational threats to the homeland.

“When I came into this position it was fairly undefined; anything that was drug related at the police department I could have been working on,” Williams said.

She realized the challenge while driving through the streets of Cheyenne, passing more than the occasional gang graffiti called “tags.” When Williams spoke to her civilian law enforcement supervisors about anti-gang efforts, she knew she had found her niche.

“I saw a gap, a need here,” she said of the lack of a gang intelligence office at the police department. “So I really jumped on it.”



Wyoming National Guard photo

Army Staff Sgt. Jessica Williams is an intelligence analyst in the Guard's CounterDrug Program, specializing in gang activity.

### Anti-terror is like anti-gang

No one has claimed gangs in Cheyenne are anywhere near as dangerous or insidious as a terrorist cell, but there are similarities.

“Different gang sets will act somewhat synonymous with the main body,” Williams said, comparing the way terror cells work with their main organization.

Her military intelligence background ramped up her gang intelligence gathering ability. Throw in the work she did for the

## Throw in the work she did for the FBI, and suddenly the Bloods were as big a target for Williams as al Qaeda

FBI, and suddenly the Bloods were as big a target for Williams as al Qaeda.

“She's been involved in counterintelligence for a bit of time, and now she's sharing that with us with all the training that she's been able to attend,” Munari said. “We wouldn't even be close to where we are now (tracking local gangs). The biggest thing is probably being able to accurately track who we have as gang members in town as well as who we have as gang sets.”

Williams gleans her starting points from information the officers pick up on the streets. She uses popular social networking sites like My Space to put names and faces to the local gangs. With her sole focus on gang activity, Williams connects with other agencies around Wyoming and neighboring Colorado. With their help, she's compiled an ever-growing list of gangs and gang members.

With the information, she's helped officers and prosecutors build cases against

that criminal element. She's also helped brief civilian law enforcement and military commanders on what to look for, how to identify gang members and how far-reaching the problem really is.

### Sir, your Soldier is a gang member

While her uniform is civilian, Williams is still a Soldier on orders. Her job means she'll be among the first to learn of a military member in the area who is suspected of affiliating with a gang.

Once she realizes the suspected gang member is a servicemember, she lets the police department know she is backing off the case, then informs the appropriate military command. Williams said it's happened, but just once or twice, “and that's a tough issue when I see that Soldier's name come up. There are ethical issues with what you do. There's always the safety and concern of your Soldiers.”

As for the Wyoming National Guard as a whole, she doesn't see a gang problem – yet.

“I'm not going to say we don't have any Soldiers involved in gang activity,” Williams said, noting it's tougher to track gang involvement in the Guard than on active duty.

“What you get with the Guard are Soldiers coming in one weekend a month and having a life on the outside. So the propensity that gang membership goes unnoticed in the Guard is a lot higher.”

The briefings on gang activity are not just for commanders wondering how to spot it or what to do with it. They're also for Soldiers readying for a mobilization.

“Potentially, as we get ready to deploy, there are concerns of gang activity in the area of operations that it may be prudent to do a quick gang brief,” she said. It's part of the effort to keep good Soldiers from doing bad things – like jokingly flashing gang signs in front of gang-affiliated Soldiers who take those signs seriously.

In Cheyenne, Williams is dealing with a different gang issue than the rest of the state. The issue involves identifying possible gang members at F.E. Warren Air Force Base.

“The military is just another slice of society,” she said. “If our community has a gang problem, the military bases will have gang membership. It might not be a big problem, but there might be some gang membership. We don't have a clear picture yet. That's one of the intel gaps that we have.”

Williams said present and former gang members who join the military sometimes find comfort in the familiarity of their former gangs, even if the members are total strangers. “That's what they know back home and they found that as a second family,” she said.

Her assignment has peaked the interest of military law enforcement. She said the Air

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# Utah Guard Soldiers awarded Silver, Bronze Stars for Valor

## Fight off ambush by estimated 100 enemy forces

By Maj. Hank McIntire  
Utah National Guard

DRAPER, Utah – Two Utah National Guard Soldiers, 1st Lt. Tyler J. Jensen and Capt. Chad A. Pledger, were awarded the Silver Star and Bronze Star, respectively, at a ceremony here June 19.

Jensen, a member of the 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Provo, received the Silver Star for his actions on Jan. 27, 2007, while deployed with I Corps Artillery (Forward) as an embedded transition team mentor to members of the Afghan National Army.

“In many ways it’s a wonderful honor, but in others it’s really hard,” Jensen said at the ceremony. “So many of my fallen friends and Soldiers are not here.”

One of those friends and Soldiers absent was 2nd Lt. Scott B. Lundell, who died in a firefight with enemy forces in Afghanistan in November 2006.

Jensen, Lundell and Pledger, who was awarded the Bronze Star, all deployed together to Afghanistan in 2006-07 with the Utah Guard’s I Corps Artillery to be trainers and mentors to the Afghan army.

On Jan. 27, 2007, Jensen was on a combat



Photos by Ileen Kennedy

Two Utah National Guard soldiers, 1st Lt. Tyler J. Jensen, right, and Capt. Chad A. Pledger, left, were awarded the Silver Star and Bronze Star, respectively, June 19.

enemy from overrunning his patrol.”

The Silver Star is awarded for “gallantry in action against an enemy of the United States while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force, or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in armed conflict against an

enemy from overrunning his patrol.”

Ironically, that casualty was Lundell. His widow, Jeanine, was on hand to see Utah Gov. Jon M. Huntsman, Jr. pin the awards on her husband’s friends.

Each speaker at the ceremony spoke tenderly of Lundell and his wife, as well as the sacrifice of family members when their Soldiers answer their nation’s call.

“It’s [for] all the Lundells out there who have served respectably and honorably,” said Pledger, modestly acknowledging his decoration for valor. “[It’s for] all the ones who keep our nation secure.” Huntsman, who happened to be in Afghanistan visiting Utah Soldiers when Lundell was killed, spoke of the memorial service he attended near Kabul to pay tribute to the fallen Soldier as “my most memorable event as governor.”

“It is totally inadequate for [me] to stand up here after what we have just seen,” Huntsman continued. “It’s pretty cool to be a governor, but it’s exceedingly cool to be able to pin on a Silver Star and a Bronze Star with Valor, knowing what that represents.”

In his remarks, Utah’s adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Brian L. Tabet, praised Jensen and Pledger for their courage. “You are quiet, unassuming young men,” he said. “Oh, how remarkable you are! And how you grace the uniform makes us all proud.”

“With such great heroes in my life,” he added, “I would be completely ungrateful if I didn’t serve.”

**“In many ways it’s a wonderful honor, but in others it’s really hard. So many of my fallen friends and Soldiers are not here.”**

—1st Lt. Tyler J. Jensen, Utah National Guard

reconnaissance patrol when his unit was ambushed by an estimated 100 enemy forces in Uruzgan province. In the confusion, the Afghans in the patrol were cut off from nearly all their American counterparts and the frightened Afghani officer-in-charge fled. Instinctively filling the void, Jensen stepped in, took charge and led the patrol under enemy fire to rejoin the Americans. Then, when another U.S. Soldier took a small-arms round in the leg, Jensen risked his own personal safety to rescue him.

“First Lieutenant Jensen repeatedly exposed himself to enemy fire to save a fellow Soldier who was wounded,” reads the award citation. “His courage, superlative combat skills and tactical leadership under overwhelming direct enemy fire were instrumental in preventing the

opposing armed force,” according to Army Regulation 600-8-22.

The decoration is the third-highest medal for valor, after the Medal of Honor and the Distinguished Service Cross.

It is the first Silver Star awarded to a member of the Utah National Guard in recent memory, to include Operations Enduring Freedom, Iraqi Freedom and Desert Storm.

Pledger received the Bronze Star with “V” device for “exceptional gallantry and valor in the face of a determined enemy” for his actions on Nov. 26, 2006.

As described on the certificate signed by Secretary of the Army Pete Geren: “Pledger’s temerity and skill resulted in an effective counterattack against an entrenched enemy ambush that not only saved the lives of

The same could be said about her job and the scope of responsibility she’s taking on. The problem for the Cheyenne Police Department is that her position is dependent on her military orders being renewed each year, and the officers also worry about losing her to a deployment.

“We can’t backfill your slot,” Munari said to her. “There’s no one to fill your shoes.”

Williams’ unit is preparing for the

possibility of a deployment to Kuwait in 2009. She wants to serve her country on the deployment, but she also wants to continue to help the state unravel the growing network of criminal gang activity. She’s even looking into ways she can help the department if she goes overseas.

“This has been a dream job. Being able to come back to Wyoming and start working as an intel analyst has been wonderful,” she said.

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command chief. “They recognize their folks well. They do a great job of documenting what they do when they deploy and submitting them for the appropriate awards when they get home.”

Smith, who read through 324 OAY submissions from the 54 states and territories, said that documenting the outstanding work of Airmen that go above and beyond is crucial in getting the recognition.

Geisser is among a handful of combat controllers that man two special tactics squadrons for the Air Guard: Oregon’s 125th STS and the Kentucky Air Guard’s 123rd STS. Both squadrons include combat controllers and combat weather Airmen. Additional pararescue Airmen make up Kentucky’s STS.

Originally from Montana, where he first served as a Soldier in the Army National Guard, Geisser joined the 125th in 2005 after nearly three years of intense active duty Air Force training that included full certification

**Air National Guard’s Outstanding Airmen of the Year**  
**AIRMAN OF THE YEAR: Senior Airman Charity Orriss**, Security Forces journeyman, 168th Air Refueling Wing, Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska  
**NONCOMMISSIONED OFFICER (NCO): Staff Sgt. Scott Geisser**, Combat Control journeyman, 125th Special Tactics Squadron, Portland, Ore.  
**SENIOR NCO: Senior Master Sgt. Donna Goodno**, Communications-Computer Systems operations superintendent, 147th Combat Communications Squadron, San Diego, Calif.  
**FIRST SERGEANT: Master Sgt. Daniel Mitchell Jr.**, First Sergeant, 177th Fighter Wing, Atlantic City, N.J.  
**HONOR GUARD MEMBER: Senior Master Sgt. Rolando Garza**, Fire Protection supervisor, 110th Civil Engineering Squadron, Battle Creek Air National Guard Base, Mich.  
**HONOR GUARD PROGRAM MANAGER: Tech. Sgt. Raquel Soto**, Services craftsman, 105th Services Flight, Stewart ANGB, N.Y.

as an air traffic controller and some of the most demanding physical training in the U.S. military. Combat controllers are trained to deploy with all other service components and provide close air support and air traffic control on austere landing fields, among other missions.

“It was a good fit as far as family and work; it was a good balance for me,” Geisser said about his move from active duty to Guard.

At the time, the 125th was forming as a new Air Guard squadron, and the unit became operational in January, thanks in part, leaders said, to Geisser’s hard work and dedication.

“We are very proud of Scott,” said Lt. Col. Jim Gregory, 125th Combat Operations Group commander during the OAY awards banquet June 19 at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington. “We are looking forward to him doing great things down range for us, and I can’t think of a better person to earn the award.”

When asked about his accomplishment, Geisser paused, scratched his thick beard and humbly replied, “I definitely feel that there are [controllers] that deserve it more than I do.”

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Force Office of Special Investigations has asked to join in the anti-gang training.

**Ever changing future**

Williams and her police officer teammates will be the first to say the gang situation is ever changing and growing across Wyoming.



## Dale Jr. moves to 2nd in NASCAR standings

DAYTONA BEACH, Fla. – National Guard NASCAR driver Dale Earnhardt Jr. and the No. 88 team led a race-high 51 laps July 5 en route to capturing an eighth-place finish in the 400-mile event at Daytona International Speedway.

With his 12th top-10 finish of the season, Earnhardt moved into second place in the NASCAR Sprint Cup Series standings.

## New paint



Photos courtesy Hendrick Motorsports

The No. 88 National Guard Chevrolet featured this hand-painted camouflage design July 5 at Daytona International Speedway, Fla. The project took two days and 10 coats of paint to complete.



Photo by Samantha L. Quigley

Jeffrey Dahl, 9, of New Jersey, left, professional golfer Fred Couples, and Margaret Rollins, 13, of Virginia hit the ceremonial first shot to open the second AT&T National Golf Tournament July 2 in Potomac, Md. Both children's fathers are deployed Guardmembers.

# Guard kids participate in opening of professional golf tournament

By Master Sgt. Greg Rudl  
National Guard Bureau

POTOMAC, Md. – Though his tee shot was a little high and left, 9-year-old Jeffrey Dahl showed a lot of composure as he teed off with pro golfer Fred Couples before a crowd of hundreds for the ceremonial first shot at the AT&T National Golf Tournament here at the Congressional Country Club July 2.

"Amazing," he said of the experience. Amazing too was that he'd only started playing the game in May, taking lessons on Fridays.

It could be the same poise that his dad, Maj. Tom Dahl, an operations officer for 177th Fighter Wing of the New Jersey Air National Guard, is displaying while deployed for the Global War on Terrorism overseas.

Jeffrey and several other children of deployed National Guard and Reserve members were invited by The Tiger Woods Foundation to be part of the tournament's opening ceremonies. The group was from "Our Military Kids," an organization that supports children of deployed and severely injured reserve personnel through grants for enrichment activities and tutoring.

When asked where his dad is, the operational security-minded youth simply said, "I can't tell you." He just hopes to play with



Photo by Master Sgt. Greg Rudl

Precious and Joy Rucker's father recently returned from an overseas deployment.

his dad for the first time when he gets back.

Jeffrey's golf ball was hand-delivered moments earlier by a member of the 101st Airborne Division's Screaming Eagles Parachute Demonstration Team, who jumped from a D.C. Army National Guard UH-1H Iroquois helicopter high above the first hole. His clubs were bought by the country club that his family belongs to in New Jersey.

Also teeing off was Maggie Rollins, 13, of Woodbridge, Va., who also has a deployed Guard father.

The group of military children also included Joy and Precious Rucker from Richmond, Va., whose father recently returned from Iraq. "We prayed to God that he would come back safely," said Precious, 17. The

girls were concerned for his safety because, as Precious put it, "he was in the city where they were blowing up each other."

The two had never been to a golf course before and appreciated the VIP attention, the T-shirts, the hats, the helicopter tour and a gift bag.

Along with the children, the tournament honored a group of wounded warriors recovering at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington who sat near the first hole.

"They're just ecstatic to be out here," said Dan Nevins, a former California Guard Soldier who led the group. "[For] a lot of the guys, this is the farthest they've been away from the hospital since they've been hurt."

Nevins speaks from experience. He deployed to Iraq in January 2004 and was injured when an IED exploded under his vehicle as his unit was heading out on a mission.

"It got my legs," he said. "The other three guys in the truck – they got their bell rung pretty good, but they were fine."

Nevins, who now works for the PGA Tour, helped organize a barbecue dinner at the Mologne House at Walter Reed for the wounded warriors that included PGA Tour players.

—Reporting by Samantha L. Quigley, American Forces Press Service, was used in this story.

## Alabama Guard officer candidates conquer Talladega on foot

By Staff Sgt. Katrina Timmons  
Alabama National Guard

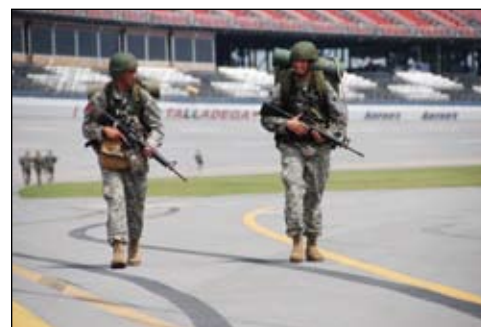
TALLADEGA, Ala. – Cars flashing by at more than 200 mph and 150,000 enthusiastic fans standing and screaming in the stands are common sights at the Talladega Super Speedway during a major NASCAR race.

On July 10, the speedway stands were empty and silent and the pace a lot slower as 173 National Guard members entered the track in full combat gear.

The Soldiers were attending an accelerated 57-day Officer Candidate School (OCS) at nearby Fort McClellan Army National Guard Training Site.

The OCS course has three phases, and completing a seven-mile foot march in full combat gear is part of the second.

The candidates had walked from a starting point 4.5 miles from the speedway on



Alabama National Guard photo

Two officer candidates head for the finish line at Talladega Super Speedway.

a sparsely traveled road. Upon arrival, they crossed Speedway Boulevard and entered the track infield through the north tunnel.

They circled at the bottom of the 2 1/2 mile track with weapons and 35- to 40-pound rucksacks.

This is one of three required foot marches totaling 22 miles the candidates must complete during the course.

The Alabama Military Academy (AMA) conducts the accelerated OCS course for Army Guard nationwide. Candidates from 23 states, including 10 Alabamians, attended the course.

Since 2003, more than 2,800 new second lieutenants from 50 states and four territories have graduated from the program.

The AMA uses the Infantry School program of instruction in the course to evaluate and develop leadership abilities of Soldiers seeking commissions in the U.S. Army and Army National Guard. The Soldiers' physical and mental stamina are tested in a demanding, high-stress, 24-hour environment. Coping with stressful and physically and mentally demanding situations under short time-constraints are common.



# Hurricane Camille

## Blast from the past; lessons for the future

By Bill Boehm  
National Guard Bureau

While locating footage for a National Guard history documentary, I recently viewed some rare video at the headquarters of ABC News in New York. The video included rare, unedited film from the 1960s. Mostly, these tapes showed National Guard troops on duty during the civil rights era and Vietnam War protests in a period of great social unrest in which the military did not enjoy high public approval.

The last segment about Hurricane Camille in 1969 was stunning. Only minutes into it did the quote by Baseball Hall of Fame catcher Yogi Berra come to mind: "It's déjà vu all over again!" The similarity to Hurricane Katrina was striking.

Camille, in a similar fashion to Katrina, hit the Gulf Coast of Mississippi Aug. 17



National Guard Bureau photo

The S.S. Hurricane Camille, a tugboat that washed ashore in Gulfport, Miss., during Hurricane Camille in 1969, did manage to survive Hurricane Katrina in 2005.

with 200 mph-plus winds and record-low barometer readings. The storm cut a devastating path through the state and roared through much of the southern U.S., deluging it with massive rainfall.

In the film, aerial photography shows homes and public buildings leveled to their foundations, while stunned residents try to make sense of the devastation. Against the backdrop of sandy beach front property—views eerily-similar to those of Katrina's aftermath—Guard Soldiers and Airmen on foot patrol try to locate those lost in the maelstrom. Other Guardsmen in nearby communities dislodge large debris piles that were homes only a short time before.

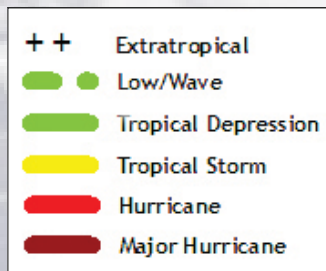
By hand, Guardsmen slowly peel away piles of wood and concrete strewn about. It's easy to see how painfully slow the process of cleaning debris was in 1969, especially with injured or fatally-wounded victims underneath the rubble.

Today, special teams like the Guard's



Camille 1969

Courtesy National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)



Katrina 2005

Civil Support Teams and CERFs (Chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield-explosive-Enhanced Response Force) with high-tech equipment can more easily locate and remove victims pinned underneath collapsed buildings. Front-end loaders and bulldozers make removing rubble faster and safer for relief workers, too.

Past columns of mine have dealt with the subject of preparedness and the fact that

### Camille

**Size:** Category 5  
**Winds:** 200 mph plus  
**Call ups:** More than 3,200 Mississippi Army and Air Guardsmen; 700 in Virginia  
**Missions:** Evacuate citizens from flooded areas, provide housing and traffic control, protect heavily-damaged communities from looting  
**Cost:** Over \$4.2 billion (1969 USD)  
**Fatalities:** 143 on the Gulf Coast, 113 from the Virginia floods  
**Other:** Air Guard units from 18 states flew in food, medicine, tents and other emergency supplies; the storm quickly moved north dumping huge amounts of rain in the mountains of western Virginia, causing massive flooding and killing at least 100

### Katrina

**Size:** Category 5  
**Winds:** 175 mph (1-minute sustained)  
**Call ups:** More than 58,000 Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen  
**Missions:** Search and rescue, security patrols, air transport, food, water and ice distribution, generator support  
**Cost:** \$81.2 billion (2005 USD)  
**Fatalities:** 1,836 confirmed, 705 missing  
**Other:** Guard responsible for 17,000 people rescued, 70,000 evacuated (exacerbated by the failure of the New Orleans area levees); It was more than three times the number of Guardmembers deployed to any previous natural disaster

Sources: National Guard Bureau and NOAA

history can and does repeat itself. Seeing history repeat this way, in the span of less than a lifetime, stuns the viewer. It is a stark illustration as to how history, within today's National Guard, can illuminate the changes that have been made in nearly 40 years. It marks the path of progress and provides insight to how the Guard can prepare, and react, to the challenges of Mother Nature.

## It happened in August

Events that made National Guard history

Selected entries from the National Guard's event calendar found at [www.ngb.army.mil/](http://www.ngb.army.mil/)

### Aug. 5, 1917

EVERYWHERE, USA – The entire membership of the National Guard is drafted into federal service for World War I. After war was declared in April 1917, Guard units were first called into federal service by President Woodrow Wilson under the militia clause of the Constitution. However, the Army's judge advocate general determined that it would be necessary to draft each Guardsman into federal service, thus severing his ties to the state militia and freeing him for service overseas.

### Aug. 9, 1990

RIYADH, Saudi Arabia – Walking off the first American transport are two Guardsmen from Headquarters Company, 228th Signal Brigade, South Carolina Army National Guard. They were the first of 37,848 Army Guard personnel to serve in Saudi Arabia during Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm that forced the Iraqi army to evacuate Kuwait.

### Aug. 16, 1777

BENNINGTON, Vt. – An American army composed entirely of militia from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York as well as Vermont soundly defeats a raiding party of 900 German troops. Led by Gen. John Stark, the militia kill or capture virtually every member of the force, greatly contributing to the British defeat at Saratoga, N.Y., two months later.

### Aug. 29, 1968

CHICAGO – The Democratic National Convention comes to a close as 668 people are arrested and 111 are injured. Chicago Mayor Richard J. Daley called out the Illinois Guard as a backup to his police forces prior to its start on Aug. 26. Nearly 6,000 Guardsmen are placed on state active duty. However, few are actually deployed to the streets to face protesters. Most are used to guard important government buildings from possible damage by demonstrators.





# Alaska National Guard children featured in Nickelodeon show about 'Coming Home'

By Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Two children of Alaska Army National Guard Maj. Joel Gilbert were recently featured on a Nickelodeon “Nick News” special, “Coming Home: When Parents Return from War.”

Kayleigh, 12, and Angus, 11, were interviewed about coping with the deployment of a parent by a crew from Lucky Duck Productions in March at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., where Gilbert was a student at the Command and General Staff College.

“Lots of people disagree about the war,” show host Linda Ellerbee told the New York Daily News. “The show is not about that. Everybody agrees the men and women serving in the military deserve our respect, but let us also honor the bravery and sacrifices made by the kids of men and women serving in the war.”

Gilbert said his children had a unique experience while he was deployed to Iraq as commander of Company A, 3rd Battalion, 297th Infantry of Juno, Alaska, from October 2004 to January 2006.

Living in a town of 30,000, only one other parent with a child at their school was deployed, so “they had no peers to associate with,” Gilbert said. It was not like living on a military base and going to school with children who are dealing with the same issues. They had no interaction with military children until they moved to Fort Leavenworth.

When he got his orders for Iraq, Gilbert and his wife, Laura, discussed his deployment with the children, who were ages 10 and 9 at the



Photo courtesy of Nick News

Alaska Army National Guard Maj. Joel Gilbert and his family, from left to right, wife, Laura, Kayleigh and Angus, were recently featured on a Nickelodeon “Nick News” special, “Coming Home: When Parents Return from War.”

time. “Kayleigh started crying and wanted to know, ‘Why can’t we go with you?’

“We talked a whole bunch about it before I left,” he said.

During his deployment, Laura worked for

the Family Assistance Center. The children also helped with stuffing care packages and other projects, which “kept them in the loop,” Gilbert said. “My wife kept everyone super-involved” with scouting and other activities. It

helped the time go by faster, he added.

Gilbert said he tried to send an e-mail from Iraq every night before he went to bed, and he tried to call every three to five days.

When he returned home, Gilbert said his children were concerned that he would treat them like Soldiers. “But I was able to reintegrate really well,” he said. “We have always had open lines of communication with them.”

Gilbert said he hopes the show will “get kids thinking.” Some children may have a parent who is different after returning from a deployment, so “if they did see the show, they may now understand why they may have issues [adjusting].”

Each of the children featured on the show talked about their feelings – their fears and expectations – during a parent’s deployment.

“I think their honesty and integrity and their pride come shining through,” Ellerbee told the Daily News about the children. “They’re very open about the pain, but they couldn’t be more definite about their pride in their parents.”

According to the Daily News, the idea for the show came from talk about troop withdrawals combined with the fact that 43 percent of the Soldiers are parents, a far greater share than in any previous war.

Marty Toub, a producer for the show, told The Fort Leavenworth Lamp that the show’s crews interviewed children throughout the United States.

“There’s so many ways to grow up in this country,” he said. “We talked to Soldiers, and we also ... talk to kids and find out how they’re getting through it.”

## Mullen: Guard families connect America, armed forces

By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

ST. LOUIS – Because it’s in every community in the nation, the National Guard is best suited to keep the American people connected with the armed forces, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff said here July 21.

“This is something we have to do better: To make sure that the military needs of our country are met and that the people of America understand what the United States military is all about,” Adm. Michael Mullen said. “There is no better group in the country than the Guard and Reserves to do exactly that.”

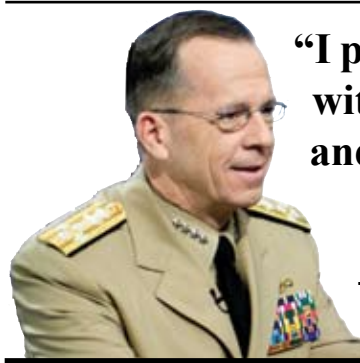
Mullen told attendees at the largest-ever National Guard Bureau Joint Family Program Volunteer Workshop and Youth Symposium that family readiness is the key to military readiness.

“It is an incredibly important conference dedicated to an incredibly important cause,” Mullen told the audience from all 54 states and territories, including many unpaid volunteers. “I put family support on an equal plain with individual and unit performance and sacrifice and service, because we cannot do it without you.”

Later, Mullen was enthusiastic about the quality of questions he got from attendees and about the work being done.

“There is so much information in this ballroom today,” he said in an American Forces Press Service interview. “If I could tap that information and feed it into the programs and the policy changes ... I’d be a very happy guy, and I know I could make some really positive changes.”

Mullen and LTG H Steven Blum, the chief of the National



**“I put family support on an equal plain with individual and unit performance and sacrifice and service, because we cannot do it without you.”**

—Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

Guard Bureau, said Department of Defense and National Guard leaders were, in fact, paying close attention to the work being done here at the three-day St. Louis event.

“The chairman being here is hugely important,” Blum said, “because he recognizes that it is the National Guard and Reserves that reach into every ZIP code in this nation. ... This is his opportunity to test the pulse and take the vital signs of the volunteer force.”

Earlier, Mullen thanked attendees for their service, urged them to recruit even more volunteers to avoid burn-out during long wars and said family programs must continue to evolve.

He said the nation needs to come together to support wounded warriors and the families of those killed in action.

“We as a nation owe them a debt of gratitude to be actively repaid to make sure that they are taken care of for the rest of their lives,” he said. “In the end, it is America that can do this. It’s not [the DoD] and it’s not the [Department of Veterans Affairs]. We’ve got to do this all together.”

Innovation is needed to improve family support, Mullen said, citing an Israeli model for caring for wounded warriors and the families of the fallen. Mullen asked the Israeli army

chief of staff how that country provides continued support. The chief reached into his billfold and pulled out a list of a dozen names of families of wounded and fallen members of the Israeli Defense Forces that the minister personally stays in touch with for the rest of his life.

“When a commander takes over a unit in the Israeli Defense Forces, one of the last things they sign for is

accountability and responsibility for every family and every member who has been wounded or fallen since that unit stood up 60 years ago,” Mullen explained. “And then, when inspectors come around to inspect your unit, that gets inspected.”

While not arguing for the same approach in here, Mullen said, “It’s not a bad model. There are other ways to connect with those who sacrificed so much than the way we are doing it.”

Introducing Mullen, Blum said that family support enables America to maintain an all-volunteer force. And he cited as an example of the importance of the National Guard Mullen’s home state, California, where the only active-duty Army base is in the Mojave Desert, away from population centers.

“When California sees the Army, the only way they see it day-to-day is to see the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve,” Blum said. “If we’re going to have a volunteer force where ... mothers and fathers will allow or encourage their sons and daughters to be part of a volunteer military, we better stay connected to the American people, and let me tell you something: When you call out the Guard, you call out America, and when you call out the Guard, you call out the family readiness piece, because if that’s not there, the Soldiers won’t be there.”

