

The

RAILSPLITTER



Illinois National Guard

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XCTC proves valuable for Soldiers



Photo by U.S. Army Pfc. Allison Lampe, 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Soldiers from Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 122nd Field Artillery Regiment in Sycamore secure a Howitzer M119A2 gun onto a UH-60 Blackhawk from Company A, 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation Regiment in Decatur, during an exercise July 17 at Camp Ripley, Minn.

Story by Maj. Nathan A. Westby
33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team

CAMP RIPLEY, Minn. – Soldiers with the Illinois National Guard arrived at Camp Ripley, Minn., July 6 to support and train the 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) through the Army National Guard’s premier training program for brigade combat teams.

Units from all major commands in the Illinois National Guard were involved in the training event that included the 33rd IBCT in Urbana, the 108th Sustainment Brigade in Chicago, the 65th Troop Command Brigade in Springfield, the 404th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade in Chicago, and the Joint Forces Headquarters in Springfield. At the peak of operations there were more than 3,200 Soldiers from Illinois at Camp Ripley.

Brig. Gen. Johnny Miller, Assistant Adjutant General for the Illinois Army National Guard, and the Task Force Illini commander for the exercise, said this is an opportunity to highlight the quality of the Illinois Army National Guard and its Soldiers.

1-178th performs lane validation

Guardian to Railsplitter: A new era

Story by Adriana Schroeder
Illinois National Guard Historian

Times are changing and in this new digital age we, too, are forced to evolve.

Twitter, Facebook, Google, e-mail, blogs and the list gets longer every year. Back in 1933, the annual cost

of publication and distribution of 12,000 copies per month was \$15,000. The paper flourished until WWII, when circulation of photos and information became forbidden by the War Department. Today, the Guardian printed quarterly cost approximately \$36,000.

Going digital seemed the best answer to combat budget cuts and keep information

timely. This new and improved paper dubbed The Railsplitter, after President and Illinois Guardsman Abraham Lincoln, will be sent directly to each Guardsman’s military e-mail inbox. Information will be

shorter, but distributed faster with monthly delivery.

In 1933, five Illinois Guardsmen created

Illinois Guardsman, Inc.

Delayed by the Great Depression, finally Oct. 6, 1933, the papers from the corporation department, office of the Secretary of State read, “to edit, publish, print, electrotype, bind, sell and distribute a monthly magazine to be called, ‘The Illinois Guardsman.’” Official papers were signed by Maj. Gen. Roy D. Keehn.

1933 to 2012



BSTB Engineers provide support



Illinois continues to move forward



Maj. Gen. Dennis L. Celletti

Welcome to our new command information electronic publication, The Railsplitter. I am proud of the Illinois Guardian and the recognition it has received within the state and at National Guard Bureau with multiple awards from NGB-Public Affairs. I am certain the Railsplitter will live up to the Guardian's reputation and also be an award-winning publication.

The Guardian isn't the only Illinois National Guard product that has received national recognition lately. As always, our Soldiers and Airmen continue to move forward and accomplish command-directed goals related to mobilization, readiness and end-strength.

For the second year in a row, the 108th Sustainment Brigade

in Chicago placed first in the large-unit category with the Army Award for Maintenance Excellence. Additionally, Field Maintenance Support 4 in Decatur placed second in the National Guard Table of Distribution and Allowances component category and the 1644th Company in Rock Falls placed fourth for the medium-unit category.

Our very own Staff Sgt. Beau Detrick of Marion, with the Recruiting and Retention Command was named the regional Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) of the Year after competing against the top NCOs from six other states and placed fourth at the national-level competition.

Along with our units and Soldiers, our employers have even received some national recognition. The Department of Defense recognized Caterpillar Inc. in Peoria as the 2012 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award recipient.

The Illinois National Guard has earned a lot of accolades and we should all be proud of these accomplishments! As always, Illinois continues to lead the way by setting the standard higher and higher each year.

Illinois National Guard Soldiers, Airmen deploy

■ 708th Medical Company

NORTH RIVERSIDE – A deployment ceremony was held for approximately 45 Soldiers with the 708th Medical Company who deployed to Sinai, Egypt, July 6.

The Illinois Army National Guard Soldiers will be part of the Multinational Force and Observers (MFO). The 708th will provide a full-range of medical, dental, physical therapy and preventative medicine services to more than 1,600 personnel who are part of the MFO.

■ BEST A10

SPRINGFIELD – A deployment ceremony for the Bilateral Embedded Staff Team (BEST) A10 was held Aug. 6 at the Illinois Military Academy at Camp Lincoln in Springfield.



■ 933rd Military Police Company



Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Kassidy L. Snyder, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

Spc. William Vincent with the 933rd Military Police Company in Chicago, holds his one-week-old daughter Trista before leaving for a deployment to Afghanistan, August 8 in Chicago. His fiancée Heather is by his side.

■ 182nd Airlift Wing Security Forces

PEORIA - Thirteen members of the 182nd Security Forces Squadron spent the morning in the dining facility with members of their families before taking off to Creech Air Force Base, Nevada August 22. These individuals left for pre-deployment training before travelling to Southwest Asia in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The families were able to enjoy one another's company over breakfast. All around people laughed and smiled, tears were shed, and nearly all held their loved ones before the Airmen were out briefed by the Security Forces Squadron commander.

Illinois' top Soldiers compete for title



Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. Michael Camacho, 108th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

Staff Sgt. Beau Detrick of Marion, with Recruiting and Retention Command, crawls under a barbed wire obstacle Sept. 15 during the Illinois National Guard 2012 Best Warrior Competition at Marseilles Training Center in Marseilles.

■ Detrick awarded NCO of the Year

MARSEILLES – Staff Sgt. Beau Detrick of Marion, with Recruiting and Retention Command was named the Illinois Army National Guard 2012 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year following the Illinois National Guard's four-day 2012 Best Warrior Competition Sept. 13 to 16 at Marseilles Training Center in Marseilles.

■ Morris named Soldier of the Year

MARSEILLES – Pfc. Christopher Morris of Robinson, with the 445th Chemical Company in Shiloh, was named the Illinois Army National Guard's 2012 Soldier of the Year following the four-day Illinois National Guard 2012 Best Warrior Competition Sept. 13 to 16 at Marseilles Training Center in Marseilles.

Former C-130 Crew Chief visits 182nd

Story by Airman 1st Class Zachary Morgason
182nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

PEORIA - Mr. Christopher Schutz, a former crew chief of the C-130E Hercules that stands in the 182nd Airlift Wing Air Park, visited the base Sept. 26, and he had the tremendously rare opportunity to visit the aircraft he helped maintain nearly 50 years ago. The trip, which Mr. Schutz made with his wife, was emotional for both and it reminded everyone in attendance of the storied history of the aircraft of our unit.

In 1963, Schutz enlisted in the Air Force as a crew chief, and in 1964 he was assigned to Ching Chuan Kang Air Base in Taiwan. From that assignment, he and the crew of the C-130E, tail number 877, flew frequently into war torn Vietnam for months at a time, earning the group the title of Assault Airlift Airmen.

"From munitions, to fuel and troops, we took everything in and back out of combat to the Army and the Marines who were in country," said Schutz of his mission. "We would move entire villages, and the plane would be filled with cows, chickens, and other types of livestock."



661st Engineers return home



Soldiers compete in marksmanship match



Botswana, ILARNG combine efforts

Story by Sgt. James D. Sims
139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Mkankake Village, The Republic of Botswana – The 631st Engineer Support Company from Lawrenceville, assisted the Botswana Defense Force (BDF) engineers with a road improvement and pond restoration project near Mkankake Village in the Republic of Botswana, as part of Southern Accord 2012 (SA 12), in August.

SA 12 is an annual combined, joint exercise that brings together U.S. military personnel with counterparts from the BDF to conduct humanitarian assistance/disaster relief operations, peacekeeping operations and aeromedical evacuation to enhance military capabilities and interoperability.

“This is a five and a half mile stretch of road that leads to Mkankake Range,” said 1st Lt. Jera Muder of Riverton, the platoon leader for the road improvement project with the 631st. “Currently it is unserviceable and our goal is to complete as much of this project as we can before we have to go back to Illinois.”



Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. James D. Sims, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from the Botswana Defense Force march up the road to Mkankake Range, as the 631st Engineer Support Company of Lawrenceville, assists with improvements to the existing road used to access the range.

Soldiers assist victims of Megabus crash

Story by Sgt. Michael Camacho
Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

SPRINGFIELD - Firefighters and police officers throughout the Litchfield area came to aid the victims after a Megabus crash on Aug. 2 that killed one and injured three dozen.

Among those assisting the first-responders were two Illinois National Guard Soldiers, Cadet Casey Fay of Edwardsville, with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment in Litchfield and Pfc. Christopher Morris of Robinson, with 445th Chemical Company in Shiloh.

The two were driving from Camp Lincoln in Springfield, to their office at the Illinois National Guard's East St. Louis Readiness Center in East St. Louis when they came across the crash.

Morris said as they passed the wreck, they saw firefighters and EMTs assisting people at the scene.

“We both felt it in our gut that we should get out there and help these people,” said Morris.

Fay, a combat medic and certified EMT, helped the first responders treat the victims. Morris, who just returned from a Search and Extraction class, assisted with litters.

In Memory



Tech. Sgt. Bob Price
183rd Fighter Wing



Staff Sgt. Richard Grossnickel
244th Army Liaison Team

Illinois Guard Retirements

■ Lt. Col. Jim Robideau

SYCAMORE - After nearly 32 years of military service in the National Guard, Lt. Col. Jim Robideau of Sycamore, retired from the Illinois National Guard Aug. 31.

Robideau plans to keep busy flying, writing, and spending time with his wife and family.

■ Lt. Col. Michael Chekevdia

ROYALTON - Lt. Col. Michael Chekevdia of Royalton, Illinois Army National Guard director of family programs, retired Sept. 21 after 30 years of service in the Illinois Army National Guard.

Now that Chekevdia is retired from the Illinois National Guard he said he plans on spending more time with his family.

■ Sgt. Maj. Carol Meisner

SPRINGFIELD – Sgt. Maj. Carol L. Meisner of Athens, senior supply noncommissioned officer in charge, Illinois National Guard Joint Staff, retired Sept. 1, after 37 years of military service.

Her advice to Soldiers serving was to keep working toward education, training and a better future for our country.

Soldiers test combatives skills



Photo by U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Cassidy L. Snyder, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs

Sgt. Derrick Manson of Melvin, with the 766th Engineer Battalion in Decatur receives a low round kick from Sgt. Ardel Buchanan of Cicero with the 766th Engineer Battalion during the championship round at the third annual Adjutant General's Combatives Tournament at Camp Lincoln in Springfield, Sept. 16.

New Operations Facility opens at 182nd

Story by Airman 1st Class Zachary Morgason
182nd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

PEORIA - The new Operations Facility is now open for business, and Sept. 8, the members of the 182d stood in attendance of the dedication ceremony. This event marked the completion of a project that members of the 182d Operations Group and 169th Airlift Squadron have patiently waited for.

In attendance at the ceremony were a number of men and women responsible for funding, designing and constructing the 27,000 square foot building, including U.S. Congressman Aaron Schock, Illinois Senator Darin LaHood and Illinois Assistant Adjutant General - Army Brig. Gen. Johnny Miller.

The facility will be the new home for weapons and tactics, intelligence operations, flight planning, life support and survival equipment.

Hayes promoted to brigadier general



Cadets graduate OCS program

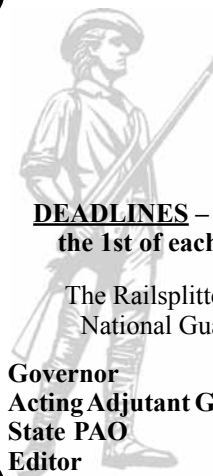
Story by Staff Sgt. Cassidy L. Snyder
Illinois National Guard Public Affairs Office

SPRINGFIELD – A crowd of more than 500 people gathered for 38 officer candidates who received their commission during the Illinois Army National Guard's Officer Candidate School (OCS) Commissioning Ceremony at Springfield High School in Springfield, Aug. 26.

"It's great to know we have a new generation of leaders stepping forward who are well trained to follow the great path our veterans have laid before us," said Maj. Gen. Dennis L. Celletti of Springfield, the Acting Adjutant General of the Illinois National Guard.

Officer candidates from the traditional OCS Class 56-11 and accelerated OCS Class 56B lifted their right hands in front of fellow servicemembers, family and friends and repeated the Oath of Office to become second lieutenants.

To meet commissioning requirements, an officer candidate completes more than 500 hours of classroom and field instruction. Candidates are evaluated on leadership abilities, physical and mental tasks and tactical exercises.



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DEADLINES – Story and photo submissions are due the 1st of each month to ngilstaffpao@ng.army.mil

The Railsplitter is the official newsletter of the Illinois National Guard authorized by the Adjutant General.

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