

Granite Guardian



A PUBLICATION OF THE NEW HAMPSHIRE ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

WINTER 2004

Saying Goodbye

New Hampshire Army National Guard Goes To War

Granite Guardian



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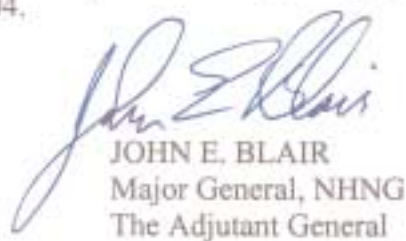


HOLIDAY GREETINGS

My wife Sharon and I extend our warmest wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season. I would like to take this opportunity to express my personal gratitude to each of you for the service you have given and the sacrifices you continue to make.

This past year, many of you have answered the call to active duty to defend freedom at home and abroad. Many more have helped in the preparation and the deployment. To all, you have performed superbly. You make me immensely proud to be in the same military organization. The United States of America and New Hampshire are better and stronger because of your dedication.

Thank you for all that you do to make the New Hampshire National Guard the successful organization that it is. Best wishes for a wonderful Holiday Season! May every joy and success be yours in 2004.



JOHN E. BLAIR
Major General, NHNG
The Adjutant General

Cover Photo: Families say goodbye to members of the 744th Transportation Co. deploying from Somersworth Armory in December 2003. (Photo by Spec. Eileen Healy)

A New Generation Of Role Models

Saluting The New Hampshire Army National Guardsman

By Capt. Greg Heilshorn
114th MPAD

It has already been an unprecedented year for the New Hampshire Army National Guardsman.

In the span of a few months, more than half of you have mobilized in the fight against terrorism - nearly 1,000 men and women from at least eight different units across the state will serve or are serving in Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

You represent the Bloodhounds of Detachment 2, 169th Military Police Company; Company C, 3rd of the 172nd Infantry (Mountain); the Ghostriders of 744th Transportation Company; Headquarters, 197th Field Artillery Brigade; 2nd Battalion, 197th Field Artillery Brigade; 1st Battalion, 172nd Field Artillery Brigade; 210th Engineer Detachment; and the 3643rd Maintenance Company, which has provided more than half of its soldiers to boost the ranks of almost every deploying unit.

By spring, you will be in Iraq or Afghanistan. Some of you have been guarding suspected terrorists in Guantanamo Bay or patrolling the mountains of Afghanistan with members of the national army since last fall.

Others are guarding our State Reservation in Concord and helping the 157th Security Forces patrol Pease Air National Guard Base in Newington.

Many of you have been asked to perform a job that is different from your military specialty, but you have accepted the mission with a kind of courage that one New Hampshire congressman best described as "humbling." Despite the tremendous sacrifice of leaving your family and jobs, you have embraced a cause that has no clear enemy and no clear boundaries.

No wonder your own commanders are in awe of you.

You are not Superman or Superwoman. You do not stand out in a crowd. You do not drive a Lexus or have a live-in maid. You are a truck driver, a school teacher, a mechanic, a corrections officer, a plumber, a cop, a general contractor, a small business owner, a volunteer fireman.

You give more than you take.

You speak of duty, loyalty and honor as if they were muscle groups, not sound bites for patriotism. You do not brag or boast. You shy away from microphones and cameras, but when asked to speak, you lead with your heart.

You would do anything for the soldiers in your unit.

You have earned a place of distinction alongside the New Hampshire guardsman who served before you in every major



Capt. John Westhaver, a retired military chaplain, baptizes William Speltz, the 7-month-old son of 1st. Sgt. Jason Speltz and wife Karen, prior to the departure ceremony of Co. C, 3rd of the 172nd Infantry (Mountain) at the Manchester Armory on Jan. 22. (Photo by Capt. Greg Heilshorn)

Life hasn't exactly been a bowl of cherries, but you make the best of the sweet moments. You work a second, part-time job so you can buy your boy a snowmobile for Christmas or treat your wife to a weekend at the casinos.

You are a single mother, a new father. You are a grandparent with more than 30 years of service. You moved up your wedding date. You are a kid still looking for some direction.

American conflict dating back to the Revolution.

You have earned the respect of your neighbors, employers and the veterans of this state.

In the eyes of hundreds of school children, you have become a new generation of role models. They see their mother and father in you. They get it. They know you are the ones keeping them safe.

UNH cadets grasp finer points of leadership

By Cadet Michael Butler
Senior, UNH at Manchester

My name is Cadet Michael Butler and I am a senior at the University of New Hampshire in Manchester as well as a cadet through the Army ROTC program at the UNH in Durham. I was an enlisted soldier of the NHARNG when I first heard about the ROTC program. I learned of all the things that the program had to offer; money for college, leadership skills, physical training and extensive knowledge of basic infantry skills. But above all it provided an opportunity to be a commissioned officer in NHARNG.

I joined the program at the beginning of my junior year through the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP). This allowed me to continue drilling with my unit as a cadet and complete the ROTC program. All the training we received was to prepare us for a special summer camp called the National Advanced Leadership Camp or NALC. NALC is a 32-day test of physical strength, day and night land navigation, basic rifle

marksmanship, hand grenades and above all, leadership skills. Our training consisted of a three hour lecture teaching us basic organization of the Army, land navigation skills, writing of operation orders and basic infantry skills. We also attended labs where once every other week we would take these skills and apply them in a field environment. Throughout the year we were assigned a position in our cadet chain of command, whether it be squad leader or company commander and graded by our peers on our leadership ability. Over all we were given an opportunity to improve on our leadership skills.

Now that I'm a senior, having completed NALC, the ROTC program has given me a different role. Senior year is the time to take the leadership skills that have taken a year to hone and apply them in planning and conducting training. Class time now is spent conducting training meetings, writing operation orders and learning more about the Army structure.

My experiences from the ROTC program will take my military career as far as I want to go.



By Cadet Keith Graham
UNH ROTC, C Battery, 1/172nd FA

What an adventurous conclusion it was to a full year of officer training!

National Advanced Leadership Camp (NALC), followed by Cadet Troop Leadership Training (CTLT), was Summer 2003 for me. Those two months away from home served two purposes. It gave me an opportunity to apply what leadership training skills I had been taught over the previous year to an actual leadership situation. It also gave me an up close look at how an actual Army unit functions on a full-time basis and how I would fit in to that unit as a platoon leader.

Before I could ever get to that point, however, I needed to be trained on things I would be expected to act on at advanced camp. The one year out of a cadet's college career that is set aside for this purpose, and the one which places the most emphasis on it, is called the MSIII year (with MS standing for military science). This year is usually the junior year of college and is truly the time for cadets to show they have what it takes to make it through 32 days of NALC.

First and foremost on the list of training events is physical training (PT). PT is conducted one hour in the morning, three mornings per week, generally starting at 0600. Six o'clock in the morning is certainly not a popular time for college students to be waking up and straining their bodies through a physical workout.

Another event cadets must be proficient on is land navigation. This is the process of locating points in wooded areas using map reading, compass using, and terrain orientation skills. This is especially important for soldiers in

combat arms branches such as the infantry and field artillery because they will be the ones spending the most time in the field during wartime situations.

One final aspect to be covered here is known as STX (Squad Tactical Exercise) lanes. This, to me, is the most pressure-packed event at advanced camp because someone is watching the cadet placed in the position of squad leader and evaluating that cadet on how he or she carries out the eight troop leading procedures (TLP's) and reacts to occurrences that happen on the battlefield. Success in this event lets the evaluators know whether or not someone can be counted on to make important decisions in the heat of battle.

On July 12 I graduated from Advanced Camp. The cadets in each platoon took time to reflect on the last 32 days, went through the ceremony, and said farewell to each other, hopeful of seeing them sometime in the future. I was then on my way to the airport as part of a group headed for follow-on training called CTLT. I was on my way to the Republic of Korea, which meant a long plane ride. My flight included one stop in Tokyo and didn't arrive at its destination in Seoul until late Sunday night, Korea time, nearly 24 hours after graduation started. That's a long day!

My first full day in Korea included a trip to the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ), at the 38th Parallel. As is always the case there, security and alertness was at its highest level. Units throughout South Korea have to be ready to "fight tonight," because the real world threat is always there.

Overall, I believe I gathered plenty of information for one month of training, although I missed an opportunity to see a live fire conducted by a field artillery unit. I was also anxious to get home and get on with the rest of the summer before school started again.

54th Troop Command welcomes new leader

By Sgt. 1st Class Michael Daigle
114th MPAD

Lt. Col. Robert W. Tetreault took command of 54th Troop Command from Lt. Col. David R. Holtgrieve in a ceremony at the Concord Armory last October.

Brig. Gen. John Weeden, Assistant Adjutant General of NHARNG, passed the unit guidon from Holtgrieve to Tetreault during the traditional change of command ceremony.

Weeden congratulated Tetreault on his new assignment and thanked Holtgrieve for his exceptional service as commander of the 54th.

Under Holtgrieve's leadership, elements of Troop Command were deployed in support of various state and federal missions; 114th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, (MPAD) to Bosnia, and Kosovo, Charlie Company, (Mountain), 3-172 Infantry to Afghanistan, and for airport security after 9-11, 1159th Medical Company, (Air Ambulance) to Bosnia, 169th Military Police Company to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba and the 3643rd Service Company and 210th Engineer Detachment for military assistance to civilian authorities.

Holtgrieve was born on March 8, 1951 in Milwaukee, WI. He was commissioned in 1983 through OCS, New Hampshire Military Academy. Holtgrieve is a graduate of the Transportation Officer Basic Course, Infantry Officer Advance Course, Combined Arms Services Staff School, the Army Command and General Staff College, and the Army War College. His previous assignments include platoon leader and commander of the 744th Transportation Company, Deputy Commandant of the New Hampshire Military Academy, Commander of Company C, 3rd of the 172nd Infantry (Mountain), Supply and Services Officer, Deputy Director of Plans, operations and training, Assistant Chief of Staff, and DCSLOG-Maintenance.

Holtgrieve holds an associate of science degree and a bachelor's degree in Business Administration from the University of Wisconsin, a Master's of Business Administration from Southern New Hampshire University, and a Master of



Brig. Gen. John Weeden, Assistant Adjutant General of NHARNG hands the 54th TC guidon to Lt. Col. Robert Tetreault during a change of command ceremony last October. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Michael Daigle)

Strategic Studies Degree from the US Army War College.

His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Army Achievement Medal, Department of the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, National Defense Service Medal (second award), N.H. Commendation Medal, N.H. National Guard Service Bar, and the Armed Forces Reserve Medal.

Tetreault was born on Oct. 18, 1955 in North Kingston, R.I. He was commissioned in 1983 through OCS, New Hampshire Military Academy. Tetreault is a graduate of the Field Artillery Officer Basic Course, Field Artillery Officer Advance Course, Combined Arms Services Staff School, and the Army Command and General Staff College. His previous assignments include Forward Observer, Fire Direction Officer, Executive Officer, and Commander of Battery C/3rd Battalion 197th Field Artillery; Operations Officer of the New Hampshire Military Academy; Chief of Plans and

Actions / Military Personnel Office; Assistant S3 and S3 / 54th Troop Command; S1 and S4 of the 197th Field Artillery Brigade; New Hampshire Counterdrug Coordinator; Executive Officer of 54th Troop Command; and Deputy Director of Personnel.

Tetreault holds a bachelor's degree in Management from Franklin Pierce College. His awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal third award, the Army Commendation Medal second award, Army Achievement Medal second award, Army Service Ribbon, Reserve Component Achievement Medal third award, Reserve Component Overseas Training Ribbon second award, Armed Forces Reserve Medal second award, National Defense Service Medal second award, New Hampshire Commendation medal, New Hampshire National Guard Service Bar seventh award, New Hampshire National Guard State Active Duty Ribbon.

744th Transportation Co. first of eight units

By Spec. Beth Decato
114th MPAD

The 744th Transportation Company is going back to the desert. In late November, the unit was notified via a phone tree it had been mobilized to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. The effective date was Dec 12.

Under normal circumstances morale could be expected to be on the quieter side, however that was not the case at the Concord Armory, where soldier readiness program (SRP) began for the company and its' attachments during November drill.

*"Our company is
made up of talented and
motivated soldiers,
noncommissioned officers
and officers."*

Capt. Mary Bergner
Company Commander

It was the first of what would be many weekends of NHARNG taking care of its own.

Finance, personnel, medical and legal were among the key directorates providing experienced staff to ensure soldiers of the 744th were prepared for its call to duty.

The soldiers were serious about getting the family support they would need while they were away, but made time to laugh, and share stories with each other while they waited their turn in line.

Shawn Macpherson of the 3643rd Maintenance Company volunteered for mobilization.

"I'm a single soldier and the sacrifice for me isn't as great as for some of the other soldiers. In effect, it's time for me to pay my dues," Macpherson said.

November's original drill plans were cancelled in order to bring together all the soldiers and begin the processing. It sounds routine, and perhaps these days the



Capt. Mary Bergner, 744th commander, receives a flag from the NHNG's Commander in Chief, Gov. Craig Benson during a ceremony prior to the units departure in December 2003. (Photo by Capt. Greg Heilshorn)

National Guard is getting the hang of it, but the internal and external involvement for preparing each soldier is quite intense and labor proficient. In Concord, everyone was looking out for each other's best interest, personally and professionally.

The Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) was among several agencies present to assist in the out-processing procedures. John Gagne, state director for ESGR, volunteered his weekend to discuss the employee benefits and rights while deployed. An employer is required by federal statute to hold the soldiers job.

"It is our agency's job to enforce the employment laws, and let soldiers know what their rights are," Gagne said.

A sergeant from Fort Devens spent the weekend validating soldiers' M-40 series fittings. He had every soldier test their gas mask to ensure a tight seal and good

fit. He was in charge of making sure the soldiers were prepared, equipped and proficient with their mask. He was the final seal of approval.

"They will train and retrain until they get a go," he said. "Each function is measured by a go or a no-go, and no one goes without being proficient in each and every task."

Others were assisting in cleaning the 744th's weapons. A representative of Mary Kay was present with holiday ideas for the soldiers to pre-order for their loved ones. Military clothing and accessories such as insignia, hats, boots, and gifts were available for order, or pick-up. Medical records were updated, blood work and physicals were conducted. Equipment was sized and resized. ID cards were issued and updated. A special chaplain service was provided in the morning and throughout the day the chaplain was

to mobilize for Iraqi, Enduring Freedom

available to speak with soldiers. Military attorneys produced legal documents and expertise with wills, power of attorneys, and custody amendments. Financial services provided information pertaining to student and auto loans, credit card payment methods, and mortgage interest rate changes while soldiers were abroad.

The weekend contained one accomplishment after another as the New Hampshire National Guard readied the 744th soldiers.

Capt. Mary Bergner promised to ensure the support of the family programs long after her unit departs.

“Our family support group has strong leadership, with two of our volunteers having experienced Desert Storm in 1991,” Bergner said. “The keys to a soldier’s success are knowing that his or her family support them and knowing there are people around that support their family. During a deployment, the bond between a soldier’s families is as important as the bond between soldiers and their unit.”



Sgt. Tricia Thompson is interviewed by local media during the 744th SRP in November 2003. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Michael Daigle)

*“We are getting together
a call list of family members so
we can call them and they
can call us if they need
anything while their
soldier is on deployment.”*

Spec. Jeffrey Jordan

Spec. Jeffrey Jordan is part of a support attachment from the 3643rd Service Company that is providing sponsors for the soldiers families.

“We are getting together a call list of family members so we can call them and they can call us if they need anything while their soldier is on deployment.”



Spec. Derek Boyle is measured for a new NBC suit during the 744th SRP in November 2003. (Photo by Spec. Catherine Caruso, 114th MPAD)

Supervisors graduate with enhanced skills

The New Hampshire National Guard recently graduated its first group of supervisors from the year long leadership development program, designed to increase awareness of the success factors in leading people, thinking strategically and managing processes.

The program is offered to full-time supervisors of the Army and Air National Guard, and state employees. The sessions, designed and implemented by Lt. Col. Scott Wakefield, employ adult learning principles along with experience-based models to present basic principles of leading and following in a way that incorporates the participant's style of learning. Wakefield creates exercises, conversations, and situations that closely parallel common workplace situations in a way that challenges and stimulates the participants.

Wakefield, a certified trainer and doctoral candidate at the Fielding Graduate Institute, received approval to conduct a pilot program to introduce leader development concepts to supervisors. He formed cohort groups of leaders and



Lt. Col. Scott Wakefield and Maj. Gen. John Blair, Adjutant General, honor first graduates of new leadership course. (Photo by Capt. Greg Heilshorn)

asked them to go through a year-long curriculum that dealt with organization theory, leadership styles, and other behavioral sciences with the goal of increased awareness of leader impact and productivity and morale.

The program was an initiative started by Maj. Gen. John Blair, Adjutant General, who sought ways to improve business through increased employee partici-

pation and involvement in running the National Guard. His theory is simple: Leading in today's complex environment requires involving everyone at various levels. We are not abandoning the tradition of military leadership, we are following the concept that everyone is a leader. With more people working in unison and synergy, the performance levels increase and there is a greater chance of success.

N.H. EMPLOYER SUPPORT PROGRAM AMONG BEST IN U.S.

The N.H. Employer Support to Guard and Reserve Program (ESGR), which is frequently recognized as one of the premier programs among the 55 states and territories, had its busiest year to date in FY03. We mobilized the largest number of N.H. guardsmen and reservists EVER in support of Operations Enduring Freedom, Noble Eagle and Iraqi Freedom. Nearly, 1,200 members of all branches of the Armed Forces in N.H. deployed.

Our mission is straight-forward enough and essential to the success and efficient operation of the N.H. National Guard: To help employers understand and appreciate the necessary demands of our guardsmen and reservists, and to recognize them for their support. Our members have worked long and hard to attend mobilizations and demobilizations that have taken us out to early morning and late night visits to airfields and armories. We have handled many inquiries about potential disputes and our employers continue to rise to the occasion.

We presented Citizens Bank with the "Seven Seals" award, one of our highest honors, and we gave an "Above and Beyond" award to N.H. Boring Company in Londonderry for not only making up the pay differential of one of its employees who was activated, but allowing him to take a company truck and a personal computer with him to his reporting station.

We have conducted several "Briefings with the Boss," which were very successful, and we hosted a "Mini-Bosslift" to Fort Pickett, Virginia with the 1st of the 172nd Field Artillery and 210th Engineers. Eight employers of N.H. guardsmen, were housed in World War II era barracks and had the chance to observe the transport and emplacement of the battalion's 155 mm howitzers. They each fired off shell, many scoring a direct hit on a truck or tank in the target area. Offering employers first-hand, up close and personal exposure to Guard training has proven to be a key to the program's success.

With assistance of our N.H. ESGR committee members we have accomplished the following:

- Provided mobilization briefings and ESGR information to over 1,100 guardsmen and reservists.
- Provided demobilization briefings to over 200 guardsmen and reservists.
- Provided ombudsman services to over 50 mobilized guardsmen and reservists.
- Assisted over 30 spouses with employer issues and awards.
- Processed over 200 ESGR recognition awards.
- Nominated Chief Master Sgt. Richard Derry of the Air Guard for the first "Ted Williams Military Achievement Award", presented to him at the First Annual Ted Williams Baseball Dinner in September 2003.

Recruiting and Retention Command News:

1,721 soldiers and counting...



Sgt. Robert Blad, HQ Battery, 1st Battalion, 172nd FA, takes the oath from CW3 Michael Tkacz, HQ Battery, 197th FA last fall. The ceremony took place at the Manchester armory in front of Car 54, a NASCAR race car with which the National Guard advertises. (Courtesy photo R&R)

The N.H. Recruiting and Retention Command closedout FY03 on Sept. 30, 2003 reaching its highest strength level in five years-1,721 soldiers strong. NHARNG was recognized by National Guard Bureau for achieving the highest "write rate" amongst all state army guards nationwide with under 3,000 soldiers. Operation Answer the Call 2003 directly supported the end-strength objectives through the enlistment of 177 soldiers in six months. The NHARNG Recruiters wish to thank all of the soldiers and units that assisted us in the mission, and those who provided referrals to enlist.

TOP RECRUITERS RECOGNIZED

Chief's 54 Award

Sgt. 1st Class Kelly Trudelle, a Concord recruiter, was recognized as the Chief's 54. This honor is bestowed upon the top all-round recruiter in each state. Trudelle personally recruited 40 soldiers and helped fellow recruiters with their missions. Trudelle was awarded the Meritorious Service Medal for her exceptional achievements.

Rookie of The Year Award

Sgt. Ryan Bisson, a Nashua recruiter, was recognized as the top new recruiter for exceeding his mission and excelling beyond his peers in his first year of assignment. Bisson was awarded a cased shadow box with unit crests from each of NHARNG units.

Commander's Attrition Award

Staff Sgt. Galen Garretson was commended for outstanding performance in the field of attrition management, and presented a certificate and commemorative bronze coin of George Washington.

Commander's Retention Award

Sgt. 1st Class Robin Lavertu was commended for outstanding performance in the field of retention, and presented a certificate and commemorative bronze coin of Franklin Pierce.

Change of Command Ceremony

On October 14, Lt. Col. Donald Dupuis turned over command of the recruiting force to Maj. Angela Maxner. Dupuis was recognized by Brig. Gen. John Weeden, the Assistant Adjutant

General, with the Meritorious Service Medal for three successive years of meeting mission. He has assumed new duties as deputy director, Military Personnel Office. Maxner has served for the past three years as the state quality officer and as the Regimental S-3 at the N.H. Regional Training Institute. She is a former active duty officer with a wealth of operational and recruiting assignments.

C Battery, 1st/172nd FA Recognized

1st Sgt. Robert Stewart traveled to National Guard Bureau to accept a unit award for top "Command Team" in FY03. C Battery, 1st/172nd FA, of Portsmouth was recognized for unit efforts in increased accessions, lower attrition and a higher retention rate and for establishing a strong working relationship with its unit recruiter, Sgt. 1st Class Brian Vespa.

New IADT Manager Named

Sgt. Maj. James Goss has been selected as the R&R commands new Initial Active Duty Training (IADT) Manager. He will work with State Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Rice and the N.H. Regional Training Institute to oversee the training & welfare of our newest soldiers.



A color guard with N.H. National Guard and Reserve soldiers march at N.H. International Speedway in Loudon last summer. (Photo by Capt. Greg Heilshorn)

Family readiness equals mission readiness

By 2nd Lt. Ken Leedburg
State Family Program Director

Family readiness equals mission readiness. Being proactive is the key to mission readiness. The mission of the Family Program is to serve as the commander's primary source for programs which enhance readiness of service members and their families and contribute to the overall morale and welfare. To establish pre- and post- mobilization family assistance support requirements, responsibilities, resources and procedures to support the overall mission of the New Hampshire National Guard.

Every family needs to be ready to meet the challenges they face when their guard member is called to duty. To do so, families need to know where to go for assistance when there is an emergency and their spouse is deployed for annual training or mobilized.

All members of the NH National Guard should make sure that their families know at a minimum:

- ◆ Your social security number
- ◆ Your unit and telephone number
- ◆ Your local Red Cross telephone number
- ◆ The NH National Guard Emergency Hotline telephone number: 1-800-472-0328.

I hope there will never be a time when your families will need emergency assistance, but in case there should be sure to set them up for success and provide them with the necessary information. This is critical for the well being of our Guardsmen, for our readiness posture and mission accomplishment, and for the overall success of the NH National Guard.

The Tricare Dental Program

The TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) is offered by the Department of Defense through the TRICARE Management Activity (TMA). United Concordia administers and underwrites the TDP for the TMA.

The TDP is a high quality, cost effective dental care benefit for family members of all active duty Uniformed Service



Sgt. Luis Cepeda, HQ, 197th FA, wife Ternisha and daughter Jasmine visit at his departure ceremony in Manchester this month. (photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mike Daigle)

personnel and to Selected Reserve and Individual Ready Reserve (IRR) members and/or their families. The Uniformed Services include the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and Public Health Services.

Eligibility

The TDP is available to family members of all active duty Uniformed Service personnel and to Selective Reserve and IRR members and/or their families. To be eligible for the TDP, the sponsor must have at least 12 months remaining on his or her service commitment with the parent Service at the time of enrollment. When the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) indicates less than 12 months remaining, United Concordia will validate the intent of those active duty, Selective Reserve, or IRR members to continue their service commitment.

NOTE:

Any reservist who is on a tour of active duty that is greater than 30 days receives the same entitlements as an active duty member. This includes the Active Guard/Reserve (AGR) and reservists on active duty for special work or training.

For more information visit their website at www.ucci.com or call United Concordia at 1-888-622-2256.

Mailing Policies

Customs forms are required on all international mail, and shipments should be properly packaged before sending them overseas. Customers should always remember to ensure they package their parcels in strong boxes and use a lot of packing material. Also customers should use a nylon-fiber reinforced tape to bundle up their packages.

While the United States has restrictions on mailing items such as poisons and weapons, other countries have their own restrictions for what can be mailed. Postal customers need to consider the length of the journey overseas and the final destination when considering what to send.

Because of security restrictions, mass-mailing operations such as Operation Dear Abby or the "Any Service member" mailing programs are not being supported by the Military Postal Service Agency and the Department of Defense.

Postal agency officials encourage service members to support the publicly available Web sites that allow the American public to write supportive letters to them. One web site is <http://www.thankagi.com>. This site enables people anywhere in the U.S. to post messages for the men and women serving in Iraq and around the world. The troops will soon be able to post responses. The new Web Site was founded by the son of a World War II navy radio operator as his way to thank those serving in the military abroad.

Granite Response showcases state cooperation



N.H. National Guard soldiers and airmen skirmish in a simulated riot during Exercise Granite Response this past September. (Photo by Senior Airman Curt Lenz)

By Maj. David Durling
114th MPAD

Over 230 soldiers and airmen from Task Force Merrimac descended on Pease Air National Guard Base this past September for riot control training as part of Exercise Granite Response.

Task Force Merrimac, a provisional unit set up just for the exercise, consisted of approximately 100 soldiers from 1st Battalion, 172nd Field Artillery, and 2nd Battalion, 197th Field Artillery, 100 soldiers from Troop Command, and 30 airmen from the 157th Air Refueling Wing. In order to maximize the available training time, the soldiers assembled at Pease on Friday night, trained until late that night, and were ready to go first thing Saturday morning.

According to Capt. Brian Thorne, the officer in charge of Task Force Merrimac (check first name), “the gist of this exer-

cise is to provide a pool of individuals trained in civil disturbance response techniques.” Thorne said the intent of the training is that “they can take this knowledge back to their units and train other soldiers.”

On a wide expanse of tarmac called the North Ramp, soldiers and airmen received skill level one instruction in a round-robin format. Clad in flak jackets, helmets with face shields, and carrying heavy wooden sticks, they learned the use of the riot baton, squad formations and movements, and how the law pertains to state-mobilized guardsmen and women.

Corp. Kent Johnson, of Portsmouth’s Charlie Battery, 1/172nd Field Artillery Battalion, said “we really look forward to this, because we need the training.” As one of the “actors” portraying civilian protesters, Johnson said the goal of the

force-on-force scenario was simple. We’re trying to test their discipline and see how well they paid attention to their training this morning.”

The realism of the exercise provided a great training scenario, according to Sgt. Michael Beauchamp, from the Air National Guard’s 157th Security Forces. “You see tempers flaring, and you need to maintain discipline and bearing. The line shouldn’t break. If one guy goes down, you close the gap.” If one or two protesters manage to break through the line of baton-wielding soldiers, there are “shark” teams waiting to pick up and detain those individuals.

Johnson also noted the cooperative attitude among the soldiers and airmen. “It was real nice having the Army and Air Guard work together. We both can learn from the other.”



Maj. Gen John Blair, Adjutant General of the New Hampshire National Guard, greets President George Bush as he arrives at Pease in October 2003 to speak to military members and their families. To his right is Col. Carolyn Protzmann, Vice Wing Commander of the 157th Refueling Wing. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Vezeiu)