

NEW HAMPSHIRE

# National Guard

MAGAZINE

Summer 2009



**Back  
to  
Iraq**



Reddel  
Becomes  
N.H.'s  
25th  
Adjutant  
General





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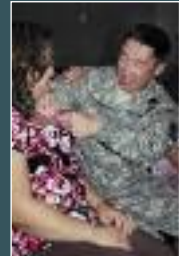
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**On the Cover:** Sgt. Carey Atkins and Spc. Aaron Deangelis (facing), crew chiefs with the 238th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), hang from a Black Hawk hoist operated by Connecticut Army Guard crew chief Doug Mallozzi during a joint training exercise at Bear Brook State Park, Allenstown, May 20. Under the watch of 238th Staff Sgt. Matthew Stohrer, the soldiers were using a recently fielded high performance hoist. The new equipment takes on added significance for the 238th, which deploys to Iraq later this summer. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA



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# MEDEVAC Company returns to Iraq

By 2nd Lt. Andrew Schwab, NHNG-PA

“We’ll do as good as we did last time”, said Sgt. Jay Ehmann.

Last time, Ehmann was in Tikrit, Iraq, and the Iraqis were holding their first elections and drafting a new constitution. Ehmann was part of the 1159th Air Ambulance Company, now the 238th Aviation Regiment, helping to provide air medical evacuation for U.S. service members and Iraqi Army personnel.

Throughout their deployment, in 2005, Ehmann’s unit completed more than 2,300 successful missions while treating and transporting nearly 4,000 patients. In August, Ehmann and 65 of his fellow soldiers will return to Iraq to again provide air MEDEVAC support to coalition forces and Iraqi military personnel.

The mission is the same, but the unit has changed in the last four years, said Capt. Peter Cartmell, instructor pilot and forward support medical team leader for the 238th.

Since their first deployment in the Global War on Terror, more than half of the soldiers of the 238th have rejoined the civilian world or moved on to new units. “There is a younger crowd coming in,” said Cartmell, a shift he feels has been accelerated by a higher operational tempo.

Pvt. 2 Timothy Comtois has just begun to experience what high OPTEMPO means. Comtois graduated from high school a year ago and joined the N.H. Guard to receive medical training and work on helicopters. Having recently completed basic training and the Army’s combat medic course, Comtois now has to learn the responsibilities and skills he will need to perform his duties from the back of a Blackhawk helicopter.



Soldiers with the 238th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) hone their life saving skills on a human patient simulator during a training exercise with Concord Hospital’s Simulation and Education Center at the NHARNG flight facility in Concord on April 9. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

“I want to get the most experience I can before I leave,” Comtois said. He’s currently learning about crew duties and aircraft systems, the foundation for the rest of his aviation education. Over the next few months, he will be taking additional drill days during the week to ensure that he completes all necessary training before the unit deploys. Sgt. Carey Atkins, his instructor, said Comtois will be working almost full time as he builds experience working on the helicopter.

For Cartmell, getting to train younger soldiers is part of what keeps him in the unit. “I feel compelled to go with this unit. I have a lot of experience, and it is my duty,” said Cartmell, who has been flying for the Guard since 2000 and spent 12 years on active duty before joining the Guard.

During their first deployment, no one knew what to expect. “We had very poor information about where we were going and what we would be doing,” said Cartmell. This time around, “the deployment is not so unknown.”

He is looking forward to using the lessons he’s learned to help accomplish the mission in Iraq, and to using his experience to help prepare the newer soldiers.

One of the biggest lessons Ehmann learned from his first tour in Iraq was how to prepare his family better for the deployment. Cartmell said that during deployments, “the soldiers take care of each other ... but it’s tough on the families.” Ehmann, who has five children ranging from one to 16 years old, said this time his family will be “better taken care of – better prepared for me to deploy.” ♦

Sgt. Carey Atkins of the 238th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) is hoisted by Connecticut Army Guard crew chief Doug Mallozzi during a joint training exercise at Bear Brook State Park, May 20. The 238th is scheduled to deploy to Iraq later this summer. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

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Maj. Gen. William Reddel addresses a crowd during the Memorial Day ceremony at the State Veterans Cemetery in Boscawen, May 30. Photo: Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey

## Here to serve you

*Maj. Gen. William Reddel, who began his career in the N.H. National Guard 30 years ago as an Air Force pilot, shares his thoughts about becoming the state's 25th Adjutant General and offers a glimpse of what kind of leadership we can expect from the corner office. Maj. Greg Heilshorn interviewed Reddel, May 28, at Joint Force Headquarters, Concord.*

**You were a traditional Guardsman until your first day as the Adjutant General, May 20. Unlike your recent predecessors, you have not been a full-timer. How does that affect your perspective?**

I do have the traditional outlook on life. I've always fought for the traditional Guardsman, but that's not to say that I don't understand the full-time side of the house. If you look at my points for retirement, I have about 80 percent of an active duty 20-year retirement. Even though I was a traditional Guardsman for 30 years, you don't receive that many active duty points by not being involved. In fact, most people at Pease thought I was full-time. So I feel like I can say I've walked in both shoes. I think I can represent all Guardsmen well and that's what I am supposed to do. I have gone through the pains of pay cuts, losing the pension, losing medical benefits.

**You can empathize with the traditional.**

Big time. The way I typically describe the Guard to people is by using the analogy of the three-legged stool. The Guardsman sits on a three-legged stool of support. One leg is the Guard. One is the employer, and one is the family and community. While he is sitting on that stool, he is juggling three balls. One is the family. One is the employer and one the Guard. You're usually juggling all three and when you've got it right is when everybody is a little upset at you. You know you've got the formula right because you are spending about equal amount of time with everybody.

**But not quite enough with everybody.**

Right. Sometimes when you are juggling those balls, you need to juggle two balls that are fairly close to you whether it is work, your family or the Guard. So you've got to throw one of those balls way up high, and you're juggling those two balls, and the

hope and the prayer is that you catch that other ball before it falls to the ground. If one of those balls falls to the ground, you're going to lose something. Either your family, your job or the Guard. It's a balancing act.

**And it never gets to a point where you've perfected the juggling.**

No, never. Because the environment is always changing, and this changes how you juggle the balls.

**What will be your biggest learning curve as the new TAG?**

It will be the Army side of the house. It's a different culture. It's different acronyms. It's just different. That is my biggest area to concentrate on. The other is the full-time side of the house – the rules and regulations for the full-time force.

**There are folks in the organization who believe the TAG should be Army because the Army Guard represents two-thirds of the organization. Ideally, it's an Army officer who has served in combat and thus can relate better to the troops.**

I'm aware of it. I was aware of it when Gen. Clark was selected as the TAG. Look, respect is earned. It's not given. I understand that, and I have to go out there and earn their respect. I also know there is that 10 percent who will never accept the idea, and that's fair. It's always the 10 percent rule. I have deployed. I have been at wars for the last 18 years. My oldest child is 20; my youngest is 16, so they really haven't known me not at war. Do my deployments last as long as the Army's? Absolutely not. We kick the door down. That's our job, and I understand that. Is it fair? No, it's not. I admire the Army guys and girls who are on the ground with their 90-pound packs in 140-degree temperatures. I know that's not fun. I understand that. But I also understand that since 1954, ground troops have not been engaged from the air because the Air Force has come in and kicked down the door and has controlled the skies over the battlefield. You have to have both. I understand two-thirds of our force is Army National Guard, and one third is Air National Guard, but that shouldn't dictate who should be TAG. I want the person who is going to have the vision, who is going to lead this organization both in the state and nationally. I will say what Gov. Lynch has said. The state is not an island by itself. There are another 54 parts to this puzzle, and whatever we can do to

*(Continued on page 7)*

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plug in nationally will help us immensely in the state. I'm plugged in nationally.

**Do you subscribe to the idea that we are one National Guard? That we must think of ourselves first as N.H. National Guardsmen?**

I do believe we are N.H. National Guardsmen first. On a day to day basis, protection of the homeland – New Hampshire – is job number one. I do believe in a joint force and joint is not spelled A-R-M-Y. Next year, 50 percent of our work force is deploying. Not only 50 percent of the troops, but up to about 50 percent of our full-time work force. So, do we close down? We can't close down. How are we going to make it work? Do we start pulling assets over from the Air side to start filling space over here?

Well, that's a thought, and it might have to come down to that. How do we fill in the gaps to make things work? We also know during that time New England as a whole region is going to be tasked with a lot. Now you start looking at our emergency assistance compacts with other states. Are we going to have the bodies from other states to help us out? It might come to a point where New England as a whole will have to look outside the region to ask for help. We also have pacts with Canada. A lot of people forget about our neighbors to the north. Maine has trained with them. We've have trained with them.

**Nationally, the military is facing budget cuts. For us, that means having to trim about 100 people off our Army Guard roll by September, and losing the beefy incentive packages that helped us recruit to a record level only a year ago. How do we wrap our hands around that?**

We've got to look at ways of keeping the incentives going because we know we can't have this up and down. We want it to be a straight line, and we know that if you take away these incentives, we're going to go downhill, and we are going to have to build ourselves up from where we were before.

**You also have to factor in the attrition that typically follows a major deployment. Is that a worst case scenario?**

We're looking at everything. I know this is going to be tough. It's the second time around for many. It's going to be the third time for some, and it could be even more than that for others. People are going to have to look inside themselves and say, "Do I still want to do this?" The hope is that they do, but we also understand that it is a stressor, and we want to do whatever we can to help lessen that stress through incentives and other means. There are a lot of people who work overtime on week-ends who make a lot more money at their civilian job than they do at drill, but I think the draw is they like coming in here. They like the camaraderie. They believe in what they're doing. They believe in service to our nation. Will that always bring people into the Guard? No, because we are an all-volunteer force.

**Describe your style of leadership.**

I believe in servant leadership. I believe I am here to serve you. There is a quote I like that says, "True leadership is for the benefit of the followers and not the enrichment of the leaders." I believe that 100 percent. I'm going to ask a lot of questions, and I don't ask questions to quiz people. I ask questions for understanding. But if the answer comes back "because that's the way we always do things," I'll just say we need to look at our processes again to see if there is a better way of doing it. I believe in management by walking around. (*Reddel points to his Blackberry and says that it's the enemy.*) We will be looking at



*Gov. John Lynch swears in Maj. Gen. William Reddel of Londonderry as the Adjutant General of the New Hampshire National Guard during a private ceremony at the State House, May 20. He is joined by his family, from left, daughters Jordan Claire Turner Reddel, Alexis Lynda Turner Reddel, and wife Rebekah Turner Reddel. Reddel becomes the 25th state Adjutant General dating back to 1777. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA*

ways to be more effective with e-mailing. You cannot lead from behind a computer. You can manage from behind a computer, but last time I checked, we didn't need managers around here. We need leaders.

**Was becoming the TAG a goal of yours or did it just happen?**

I was asked by N.H. Executive Councilor Raymond Burton, "Did the job find you or did you find the job?" I truly believe the job found me. It was not on my road map. My goal was to be a one-star general someday. But people talked to me and said we think you should apply, we think you have a lot to offer the Guard both in the state and nationally. The rest is history.

**Were you surprised when you got the call that you were nominated?**

I was. I was very surprised.

**How long will you serve?**

I can stay until age 65. I'll be 51 this summer, so I have 14 more years. Do I want to stay 14 years? Not really, and the only reason I say that is that I feel like there are talented people behind me who have a lot to offer. Originally, I got a five-year military leave of absence from U.S. Airways because that's what's allowed by law. In four years I'll look again and ask, Do I want to stay longer? Have I done what I wanted to accomplish? Are there people right now that are ready to take this over? Army or Air, it doesn't matter to me. Part of your job as a commander is to create a succession plan and create depth, and that's what I'm planning to do. To create that depth and not come out and say this is the next person, but have options. Have people that are ready to step up to the plate.

**You've been on the job for a week. First impressions?**

I think what sums it up for me is when the Vietnam veterans from 3rd Battalion were here during the May 21 panel discussion talking about when they arrived at Fort Bragg where they prepared for deployment to Vietnam. The active duty officers in charge looked at our soldiers and said, "Wow, these guys are impressive." Their uniforms were correct, their trucks were spit-shined, they were ready to serve. We were not the rag tag militia, or whatever name they used to call us. We were a force to be reckoned with. There was also an Army gentleman who stood up during the panel and said 3rd Battalion saved his butt over in Vietnam because he knew he could call them. So you have to look at our history and heritage. There are so many examples of service before self and excellence in all we do on both the Army and Air side. We have a good organization. We really do. I want to continue that tradition and make improvements where we can. ❖

# 3643rd's new water purification system gives state critical asset

By Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey, NHNG-PA

**SOMERSWORTH** – The sudden surge of river water through a labyrinth of hoses drew a smattering of grins and shouts of victory from a group of 3643rd Brigade Support Battalion soldiers at the water treatment plant at Salmon Falls River, March 15.

The successful test of the new water purification systems – the Tactical Water Purification System and two new Lightweight Water Purification Systems – proved that the N.H. Guard now has a new tool in its inventory to help with homeland emergencies and operations overseas.

And they did it on the first try.

“This is a big deal,” said 1st Lt. Nicholas Giampetruzzi. “With these systems, we can keep people alive.”

Each apparatus can produce potable water from fresh, brackish, salt, and nuclear, biological and chemical contaminated water sources, said Johnnie Miles, the equipment fielder who helped transport the systems to New Hampshire.

The two smaller pieces of equipment, the LWS, can each produce 120 gallons per hour of potable water. The larger piece of equipment, the TWPS, can produce 1,500 gallons of clean water per hour, and replaces the older generation reverse osmosis water purification unit that could make only 600 gallons per hour.

All three pieces of equipment are generator-powered, membrane filtration systems.

“The TWPS right there is the bread and butter of the operation. That’s a sweet piece of equipment,” Miles said. “We have these systems all over the world – anywhere the Army is conducting operations, they are there.”

Each machine has the ability to operate approximately 22 hours per day, Miles explained. The general rule of thumb is one to three hours of maintenance and to cool down in each 24-hour period; then they can be started right back up.

“They work in any environment. They’re rapidly deployable, self-sufficient, highly mobile pieces of equipment,” he added. “If there are any state emergencies, they’ll be ready.”

The two smaller pieces of equipment, the LWS, can be moved in the back of a humvee truck. The larger must be moved by HEMTT [Heavy Extended Mobility Tactical Truck] or airlifted into place, Miles said.

The three systems could now potentially be used for state emergencies to provide safe water when otherwise there may not be any, said Giampetruzzi. To put it into perspective, the Somersworth water treatment plant can produce six million gallons of water per day, he said. In the event of an emergency, the first and foremost consideration for the Army equipment would be to provide drinking water – at a target of one gallon of water per person per day.

There was much coordination, cooperation and a great deal of enthusiasm that led to using the Somersworth water treatment plant as a venue to field test the new equipment, Giampetruzzi said. One of the selling points was the reality that if there was an emergency in the community, the National Guard could step in and produce safe drinking water, he said.

Somersworth Director of Public Works John Jackman said he was pleased the town could help. “We were very excited to



*Pfc. Willie Barron and Pvt. Sara McPherson, of A Company, 3643rd BSB, set up the NHARNG's new water purification equipment at the water treatment plant in Somersworth, March 15. Photo: Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey, NHNG-PA*

see this,” he said. “A lot of people who work out here at the plant are very interested, and came in on their day off to see it.”

The need for equipment like this is showcased in New Hampshire’s recent history of natural disasters, according to Lt. Col. Ralph Huber, deputy director for joint operations. There have been three major floods in an 18-month span. Those devastating events show how fast weather can create dire situations, Huber said.

The N.H. Guard has up until now been constrained to handing out bottled water or physically staging water buffalos, with a capacity of 350 gallons, he said.

“We could keep the water buffalos topped off with potable water, but we were still fairly limited,” he said. “Even though we could always stage water, we didn’t have the ability to produce

water on our own. So yes, these water purification systems really expand our capabilities. Obviously, if you can make it on site, it's going to be better. So clearly, this is potentially a big win for us."

Sgt. Christopher St. Marie, of A Company, 3643rd BSB, has deployed to Iraq and has been activated in state to assist during the floods.

"Of course I would not want anything to happen in any of our communities," he said. "But when it does, I would love the opportunity to show our communities what we can do and how we can help them. First and foremost, we are here for our state. We are part of our communities, and these are our neighbors we'd be helping."

In October 2005, the Monadnock region was pummeled with 14.5 inches of rainfall in just 30 hours. Alstead took the brunt of the flooding, with four deaths and 36 homes destroyed. The Keene water treatment plant failed due to the surge in water. Five hundred N.H. Guard troops were called in to assist.

During the response to Hurricane Katrina, NHNG troops deployed to New Orleans and handed out donated water to people in need. Additionally, Huber said, the Guard had to provide water to sustain more than 400 soldiers for three days.

"You're talking about a lot of water," he said.

In May 2006, Gov. John Lynch declared a state of emergency after torrential rainfall throughout most of New Hampshire forced evacuations and washed out roads. April 2007 brought another state of emergency with more than 200

N.H. Guardsmen called up to help in Hampton, Rochester, Farmington and Greenville.

"Remember that 40-60 percent of New Hampshire is rural," Huber said. "A lot of folks rely on individual wells. When you have that, or smaller municipalities that don't have back-up generators for their electrical grid, and there's power loss, there's also going to be a loss of water supply. And when you're talking power loss, there's also not going to be means or places to buy water. People are going to quickly get thirsty."

One of the best examples of NHNG helping supply water to New Hampshire communities was the ice storm that pummeled the state in December 2008, Huber said. FEMA provided 71,000 gallons of water, and of that, the NHNG distributed 32,000 gallons.

For the soldiers of A Company, 3643rd BSB, the power to make a real difference in people's lives – to conceivably save lives – is significant. One of the trainers in the unit, Pvt. Sara McPherson, summed up the feelings many of the soldiers expressed.

"This job is so versatile, and it's one where we're really out there helping people," she said. "If there was an emergency now, we could transport the equipment out to where we're needed and provide thousands of

gallons of potable water every day."

McPherson paused to reflect on the simplicity of the mission.

"You know I really appreciate what we have, but it's true that sometimes you don't realize what you have until it's gone," she said. ❖



*Less than 1 percent of the world's fresh water – about .007 percent of all the water on earth – is readily accessible for direct human use.*

## TAKING WATER FOR GRANTED

By Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey, NHNG-PA

Lt. Col. Daniel Wilson, commander of the Brigade Support Battalion, holds a particular memory from his deployment to Iraq that impresses him with the sanctity of safe water.

At the Tigris River, he recalls seeing women drawing water for cooking, people and animals bathing, others fishing, children playing, and men urinating, all in rather close proximity. Here in the United States, he remarked, we all tend to take safe water for granted or complain when we have to buy a bottle of water.

As a matter of fact, water scarcity around the world is more common than many people may realize.

Of 1.4 billion cubic kilometers of water on the planet – about two-thirds of the earth's surface – almost 97 percent of it is unusable salt water. Most fresh water is locked up in glaciers or deep underground,

leaving only a fraction available for human consumption or use. Less than 1 percent of the world's fresh water – about .007 percent of all water on earth – is readily accessible for direct human use.

Each year, a reported 3.575 million people die from water-related diseases. Of these, 98 percent of water-related deaths occur in the developing world.

Approximately one in eight people – or 884 million people – lack access to safe water supplies. Water and sanitation crises claim more lives through disease than any war claims through guns, according to Water Partners International.

Though experts report there is still enough water to go around, its distribution is uneven. According to the Pacific Institute for Studies on Development, Environment and Security, North America has access to more than 6,000 cubic meters per person

per year stored in reservoirs. But the poorest African countries have less than 700, and Ethiopia has less than 50 cubic meters per person per year of water storage. Wealthy but water-scarce countries like Saudi Arabia can afford expensive desalination projects, but poor ones cannot.

The daily requirement for sanitation, bathing and cooking needs, as well as for assuring survival, is about 13.2 gallons per person.

Agriculture accounts for 66 percent of human water consumption, industry 20 percent, and domestic households 10 percent, according to the World Water Council. About 4 percent evaporates from man-made reservoirs. ❖

*Sources: Reuters, World Bank, Pacific Institute for Studies on Development, Environment and Security, World Water Council, Water Partners International, BBC News.*



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# Clark retires after 40 years of service



Deborah Clark is honored by Gov. John Lynch and Dr. Susan Lynch during her husband's retirement ceremony in Assembly Hall, JFHQ, Concord, April 4. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

By Staff Sgt. Angela Stebbins, 157th ARW-PA

Hailed as a true leader by Gov. John Lynch, Maj. Gen. Kenneth Clark retired after 40 years of service to the N.H. National Guard, a career that began as a U.S. Air Force pilot and culminated as the state's 24th Adjutant General.

"I am truly sorry to see General Clark retire, not only because he has had such a distinguished record of service to our state and nation, but also because he is a wonderful individual," said Lynch, who presented Clark with the Distinguished Service Medal during a retirement ceremony April 4 at Joint Force Headquarters in Concord.

The tribute to Clark was attended by more than 200 friends, family and fellow Guardsmen, including the Adjutants General from Maine, Vermont, Massachusetts, and the director of the Air National Guard, Lt. Gen. James Wyatt III.

"He has done a marvelous job being able to help bring the Army and Air together as a team, and in bringing the support of the National Guard to the state mission to a whole new level," said retired Maj. Gen. Joseph Simeone, former Deputy Adjutant General of the N.H. Guard. "Because of him, the N.H. National Guard has a greater level of visibility on a national level."

During his four years as the Adjutant General, Clark challenged the practice of top-down command and encouraged a servant-style form of leadership.

"Maj. Gen. Clark has a particular thing that he likes to see in all of his leadership positions," said Chief Master Sgt. Anthony Lebel, a vehicle maintenance foreman for the 157th Air Refueling Wing's Logistic Readiness Squadron. "That would be if an individual is in charge of a section, that individual does not have people that work for him or her, but that the supervisor works for the people assigned to him or her."

Clark's work as an advocate for the National Guard in New Hampshire and nationally was lauded by the state's congressional delegation.

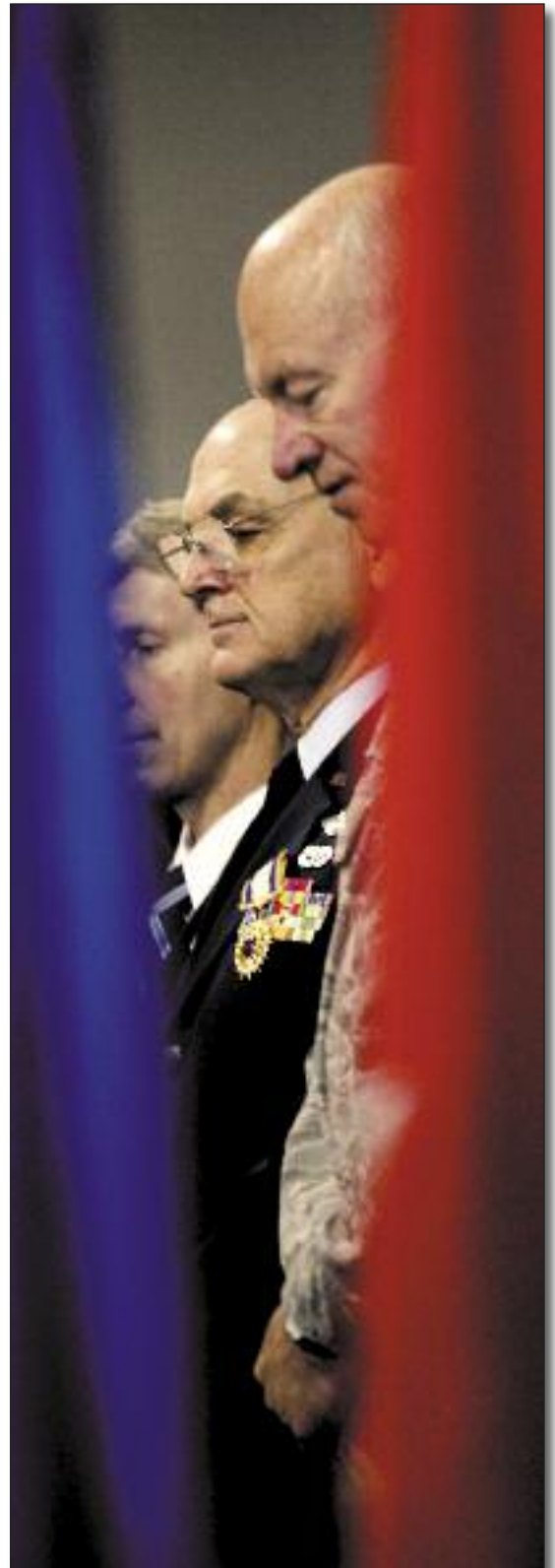
"He has been instrumental in helping create what I hope will be a national model for pre-, during, and post-deployment care for our armed forces," said Congressman Paul Hodes. "When you are around Gen. Clark and listen to him speak from the heart, it sinks in ... the people like Gen. Clark who have given their lives and service to this country are role models."

Added retired Maj. Gen. John Blair, an Army aviator who served as the Adjutant General prior to Clark, "His caring for people is the key to his success; it means so much to him."

After receiving numerous accolades and mementos from a long line of distinguished guests, Clark spoke about his career, his pride in serving in the National Guard, and his deep gratitude for the support of his wife and family.

His final remark in uniform was a touching tribute to his biggest inspiration.

"My mother was four feet, 10 inches tall, but she knew how to trust people," he concluded. "I am who I am because of her faith in me. Thanks, Mom." ❖



Maj. Gen. Kenneth Clark, flanked by Gov. John Lynch and Lt. Gen. James Wyatt III, the director of the Air National Guard, listens to an invocation during his retirement ceremony in Assembly Hall, JFHQ, Concord, April 4. Clark, the outgoing Adjutant General of the New Hampshire National Guard, was honored for his 40 years of service as a citizen-soldier. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

# Courage under fire

## N.H. citizen-soldiers and airmen honored for combat



*Spc. Douglas "Doc" Rogers, a former member of C Company, 3rd Battalion, 172nd Infantry (Mountain), catches up with soldiers from the company he served with in Iraq in 2004. Rogers received the Army Commendation Medal with Valor Device on April 2 during a ceremony in Assembly Hall, JFHQ, Concord. Rogers earned the medal for coming to the aid of a fellow Mountain Company soldier while under intense enemy fire during Operation Phantom Fury in Al Fallujah, Iraq, on Nov. 24, 2004. His actions that day played a critical role in saving the soldier's life. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA*



*Staff Sgt. Hoon Nowack fastens a spouse appreciation pin on his wife, Lilybeth, during a Freedom Salute ceremony on April 25 in Assembly Hall, JFHQ, Concord. During the ceremony, Nowack was awarded the Bronze Star for work as an embedded tactical trainer and mentor in Zabul Province, Afghanistan. A Guard narrative about Nowack's award said that during the first firefight his team encountered, his vehicle was disabled by direct mortar fire. "After wiping the dust and debris from his face, he continued to pour accurate fire onto the enemy, suppressing them so the Afghan National Army soldiers could flank and defeat them. It was Nowack's third deployment, having served in the first Gulf War and with the Snow Stormers in 2005. Photo: Maj. Greg Heilshorn, NHNG-PA*

*Sgt. William Savage is applauded after he received the Purple Heart during a Freedom Salute ceremony on April 25 in Assembly Hall, JFHQ, Concord. Savage was injured by a bullet in the arm while out on a night patrol in Afghanistan when his humvee was ambushed. It was Savage's second tour of duty. He told a newspaper reporter at the ceremony that he was willing to go back for a third tour, if called upon. Photo: Maj. Greg Heilshorn, NHNG-PA*





Master Sgt. Nancy Young, a member of the 157th Air Refueling Wing Logistics Readiness Squadron, stands at attention with Col. Richard Martell, Wing Commander, after being presented with the unit's first Combat Action Medal on May 2. Young was one of five airmen from the Wing's Logistic Readiness Squadron who served in Iraq in 2004 and were assigned to gun trucks providing security to Army convoys in the Sunni Triangle. They all received the Army combat patch for their duty, an honor few airmen receive outside of Special Forces. Photo: Tech. Sgt. Mark Wyatt, 157th ARW Public Affairs Multimedia Center



Jennifer Dimond receives a hug after the Franklin Police Department was dedicated in her husband's name during a ceremony, March 26, in Franklin. Cpl. Scott Dimond was killed in action in Afghanistan in October 2008. He was a Franklin police officer for 18 years. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

## In his own words

*Spc. Adam Doucette was awarded an Army Commendation Medal with Valor on Feb. 20 during the 237th Military Police Company's annual training at Fort Pickett. He was given the award for actions performed during an IED explosion in Iraq that claimed the lives of fellow N.H. Army Guardsman Sgt. David Stelmat, two North Carolina Guardsmen, Sgts. Thomas Ray and David Williams, and two Iraqi translators. This was his second deployment with the N.H. Army Guard and the second time he was based in Camp Taji, north of Baghdad.*

*Lori Duff met with Doucette, who is also a volunteer firefighter in Webster, on March 19. The following are his thoughts about deploying, the incident and coming home.*

When I first got there, I would have said my first deployment with Charlie Company was more stressful because we were always getting shot at – or they were trying to blow us up two or three times a day. But this second time around, once we started getting more regularly shot at, that's when I would have to say it changed.

The latter half of the deployment, for some reason, they just started going for us.

Taji was built up more than when I was there in 2004. When I first got there, the second time, and saw all the new blast roofs and barriers and walls around every building on some of the bases, which hadn't needed extra protection, I was just sort of like, "What the hell was my first time here for anyway?" You would have thought that it would have gotten better.

My first roommate in Taji was Sgt. Ray, the gunner that was killed up there.

You are family. When you've been over there a few months or a couple of weeks, you become a family. I've been before, and I know what it's like out there. I don't want my squad out there without me when I can't do anything. You don't want your family going out into trouble when you are stuck behind, waiting.

Lots of times, when we only had one medic, Stelmat, he'd show up and they'd have to order him to sit down. "You've got the day off. You are not going anywhere." He always wanted to keep going out.

We were surprised that we never got hit before we did because there was only one way in and out of the area that we operated. It was the same route every day at the same time. We never got hit up until Sgt. Eakes was killed.

I was a gunner on both deployments. Being the gunner, I could keep a better eye on things.

When the initial blast happened, it was right around a quarter to eight. Williams never had much luck with the electronics in the truck. It was like he would just touch the frame of it, and it would just die on him. Just before he made the turn, he started screaming over the radio that the blue force tracker, which was the computer in the truck, just died on him.

"It's showing black. The screen says this and that and..."

And I'm just doing one of these, "Oh God, not again."

And that's when the blast happened. We were all like, "What the hell was that?"

They had gotten into an argument with Spc. Herkey, who never had much luck with knowing his left from his right. And he said, "No, it happened at the 6 o'clock," and he's facing to the left.



I have to look in his direction and that's when I noticed something. I saw a little bit of smoke, and I thought, "Was that the exhaust?" because sometimes some of the vehicles would pop out a puff of carbon because they're diesel. Then I saw the look of flame and did a little bit more stretch and that's when I realized the rear truck was hit.

There was the IED going off. And then everything just went, the muscle memory went off, and everybody did their part.

Ash tried to get our truck to turn around. The one we had didn't have third gear. So when he tried backing out of the turn, it just caught a little pothole in the road – just right where it didn't have the muscle to move out of it right away. So I just told him to get into the turret. He came in from underneath just as I was pulling out through the top. I completely forgot I was wearing the gunner's pants, which are like 5 or 10 pounds.

I took off running to the rear truck but there really wasn't much I could do. That's when everybody was going, "Did you guys take fire?"

I think that was one of the few IEDs that after the initial blast, we didn't take small arms fire. I probably wouldn't even have noticed.

I went running to the truck, like I said I don't even remember hitting the top of the humvee and trying to get off the truck. I went to the back, grabbed my aide bag and went running to the rear truck. That's when I noticed Sgt. Williams outside the vehicle. Tried to help him out. Tried to pull him away.

The pyros had cooked off on the truck and the blast from those cooking off is what knocked me head over heels down the little embankment. I went tumbling over, half-somersaulting down the side.



The way the blast hit it – it just moved it forward. It lifted the truck up and shifted it forward about 10 feet. There weren't even any skid marks on the road.

Sgt. Williams was the team leader. He was in the right front passenger seat. Sgt. Ray was the gunner so he would have been facing to the rear and Sgt. Stelmat was the driver that day.

You just sort of lose track of time while you're sitting there waiting while there's nothing you can do. You just sit there and wait. I'm screaming on the radio wondering where the MEDEVAC is, and I see a helicopter that to me looked like it was just landing. And I said, "About time a medevac gets here."

And someone comes over and says, "No, they're just taking off. They've been here for who knows how long."

The first few hours after it, we were just dumbfounded. Like I said, you don't think it will happen to you, but when it does you are just like ... ok ... did that just happen? And you're just going around in a daze.

We just do the process of going through the gear, silently, I guess you could say. Everybody is in that mood, and you just throw your gear on the trucks, put the weapons away.

They have you talk to combat stress. You get checked out at the aid station, things like that. We were briefed by our leadership on what happened, and they just asked if you were ok, if you needed anybody to talk to – just like units are going through right now, the suicide prevention talks, just telling people that there are people here if you want to talk.

Sgt. Ray and I had met actually at MP School.

I was locked out of the room, because I was his roommate, while they collected his things.

You don't think it will happen to your guys. You hear about it happening to somebody else but never think that it could happen to you.

Why is it that the good guys get hurt?

It upset me how God could allow their deaths to happen – but I didn't not believe in God anymore.

I've been telling people that it's like a hazard of the job. God forbid, it's the same thing that will happen to firefighters. You are out on the job, and something happens at a scene. One of the guys gets hurt or killed at a fire scene. Some guys would say, "Why am I doing this?"

It felt good to get home and finally to be able to take the uniform off and not have to worry about putting it on again for who knows how long. Take it off and throw it in a corner and forget it's stuffed in a bag or something.

There's more Post Traumatic Stress this time because of what happened. Little things, without even realizing it will make you think of what happened, and all the emotions start running again.

The smallest things still set me off a little bit. Things I wouldn't have bothered with before. You see the things that people worry about here and you think "Why?"

I didn't have that much stress after the first deployment. Yeah, we were getting shot at, or they were trying to blow us up,

two or three times a day, but nobody got hurt. So it was stressful coming back, but you didn't have the bad memories of somebody getting hurt or killed. It was a lot easier.

The first day I went into a store on Black Friday after Thanksgiving, I'm white knuckling it on the cart just waiting for someone to bump into me. For the whole past year I've been keeping people at a distance and now they are like 2-3 inches away. I'm waiting to see if they're going to try something. What are they gonna do?

Then at the Webster town meeting, I was listening to people complaining. And I wanted to grab the mic and say, "Stop worrying about the little things." It took all I could do to keep myself quiet.

When things are quiet here, it gives your mind time to wander. Sometimes it's just small things that you don't even realize would do it – would make you think of things and the guys back there. And then you start thinking about it all over again. It's like then you ask yourself, "Why am I thinking about that again?"

I don't do what I did for the award. If guys start doing that, then they are going to get hurt or hurt somebody else. I don't do what I did to get something pinned on me.

That's who I am.

They go, "Why did you do it?"

I go, "Why not?"

That's why I got into the fire department and then into the Guard – because there's always somebody calling for help. There needs to be somebody to help them. When somebody calls for help, there has got to be somebody to go help them. ❖

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# AN ABOUT FACE:

## *N.H. Army Guard forced to cut 100 soldiers from ranks*

By Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey, NHNG-PA

A year after the N.H. Army National Guard achieved a historic milestone by surpassing 100 percent of its allotted manpower, it's being forced to do an about face and trim 100 soldiers from its ranks by September, the end of the fiscal year.

At first glance, the reduction announced by National Guard Bureau in May doesn't seem like a big deal. The organization would still be at 100 percent of its authorized strength, and as NHARNG leadership explained, there are about that many soldiers who are not deployable. They include "no-vals or no-value added soldiers" meaning they have not been showing up for drill, medical holds, and those who are nearing the end of their service obligation.

At the height of NHARNG's success, the state boasted 1,900 soldiers. Its authorized end strength is 1,789. But the math isn't that simple.

NGB is also cutting back on the incentives and waiver policies that allowed New Hampshire and many other states to recruit over strength by as much as 20 percent. Recruiters have been told to scale back.

When you couple that with the fact that the NHARNG is preparing for its single largest deployment next year, and the military's current stop-loss policy changes in August – meaning in most cases soldiers will not be required to remain in service through their unit's deployment after the individual's enlistment contract expires – the NHARNG is facing a much more complex scenario.

"This is the perfect storm of National Guard strength maintenance," said Recruiting and Retention Commander Maj. Rodney Freeman. "You have paring down the numbers at the same time as we're ramping up for the biggest deployment yet."

NGB's edict was a result of an adjustment in the appropria-



tions given to the Army National Guard. The overall strength of the National Guard authorized by Congress is 358,200 soldiers. Due in part to the beefy incentives, a sagging economy and a Guard Bureau push to recruit past 10 percent over strength, the actual total numbers peaked at about 366,880 soldiers. Now, however, there is no longer funding for those extra ranks.

Traditionally, a surge over a state's authorized strength better enabled state National Guards to send their units to contingency operations more fully manned, explained Col. Richard Duncan, NHARNG chief of staff.

"One of the biggest differences between the active component Army and the National Guard is a management tool tagged TTHS, which stands for Trainees, Transients, Holdees and Students. TTHS allows active duty to not count against their end strength those soldiers who are for various reasons non-deployable," Duncan said.

The Army National Guard has no such device.

"A unit may look 100 percent on paper but in actuality may

## **N.H. Army Guard recruiters told to slow down**

By Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey, NHNG-PA

The climb to the top was grueling and hard-fought. Now, just two years after New Hampshire Army National Guard eclipsed its recruiting goals, they are being told by National Guard Bureau to slow down.

While commanders across the state face the trying task of trimming their ranks by a total of 100, Recruiting and Retention Command has its own challenges. Individual recruiters have lowered quotas, and the more successful recruiters have been told to stop recruiting altogether.

"This is going to be a rough ride," Maj. Rodney Freeman, commander of Recruiting and Retention Command, said. "But in one or two years we are going to be left with a stronger force – a little smaller, to be sure, but significantly stronger for many reasons.

This is an opportunity for commanders to clean up their books, to rehabilitate those soldiers who may have some issues but are still contributing members of the National Guard. But yes, sometimes commanders are going to have to make difficult decisions."

Four or five years ago an average of 350-400 soldiers joined the Guard each year, Freeman said. "Our new goal is 273 per year. We're already at 190 as of May, so that means 80 between now and September."

"We are in uncharted territory with the restrictions on our end strength," Col. Michael Jones, National Guard Bureau – Accession Strength Maintenance, wrote in a May e-mail to all Recruiting and

Retention personnel across the nation. "No one is happy holding you back, but we are required to do what we are ordered to do, and we have been told to slow it down to get within authorized levels of end strength."

Toward that end, the eligibility requirements to enter the service have become much tougher than they used to be.

"To qualify applicants now is very difficult," Freeman said. "Now we have smaller guidelines and we have to find just the right candidates. It's a challenge, to be sure. It has forced recruiters to go to different areas than they normally would, and to work differently."

As of today, there are no moral waivers, the bonus program has been greatly



After going through a period of unprecedented growth, the N.H. Army National Guard will reduce its ranks to comply with new force structure mandates from National Guard Bureau. Photo: NHNG-PA archive

not be, based on attrition, based on Military Occupation Skill Qualifier, based on other factors. There may be a number of people who are not qualified or are counted as non-deployable,” Duncan said. “So what NGB wanted to do was drive the end strength past 100 percent so we would have the ability to put fully manned units out the door without cross leveling.”

The pay and allowances for the excess soldiers had traditionally been paid for out of the Defense Department supplemental budget. This year, however, the 2010 defense budget shifts spending from the supplemental budget back to the base budget.

“Unfortunately, now the money and authorizations don’t match,” Duncan said. “Now Guard Bureau is putting our end strength back to the authorized levels.”

To many in the organization, the timing of this news is hard to grasp. Col. Rick Greenwood, director of personnel, who serves as the congressional affairs contact officer, was part of the

legislative team that recently spoke to Congress about this issue.

“It wasn’t even three months before this that we voiced strong concern. We have had all these successes, and we told members of Congress we have these concerns, and we oppose any cuts,” he said. “We talked about the potential downfalls of cutbacks and the importance of maintaining the military force structure.”

In addition to the loss of incentives for new recruits, the entry requirements have become more discerning. Recruiting efforts have been substantially slowed from what used to be about 30-40 new recruits each month to about 10 each month now. NGB looked at each state, and taking into consideration various factors, decided how much of the burden of these cuts each state would bear, Duncan said. “This is not a lay-off. There will be no reduction in force at this time,” Duncan said.

*(Continued on page 18)*

reduced and the Armed Forces Qualification Test scores must be 50 or better. Formerly, it was 34 or better. Age requirements have changed from a maximum enlistment age of 42 to 35. Other programs such as College First and Active First have been eliminated.

“I would say 25 to 30 percent of the recruits who came in last year would not be eligible to join this year,” Freeman said. “And I’m not saying they weren’t good before. We’ve always had this spectrum of good to great recruits coming in. Now, it’s all great.”

According to the NHARNG Incentives Program Manager, Master Sgt. Margie Arwine, there has been a substantial change to the bonus monies contracted out for first-time enlistees. In March 2008, \$400,000 was paid out in enlistment bonuses. In March 2009, that number

dropped to \$135,000. The number of new soldiers eligible for the bonuses was cut in half, she said.

Freeman said he has “turned off” recruiters who have met their reduced missions, or recruiting goal for the year.

“That doesn’t mean they’re going home and not working,” he said. “What that means is, we’re directing their energies elsewhere. When this opportunity presented itself, we decided to take the recruiters who have met their year-end mission and turn their attention to mentoring the recruiters who are struggling a little more. The benefits of this are two-fold: one, it helps increase the skill-set among the entire recruiter force; and two, it bolsters the camaraderie among the command.”

Out of 18 recruiters, four have met their year-end mission. According to Freeman, a handful more is close behind.

He admits this new way of doing business is a bit unconventional.

“Our way ahead will require a change in approach, strategy, resourcing and mindset for us to take the ARNG into the next level of readiness,” Jones wrote. “The last five years have brought us to this point which will provide us an opportunity to significantly change our strength posture by focusing on personnel readiness in ways we’ve been unable to do in the past.”

For the recruiting commander, this shift makes sense.

“I really see positive movement in all of this,” Freeman said. “This provides an opportunity for commanders to clean up their books, and to rehabilitate those soldiers who may have some issues but are still contributing members of the National Guard.” ♦

# Mullen salutes Pequeño during National Memorial Day



Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, greets NHARNG Staff Sgt. Jose Pequeño, his mother Nelida Bagley, sister Elizabeth Bagley and daughter Mercedes during the 20th annual National Memorial Day Concert held in Washington, May 24. Pequeño, who suffered a severe brain injury in Iraq, and his family were recognized during the concert. Photo: Courtesy of Office of Secretary of Defense

By Gerry Gilmore, Office of the Secretary of Defense Public Affairs

WASHINGTON – Memorial Day is a time for Americans to “honor all those who have sacrificed and still sacrifice today for our freedom,” Navy Adm. Mike Mullen, chairman of the Joint

Chiefs of Staff, told a large audience gathered on the U.S. Capitol grounds here yesterday evening for the 20th annual National Memorial Day Concert.

The nation’s top military officer especially saluted warriors who’ve been wounded during the performance of their duty. The admiral cited the bravery and sacrifice of concert attendee New Hampshire National Guardsman Staff Sgt. Jose Pequeño, who’d been severely wounded in Iraq.

Pequeño’s mother, Nellie Bagley, and his sister, Elizabeth, are helping him as he continues his recovery.

America needs “heroes like Jose,” Mullen said, noting it is important for citizens to recognize and appreciate the sacrifices made by service members and their families.

“Let our gratitude carry on to every corner of this land, and every day of the year,” Mullen said of the appreciation of service members’ work and sacrifice on behalf of the nation.

“May God bless our veterans and all our armed forces,” Mullen said. ♦

## AN ABOUT FACE: N.H. Army Guard forced to cut 100 soldiers from ranks (Continued from page 17)

“We have no intention of telling soldiers who are viable assets to this organization that they need to pack their bags and go home. Those who are MOSQ, those who meet the standards, those who are doing all the right things do not need to worry.”

“We are not trying to be the hatchet – we don’t have a medical quota, nor are we trying to invent reasons to medically discharge people,” said Maj. Richard Oberman, deputy state surgeon. “What we are trying to do is the same thing we always have – we are working to adjudicate medical cases in as expeditious a manner as possible. That’s good for the soldier – in a lot of instances if a soldier’s case isn’t resolved, they’re in limbo and can’t move on.”

Since NHARNG started deploying soldiers in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, there have been 22 soldiers processed through the medical evaluation boards and physical evaluation boards, Oberman said. As of May 2009, there are still four soldiers on medical hold-over due to injury or illness while on active duty. There are additionally 17 soldiers now pending duty-related MEB/PEB.

Oberman added that while more than 80 percent of the state is in compliance with the mandated annual physical health assessment, only 40 percent are current on dental readiness. In his opinion, dental readiness is the single largest deterrent toward New Hampshire’s overall deployment readiness.

Sgt. 1st Class Neal Mitchell, the NHARNG state career counselor, said there are on average 16-20 losses each month due to natural attrition, which he classified as retirement, medical, administrative issues and expiration of term of service.

New Hampshire had 28 soldiers who had not drilled over the previous four months as of the end of April and who are on what is known as the no-val pay report, according to the Director’s Strength Readiness Overview Web site. Compared to the rest of the country, New Hampshire is in the top five for overall personnel management.

“We used to try to keep people on the books to work with them and resolve their issues,” Duncan said. “We may not have that luxury anymore. We need to take a succinct look at our books and look hard at the quality of the soldiers we do retain.”

This new development has, in fact, revitalized soldiers’ enthusiasm to perform and train, according to Capt. Ken Kruger, commander of B Battery, 3643rd Brigade Support Team.

“I have seen positive results from this. We are a professional Army, and we perform to Army standards,” Kruger said. “If people can’t get to those standards, we tell them, there’s always someone in your rearview mirror that can.”

“There are soldiers we’re helping work through and manage their life issues. Some of these have deployed before and served honorably but now have family or other issues that might be exacerbated by going on another deployment,” he added. “First and foremost we want to take care of soldiers and give them time to get their life in order.”

Between August and December, the NHARNG is deploying from 150 to 200 people from three different units. They will be scheduled to return home not long after more than 1,100 soldiers from the 197th Fires Brigade are scheduled to deploy.

“Everything is timing,” Duncan said. “If we weren’t getting ready to deploy the Brigade, this is probably something that wouldn’t be such a concern.”

National Guard soldiers have a dual mission – they respond to emergencies on the home-front and also serve overseas in a federal capacity.

“If you took a snapshot picture today of our numbers, if you want to think of it that way, they’re terrific,” said Greenwood. “But project out 18 to 24 months. There is concern among Guard leadership what that picture will look like in two years.”

The consensus among NHNG leadership is there is great mindfulness about the challenges ahead.

With the Brigade deployed, there will still be roughly 700 soldiers remaining in the state – about 500 if new recruits are subtracted. Historically, that number has proven to be enough coverage to aid with any state active duty missions, Duncan said.

“We will still have state and domestic missions. It may be the Air Guard has to carry the lion’s share of the load,” Greenwood said. The Air National Guard currently has about 1,000 airmen. “This is new ground,” Greenwood said. “We have to be patient with the process.” ♦

# Stop-Loss policy expires this fall

By Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey, NHNG-PA

The Army National Guard will effectively end the controversial stop-loss program beginning this fall.

In its place, the new Deployment Extension Stabilization Pay program pays a cash bonus of up to \$6,000 to soldiers in units set to mobilize who choose to stay in past their end of service date in order to deploy.

The DESP is offered to soldiers with an expiration term of service between six months prior and 12 months after their unit's mobilization date. A policy detailing the changes and management of the cash bonus was released on May 29.

"The DESP is good news," said 1st Lt. Garri Hendell, personnel policy actions officer (Legal) at National Guard Bureau, who helped draft the policy. "The intent of this by the federal government and the Secretary of Defense is that now formations can be stabilized before they deploy. And I think this shows a realization that we can't keep doing stop-loss forever, not going from a strategic force to an operationally ready force like we have. The operations are a persistent thing, and we can't just keep people forever.

"So now we've gone from a stick to a carrot," he said. "That's the point of this extra pay."

"This program will have a positive impact on unit readiness by reducing cross-leveling and attrition in advance of the unit's mobilization date," states the new policy. "The intent is that soldiers who train together in a pre-mobilization environment will mobilize together."

Soldiers who take advantage of the cash bonus will extend their enlistment requirements for the length of the deployment plus 90 days. Those who have enlistment contracts that expire during the deployment and who choose not to extend may still have to deploy if they could serve a minimum of 180 days boots on the ground. Soldiers exercising the DESP option will still retain the ability to re-enlist overseas for current extension bonuses, Hendell said.

"Enlisted members whose service obligation ends within the period from 365 days after their unit's projected mobilization date to 455 days after their unit's projected mobilization date ... will deploy but are likely to return to the continental United States individually before their unit is scheduled to return," cites the policy.

For those who elect not to extend their enlistment in order to be eligible for deployment may request transfer to other units or the Individual Ready Reserve for the balance of the enlistment contract. Those soldiers are not eligible for extension and will be separated from the National Guard at their regularly scheduled ETS.

"The hope is that, as always, people recognize the Army National Guard is a great opportunity to serve and a great economic opportunity, especially with the current economic climate," Hendell said. "So we're looking at DESP as a good retention tool as well, and we'll hopefully keep in those good, experienced soldiers, which is what we want."

The new plan provides that the National Guard deploy units that don't include soldiers whose contract is up starting in September. The Army Reserve will start following the new policy a month earlier, in August, and the active duty Army will follow suit in January.

Stop-loss policies for National Guard

units mobilizing prior to Sept. 1, 2009, remain unchanged.

Soldiers who stay in past their retirement or enlistment terms will be paid \$500 each month of Title 10 service if they agree to extend from 180 days to 365 days prior to mobilization date. For those who extend between 179 and 90 days before mobilization, the rate drops to \$350 for each month on active duty.

Under the stop-loss policy that has been in effect since 2001, Reservists and National Guard soldiers are barred from leaving service if their units have been alerted for mobilization. Active-duty soldiers within 90 days of retirement or obligated service cannot leave the Army if they are in units alerted for deployment.

About 120,000 soldiers have been held over since 2001 according to a New York Times article. As of January 2009, about 13,000 soldiers are still serving in an involuntary capacity after their contractual obligation has ended, according to generalized reports. This includes 7,300 active duty Army, about 4,450 National Guard troops and about 1,450 Reservists.

The Marines, Air Force and Navy used the policy early in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan but ceased by 2003. ♦

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# 114th soldier shows Iraqis how to shoot video



*Pvt. Courtney A. Selig, second from left, a combat correspondent with the 114th Public Affairs Detachment, Multi-National Corps – Iraq, interacts with an interpreter while providing instruction on video broadcast fundamentals to a group of Iraqi army soldiers at the Iraqi Ground Forces Command, May 23.*

Photo: Capt. Robert Burnham, 114th MPAD

*By Capt. Robert Burnham  
Multi-National Corps Iraq – Public Affairs*

**BAGHDAD** – At a time when U.S. military operations are transitioning to support increased Iraqi responsibilities, N.H. Army Guard Pvt. Courtney Selig provided training on broadcast video fundamentals to a group of Iraqi Army Public Affairs soldiers May 23 at Camp Iraqi Heroes in Baghdad.

Selig, a resident of Goffstown and 2007 graduate of Goffstown High School, designed the training plan and led classroom instruction. She was mobilized to Iraq in February with eight other members of the New Hampshire Army National Guard's 114th Public Affairs Detachment and is expected to return home in early 2010.

One week prior to the training event, Selig was on hand to film an anniversary ceremony held at the Iraqi army camp to celebrate the four-year birthday of the Iraqi Ground Forces Command.

"They seem really eager to learn," Selig said. "Our interaction shows the trust between us."

With use of a U.S. Department of Defense translator and visual aides, the Army private introduced basic video broadcast techniques, such as shooting 180 degree scenes, capturing the cut-away, and incorporating sequences.

As an Army combat correspondent, Selig documents current activities involving U.S. forces assigned to Multi-National Corps – Iraq. "I'm proud to see how happy the soldiers and family members are when they see their stories on TV," Selig said.

In addition to documenting the stories of her fellow service members in Iraq, Selig is expected to continue to work on similar training events and partnership opportunities in order to enable her Iraqi army counterparts with the technical skills to report the activities of Iraqi soldiers to their own people.

"It's crucial to teach them what we are doing. Without these skills, they'll never be able to tell their soldiers' stories and how far they have come in Iraq," she said. ♦

*Burnham is commander of the 114th MPAD.*



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# OPERATING

## IN THE MOST REMOTE OUTPOST IN

# AFGHANISTAN



*An interpreter helps Capt. Steven Mongelli during a patrol in western Afghanistan. Mongelli is one of 16 N.H. Guardsmen serving in Afghanistan as part of a mentor and training team.*

Photo: Courtesy of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Andrew Filiault

*By Chief Warrant Officer 2 Andrew Filiault*

As our Spanish-piloted Cougar helicopter lifts off and starts gaining altitude, I gaze over the dusty fields surrounding the Herat airfield and look toward the looming mountains between us and Bala Morghab, our final destination to the northeast in Badghis province, Afghanistan. We skim over and through the first foothills, almost brushing their rocky sides. Then the giants appear, dark peaks well over 10,000 feet.

While the mountains here in western Afghanistan don't reach the monstrous heights of their cousins farther to the east near Pakistan, the effect on transportation is the same. Nobody travels for any great distance in a straight line unless going via air. Even then, our helicopter has to follow a serpentine route through the mountain passes.

A serrated ocean of stone and sun-scorched earth spreads out before us on our flight path. Surprisingly, quite a few patches of green dot the landscape below. I'm told this spring has seen more rain

than usual. Taking advantage of the bounty, the farmers and herdsman utilize the valleys and draws, wherever water collects, to maintain their crops and livestock.

Along our route, tiny villages of mud homes and black tents sporadically occupy the desolate land. Small children watch the herds of sheep, goats and camels that their families depend on. The children wave to us as their herds run from the noise of the helicopter, and the side-door gunners wave back as we flash by. As a 21st-century urbanized parent, I can't imagine sending my children out alone for the day in this environment. Yet, in the remote reaches of Afghanistan, it's simply a matter of fact and a matter of existence.

The 90-minute flight nears the end as we roll down out of the wilderness toward Bala Morghab, a metropolitan area of over 100,000 people located near the Turkmenistan border. The word "city" as we use it in the U.S. does not apply here. Bala Morghab consists of the bazaar in the city center and many small villages

clustered around that center like spokes of a wheel.

Isolated and remote, the city and villages represent the largest population center in this portion of Badghis province. The paved section of the Ring Road, which encircles the mountainous interior of Afghanistan, has yet to reach this area. In fact, the road in and out of Bala Morghab more closely resembles a four-wheel drive track. As a result, both Bala Morghab and Badghis province lag behind most of the country in terms of development.

At the eastern base of the mountains, the rippling fields of winter wheat surround Forward Operations Base Todd. The FOB lies across the Morghab River to the west of the Bala Morghab bazaar. The surrounding land consists of many small farms; for the most part the people make their living as farmers, herdsman and small shop keepers. The helicopter dodges, ducks, dives and dodges again as we take precautionary evasive action prior to landing. Then a final swoop over the perimeter walls, a brief hover, and finally we touch down.

FOB Todd lies within the grounds of an abandoned cotton factory, the roof long gone and the walls scarred by 35 years of conflict. The first U.S. team to occupy the FOB arrived in August 2008 after a long journey from Herat, replete with enemy contact, vehicle breakdowns and strenuous effort in overcoming the horrendous condition of the road. An ad hoc combination of Guardsmen from Colorado, Massachusetts and New York and active duty soldiers, the team commenced the immensely difficult task of FOB construction while under fire. During this process, Sgt. 1st Class David Todd Jr. of Louisiana perished in one of the many firefights. To honor their fallen comrade, the team named the FOB for him.

In early December 2008, seven N.H. Army Guard soldiers, including me, arrived here to replace the original team. They included Capts. Tyler Chamberlain, Steven Mongelli, Mark Patterson and Mo Sampson; and Sgts. 1st Class Scott Roberts and Marty Wyman. We joined up with soldiers from the New Mexico and Illinois Guard and the active component. We also have active duty Navy and Air Force personnel rounding out the team.



We share the FOB with an Italian airborne infantry unit and an Afghan National Army infantry unit. Our U.S. team has the responsibility for mentoring and training the Afghan National Police and ANA posted to Bala Morghab.

Since NATO and its armed component, International Security Assistance Forces, has responsibility for western Afghanistan, the Italians constitute the maneuver element here. The ANA's main jobs consist of area security and FOB defense, while the ANP, who live at the headquarters in the city, patrol the city proper and a few of the adjacent villages. Together, we live in the most remote outpost in Afghanistan, truly accessible only via air because anti-coalition forces have since closed the road.

The definition of scarcity aptly describes our lives. When weather or the security situation permits, re-supply arrives via air drop or helicopter. Some of us live in old converted shipping containers, while others have managed to turn bunkers into quarters. We have running water, power and electronic communications. However, we know for all intents and purposes that duct tape, mechanic's wire and chewing gum hold this FOB together.

The juggling act that defines our job as police and Army mentors neither lacks entertainment nor education. Every day brings a new challenge in terms of learning what makes our Afghan partners tick. Tangled threads of cultural flash points for the Afghans weave through our daily life with them. For example, in trying to get our police and Army colleagues to work together, we have to be sensitive to tribal and historical differences. Some meetings with our partners have included statements such as, "I can't do that because he's Tajik, and I'm Pashtun" or "My father fought with the Mujahedin, and his father fought for the Russians" or "They're from Qal-e-Naw, and we're from Bala Morghab."

We also have to juggle our international relationships, specifically with the Italians. On the whole, the Italian ground soldiers here act as professionally and work as hard as any U.S. soldier. We have very good relations with them, run missions together, and have developed friendships as well. The only Westerners around for miles and miles, we gravitate toward each other and work together for



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Andrew Filiault, center, with two of his Italian comrades during operations in western Afghanistan. Filiault is one of 16 N.H. Army Guardsmen serving in Afghanistan as part of a mentor and training team.

Photo: Courtesy of Filiault

our mutual survival. The difficulties lie, I believe, at echelons well above ours in a complex web of international caveats and rules of engagement.


Given the isolation, the Italians posted here have achieved somewhat of a celebrity status back in their homeland. A few months ago, a television crew from one of the Italian television channels

arrived and filmed a segment on the mountain infantry unit that up until recently served with us. Despite this, our Italian comrades still fail to garner the outpouring of support from their countrymen that characterizes our experience.

In stark contrast to the Italian mail call, when our mail arrives, the sheer number of boxes and letters from the U.S. truly astounds me. Of course, we receive mail from family and friends. However, the unbelievable level of support and generosity of the American people manifests itself in the form of care packages and letters from people we don't even know: church groups, schools, civic organizations, fraternal organizations, etc. Words alone fail to describe how much this means to us, knowing that while the war has detractors, the troops have the support of a grateful nation. ❖

*Filiault is one of 16 N.H. Army Guard soldiers deployed to Afghanistan as part of a N.H. Army Guard Embedded Training Team.*

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Veterans of the 3rd Battalion, 197th Field Artillery, gather for a group shot in front of a 155 Howitzer, the basic gun for the N.H. Army Guard unit when it served in Vietnam in 1968-1969. The soldiers gathered for a panel discussion to remember their combat tour at Assembly Hall, Concord, May 21. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

# Forty Years Later

## 3rd Battalion, 197th FA veterans remember Vietnam

By Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

**CONCORD** – He thought that he was going to die. Deep in the jungle of Vietnam, with his position being overrun by Vietcong and mortar rounds falling, David Copson called for an airstrike.

In the darkness of night, the Concord native radioed the coordinates to a soldier with a New England accent. It turned out the voice was from his New Hampshire home. Minutes later, the N.H. National Guard's 3rd Battalion, 197th Field Artillery, fired a round at the intended target. It was a direct hit.

In the moments that followed, the men of the 197th sent up an illumination round. By the light, Copson could see the enemy collecting bodies. He ordered another round and within 20 minutes, the situation had been neutralized.

Forty years later, as Copson stood up to tell his story to a panel of 197th

Vietnam veterans inside Concord's Assembly Hall May 21, his voice shook with emotion.

"You guys were unbelievable. Right on the money all the time," he said, holding the map from that battle, the coordinates still marked with grease pencil. "I owe my existence to the 197th."

In the time that has passed since their year-long tour, which left seven of their fellow soldiers dead, the men of the 197th have moved on with their lives. They are retired fire chiefs, construction workers, lieutenant colonels and computer specialists. But their memories of the days in the jungle remain. They took an evening to share some of those memories in front of friends, family and fellow Guardsmen.

Organized by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Thomas Graham, N.H. Army Guard historian, the panel wove stories about

their activation, war, loss and coming home. Now in their late fifties, sixties and seventies, the men are a little grayer than they were in 1969, but their camaraderie, their laughter and their sorrow still hold the timelessness of youth.

### Notification over the airwaves

It was the spring of 1968, the men of the 197th were going about life as usual. The situation in Vietnam was volatile, but the country had not yet turned to the National Guard for support.

The men of the 3rd Battalion were in various life stages. Eighty percent were married. Most were in their late 20s with 10 years of service already under their belts.

Medic Bill Toland was working at the fire station in Exeter, when the news that the 197th was activated came over the

radio. He went home for lunch that day to his young son, a pregnant wife, and a bill from Sears and Roebuck that he wasn't going to be able to pay.

Intelligence Specialist Ed Scully got his notification as a 34th birthday present.

Bob Reeves found out while working a job he hated as a laborer. When he got the news, he thought, "Hell, Vietnam's got to be better than (this)."

Eighteen-year-old Spc. Frank Derocchi was just a typical high school kid, living large with a new set of wheels.

The battalion's executive officer, John Sullivan, was sitting in his office at the Portsmouth armory when his wife came in and said, "You've been activated." He called a superior officer who said he would call him back. A few minutes later, the phone rang. "Congratulations," the general said, "you're now on active duty."

These men, as well as 500 of their fellow N.H. soldiers, gathered their gear, said their goodbyes and headed to Fort Bragg, N.C. They were the first N.H. Guard unit to deploy to Vietnam and one of only eight Guard units across the United States to be sent to the conflict.

They were a community of New Hampshire families, fathers, brothers and neighbors from all walks of life. Many had known each other for years. Some were related, others were woven together by neighborhoods and children, schools and work – all were tied by their connection to the Guard.

Sullivan recalled that the leadership at Fort Bragg asked the unit, "How many weeks of training do you need (before you can deploy)?" They answered, "Ten." When the 197th arrived in North Carolina, 10 weeks is what they got.

## Going to war

The airplane ride lasted 27 hours. As they began their descent into Vietnam, Derocchi looked out window and saw smoke billowing from the earth below.

"Holy ----!" he thought in a panic. "All that smoke from the rockets coming in?" For the first five minutes, he was alarmed. Finally someone told him the smoke was from the burning of human waste from the latrines. "You see a lot of war movies but the one thing that's missing is the stench," said Taylor.

As the back door to the plane opened, the men were given their initial taste of the ever-present odor and their first round of ammunition. "They cautioned us ... if anything moves, shoot it."

Of his first drive up Highway 13, known as Thunder Road, Toland said,



*Soldiers of B Battery, 3rd Battalion, 197th Field Artillery, prepare to send a round down range during combat operations in Vietnam in 1968-1969. In all, 506 N.H. Army Guard soldiers served with the battalion in Vietnam. Photo: Courtesy of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Thomas Graham, NHARNG historian*

"I thought it was a joke – but no one laughed." Along the way, the glass in his windshield shattered from sniper fire. "I was shaking all over," Toland said. If that would have been a real job, I would have quit right then."

Barnevik remembers drainage ditches covered in slime and the hugest rats the soldiers had ever seen. Tucked into the jungle, the circular fire support stations that the soldiers manned were in

24-hour-a-day danger and in need of 360-degree defense.

"We didn't know who the friends were and who the enemies were," said Sullivan.

During their time in Vietnam, the men fired over 150,000 rounds from their Howitzers. They became so proficient that once during a firefight they were able to load and fire a round before the last one hit the ground.

*Continued on page 27*



*Third Battalion, 197th Field Artillery, soldiers take a break to read letters during combat operations in Vietnam 1968-1969. Photo: Courtesy of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Thomas Graham, NHARNG historian*

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Derocchi remembers being young and thirsty for adventure. He volunteered early on to go on a mission up Thunder Road.

The Army had taken the tops off the vehicles for travel, with the idea that it would be easier to launch grenades at the enemy. Unfortunately, it also made it harder for the windshield wipers to be effective during the rain, as the inside of the car's windshield was being drenched, Derocchi recalled.

The day Derocchi volunteered, while traveling up the road, a land mine killed seven men in a vehicle ahead. "Those moments," he said, "will last forever."

Not all the stories were sad, though. Barnevik recounted the story of Alpha Battery's "prized possession" – a toilet seat. Using a shipping carton, a 55-gallon barrel and a piece of plywood, the men fashioned a quality jungle latrine. "This was our pride and joy," said Barnevik.

One day as a soldier was sitting inside, they heard the distinctive "thump-thump" of incoming fire. Soldiers began screaming, "Incoming Rounds." The man dove out of the latrine, his pants around his ankles, just in time to avoid a mortar round to the crapper. The soldier ended up "face down on the ground, covered in you-know-what," said Barnevik.

### Coming home

After a harrowing year of sweltering heat, overpowering stench and the constant boom of the Howitzers, it was time for the men to come home. Up to that point, they had lost only two men – Capt. Roland Labonte, killed in action, and another non-combat-related death.

The unit was gathering in the south waiting for everyone to arrive so they could travel home together. They wanted to leave Vietnam as they had arrived, a community of N.H. soldiers.

Less than two weeks before they were scheduled to fly home, Guy Blanchette, Gaetan Beaudoin, Richard Genest, Richard Raymond and Robert Robichaud were traveling south along Thunder Road when their vehicle hit a land mine. The five men, all from Manchester, were killed.

The battery, Thunder III, where they were located more than half their time in Vietnam, was renamed "Hampshire Field," and a plaque was placed in their honor. Barnevik said that some day before he dies he wants to go back to that field. "I could find my way in the dark," he said. "I want to see if that plaque is still there."



From left, Bill Toland, Richard Lavoie, Ed Scully, John Barnevik, John Sullivan, Bob Reeves, Frank Derocchi and Arnold Taylor gathered for a panel discussion to remember their tour of duty in Vietnam with 3rd Battalion, 197th Field Artillery, in Concord's Assembly Hall May 21. This year marks the 40th anniversary of the battalion's deployment. They were the only N.H. Guard unit to serve in Vietnam. Photo: Lori Duff, NHNG-PA

### Readjusting to New Hampshire

The soldiers flew into Pease and the arms of their families and children, but they also returned to a climate of disdain. They were told not to wear their uniforms because it wasn't safe.

Toland remembers that when he came home, the mailman, himself a World War II veteran, said, "Hey, the baby killer is home."

"I didn't want anyone to know I had anything to do with Vietnam," said Toland.

In the year they were gone, their lives had changed. Some divorced. Some had a hard time readjusting to work. Some lost jobs. Even in the smallest of ways, their basic responses had been altered by the war.

Derocchi remembers the day he opened his duffel bag on his mother's living room floor and saw a "white thing" go by. Thinking that it was a rat, he gave it a "touchdown" kick across the room. It was his mother's cat. "She was not impressed," he said.

Most of the men stayed in the Guard. "It's hard for people to understand," said Barnevik. "Nobody wanted to listen." It took years before Barnevik began speaking about his tour in Vietnam to anyone other than the men in his unit. "I kept it to myself for a long time," he said. Their shared experiences forged a bond that still exists today. The group has kept in touch throughout the years, holding reunions and socializing.

At one reunion, Toland recalled a visit by the late Dick Genest's son.

Genest had been well-liked by his fellow soldiers and his death, mere days before leaving Vietnam, had hit them hard. During their tour together, Genest would show Toland pictures of his small son back home. Toland wasn't sure how he would feel seeing that boy all grown up.

When Genest's son walked in the room, Toland said, "he looked just like his father," an identical twin. "Even his teeth were the same." And there, years later, Toland found great pleasure in telling him about his father, about the photos and about the love that the young soldier had for his son.

The men had returned without recognition or gratitude, so closure for many of them was hard in coming.

Richard Lavoie kept a journal, which he kept closed for 40 years. He opened it for the first time before the panel discussion.

For some of the men there was a shame that they found hard to let go of. It took Barnevik 20 years after the war to be able to begin to acknowledge and honor his service to the country.

At the start of the first Gulf War, he agreed to march in a parade representing N.H. Vietnam veterans. Along the way, Barnevik remembers the crowd rising to give them a standing ovation. It was a recognition the 197th had never received.

"It was the first time I felt like I was coming home." ❖

# Former commanders reminisce about legacy of the Wing



From left, retired Maj. Gen. Kenneth Clark, retired Col. Robert Lilljedahl, retired Maj. Gen. Joseph Simeone, and Col. Richard Martell share a moment of laughter during a panel discussion at Pease Air National Guard Base in Newington on March 27. Martell, the commander of the 157th Air Refueling Wing, gathered the previous three Wing commanders to reminisce about their service in the N.H. Air Guard. Photo: Staff Sgt. Curtis J. Lenz, 157th ARW-PA

By 1st Lt. Sherri Pierce, 157th ARW PAO

**PEASE AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, NEWINGTON –** The gathering of three former commanders of the 157th Air Refueling Wing on March 27 for a roundtable discussion marked an unprecedented occasion that may never occur again, said Col. Richard Martell, the current 157th commander.

It was Martell's idea to gather his predecessors, all of whom he credits as mentors, to reminisce about their time in the N.H. Air Guard and its evolution over the last 40 years into one of the premier flying units in the country.

The panel included Maj. Gen. Kenneth Clark, who has since retired as The Adjutant General of the N.H. Guard, retired Maj. Gen. Joseph Simeone and retired Col. Robert Lilljedahl.

They were joined and encouraged by about 100 current and former members of the unit over lunch. The following are some snapshots from the two-hour-long event.

## Active associate

**Martell:** When I joined this organization back in the 80s, Bob Lilljedahl was the boss. We weren't a wing yet, so he was the group commander, and I'll set the stage for you. We were a tenant on the Strategic Air Command Base, and one of the reasons today is so special is because we are coming full circle. We've gone from being a tenant, and now the active duty is

going to be a tenant on our base. I think that is a pretty special thing, and it took a lot of people, a lot of people in this room, to make that happen.

**Simeone:** This unit was started in Manchester in 1947. It was a fighter unit until the C-97s came in, and if you look at your history, no multi-engine planes were in the Guard. We were one of the first units to get a multi-engine airplane. That was a big transition for the National Guard fighting for force structure in those days. Carry that forward to when we got the tanker. We were the second unit to be in the Strategic Air Command because the SAC never had a reserve component, only active. Then think about what is about to happen to you. You are going to be an active associate unit, which is a very historic event.

**Martell:** We are about ready to jump off and lead a direction for the Air Force as far as active associate and bringing in a different segment. We are going to pass on our experiences, and we are going to learn and grow, which are all important things. In the future in this country, we are not going to have the luxury of everyone having their own airplane. We are going to have to share assets ... and give the people of this country back a good return on their dollar. We are the right people to do that.

**Simeone:** Somewhere along the line, in order to survive at the levels we operate at, you are going to see these blended units where maybe the wing commander is a Guardsman but the vice wing commander is an active duty person. It's not going to

happen tomorrow but that's what's coming. There are more tankers in the Guard than in the active force. What this means is having an active component on a Guard base with the great maintenance and the great mission support you all get ... the Air Force can handle a greater ops tempo ... because now those airplanes can be flown with those people that aren't having to take more time off their job. This is how I think the Air Force is going to meet its mission demands with less airplanes.

**Lilljedahl:** I don't think it is all a positive. I know from a dollars and cents perspective that's probably the way to go, but I am a firm believer that there is something special about a Guard unit being a little concise unit where everybody knows everybody else. Now all of a sudden bringing people in from all over will affect the spirit of the unit. It is going to happen, there's no doubt about it, but there is something unique about the Guard.

## Highlights and challenges

**Simeone:** Being the task force commander during the Somalia operation right after the base closure was, I think, the highlight of my career. We got very, very short notice, maybe 24-48 hours, as a unit to put together a Tanker Task Force over in Morón, Spain. I was there for about 45 days. We flew 430 missions without a miss. We were taking off out of Morón, Spain, with maximum fuel – popping up, hitting the C-141s coming across and giving them gas – that was probably the highlight.

**Martell:** I thought back in May 2001 that my biggest challenge was getting ready for an ORI (operational readiness inspection). I spent a whole lot of time and stomach acid worrying about that ORI, and that all got blown to hell on 9/11. I will go to my grave with this: my proudest moment was driving out of the battle staff about 3 o'clock in the morning on 9-12 – I had not left the battle staff for 16 or 18 hours – to see the wonderful transformation this wing had done getting ready for a wartime posture. You would not believe what the base looked like; you would not believe how prepared we were. I keep telling this story over and over again. On 9/11 we did not call a single person into work. By noontime every one of our airplanes was ready to go, manned by flight crews ready to fly who came in on their own, serviced and maintained by maintenance folks who got them ready. Everyone that was in support of the mission stepped forward. That was what being a citizen-soldier and being in the Guard was all about to me. I walked away from that day knowing that no matter what, this organization could face and conquer any challenge put in front of it.

**Clark:** I reflected yesterday on something I wasn't sure I was going to bring up here today or not, but I am. Some-time during [Col. Lilljedahl's] tenure, somebody in the Guard did something totally inappropriate and [Lilljedahl] got interviewed by the press. He made a statement much to the effect of, "Well, you know, the Guard is representative of our community, and you can't expect that we would be that different from the community, so you're going to have those kinds of problems within the organization." Trust me, that has not changed. Every time you turn around, someone in one of these uniforms is

doing something that makes you say, "What were they thinking?" The obvious answer was, they weren't. Those continue to be the biggest challenges when you are in command. It's those strange things that people do that make you say, "How did that possibly happen?" But they do and they occupy a lot of time and energy.

**Lilljedahl:** That is very true. As a commander of one of these organizations, the hardest job you have is dealing with personnel issues. You think that we fly airplanes, and we refuel airplanes all over the world, but the thing that always puzzles you is why you have to spend so much time on personnel issues. And it goes back to what he said, and I did get into a bit of trouble for saying this many, many years ago, but the Guard is a cross section of America. It's got all kinds of people in it. And they are wonderful people, but nevertheless, these wonderful people occasionally do things that make you say, "Why did you do that?"

## Best and worst landing

Chief Master Sgt. David Eaton (from audience): A week before Christmas, we were supposed to bring back some aviators. A long series of events included snowstorms and so on and so forth. I recall calling my new bride and saying we aren't going to be home. She was upset because we didn't have a Christmas tree and had no presents. At any rate, to make a long story short, here we are over the field on Christmas Eve day and minimums were such that we could not get in here. [Col. Lilljedahl] had a snippet of opportunity in which to put that tanker down, which you did. There is this sound when you fly and when you come down – all you can hear really is the air over the wings. On that particular landing, the sound of the wind over the wings changed to include the sound of the wheel bearings turning but there was no thump, there was nothing like that. There have been other times, for example, flying with Col. Martell and he would ask, "How was that landing?" I would say, "Pretty good, sir." "Just pretty good? I thought it was good."

**Lilljedahl:** I have to tell you about the worst landing I ever made. We were leaving from here to go to, probably, Savannah. They loaded up the plane with dignitaries, and I'm the pilot. I'd like to think that field had some sort of reputation that coming in one way had some sort of a cross wind or something (laughter from the audience), but I know that I made a landing there that I was surprised to look out and see that the wheels hadn't come up through the wings it was so bad."

**Chief Master Sgt. Dick Dolbec (audience):** Col. Lilljedahl, I have to bring up a flight I was on with you.

**Lilljedahl:** I hope this was a good landing.

**Dolbec:** I don't know where we were coming home from. We landed at Pease, and I think we took up all of 500 feet of runway, and I think we fishtailed across that runway from wing tip to wing tip and we bounced. Everyone in the back

was dead calm. You came out of the cockpit with your pipe in your mouth, and everyone gave you a resounding cheer.

**Lilljedahl:** That was nice of them. ❖

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of the 157th Air Refueling Wing  
(Maj. Gen. Kenneth Clark,  
Maj. Gen. Joseph Simeone  
and Col. Robert Lilljedahl)  
on March 27  
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– Col. Richard Martell,  
Current 157th Commander

# N.H. Air National Guard history exhibit opens

Story and photo by 1st Lt. Sherri Pierce, 157 ARW-PA

**MANCHESTER** – A KC-135 tanker parked next to the N.H. Aviation Museum at the Manchester airport May 30 helped kick off a featured exhibit on the history of the N.H. Air National Guard.

Its size could not be understated enough by a young boy who came to the exhibit with his father.

“That’s a big plane,” said the four-year-old, one of many who toured the military aircraft.

The ongoing exhibit was a collaboration between the 157th Air Refueling Wing, the N.H. Aviation Historical Society and the N.H. Aviation Museum. Six large panels detail the origins of the N.H. National Guard at Fort William and Mary in Newcastle up to the present and the Wing’s 24-7 air refueling mission at Pease Air National Guard Base in Newington.

“We are very proud of our heritage,” said Maj. Gen. William Reddel, the Adjutant General of the N.H. National Guard, on hand to open the exhibit.

A flight crew was available to answer questions throughout the day. The Wing’s Life Support section brought a life raft and displays of various tools and supplies used by pilots and crew during emergency situations. Recruiting also brought information on the 157th ARW and how to become a member.

The N.H. Aviation Historical Society was founded in 1995 and opened the museum in what once served as an air traffic control tower. ♦



Staff Sgt. Adam Hanson and Airman 1st Class Chris Donovan of the 157th Air Refueling Wing Life Support section talk to a visitor about the uses of the life raft on display at the museum exhibit opening.

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# Air Promotions & Awards

## PROMOTIONS

### Senior Airman

Frederick Horne  
Matthew Slattery  
Anastasia Nestor  
Jareb Kinney  
John Uzzle  
Andrew Morrison

### Staff Sergeant

Alan Rogers II  
Owen Murray  
Eric Low  
Jason Inglis  
Theodore Donald  
Steve Kawonczyk  
Joseph Berube

### Technical Sergeant

John McCabe III  
Michael Rondeau  
Celestyne Bragg  
Eugene Clark  
Jeffrey Clark  
Paul Marcus

### Master Sergeant

Robert Cole  
Alan Beaulieu  
Samuel Daigle  
Jeffrey Vermette  
David Pais  
Aaron Cleaver

### First Lieutenant

Carrie Smith  
David Thomas

### Captain

Jeffrey Kipp  
Emily Cole  
Autumn Ricker

### Lieutenant Colonel

Robert Blonigen

### Colonel

Richard Greenwood



*Tech. Sgt. Christie Rouleau, a boom operator with the 157th Air Refueling Wing, talks to Josh Adams, a reporter from WMUR TV, during a training mission over New York, May 21. The media flight helped promote the opening of an exhibit of the history of the N.H. Air National Guard at the Aviation Museum of New Hampshire. Photo: Maj Greg Heilshorn, NHNG-PA*

## AWARDS & DECORATIONS

### Meritorious Service Medal



Lt. Col. Thomas Blake  
Maj. Dean Rancourt  
Master Sgt. Michael Toews  
Senior Master Sgt. Elaine Halsey  
Lt. Col. Mark McKenzie  
Senior Master Sgt. William Russell  
Lt. Col. Marc Schwartz  
Master Sgt. David Langford  
Tech. Sgt. Samuel Daigle  
Master Sgt. John Lessard  
Lt. Col. Scott Normandeau  
Master Sgt. Michael Krall  
Chief Master Sgt. Cesar Davila  
Senior Master Sgt. William Hardekopf  
Senior Master Sgt. Keith Downs  
Master Sgt. Peter Coletti

### Air Force Commendation Medal



Tech. Sgt. Ralph Siemer  
Tech. Sgt. Brian Marden  
Tech. Sgt. Anita Manupelli  
1st Lt. Karl Smith  
Master Sgt. John Capsalis  
Master Sgt. Daniel Pollard  
Senior Master Sgt. William Brown  
Master Sgt. Paul Short  
Master Sgt. Perry Briggs  
Tech. Sgt. Beverly Wallace  
Tech. Sgt. Jonathan Timblin  
Master Sgt. Jeffrey Floyd  
Tech. Sgt. Thomas Johnson  
Tech. Sgt. Ronald Connary  
Senior Airman Danielle Lewis  
Master Sgt. Joseph Madison  
1st Lt. Emily Cole  
Master Sgt. Sandra Chabot

### Air Force Achievement Medal



Airman 1st Class John Pepper  
Senior Airman Jeffrey Greenlaw  
Airman 1st Class Joseph Cloutier  
Staff Sgt. Brian Roberge  
Staff Sgt. Raymond Martin  
Staff Sgt. Emilio Garcia  
Master Sgt. Russell Ayers  
Staff Sgt. Lawrence Bower  
Tech. Sgt. Darryl Bethel  
Staff Sgt. Jacob Watson  
Staff Sgt. Gabriel Laplume  
Master Sgt. Garrick Lewis  
Tech. Sgt. David Pinard  
Staff Sgt. Matthew

# Army Promotions & Awards

## Private 2

Benjamin Hanley  
Michael Chapman  
Lance Malette  
Adam Cheney  
Philip Mexcur  
Wayne Durant  
Jonathan Mexcur  
Cameron Eller  
Katherine Dion  
Timothy Miller  
Harold Hill  
Jason Martin  
Morgana Delisle  
Michael Beauchesne  
Jason Wilkins  
Ryan Keane  
Devin Anderson  
Mark Kuehn  
Scott Auditore  
Michael Fessenden  
Thomas Cote  
Allyson Crowley  
Stephen Martel

Cody Leonard  
Christopher Malinowski  
Trent Labonte  
Mark McLynch  
Davi Raimundo  
Anthony Whitney  
Ryan Toczko  
James Lafond  
Michael Higgins  
Benjamin Russell  
Caleb Lamothe  
Joseph Klemarczyk  
Jacob Harzbecker  
Talayna Duval  
Casey Hanson  
Michael Marschhausen

## Private First Class

Jeffrey Hollow  
Dylan Gingues  
Castava Knipfer  
Anthony McInnis  
Kenneth Penn  
Scott Penn

Keith Chavanelle  
Michael Paine  
Jeffrey Sweeney  
Daniel Jackson  
Jessica Mountford  
Vincent Distefano  
Violet Galpin  
Jason Heath  
Kayla Pattenjohnson  
Michael Judkins  
Megan Beck  
Kaitlin Rorick  
Jill Brinley  
Jennifer Ramsdell  
Matthew Axelrod  
Matthew Wheaton  
Alexis Pennington  
Megan Cullen  
William Genest  
Brett Starcher  
Shaun Labelle  
Anthony Daisey  
Michael Tully  
Craig Murdoch

Brian Lenhart  
Angel Dominguez  
Zachary Gilding  
Steven Chick  
Cameron Pelletier  
Bradley Estabrook

## Specialist

Michael Burke  
Edgar Jones  
Benjamin Hamel  
Timothy Crouch  
Melissa Dempsey  
Nicholas Valade  
Mark O'Brien  
Cynthia Thompson  
Joseph Emond  
David Tille  
John Petrillo  
Matthew Early  
Scott Marshall  
Michael Flood  
Kyle Currier  
Paul Schafer

Douglas Pilcher  
James Snyder  
Scott Burns  
Paul Dooling  
Nathan Tilton  
Valentin Sechelar  
Jason Fencik  
Adam Marino  
David Helie  
Clayton Kuusisto  
Gordon Farrar  
James Berry  
Adam Labonte  
Amy Austin  
Sara Furmanick  
Kristina Nee  
James Lowry  
David Lapanne  
Nicholas Paris  
Rene Viano

## Sergeant

Erick Irizarry  
Witty Phelps

Michael Manning  
Jeremiah Crosby  
Tony Wyman  
Derrick Barnes  
Samuel Doxsey  
Joshua Sanborn  
Raul Zubicaray

## Staff Sergeant

Darin Ouellette  
Eric Crane  
Patrick Phair  
Carolina Compton  
Wayne Hemingway  
Lance Emond  
Randal Carver  
Jamie Morse  
Steven Ainsworth  
Jason Weaver

## Sergeant First Class

Mark Cave  
Christopher Macarthur  
Roy Lowes  
William Lugg  
Andrew Lane

## Master Sergeant

Robert Reeves  
Earlon Foss  
Timothy Wooster  
Stephen Houten

## First Sergeant

Glen Drewniak  
James Aldridge

## Command Sergeant Major

Jason Speltz  
Stanton Noyes

## Warrant Officer (1)

Nathaniel Parker  
Paul Montminy

## Chief Warrant Officer (2)

Emily Leclai

## Second Lieutenant

Daniel Curtis

## First Lieutenant

Trevor Mastromarino

## Captain

Steven Mongelli  
Joseph Gray  
Michael Butler  
Brooks Hayward  
Robert Belton  
Erikka Woods

## Lieutenant Colonel

Frederick Harris  
James Challenger



Sgt. Maj. Dave Stevens shares a moment with his daughter and grandmother during his retirement ceremony March 8 in Assembly Hall, JFHQ, Concord. Stevens retired after a 30-year career in the N.H. Army National Guard, which culminated in a tour of duty in Afghanistan as part of an embedded training team. Photo: Staff Sgt. Ginger Dempsey, NHNG-PA

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