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**CIVIL SUPPORT TEAMS
FIND THE BAD STUFF
BEFORE IT FINDS US | PAGE 9**

ON GUARD

MARCH 2010 • VOLUME 2 • ISSUE 1

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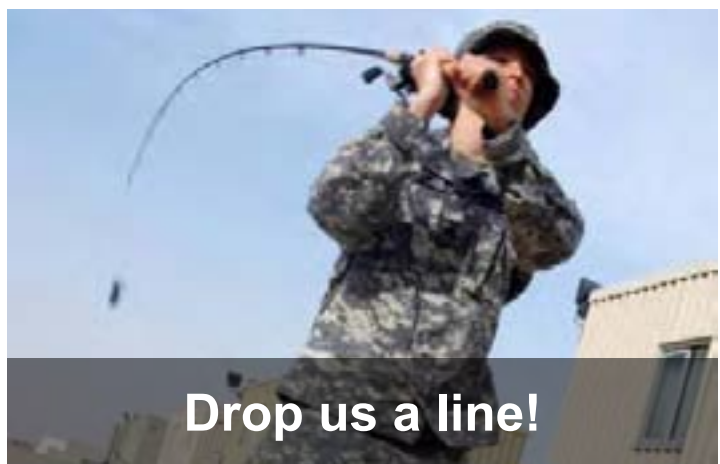
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From the Editor:

We live in a dangerous world with people who have dangerous motives and means. They will not think twice about using a deadly chemical as a weapon to attack our country. But the U.S. military has an answer—Guard's Civil Support Teams.

We decided to feature them in this issue and put them on the cover because these nimble, high-tech detectors of doomsday delivery methods aid civilian first responders should a dirty bomb strike.

Dressed in bright, oversized and crinkly chem-suits, and holding sophisticated detection equipment, they cross the "danger, do not cross" tape and determine whether that suspicious white powder is anthrax or just talcum powder. We feature two CST training stories – one a natural, yet new partnership with the Coast Guard. These teams don't just train either; their call-outs have included responses to oil refinery fires, hurricane cleanups, a presidential inauguration and a just-in-case at the Super Bowl.

The magnitude of the Haiti earthquake stunned us all earlier this year, and the American people responded with unprecedented financial generosity as well as sending some of its finest servicemembers to the disaster zone.

One of our staff, photojournalist Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy, chronicled the destruction and the difficult recovery and rebuilding by Guardmembers who are working there. He framed Air Guard services personnel with his camera carefully and with utmost dignity recovering the remains of victims of the collapsed Hotel Montana. He also photographed the rebuilding work done by an Air Guard civil engineering squadron at a children's home.

From one DoD-featured photographer to another: Army Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika embedded with his fellow Tennesseans at Buehring, Kuwait, as they trained for a mission in Iraq. He captured the training through pixels, and conditions at the isolated base through simple, yet effective words. Who said photographers couldn't write?

For your convenience and amazement, we've once again included active hyperlinks and buttons that make reading the On Guard a more interactive and informative experience. If you like what you see (or don't), drop us a line. Remember—Always Ready, Always There!

-Master Sgt. Greg Rudl

ON GUARD

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E-mail your stories and photos for possible inclusion. We prefer that photos be high-quality digital (300 dpi or more) and e-mailed to: **Editor.OnGuard@ng.army.mil**

APRIL

The National Guard celebrates
Month of the Military

CHILD

Civil Support Team

Wyoming's 84th CST trains for disaster

By Army 1st Sgt. John Dowdy
WYOMING NATIONAL GUARD

Members of the Wyoming National Guard's 84th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) conducted nine days of advanced emergency services training in March at the Texas Engineering Extension (TEEX) Service training institute in College Station, Texas.

The Wyoming contingent included members of the 84th CST, two civilian firefighters from Cheyenne and two Air National Guard members from the Wyoming Air Guard's 153rd Civil Engineering Squadron.

With help from professional staff members at TEEX, 84th members studied urban search and rescue, hazardous materials, high-angle rescue, confined space extraction, public health and weapons of mass destruction terrorism.

And they practiced it, too. For example, one morning was filled with rescue-rigging refresher training for a confined-space extraction. That was followed by additional confined-space rescue scenarios that required the team to hoist and lower patients to medical teams on the ground using tripods.

The Wyoming Guard members and civilian

counterparts also exercised on building collapses – from industrial to office to home – as well as train derailments and rubble piles.

The 84th interacted with experienced teams such as the New York City Fire Department Task Force, which recently helped save six lives within collapsed structures in Port au Prince, Haiti.

Members of the 84th said it was nice to be able to train with teams who have the “been there, done that” stamp of approval.

Actual deployments for the 84th have included operations during the Democratic National Convention in Denver, Colo., response to white powder reports at the state capitol, and identifying hazardous waste and debris mapping during the relief efforts of the Hurricane Ike aftermath.

The 84 CST is designed to assist civilian first responders during emergency situations and disasters locally, nationally and internationally.

The team is comprised of Wyoming Army and Air National Guard service members and can rapidly deploy to suspected or actual terrorist attacks, natural disasters and other emergency situations in support of local first responders.

-Dowdy is the first sergeant for the 84th CST



CSTs were there for...



... a **chemical incident** at Camp Williams, Utah, March 25, 2010, that resulted in 11 employees being sent to the hospital for treatment. Utah's 85th conducted a sweep of the building to identify the suspected source of the symptoms.

...the recent **Super Bowl XLIV** at Mi-

ami's Sun Life Stadium. Florida's 44th CST was on the ground and poised to support civil authorities.



...the **people of Salem,**

Oregon, to survey the scene after evidence of bomb making materials was found there in February 2010.

... **New Year's Eve celebrations** in New York. New York's 2nd CST stood ready to assist as an estimated million people partied in Times Square.



... an **anthrax scare** at the University of New Hampshire's Durham campus in December 2009.

The 12th CST played a crucial role in identifying a potentially lethal strain of anthrax. It detected traces of gastrointestinal anthrax at the United Campus Ministry Center there. It provided on-scene support to include entry teams, a mobile lab and decontamination operations. It collected 46 samples from African drums used inside the

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center. Two yielded positive results. A third positive sample came from an electrical outlet.

... a **massive fire at a refinery** near San Juan, P.R., in October 2009 to monitor air quality.

6 ... **Hurricane Ike** after it struck southeast Texas in September 2008. Texas' 6th and South Dakota's 82nd CSTs were directed to provide environmental quality support. The units helped identify substances that washed ashore along

the coast or had been displaced on the mainland, and advise civilian authorities on substance disposal.



... **the Ricin scare in Las Vegas** in February 2008. Nevada 92nd CST received their first real-world opportunity to use

their military training and expertise at this potential weapon of mass destruction incident when an unknown substance was discovered in a Las Vegas hotel suite.

CST FACT SHEET

- Identify Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear agents and substances, assess current and projected consequences, advise on response measures and assist with requests for additional support

- Operations mandated by state

- Receive more than 600 hours of high-tech training by agencies such as Federal Emergency Management Agency, Departments of Energy and Justice, and the Environmental Protection Agency

- 57 CSTs are located in each state and U.S. territory and Washington D.C.; two in California, New York and Florida

- 55 certified CSTs, remaining two in certification program during FY10.

- Under control of the governor, alert and on standby 24/7/365

- Deployable within 90 minutes (advance team); main body deployable within three hours

- Operates high tech equipment including a specialized/secure communications vehicle (Unified Command Suite), and a mobile analytical laboratory system with a full suite of chemical, biological, and radiological analysis equipment

More

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ON GUARD

aining forges partnership with rd and U.S. Coast Guard

lt. Thomas Kielbasa
GUARD

by land or by sea. And the
– the Guard's Civil Support
erate in both environments.
or a recent training exercise
the Florida National Guard
ng Florida's coastline.
Guard's 44th CST traveled
n Mayport near Jacksonville
oon training and exchanging

ST – all experts in the detec-
diological and nuclear mate-
d on their CST mission and
red a ship was contaminated
ast Guard in turn instructed
chniques for boarding mari-

44th CST's commander, said
was just the start of an im-
nip between the two agencies.
nning of a much more robust
ust at the tactical level at this
e would get our detection
a board (a ship) to do that

in maritime operations is
coastline of more than 1,100
d to be prepared for any mis-
hemical or terrorist threat.
coastline as we've got, it
ative thinking to think up a
," he added.

on the Guardsmen practiced

boarding techniques of several different Coast Guard ships,
from small inflatable rafts to a 175-foot cutter.

Lt. Cmdr. Mark Kuperman, Incident Division
Management chief for U.S. Coast Guard Sector Jackson-
ville, said the purpose of the boarding training was to give
the CST members a sense of how to move themselves and
their detection equipment from one ship to another while
at sea or in the river.

"They need to be able to operate in that maritime
environment," he said. "If they can do it with our ships that
are smaller, they won't have a problem doing it on a larger
vessel."

Kuperman, who observed all the training and of-
fered his expertise on maritime operations to the CST, said
he hoped the exercise would continue to foster a strong
relationship between the National Guard and the U.S.
Coast Guard.

"The ability that the 44th brings is not just as a
National Guard component, but they are also linked into
the state of Florida," he said. "So, for an emergency re-
sponse organization like the U.S. Coast Guard, this brings
a tremendous amount of versatility in that we're able to tie
in to both state and federal partnerships simultaneously in
working with the 44th."

Boatswain's Mate Justin Pickler, who delivered the
44th CST members by boat to the larger ships at the Coast
Guard station, said it was just a good opportunity for his
team to meet the civil support team and learn about their
mission.

"It's always nice training with other agencies," Pick-
ler said. "(We see) how they do things on their side of the
house, and they see how we do things on our side of the
house."

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51st	Michigan	51st	84th
45th	Tennessee	45th	84th
35th	West Virginia	35th	84th
14th	Connecticut	14th	84th
21st	New Jersey	21st	84th
42nd	North Carolina	42nd	84th
53rd	Indiana	53rd	84th
54th	Wisconsin	54th	84th
32nd	Maryland	32nd	84th
102nd	Oregon	102nd	84th
47th	Mississippi	47th	84th
85th	Utah	85th	84th
92nd	Nevada	92nd	84th
72nd	Nebraska	72nd	84th
13th	Rhode Island	13th	84th
33rd	District of Columbia	33rd	84th
31st	Delaware	31st	84th
94th	Guam	94th	84th
83rd	Montana	83rd	84th
81st	North Dakota	81st	84th
12th	New Hampshire	12th	84th
22nd	Puerto Rico	22nd	84th
82nd	South Dakota	82nd	84th
23rd	U.S. Virgin Islands	23rd	84th
15th	Vermont	15th	84th
	Wyoming		84th

FY2001

FY2004

FY2005

Haiti Earthquake

The Guard's participation in Operation Unified Response



Local residents walk past a building in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, March 12, 2010, damaged in the January earthquake. Members of the 118th Civil Engineering Squadron provided structural assessments of many buildings in Port au Prince as a way to reassure local residents that the buildings are safe to enter. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy)

Connecticut Airmen recover remains at collapsed hotel

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy
NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

The earthquake that rocked this city left many of its structures damaged or destroyed, including one landmark that many say represented a sense of stability within a disordered city.

The Hotel Montana, a four-star hotel where diplomats, dignitaries and other world leaders often stayed, collapsed during the Jan. 12 earthquake trapping many of its guests.

A few made it out alive, and the task of

finding and identifying those who didn't fall to a variety of organizations, including search and recovery teams from France, Mexico, Canada and members of the U.S. military.

"We all volunteered to come here, but we had no idea what we would be doing," said Tech. Sgt. Bambi Putinas, a member for the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing. "In the back of our minds, we all thought possibly oratory affairs," she said.

Her job in the wing's services flight encompasses not only personnel issues, food services and lodging, but also mortuary affairs.

Their mission would be to assist with the preliminary identification of remains, making sure they got back home safely, including any articles, luggage, personal effects.

"It was hard," she said. "Sometimes you could actually put a face with a name or an article or something that was inscribed."

To Tech Sgt. Chris Jones, also with the 103rd, it was an opportunity to provide a sense of closure to the grieving family mem-

bers. "We were sending them home."

"Some people wanted to go out every day, no matter what," said Putinas. "You think that you're going to find somebody one day and you just keep on searching hoping to find someone."

Though it is part of the services mission set, mortuary affairs is not a skill that unit members use on a regular basis.

"It was a lot of nerves the first time we went out there," said Jones.

Unit members also relied on each other for support during the recovery operations.

"We kept an open-door policy and set rank aside if anybody needed to talk or had any questions," said Jones, who added that there were briefings and other opportunities for those at the site to discuss or work through any issues.

"We're a pretty strong group to begin with," said Putinas.

Jones recalled the day the remains of an Air Force officer were recovered.

"They said he was still in his uniform," said Jones. "His body was covered, and he was moved out of the rubble and all of us stopped working and we went to attention and saluted as he was moved past us. It was our way of paying final respects to him."

The unit wrapped up the mission in late March.

"I think I'll be telling my family members about the team I worked with," said Putinas. "And how great it was to work with the Army, the Navy, the French, the Canadians, and how people from all aspects of life could come together for one mission, in a country that none of us ever thought we would come to, and pull together and do a mission that needed to be done."



On the ground First-hand accounts of the Haiti devastation

"There was a humanitarian mission before the earthquake and there will be one long after."

- LT. COL. CRAIG BRADFORD, commander of the 118th CES in Nashville, Tenn., and commander of the 24th Expeditionary CES in Port au Prince, Haiti. He arrived Jan. 29

"We were at the north end of the airport, and it was nothing but tall grass. And we came in with our heavy equipment and leveled the place. We put up tents and then our shower and laundry and built it up to as you see it today."

-STAFF SGT. OSCAR TREVINO of the 190th Civil Engineering Squadron (Kansas Air National Guard) was with his unit in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as part of its two weeks of annual training when the quake struck

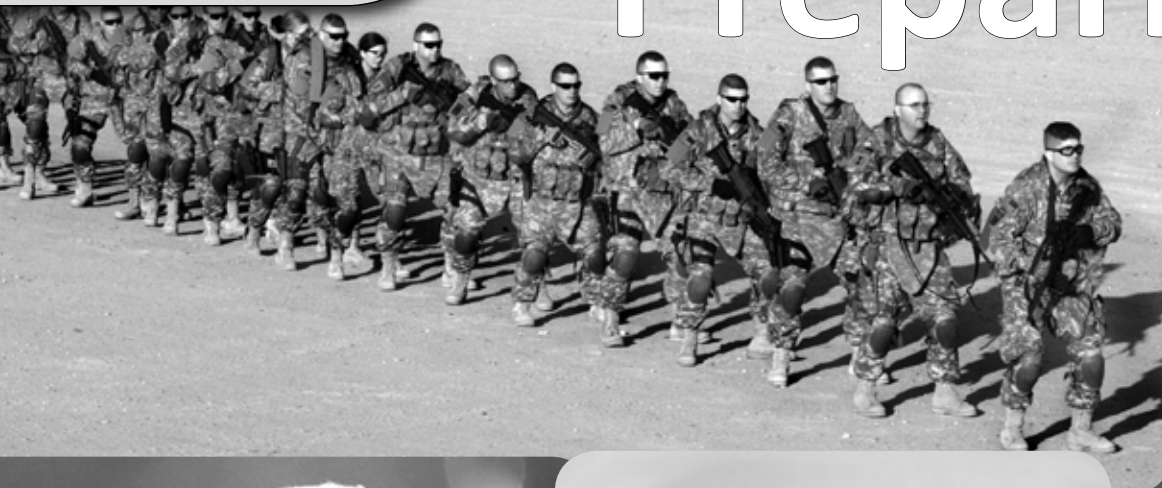
"His body was covered, and he was moved out of the rubble and all of us stopped working and we went to attention and saluted as he was moved past us. It was our way of paying final respects to him."

- TECH. SGT. CHRIS JONES, a member of the services flight for the Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Airlift Wing tasked to recover remains from the rubble of the collapsed Hotel Montana

"When we arrived at the Port-au-Prince airport, we found that there was only one guy controlling everything. This guy provided the air traffic control and the ground control on where the incoming aircraft would park."

-LT. COL. KEN PECORARO, a 35th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron pilot, assigned to the Ohio Air National Guard's 179th Airlift Wing.

Preparing for



combat is ...



When a photographer has a name like Klika, you expect a lot. Well, DefenseLink.mil-featured Army Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika delivers. He spent time with his own—Tennessee National Guard Soldiers assigned to 1st Platoon, Regimental Troops Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment—as they participated in a grueling, three-day, live-fire course of Advanced Marksmanship Training at Camp Buerhing, Kuwait, Feb. 14, 2010. The training will prepare them for a deployment to Iraq. During the course, the Soldiers were taught advanced room clearing, mounted and dismounted firing techniques and how to properly secure VIP's from one location to the next. This is the unit's second tour to Iraq in five years.

More >>>>>>>

with the Tennessee Army National Guard

By Army Staff Sgt. Russell Lee Klika
TENNESSEE NATIONAL GUARD

Night gives way to daylight as the sun, with its lurid, red glow, creeps over the eastern horizon. Once it pulls itself over the edge of the earth, it travels on an upward ark in the sky, fading from red to yellow.

Spin yourself 360 degrees and you'll see a surrounding cloud at all points of the compass, hanging like a pall where land and sky come together. The pall could lead one to believe it is a heavy fog in the distance, but there is no moisture in this fog. No need to worry about rain. It's not likely to happen, but an unexpected dust storm could sweep in at any moment.

Promptly at 6 a.m., those still asleep are treated to the sound of reveille played over the base loudspeaker. One would have to be near deaf to sleep through it.

"Welcome to Camp Buehring" reads the sign at the base's entry check-point.

Camp Buehring is the overseas starting point for Soldiers of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard. It's one of the last combat units deploying to Iraq as the United States begins to withdraw its forces.

This brown and gray oasis in the desert is also many Soldiers' introduction to the harshness of the Middle East and the Third World.

The land here lies as flat as a cookie sheet and as barren as the moon. Apart from spiders, flies and a lonely cricket, the only wildlife seen inside Camp Buehring are two sparrows and a rumor of a mouse in the sleep tent.

Buehring is initially a welcome change of venue for most Soldiers of the 278th. Arriving around Feb. 17, a plane load of troops was

fleeing a damp and cold southern Mississippi where days before two inches of snow had fallen.

Here, the temperature is a pleasant 75 degrees. Two days later the newbie's begin to suffer buyer's remorse as a mild dust storm creeps over, under and around them, enchanting them for the next three days.

Up-tempo

Camp Buehring is also where U.S. forces get some of the most realistic training in the world. Soldiers who attend the advanced combat lifesaver course come away shaking their heads in awe.

Combat lifesavers are not medics, but ordinary Soldiers trained to do the extraordinary; treat life-threatening wounds, stabilize the wounded and keep them alive for evacuation.

Staff Sgt. Kenneth McCormick said his hands were shaking as he went through the course. "The training was as close to real as you could get without having a live subject to work on," he said.

Spc. Jason Horn described the course as follows: "Imagine yourself in the dark with a strobe light flashing. You hear the screaming [loud sound effects] of seriously wounded, breathing, bleeding dummies with eyes that blink. These mock humans count on you to stop their bleeding, bandage their wounds or open a collapsed lung. The sound of weapons firing surrounds you and the clock is running because you hear the sound of the medevac helicopters coming."

There is a vast improvement in medical care in this war from previous wars. One out of every three 278th ACR Soldiers is CLS-qualified.

"Our combat lifesavers are trained more realistically, they are better equipped to treat life-threatening injuries and we have 1,200 CLS-qualified personnel throughout the regiment and that is a phenomenal number," said Maj. Steven Turner, the 278th ACR's chief of



sun d o w n d at Camp Buehring

Operations.

The 278th ACR also trained on various live-fire weapons ranges. One is the dismounted close-quarter range that stresses quickness, split-second decision making and trust in your wing man.

Sgt. John (Andy) Parker and Staff Sgt. Keith Primavera talked about the ranges and techniques taught to them by former elite military personnel.

"The scenario is inside an Iraqi home. As you sweep through clearing each room, targets will pop up as either innocents or insurgents. It allowed us to put our training into action. We had to make quick decisions and make the right decision," said Parker.

Primavera added, "The training also brought out the trust and confidence you have to have for the Soldiers beside and behind you. You know they're going to cover their area and your back."

Down-tempo

Not all of the 3,300 soldiers in the regiment go north to Iraq at once, but rather in piecemeal.

The 278th Soldiers who have completed training at Camp Buehring and await transportation call it "hurry up and wait."

Camp Buehring has been improved since the 278th traveled through here back in 2004. It offers amenities such as a movie theater, wireless internet, first-class dining facilities, fitness centers, fast food and a 24-hour coffee shop.

When not training, Soldiers find ways to pass the time by conventional methods such as card playing or surfing the net; other times, unconventionally.

Master Sgt. James Grigsby, Regimental M2 Bradley Master Gunner, said that when "Joe" (slang for Soldier) has too much time on his hands, he gets in trouble. "He will start looking around for something

to do and if not kept busy he will start saying 'watch this.' Trouble almost always follows."

While "chilling out," members of the regiment have participated in two, 5-kilometer races. Regimental Headquarters Troop's Pfc. Ashanti' Short finished third in the women's event and Spc. Jason Norton placed second in the men's event.

Soldiers at Camp Buehring also have access to the United Services Organization. They have a unique program called "United through Reading." According to Staff Sgt. Jim Kritikson, a Soldier reads a book while being videotaped by the USO. The USO then sends the book and the DVD to the Soldier's home where their child can watch and listen while they look at the same book. Kritikson and Staff Sgt. Tim Sather both say they took advantage of it.

Some Soldiers just find a shady spot to hang out with a make-shift seat and chit-chat the hours away. Command Sgt. Maj. John Cartwright of 3/278th ACR said that "he was boxing up boredom to send home."

The laundry is taken by a guy from Pakistan and a dude from Bangladesh. Some mornings, when business is slow, they can be seen playing cricket.

The food at Camp Buehring is good and there's plenty of it, and the dining facility serves four meals a day. The food is served by and international staff that would make the United Nations proud.

Indians and Pakistanis, Hindu and Muslim, stand amiably side-by-side serving meals along with servers from Indonesia, Philippines, Nepal and Bangladesh. They dress in black slacks, white shirts, black vests and white cafeteria hats.

Now, the day is done. It is an hour before sunset. As the sun sets in the west, the thick pall obscures the bright ball to the point that it can be observed without squinting. Slowly, day turns into night. 🏠

Check out Klicka's portfolio: www.defense.gov/home/features/military_photographers/klicka/



Sgt. Chance D. Ragsdale of 2nd Platoon, 211th Engineer Company (Sappers), South Dakota Army National Guard, waves a truck through a traffic control point in Paktika Province, Afghanistan.



Consistent Stability

South Dakota Soldiers provide comforting presence in eastern Afghanistan

Story & photos by
Army Sgt. Jon E. Dougherty
MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD

For National Guard units operating in some of Afghanistan's meanest regions, sometimes – like back home – just being a presence is enough.

It's enough, for instance, to provide reassurance to citizens, while at the same time sending a strong message to the enemy, that America and its military are committed to creating a long-term, stable environment in this war-torn country.

So it isn't surprising that the mission of South Dakota's 2nd Platoon, 211th Engineer

Company (Sappers) was all about providing reassurance on its latest mission here in eastern Afghanistan.

Normally a route clearance team whose primary purpose is to hunt improvised explosive devices (IEDs), the chief danger to U.S., NATO and Afghan forces, the Punishers – as they are called – took on a different challenge this time.

On this day 2nd Platoon would conduct what is often termed a "presence patrol" – a task designed to demonstrate visibility, both to Afghan civilians and to the insurgent enemy, for the purposes of providing security and, in no small measure, confidence. Instead of exclusively searching for IEDs, the Punishers set up a traffic control point (TCP) to look

for known insurgents and illicit weapons and bomb-making materials.

It's not a mission they have done very often, but it is an assignment that is no less important to the overall stability of a south-west Asian nation long accustomed to war and violence.

"We are in a direct support role so setting up at TCP is not something we typically do," said 1st Lt. Chris Long, 2nd Platoon leader.

Nevertheless, Long said, just having a regular presence is an important and "effective" tactic to help foster self-assurance among the local population that U.S. and NATO forces, working with the Afghan national government, are committed to providing the

“We try to build relationships in the villages that we frequent, so they understand we are here to help the Afghan government provide security and services to the population”

-1ST LT. CHRIS LONG, 2ND PLATOON LEADER

kind of security that is necessary to construct an environment of self-reliance.

“We try to build relationships in the villages that we frequent so they understand we are here to help the Afghan government provide security and services to the population,” Long said.

That strategy was evident the moment Long and his men set up TCPs at either end of their convoy.

Sgt. 1st Class Jon Albers and his men were as concerned about reassuring local Afghan motorists the U.S. patrol was there to help them as they were about making sure none of the vehicles or their occupants posed any threat to the convoy or the nearby village.

Mindful of the bone-chilling cold winds blowing across barren, flat plains flanking the roadway, for example, Sgt. Chance D. “Rags” Ragsdale and Spc. Josh M. Krumm suggested closing the open doors of one vehicle after it had been thoroughly examined, in order to keep an Afghan mother and her infant warm while the Guardsmen talked to her husband.

And during each vehicle stop, Albers always made sure the Afghan interpreter working with the platoon asked drivers and passengers if they were having any problems or issues in their villages that the national government should be aware of, including – but not limited to – security and infrastructure problems.

Finally, with each vehicle the Punishers were mindful to thank drivers and occupants for their cooperation before handing out solar-powered radios as well as government literature that explained President Hamid Karzai’s administration and its efforts to improve the country.

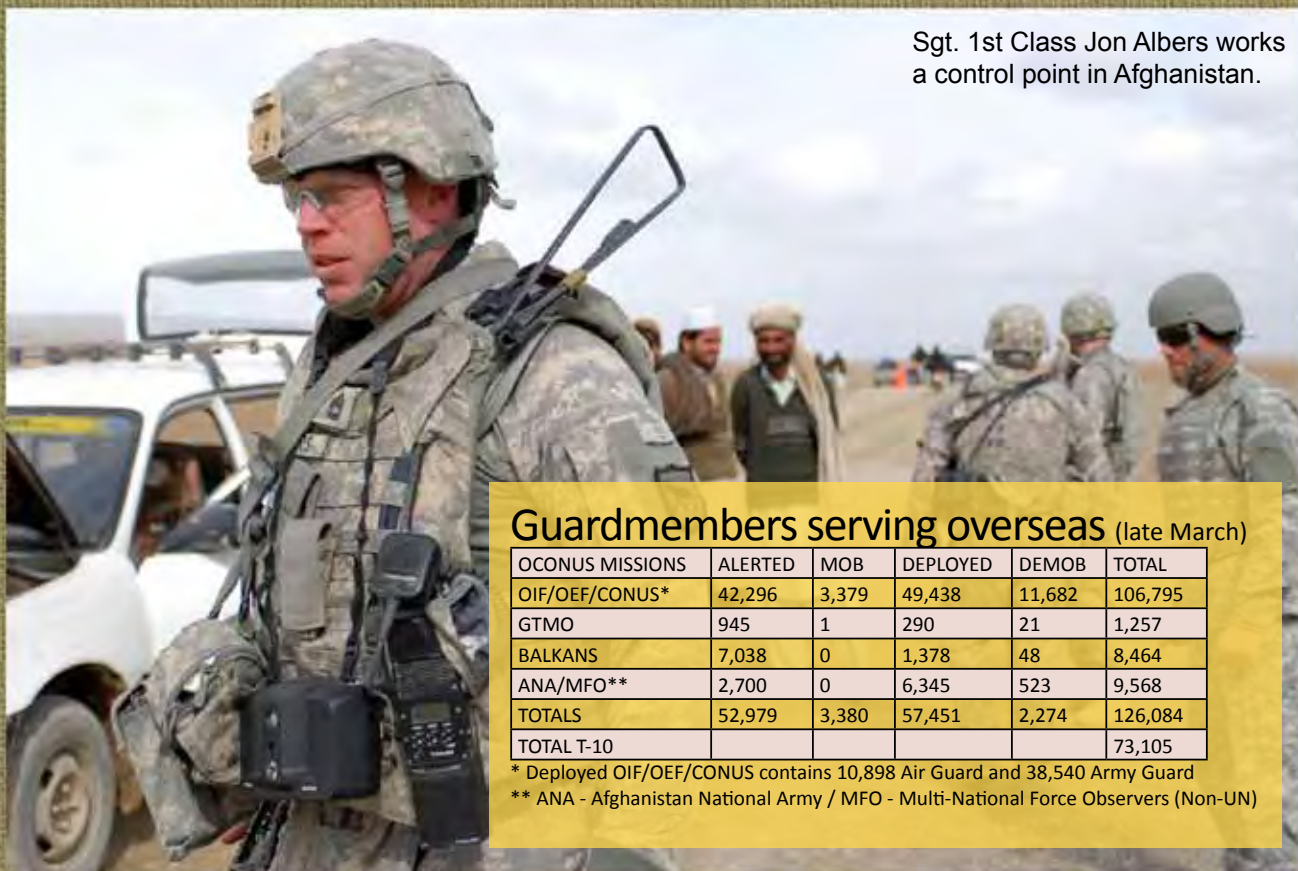
Small gestures, indeed, but big enough, it is hoped, to have the potential to carry great weight among a skeptical population.

In a country where generations have grown up knowing only war, no one is more aware than Afghans that there are no guarantees of a better life – and it wouldn’t matter if someone were promising such a thing, not many Afghans would believe it.

Here, actions speak louder than words, especially when so many words for generations have been little more than empty promises. But as long as everyday Afghans are seeing legitimate efforts by units like the 211th to improve their lot in life, they will not only begin to believe in U.S. and Afghan national resolve, they will begin to believe in their own future as well.

And that will bode well for the forces aligned against extremism.

Consistent stability has a way of producing that kind of optimism.

Sgt. 1st Class Jon Albers works a control point in Afghanistan.

Guardmembers serving overseas (late March)					
OCONUS MISSIONS	ALERTED	MOB	DEPLOYED	DEMOB	TOTAL
OIF/OEF/CONUS*	42,296	3,379	49,438	11,682	106,795
GTMO	945	1	290	21	1,257
BALKANS	7,038	0	1,378	48	8,464
ANA/MFO**	2,700	0	6,345	523	9,568
TOTALS	52,979	3,380	57,451	2,274	126,084
TOTAL T-10					73,105

* Deployed OIF/OEF/CONUS contains 10,898 Air Guard and 38,540 Army Guard
 ** ANA - Afghanistan National Army / MFO - Multi-National Force Observers (Non-UN)

味方 = ALLY

South Carolina trains with Japanese Army in Exercise North Wind

By Army Spc. Brad Mincey

SOUTH CAROLINA NATIONAL GUARD

With tired feet, sore backs and weary hearts, South Carolina Soldiers wrapped up Exercise North Wind 2010 at the Ojojibara Maneuver Area in Sendai, Japan, and headed home.

"I wish we had more than two weeks to train with the Japanese Army," said Sgt. 1st Class Sammie Robertson, whose sentiments were echoed by many of his fellow Guardmembers assigned to the 1-118th Combined Arms Battalion (CAB).

"Japan is our ally. They are on our side and on our team. This deployment allows me to get my Soldiers out of the same routine and provides some adventure for them," said Lt. Col. Michael Krell, the battalion commander.

In addition to receiving essential cold-weather training from the Japanese, U.S. Soldiers shared their knowledge of nuclear, biological and chemical warfare survival training and combat lifesaving. Many of the Guardmembers also exchanged patches and rank insignia with Japanese soldiers.

An exchange of cultures happened as well, with Guardmembers visiting a local Buddhist temple and enjoying a local Japanese restaurant. Most agreed there was so much more they wanted to see and explore during their time in Japan.

"By building these relationships, if we are ever on the battlefield together, we will know each other's capabilities and can say we've trained with these guys and know what they can do," said Krell.

"This will help build trust with our militaries because you never know when we are going to be on the battlefield together," said the battalion's Command Sgt. Maj. Roger Watson.

Watson said the cold weather training was one of the biggest benefits of the mission and on past deployments they saw strong variances in temperature.

Another important aspect of the training consisted of a company movement to contact. The Soldiers moved in a coordinated attack with

the Japanese Army and took out an enemy. Each element had its own type of formation; the Americans used a "wedge" formation where the Japanese used a "hishigata" (diamond) formation. The basic idea was the same – move from one point to the next while keeping a secure perimeter.

Krell said the movements gave them an opportunity to work through the language barrier and although their techniques may be a little different, the goals are the same. He added many Soldiers felt the effects of the foot movements on their knees, using bandages and pain medication.

"It is a totally different animal than doing regular woodland-type training in the spring- or summer-time," said Spc. Billy Hanby, rifleman and Bradley fighting vehicle driver. "You have to make sure you are drinking a lot of water because even though you don't sweat as much, you have to keep hydrated."

Some friendly competition was also held between the two forces. One day, there was a marksmanship competition where Soldiers shot 10 rounds at 300 meter targets in less than 25 seconds. In the evening, colorful origami shuriken (paper ninja stars) were thrown at targets for prizes.

"Operation North Wind was one of the best short exercises I have ever participated in," said Watson. "We packed every day with something to do. Our Soldiers will take this experience in Japan with them for the rest of their lives."



Top: Sgt. Michael Johnson provides security during patrol-movement training on Ojojibara Maneuver Area, Sendai, Japan. Middle: Infantryman instruct Japanese soldiers on the use and technical characteristics of the M-203 grenade launcher. Right: Soldiers clear a trench during the conclusive phase of a company-level simulated attack. Far right: A Soldier provides supporting fire. (Photos by Sgt. Roberto Di Giovine)



Other states training with Japan...

➡ Soldiers from the **NEW YORK** Army National Guard's 42nd Infantry Division deployed to northern Japan for a battle simulation exercise called Yama Sakura late last year. **COLORADO**'s 169th Fires Brigade participated as well.

➡ **NEW YORK**'s 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, participated in Exercise Orient Shield in the fall with Japanese troops for a simulated combat field training exercise.

➡ The **ALASKA** Air National Guard trained two members from the Japanese Air Self-Defense Force in January on air refueling operations on the HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter.

➡ **CALIFORNIA** Air Guard members from the 129th Rescue Wing teamed up for refueling training with Japanese pilots at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., in December 2009.



Spotlight

"Our Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen are absolutely the most patriotic, the most dedicated, the most committed young men and women that I have seen in my 35 years of service."

GEN. CRAIG R. MCKINLEY
Chief of the National Guard
Bureau

Sgt. 1st Class Mark Wanner

The Ohio Army National Guard **Special Forces medical sergeant** stood unassumingly on a stage Feb. 6 in the Ohio Statehouse atrium to receive the Silver Star Medal—the nation's third highest medal for valor in combat. Despite the season's worst snowstorm, several hundred people, including his fellow Green Berets from the **Columbus-based Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group**, Family members, friends and dignitaries traveled to Central Ohio from as far away as Utah to attend the event. Wanner earned his medal for actions during a firefight last May when he saved the life of a fellow Green Beret. "I was just the closest person to him that day. The real heroes are the whole team, our Afghan counterparts," he said. "The whole team's a hero because everyone did their part." Ohio's governor and adjutant general presented Wanner with the medal. It is the first such award for an Ohio Guard member since the Korean War.



1st Lt. Justin Abel

This **software engineer** is deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, working as a computers and communications specialist. "This position requires a background in information technologies and communication systems," he said. "My civilian employer provides me with great experience I can bring to Kosovo to help our team." Back home in Fargo, N.D., he works at Microsoft Corporation. "I miss my job and the amazing people I work with at Microsoft. I am fortunate to have the opportunity to work with great people in both my civilian career and my military career."



Senior Airman Joshua Wolff

Once the alarm sounds, this Airman must be fully geared-up and heading to his truck within 60 seconds ready to leave the station. As a **crash and fire rescue firefighter** with the **122nd Fighter Wing** of the **Indiana Air National Guard**, he's no stranger to emergency response. Currently deployed with the **388th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron** in Southwest Asia, Wolff said staying vigilant and flexible is a natural part of his work life and one he takes seriously, especially on his first deployment. "This is a very physical job," he said. "You have to be ready to work no matter what hour of the day; and when called upon, perform your job without hesitation."





Capt. Mark Viau

He's a **public affairs officer** for Utah's 101st Information Operations Flight by day, and an **aspiring actor** by night. He's being cast in his first leading role in a full-length feature film entitled "Diva Force," which is scheduled for release in Fall 2010. "As a traditional Guardsman, there is flexibility between acting and Guard duty," said Viau about trying to balance the two careers.



Spc. Monica Beltran

As the Guard's top combat-decorated women, this **Virginia Soldier** recently shared her experiences about the challenges and accomplishments of women in military service during a National Women's History Month event in Washington D.C., in March. She was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with Valor device for her service in Balad, Iraq, in 2005. During her deployment, she said male Soldiers were not comfortable with women serving with them in combat. That may have changed when her convoy came under attack from insurgents wielding improvised explosives, small-arms and grenades. Beltran steadfastly manned her machine gun throughout the firefight while wounded with another Soldier dying. "They did not accept me as being a gunner, but that day I showed them that a female could do just as much as a male, and maybe better."



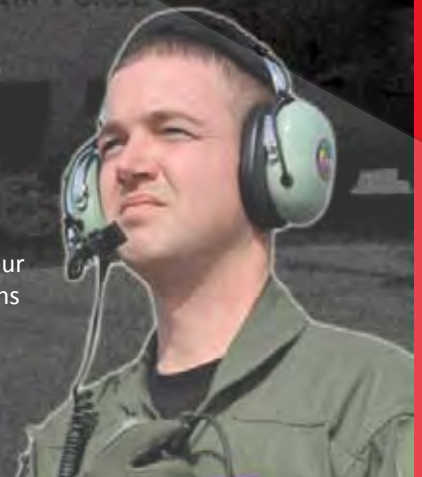
Maj. Tammy Barlette

She became the first **Remotely Piloted Aircraft pilot** from the reserve component to graduate from the prestigious Weapons Instructor Course in December. Barlette, from the **Arizona's 214th Reconnaissance Group**, completed the course in 5 1/2 months. The Weapons School, regarded as the Air Force's premier weapons and tactics training program, provides graduate-level instructor academic and flying courses. "I've been through a lot of training, but nothing as difficult as this," said Barlette, a former A-10 pilot who left active duty to fly MQ-1 Predators over Iraq and Afghanistan full time with the Guard.



Tech. Sgt. Micah T. Collins

Not only can he organize palettes on a C-130 Hercules, this **loadmaster** from the **Louisiana's 159th Fighter Wing** can handle an academic load. He received the John L. Levitow Award at NCO Academy from the I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base in Knoxville, Tenn, Feb. 11, 2010. The award goes to the top of the class and is voted on by fellow classmates, teachers and staff. "Professionally, I learned techniques and gained practical experience in managing the Air Force's most valuable assets, our Airmen," said Collins. "Personally, I learned about my limitations and strengths."



Two schools ▷ One goal ▷

I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training & Education Center▷

▷ Make you a professional▷

National Guard Professional Education Center▷

TEC: a gateway to career advancement

By Air Force Master Sgt. Mavi Smith

The I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center here has provided leadership training to service members for more than 40 years and while Air National Guard is in its name, this center is all about educating the total Air Force.

Since its inception in 1968, the Training and Education Center has provided a shared common academic experience for service members and more.

Located at McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base near Knoxville, Tenn., the Training and Education Center was named in honor of the first director of the Air National Guard, Maj. Gen. I.G. Brown.

From modest beginnings in a gymnasium and barracks inher-

ited from a long-gone Air Force fighter squadron, the Training and Education Center is now a modern, student-centered campus with classrooms, dormitories, athletic center, and dining hall all within a short walking distance of each other.

More than 4,200 service members pass through the doors of this campus each year. They attend a variety of courses ranging from one to six weeks that include enlisted professional military education, skill enhancement training courses, and distance learning programs.

THE PAUL H. LANKFORD ENLISTED PROFESSIONAL MILITARY EDUCATION CENTER

The Lankford Center is one of five Air Force enlisted profes-



PEC: a nationally renowned military training institute

The Lavern E. Weber Professional Education Center, located at Camp Robinson in North Little Rock, Ark., is the national training center for the Army National Guard.

The Professional Education Center (PEC) has been a full-service training and conference facility since 1974. It's named former National Guard Bureau chief, Army Lt. Gen. Lavern E. Weber.

Over the past quarter of a century, PEC has undergone changes to its leadership, staff, facilities, training methodologies, and conference support. Its mission is committed in providing "excellence in education to the total force." At the heart of the Professional Education Center are the training centers:

- GED Program
- Human Resources and Readiness Training Center
- Information Technology Training Center

- Installations, Logistics & Environmental Training Center
- ESC Training Center
- Organizational Readiness Training Center
- Resource Management Training Center
- Strength Maintenance Training Center

Camp Robinson is home to the PEC and its 75-acre campus consisting of 25 buildings and a total staff of approximately 420 military, civilian contractor personnel. It annually provides instruction to over 20,000 members of the military force.

PEC also hosts over 5,000 conferees annually from the National Guard, Army Reserve, Active Army, DoD, state and federal agencies. Some of the conferences held at PEC include the Army National Guard Senior Commanders' Conference, FORSCOM Command Readiness Program Conference and the

sional military education centers world-wide that is focused on the development of enlisted leaders.

Here, a staff of Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, and Air Force instructors serve together to train and educate the enlisted leaders of tomorrow.

Through the Airman Leadership School, the Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) Academy, and the satellite broadcast version of both programs, the Lankford Center enhances an enlisted service member's development by strengthening the ability to lead, follow, and manage while they gain a broader understanding of the military profession.

Air National Guard, Air Force Reserve, Air Force, Coast Guard, and Canadian Air Force members learn and study curriculum in the areas of the profession of arms, leadership and communication to build the skills they need for their current rank and to prepare for future responsibilities.

Some of the courses offered are:

- The five-week Airman Leadership School prepares senior airmen for positions of greater responsibility by providing many of the leadership skills required of supervisors and reporting officials.
- The six-week NCO Academy further builds upon those leadership skills by preparing technical sergeants to be professional, war-fighting Airmen who can manage and lead their units.
- The 10- and 12-week Satellite Enlisted Professional Military Education Programs are distance learning versions of the Airman Leadership School and the NCO Academy. In these courses, lessons are broadcast live over the Air National Guard's Warrior Network satellite system to students at their home stations.

Winston P. Wilson Marksmanship Competition.

PEC is on the leading edge of providing Distributed Learning Courses to all members of the National Guard. Its unique mission has allowed the means to prepare, deliver and provide the training that is necessary to train the entire military force by utilizing the latest technologies to accomplish its mission.

PEC is now able to reach the full-time reserve force through the Reserve Component Automation System and other training sites and armories through web-based training, video production, and two-way audio and video. Additionally, PEC collaborates with other schoolhouses and agencies to leverage the full spectrum of media and training delivery. Through these efforts, satellite facilities at its schoolhouse are able to provide the vehicle for training delivery throughout the world.

MISSION

To provide training and event support that enhances the readiness of the ARNG



SKILL ENHANCEMENT TRAINING

These courses provide personnel in a wide variety of career fields with current policies, guidelines, and administrative practices. They are narrow in focus, targeted to specific areas and designed to enhance job performance. They range in subject from food services, recruiting, and expeditionary medical support to safety, security, and public affairs.

The Public Affairs/Multimedia Management Seminar is a nine-day class offered three times a year. It provides public affairs personnel with needed background and training to manage a base public affairs

VISION

To be a nationally renowned military training institute known for exceptional customer service and progressive methods and technologies that exponentially converts training to experience.



STRATEGY

To use the systems approach to training and adult learning methodology, while aggressively seeking new delivery platforms.

PEC will develop and deliver adaptive, relevant, job-focused and sound educational content taught by PEC certified and qualified instructors with the intent of providing three years of experience in a five-day course. We will schedule to the fullest extent possible to train the ARNG full-time force and select part-time requirements.

PEC will continue to modernize current facilities and incorporate the latest technologies to extend training capabilities to students and attendees.

VALUES

- **Innovation:** Employing cutting edge technology, processes, and individual creativity and resourcefulness to increase value for our stakeholders and customers
- **Quality:** Continuously improving and delivering the best training, educational experience, and service



multimedia service

Like many of the other 40 skill enhancement training courses held here, the Public Affairs class has a long history at the Training and Education Center. It was created by a group of volunteers in 1984, and has trained more than 1,500 Airmen.

TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION BRANCH

To transform is to change. Transformative education is about affecting change through knowledge or skills.

The Transformative Education branch provides numerous professional and personal development courses as well as produces advanced distributive learning initiatives that reach service members worldwide.

They have created numerous advanced distributive learning products and are currently producing the Nuclear Weapons Related Materiel (NWRM) Fundamentals course for the Air Force. This course will provide a basic knowledge of NWRM management procedures and will be mandatory training for all Air Force logistics and maintenance personnel who have NWRM duties and responsibilities.

TEC TV

From the television studios at TEC TV, 1st Air Force at Tyndall AFB, Fla., and the Air National Guard Readiness Center at Andrews AFB, Md., more than 400 hours of live interactive training, education and command information are broadcast each year from the Training and Education Center to audiences worldwide.

IT'S ALL ABOUT TRAINING AND EDUCATION

From satellite television broadcasts from the TEC TV studios, to advanced distributive learning courses created by the Transformative Education branch, to traditional classroom instruction provided by skill enhancement training and enlisted professional military education instructors, the Training and Education Center is on the cutting edge of military education.

And while Air National Guard may be in its name, the I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center is all about total Air Force education and more.

More information on the Training and Education Center can be found at www.angtec.ang.af.mil.

TEC received
its 8th
Air Force
Organizational
Excellence
Award in
January

- **Integrity:** Do what is legally, morally, and ethically right
- **Results Oriented:** Staying focused on results to support PEC's mission and vision
- **Customer Focused:** Successfully anticipating and responding to the requirements of our current and potential customers
- **Teamwork:** Individuals focused on reaching shared organizational goals
- **Family Oriented:** Fostering an environment that supports and respects the internal and external PEC family

NEW COMPLEX

In early 2009, an \$18.4 million construction project broke ground at PEC that aimed to triple the capacity of those that attend the GED Plus program at PEC. Once completed (expected in early 2010), the training complex will allow for up to 7,500 students to pass through the program each

year.

The GED Plus program allows non-high school graduates to enlist in the Army National Guard with the stipulation they earn their GED prior to attending basic combat training. In order to reach that goal, those in the program attend a resident course at PEC that prepares them to complete the GED exam.

"[It] will allow us to reach out and engage a larger portion of our youth that don't complete high school, but who do have the ability to



grow, serve and make a positive contribution to our country," said Col. John Frost, commandant of PEC.



PEC visits TEC to explore collaboration opportunities

By Master Sgt. Mavi Smith

Leadership from PEC visited the I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center at McGhee Tyson ANGB in December to explore opportunities for collaboration between the two training centers.

"The Army Guard has such an established program with the PEC," said Col. Richard B. Howard, TEC commander. "So, sharing ideas with the PEC folks today on how we might be able to develop ourselves to reach and match the vision of the chief of the National Guard Bureau to expand to meet the needs of the Air National Guard and the total force... is going to help us get there."

PEC's leadership spent the day on a whirlwind tour to learn more about TEC.

The main thing we wanted to do is try and learn from each other's organizations and see where there might be some opportunities

for us to partner together to make both organizations even better and stronger," said Army Col. John M. Frost, commandant of the PEC.

PEC leadership received informative briefings from Howard and the center's Enlisted Professional Military Education, Transformative Education, and TEC TV branches. Air Force Col. Timothy T. Dearing, commander of the 134th Air Refueling Wing, also joined the group and provided an overview of the missions accomplished at McGhee Tyson and his commitment to TEC.


PEC leadership toured the campus and visited the classrooms of the 130 students attending Satellite NCO Academy Class 10-2.

"I enjoyed the opportunity to not only see the classrooms here at TEC and how you're structured, but to visit with some of the TEC students," said Army Maj. Sean Gavan, chief of operations for PEC.

During the visit, lessons learned were shared; training, planning and registration issues were discussed; and similarities between the organizations were explored. While the missions of the two organizations are different, many of the participants expressed synergies for collaboration.

"One of the synergies I see is in conference capabilities," said Frost. "And I also think there will be opportunities to do leadership training at either location that is applicable to both services."

"I actually find between the Army and the Air Guard training methodologies and the resourcing, we are very much similar," said Gavan. "I look forward to seeing how we can expand our capabilities ... in the future."

In April 2009, members of TEC and the 134th Air Refueling Wing traveled to TEC in Camp Robinson, Ark., for a similar visit. 



Hundreds gather for a welcome home ceremony for more than 250 New Jersey Soldiers in Trenton. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen)



Vermont Soldiers launch a 120mm mortar at Camp Atterbury, Ind. (Photo by John)



South Dakota Soldiers throw sandbags onto a raft for transport to flooded Red River March 25. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Theanne Tangen)



New Jersey Tech. Sgt. Barbara Har... a Dr. Seuss book to a group of elemen... Read Across America event (Photo)



ortar at fixed targets on a range
(Photo by Tech. Sgt. John Crosby)



bison, 108th Air Wing, reads
mentary students during the
(Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen)



Four F-15 Eagles from Florida's 125th Fighter Wing fly a historic flight over Sun Life Stadium for Superbowl XLIV in February 2010. It marked the first Air National Guard fly over in the history of the Super Bowl. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. Shelley Gill)



Alaska Military Youth Academy Cadet Vaise Poasa Jr. plays the snare drum during a drill and ceremony skills event in February 2010. (Photo by Army Sgt. Karima Turner)

Sisterhood

Deployment TIPS for families

- ➔ Be a good role model by demonstrating good coping techniques.
- ➔ Allow and encourage children to express their feelings and try to accept them.
- ➔ Establish rules and limits, as a family, BEFORE deployment around the issues of:
 - Consequences for disobeying family rules.
 - Money and allowances.
 - Chores and responsibilities.
 - Avoid saying, "Wait until your father/mother gets home!"
 - Be flexible enough to adjust the rules and limits as necessary
- ➔ Spend time together as a family, with each child and as a couple.
- ➔ Emphasize the importance of school:
 - Visit school before deployment and talk to teacher.
 - Leave stamped envelopes for teacher to mail progress reports, schoolwork, etc.
 - Tell your child that school is important.
 - Send cards, letters, pictures, foreign money, restaurant menus, etc to class.

Guard daughters hold first conference for teen girls

Moranda Hern

Kaylei Deakin



Nearly 100 teenage girls from throughout California gathered in March to take part in the Sisterhood of the Traveling BDUs event. (Photo by Tech. Sgt. David J. Loeffler)

By Air Force Maj. Kimberly Holman CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD

In a popular movie, "The Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants," a group of teenage girls keep in contact with each other by sharing a pair of jeans.

That theme provided the inspiration

for an idea by two California National Guard daughters, but instead of a pair of jeans, battle dress uniforms (BDU) became the shared bond between more than 100 girls.

Seventeen-year-olds Kaylei Deakin and Moranda Hern met at California first lady Maria Shriver's 2008 Women's Conference. The girls found they had many things in common, including a need to feel understood while going through the challenges that military deployments bring to families.

After more than a year of planning and organizing, Deakin and Hern brought teenage girls together from across California for a weekend in March that coincidentally marked the seventh anniversary of the beginning of the war in Iraq.

"I remember watching stories about the war in class, and people would giggle and

BENEFITS of deployments for teens

- Increased independence and self-confidence.
- Strengthened relationship with parent at home.
- Families learn to establish goals and plan together.
- Re-evaluation of rules.
- Teen and deployed parent may become closer through letters, e-mails, cards and packages.
- Teen learns about the world and world affairs.



laugh as the bombs were going off," said Kaylei, whose father left to fight in Afghanistan a few years later, when she was 13. "I was so worried ... thinking about what was going on over there."

She said her father's deployment affected her family long before and long after he left California. She felt like no one really understood the empty feeling she had inside as she watched her world change dramatically while her dad was deployed.

For the two years he was gone, Kaylei felt depressed and lonely, and she felt she needed to step up in her father's absence to provide strength beside her mother and take over in areas of sibling discipline.

When Kaylei met Moranda, they found they shared similar experiences. Moranda's father is in the Air Guard, while Kaylei's father is in the Army Guard. And at times when the girls needed their friends' support the most, the girls felt that they were very alone.

"People saw a big change in me after my dad left, and a lot of them just stopped coming around because they weren't sure of what to say or how to act around me," said Moranda, whose father deployed to Afghanistan on very short notice when she was 15. "I felt like I was just some weird person who couldn't get it together."

Realizing there were thousands of girls going through similar experiences, Kaylei and Moranda decided to form a support network and organize a first-ever conference for daughters of military members.

The girls put together a proposal and brought a presentation to Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight, who was the assistant adjutant general of the California National Guard at the time, whom the girls had met at the 2008 Women's Conference.

Kight was impressed and vowed to do everything she could to support the effort.

"The Guard provided the Sisterhood of the Traveling BDUs with the structure, and

the girls provided all the innovation, imagination and creativity," she said. "I am so proud of them for seeing this through, and what a wonderful program they have founded."

The two high schoolers raised \$30,000 through various corporate sponsors to provide an all-expenses-paid weekend for girls ages 13-17.

The conference theme was "Unite, Inspire, Lead," and girl-power was ever-present throughout the weekend. The girls arrived at the conference in semi-formal attire on the first evening for a "purple carpet" event, complete with flashing cameras and a receiving line that included Kaylei, Moranda and Kight, who is now the adjutant general of the California Guard.

The weekend included several guest speakers, including an Olympic gold medalist, a Hollywood image consultant and corporate executives. Workshops and break-out sessions brought girls together on issues ranging from self-esteem, self-image and career plans, to boys and relationships.

The venue provided a nonthreatening environment, while the sisterly support provided teens an opportunity to reach out and share stories and get to know each other.

Many of the girls discussed their fear of something happening to a parent in combat. Others shared the experience of attempting to console a worried mother while Dad is away, or knowing that one of their parents won't be able to see them go to prom or graduate from high school.

Kaylei plans to enlist in the Marines after graduating from high school in June, and Moranda has been accepted into the Air Force Academy. Many other girls at the conference also have plans to follow in their parents' footsteps.

"I hope that the girls come away from this knowing that the next time a deployment rolls around that they will be supported, and that they have a network — it won't have to be the way it's always been," Moranda said on the last night of the conference.

Kaylei and Moranda hope other teen girls will keep the "sisterhood" alive and will call upon each other for help when they need it. They plan to go national with the organization and create chapters in other states during the next year.

unite, inspire, lead

Deployment CHECKLIST for parents of teens

☒ Are you aware of the developmental milestones your teenager may be achieving? They are:

- Gaining independence and becoming more responsible.
- Trying new behaviors.
- Unpredictable - new friends, hairstyles, piercing, clothes, music, etc.
- Questioning the "status quo."
- Are aware of world issues.

☒ Do you know how does your teen typically react to stress? They may:

- Have personality changes such being moody, loud, or quiet.
- Challenge parent's ideas and way of life.
- Be very sensitive and feel misunderstood.
- Experience a drop in school performance.
- Experiment with alcohol or drugs.

☒ Have you had a family meeting to discuss the deployment?

☒ Have you told your teenager where you are going, why you are going and approximately when you will return, if known?

☒ Have you addressed any concerns your teen may have about safety?

☒ Have you made a communication plan with your teenager, provided them with your email and regular mail address, and asked them to keep in touch?

☒ Have you reminded your teen that school work is important and that you'd like to receive progress reports from them?

☒ Did you include money in your budget for phone calls, gifts/souvenirs for your teenager?

☒ Do you and your teen have a support system — people you can reach in person, by phone or email — you can turn to for assistance during the deployment?

☒ Have you avoided putting added responsibilities on your teen by not making comments such as "You're the man in the family" or "Take care of your little brother"?

uncertainty
deployment
cancer
Hodgkin's
Lymphoma

Guardsman reflects on her incredible journey

By Air Force Capt. Penny Ripperger
NORTH DAKOTA NATIONAL
GUARD

Not many people would consider themselves lucky when they get cancer. Fewer would look at their experience as an inspirational journey filled with an array of vivid memories and life lessons. And only the exceptional few would find humor in their illness.

Senior Airman Theta Olson is the exception.

She won her battle with cancer, but that's not the story here. It's how this 21-year-old overcame a life-threatening illness with spunk and dignity, never missing a moment to laugh.

The diagnosis

"I deployed to Kuwait in May. It was about my second or third week there, and I rubbed my shoulder and felt a large lump. At first I thought it must be from my gear, but it didn't hurt like a normal muscle knot, so I thought I better get it checked out," Olson said.

A physician assumed it was some sort of bug bite and gave her a week's worth of antibiotics.

"I thought the antibiotics were overkill. I'm thinking, 'I'm fine, it's just some lump. I don't need to take this,' but I took the antibiotics anyway and the lump never went away," Olson said.

Next, she was sent to a nearby Navy hospital to get an ultrasound.

"This Marine had his leg amputated. He was in a lot of pain, but the whole time he was joking with the nurse that he wanted his prosthetic leg to be turned into a 'machinegun leg' so he could go back to the fight"

"After the ultrasound the doctor told me he thought it might be lymphoma. I said 'lymp-what?' I had no idea what that even was. I thought it was some type of cold or something," Olson said.

The doctor encouraged her to be medevaced to Germany for more tests. Olson was hesitant.

"I was excited about being in Kuwait and I didn't want to go back. I had just finished my training and unpacking. I had worked hard to get to where I was and it was my time to shine," Olson said. "I think I was also in denial. I wanted to be ignorant and play it off like nothing is happening, that these people don't know me, they're just exaggerating."

She requested a second opinion, and to her dismay, the second doctor agreed that she should go to Germany for more tests. Still not completely sold on the idea of leaving Kuwait for Germany, the civil engineering commander finally convinced her to return home.

Olson was medevaced to Landstuhl, a military hospital near Ramstein Air Base in Germany. She described her experience there as "insanely awesome." Tests were performed with no lines, no waiting. It felt like VIP treatment.

She was feeling optimistic and no one thought she had cancer. She was too young, too healthy. With the exception of the lump, she had none of the signs that typical patients have. Even the medical professionals who were giving her tests expressed doubts, but soon her optimism would face its first real test.

"I was walking back from chow and I saw my doctor waiting for me by my barracks. As soon as I saw him, my heart sank. I knew he wouldn't be meeting me like this if it wasn't bad news. I was with some friends and he asked to see me alone, but I wanted him to tell me the news with my friends near me, so he did. He told me I had Hodgkin's Lymphoma and that I was about to begin an incredible

journey,” Olson said.

The trip home

Olson boarded the rotator to take her back to the United States on June 28, 2009. It would be on this flight that she would meet military members of all branches with varying degrees of injuries.

One person she remembers fondly is a Marine who sat by her.

“This Marine had his leg amputated. He was in a lot of pain, but the whole time he was joking with the nurse that he wanted his prosthetic leg to be turned into a ‘machinegun leg’ so he could go back to the fight,” Olson said.

She also remembers holding the Marine’s Purple Heart. It was the first time she had seen the medal up close. It especially struck home for her when she found out that he was her age.

“You don’t realize the impact of those who are injured until you actually see it firsthand. The nurses on those planes were incredible. They would go above and beyond to help their patients and make us as comfortable as possible throughout the flights. They weren’t helping us just because we were patients; it was because we were their brothers and sisters in arms. I will never forget that,” Olson said.

The stories of the patients on the plane ranged from tragic to funny, Olson said. She chuckled as she described her interaction with a Soldier: “When I asked him why his leg was in a cast, he said, ‘you know, Humvees ... well, they shouldn’t be taken off-roading.’”

After several days of flight, Olson finally landed at Lackland Air Force Base in San

“The drugs are literally fighting cell regeneration and that is why your hair falls out and your fingernails stop growing. But on the plus side, I didn’t have to shave my legs for months and it cleared up my complexion”

Antonio, Texas. Her parents, (retired Master Sgt.) Gordy Olson and Sheila Olson, were at the base to greet her.

“Once my mom saw me she was able to deal with it a lot better,” Olson said. Living in a military family, her mom was accustomed to the risks of deployments. “She was ready for me to come home missing a limb or even worse, but she wasn’t ready for me to come home with cancer. She wasn’t prepared for me to have to fight for my life in the U.S.”

The Cancer Lottery

Hodgkin’s Lymphoma has a 95 percent recovery rate and typically affects people in their early 20s to early 40s. Olson describes that acquiring this type of cancer is like winning the “cancer lottery” because of its high success rate.

“It affects the lymph nodes all over your body. Unlike other cancers, like breast cancer, you can’t just cut out the abnormal cells because the lymph nodes are all connected together. If you take out one cancerous lymph node, it will just come back. The only way to treat it is through chemo,” Olson said.

The normal military procedure was

for Olson to be treated at Lackland AFB over a six-month time-period. Olson wanted to come back to North Dakota for her treatment, and her Happy Hooligan family fought to get her home.

“I went to high school in Virginia, but my dad who spent most of his military career with the Happy Hooligans, talked me into moving to North Dakota and joining the Air Guard. Now, I’m so glad I did because it was unprecedented what the Wing did for me. They fought to get me here, to get me home for treatment,” she said.

Olson explained that Airmen like Senior Master Sgt. Mike Anders, of the 119th Wing Medical Group, pleaded her case by explaining that much of her treatment depends on her attitude and how she can handle the stress. Anders and others said that she would recover faster if she could come home and work at the base among her fellow Hooligans between chemo treatments.

The diligence paid off. Olson was approved to come home. She began her chemo treatments on July 9, 2009, at the Roger Maris Cancer Center in Fargo, N.D.

Treatment

Hodgkin’s Lymphoma spreads fast. Often, people who have this type of cancer do not display any physical signs until it has progressed to stage three or four, meaning that it is in multiple areas of the body.

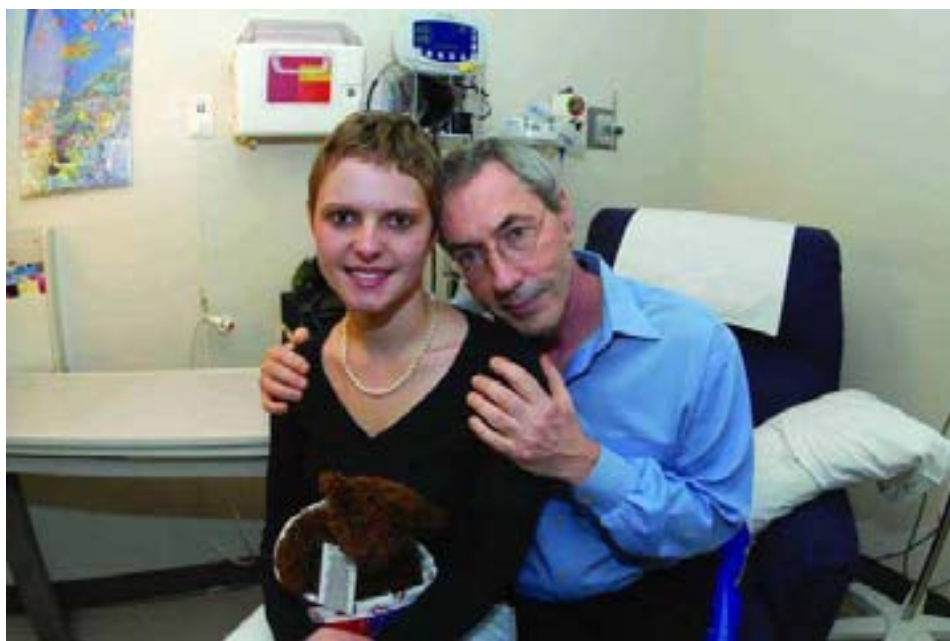
“I was lucky, because I had the noticeable lump on my shoulder. I also had a cancer spot in my chest that I was completely unaware of. Even though we caught my cancer right away, I was still already at stage two,” Olson said.

Although each case is treated uniquely based on the individual, typically patients up to 20 years old, which was Olson’s age at the time, are placed in the pediatric ward for treatment. That’s where she met her doctor, the man who would help her through the next several months with laughter and support.

“One of the first things Dr. Kobrinski told me was, ‘The object of the game is to kill the cancer before the poison (chemo treatment) kills you. But I’m really good at this, so don’t worry.’ He was funny from the start,” Olson said.

Olson described how the actual day she received the chemo treatments she felt fine. It was about a week later that the effects on her body showed.

“The drugs are literally fighting cell regeneration and that is why your hair falls out and your fingernails stop growing,” Olson said. “But on the plus side, I didn’t have to



Senior Airman Theta Olson used a positive attitude, humor and the love from family and friends like her father to overcome cancer. Courtesy photo.

shave my legs for months and it cleared up my complexion," she joked.

At one point, Olson was on 19 different medications and going in for chemo treatments several days a week. She explained that she learned a great deal about herself throughout the entire process — how a person reacts to the different drugs and situations, physically and emotionally. She also appreciated the support from her friends, family and coworkers at the Wing.

"There were days when I was so tired that I would sleep 20 hours. It took everything I had to pull myself out of bed to eat," Olson said. "I wanted to work to keep myself busy, but knowing that on the rough days that I didn't have to go into work if I didn't feel up to it was a huge relief."

Through it all, she did her best to keep her sense of humor and stay positive.

"Sure, there were sad moments. At first, I was really angry at the cancer, at my situation. But it's hard to stay mad when you're sitting in pediatrics next to a happy, bald 3-year-old who is getting chemo with you," she said.

Olson continued the treatment and was shocked by the outstanding support she received. Within her own squadron, she found comfort in the fact that two Airmen she works with recently overcame their own battles with cancer.

"By the time I was getting treatment, both of my coworkers were in remission. Knowing that they had fought this battle and won was a constant reminder that I would be

"Sure, there were sad moments. At first, I was really angry at the cancer, at my situation. But it's hard to stay mad when you're sitting in pediatrics next to a happy, bald 3-year-old who is getting chemo with you"

okay too," said Olson.

She also described the Comfort Shawl and Burden Bear that she received from the Enlisted Association. Rosie Clemenson, wife of Chief Master Sgt. Jim Clemenson and mother to Master Sgt. Erik E. Clemenson and Capt. Justin J. Clemenson, both of the 119th Wing, nominated her for the items.

"I didn't think I would at first, but I did use the Comfort Shawl and every time I looked at that bear it would remind me of all the people who were thinking and praying for me. When you have that much support, you know you're not going to fall," she said.

Another supporter, Olson's boyfriend, Senior Airman Adam Morine, a fellow Happy Hooligan, who deployed to Iraq in January of 2009, kept in contact with her throughout her treatment. She knew he was a keeper when after he saw her for the first time without any hair via video feed, he said, 'Wow, you look hot bald!' Olson laughed, "I told him he had been in Iraq too long."

Shortly after her boyfriend's return

home in August, Olson was asked to come to the center to see Dr. Kobrinski. She didn't know what to expect, she only knew that he wanted to see her right away. She brought her boyfriend along for moral support.

"I was nervous. I didn't know why he wanted to see me. I'm an optimistic person, but I also work in emergency management, so I'm envisioning and trying to prepare myself for the worst-case scenario," Olson said.

Dr. Kobrinski soon calmed her fears and told her the wonderful news that her cancer was in remission. She was cancer-free after just two cycles, two months sooner than expected.

Olson laughed. "Adam came home on a Tuesday and I was in remission by Friday, now that's a good week!"

At Morine's return home celebration the following week, people would say to Olson, "Oh you have cancer and Adam would quickly correct them and say, 'No, she HAD cancer. It's gone!' It was a good day," Olson said.

Timing is everything

After Olson went into remission, she went through two more rounds of chemo as a safety precaution, which is typical. Through it all, her thoughts often drifted back to the desert where she was first diagnosed.

"Half your heart is in the desert and half your heart is here. So when the Airmen I served with came home in October, about the time I finished my last round of chemo, it was good closure for me," Olson said.

Life is getting back to normal. Her spunk and humor are still in check. She's back at North Dakota State University, finishing her double major in emergency management and sociology for no homework, but he refused," Olson chuckled. "But I still think he's an amazing doctor."

It seems that the doctor who stood outside Olson's barracks that unforgettable day in Germany and confirmed that she had cancer was also correct that she would begin an incredible journey. Without a doubt, Olson had the journey of a lifetime in 2009, a year she will never forget.

"On New Year's Eve I was thinking about everything that has happened throughout the year. Winning Airman of the Year, my Kuwait deployment and I beat cancer ... yeah; it's been quite a year. It's been a really good year," Olson said.



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A VIEW ON LIFE A

Thirty-five years in uniform, three wars, 30 bases, 20 aircraft, 90 years worth of wisdom. Meet a Colorado National Guard living legend.

*He's strafed German troop trains in France's Saar Valley, married the woman who treated his battle wounds, stalled out in a fireball of destruction in Korea, survived 100 combat missions in Vietnam, flew 20 different aircraft, was stationed at 30 bases around the world—there's not a lot that Bill Eugene Myers, Colorado National Guard's oldest living veteran, has **not** done in his 35-year military career, except talk about it—until now.*

By Air Force Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad
COLORADO NATIONAL GUARD

Tucked away atop a hill near Bailey, Colo., resides 90-year-old Bill Eugene Myers. His house, perched on a knoll, offers a spectacular view of the Front Range foothills. Spectacular too is this veteran's longevity and experiences in three wars.

At 5 feet, 8 inches tall with a gaunt frame, Myers doesn't brag about his exploits in World War II, Korea or Vietnam. He rarely talks about them, and then only with the right company.

He answered the door for this interview dressed in a flannel shirt, blue jeans and cowboy boots – the look of a rancher.

Inside, his living room holds pictures of high adventure in flight and many books on aviation and military history. With help of that memorabilia, including die-cast metal models of fighter planes, Myers recalled the memories of wars where the objectives were clear and the rules less confining.

Military beginnings

He joined the Colorado Army Guard's 168th Field Artillery in Golden in 1938. His drill check for a private back then was \$5 – used for spending money, he said.

He had always been interested in the military growing up. After spending a good portion of his childhood on his grandparent's ranch, he became fascinated with the cavalry. Off to military school he went. Randolph-Macon Academy in Front Royal, Va., taught young Myers conformity and a highly structured lifestyle.

"I enjoyed it. It was tough. They don't have them



ND WAR



like that anymore. They hazed you and beat you when you were a freshman."

Myers graduated from the academy in 1938 and joined the Colorado Army Guard that same year while attending the Colorado School of Mines in Golden. Within two years, Myers had flunked chemistry and was flat broke. He dropped out of school, took a short hiatus from the Guard and worked in a lead, zinc and silver mine in the panhandle of Idaho for six months in order to get back on his feet financially.

"One day the Guard sent me a letter stating that if I went on active duty with them for a year, they would make me a staff sergeant," Myers recalled, who was a corporal then. And took up the offer

Myers said a Guardsman's average drill in the CONG field artillery prior to World War II consisted of drill and ceremony, classes and training on the French 75mm artillery piece at Camp George West in Golden.

"We had just been mechanized," Myers said. "When I joined I thought we were still using horses, but trucks were pulling our artillery. The world was changing."

And it was about to change in a monumental way.

A sign from the sky

Myers' unit was activated in early 1941 and put on a year's worth of orders. The unit convoyed for training to Camp Forest, Tenn., attached to the 7th Army Corps. Off base one Sunday afternoon while Myers was on a date, he heard the news that Pearl Harbor had been bombed and America was now at war.

His regiment was immediately ordered to the Philip-

pinas but due to the extensive amount of transports being sunk on their way to the islands, Myers and his fellow Soldiers ended up at Camp Roberts near Paso Robles, Calif., for a short stint before they were moved up to Camp McQuaid at Monterrey Bay, Calif.

"California thought the invasion was coming," Myers said. "We were all on alert. There were Cossack posts (sentries) on every bridge and everything was blacked out at night."

It was around this time that Myers made the switch to the U.S. Army Air Corps. The clincher came a year before while he was on maneuvers in Louisiana. He knew he wanted to fly when his truck was hit with a flour sack dropped from a circling airplane on a training bomb run. Right then he knew he was on the wrong end of things.

Myers put in his paperwork for a commission and flight school. He thought if he didn't make it through flight school, he'd end up a gunner or a maintenance troop on a ground crew, which would still be better than the field artillery.

After more than a year at flight school, Myers earned his wings as a single-engine fighter pilot and commissioned second lieutenant. It was 1943 and the air war in Europe was raging.

In January 1944, the 24-year-old Myers found himself stationed in England flying P-47s on missions over Western Europe. His missions consisted of fighter sweeps (strafing and dive-bombing ground targets) and bomber escorts.

"Anything that moved was a target – period – anything that moved," Myers said. "They didn't have all these restrictions in what you can and can't hit these days."

Myers said he had three air-to-air kills, 12 air-to-ground, two





1920: Bill Eugene Myers is born in, Ra
1938: Joins the Colorado Army Guard
1941: While training to Camp Forest,
1944: Stationed in England flying P-4
1950: Flying P-51 Mustangs with 67th
1967: Serves year in Vietnam as depu
1973: Retires as a colonel and returns
1983: Retires for good after working

Left: Bill Myers holds the photo of his original unit, the 168th Service Battery, Colorado Army National Guard. He shows off his military patch collection spanning from 1938 as a private in the field artillery. Every squadron or unit that Myers was either in or was assigned to by Staff Sgt. Aaron Rognstad)

probables (might or might have not been shot down in the air) and three damaged – all aircraft of some sort. Periodically, Myers and his fellow pilots would throw parties to celebrate air victories and blow off some steam from the stressors of constant air combat.

“In those days you were supposed to get a shot of whiskey after every mission,” Myers said. “We did that the first couple days and then realized that was a waste of whiskey. What good’s one shot of whiskey? So we started saving our shots for one big party.”

Bail out or belly-in

It was at one of these parties that Myers met his future wife – a 22-year-old Army second lieutenant physiotherapist named Louise – but at the time she was dating his company officer. A few months later Myers began to date Louise after he was treated by her for wounds stemming from the strafing of a German troop train in the Saar Valley in France in late November 1944.

Myers’ plane was hit from multiple shells fired from an anti-aircraft gun mounted on the roof of the train. Flak from the shells tore into Myers’ body. His engine was on fire and he knew that he was going to have to bail out. After reaching an altitude of around 2,000 feet, the fire in Myers’ P-47 engine extinguished, but oil continued to pour out of it.

“If you lost your oil, you were in deep trouble,” Myers said. “I thought I was well over 10 miles behind our lines and finally the oil pressure went to zero. So I started to look for places to belly-in, because you never bailed out of a P-47 if you could belly-in because you’re apt to get killed real easy.”

With blood spurting from an artery in his wrist and his plane out of oil, Myers crash landed in a field. American troops found Myers lying next to his plane and told him that he had crashed only a couple hundred yards from the German lines.

Myers had flak lodged in his neck, chest, left leg, right shoulder, hand, and even between his eyes. Despite his injuries, he was back in the cockpit within a month.

“I was real lucky,” Myers said. “Luck and stupidity took over skill and cunning.”

Myers flew 147 combat missions over Europe in World War II that included sorties for Gen. George S. Patton’s legendary 3rd Army that broke out across France. Myers came home from the war a decorated

hero. But it wouldn’t be his last time.

Same tactics, different aircraft, new enemy

After the war, Myers remained on active duty and was stationed at a series of U.S. Air Force bases. Along the way his son Peter and his daughter Sally were born.

In 1947, the Army Air Corps became the Air Force while Myers was stationed at Eglin Field, Fla. He said there was no big ceremony of any sort inaugurating the new branch and the only thing that changed was the new uniforms.

“We were sort of glad to be our own outfit,” Myers said of the transition.

Within the newly established Air Force, many squadrons were transitioning from propeller-driven planes to jets around this time, and Myers became certified on the new P-80 Shooting Star at Pine Castle Air Force Base in San Bernadino, Calif.

“It was quite a jump,” Myers said of the new jet. “It took a little longer to take off; the temperature affected it more There were no simulators and there were no two-seaters, so it was kind of like your first solo all over again the first time you flew it.”

In June 1950, North Korea crossed the 38th-parallel border and invaded South Korea. It didn’t take long for Myers to get back into aerial combat. By August that year he was flying P-51 Mustangs with the 67th Fighter Squadron out of Taegu, Korea.

Myers’ missions were primarily ground support operations that dealt with low-level bombing and strafing. He said there was always lots of anti-aircraft fire that he and his pilots had to deal with, due to this, the rate of downed P-51 fighters in his squadron was greater than that of the P-47s in his old squadron in World War II.

Myers recalled one close call over the skies of Korea.

“I saw this big haystack that I thought might be hiding something, so I gave it a burst and it blew up right in front of me. I was very low to the ground and I flew right through the fireball. My engine was dead and I punched everything (the tanks and bombs). I switched gas tanks and hit the primer and my engine started running. From there I flew it on home.”

Myers said air and ground combat tactics in Korea were similar with those in World War II, just on a much smaller level. Myers made the rank

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of major during his year-and-a-half in the war. He was 31 years old when he left and had flown 90 combat missions. He saw helicopters for the first time while he was there as well as the first jets in combat. He also saw from the air the devastation that the Chinese inflicted on an American division during the massive Chinese offensive in the fall of 1951.

“An entire American division was retreating while the Chinese were advancing,” Myers said. “I saw SOS stamped out in the snow and all around it were the remains of tanks and equipment. The whole division was wiped out.”

Even though the war was considered a success by American standards, Myers felt as if he and his pilots had certain restrictions placed on them that kept them from inflicting the maximum amount of damage upon the enemy, unlike World War II. Myers said he couldn’t bomb certain parts of North Korean infrastructure that he thought to be a threat.

He liked Korea though, and said it was interesting and beautiful from the air.

“There were lots of hilltop fortresses and old Chinese ruins,” Myers said. “I was just glad to be up in the air and not down on the ground slugging it out.”

Upon his return to the States, Myers and his wife Louise had their third child – a girl they named Terri – in 1952.

Vietnam – “That was a bad one.”

Based out of Tuy Hoa, Myers was the deputy commander of materiel for the 31st Wing during his year in Vietnam in 1967-68. He was in charge of the wing’s avionics, munitions and field maintenance.

As a colonel, Myers was still flying close-air-support combat missions in F-100 Super Sabres. If Korea put restrictions on Myers and his pilots, Vietnam was a chokehold.

“You couldn’t hit a target until you got permission from the providence chief,” Myers said. “You had to coordinate with the Vietnamese on a lot of targets and you couldn’t fly into Laos or Cambodia.”

Overall, Myers was disappointed in the outcome of the war.

“It sure wasn’t like World War II or Korea,” Myers said. “We didn’t lose the war. They (the politicians and American citizens) lost it in the States. That was a bad one.”

Myers rarely saw what he was bombing in Vietnam. He said all he would see was a bunch of leaves and some smoke go up after his bombs

hit the ground. The tree cover was so thick that it concealed targets most of the time. He said the landscape of the country from the air was a triple canopy layer of trees and beautiful beaches along the coast. He didn’t get to see much else of the country as he rarely went off base except for missions in the air.

Myers flew 100 combat missions during the war. It would be his last war in a decorated military career that saw him fly 20 different aircraft while stationed at 30 different bases around the world over the span of 32 years.

A love of flight and airplanes

Myers retired from the Air Force in 1973 as a colonel and returned home to Colorado to settle down with his wife—so he thought.

In 1973, Myers took an aircraft quality control position as a contractor for the Royal Saudi Air Force and he and Louise ventured off to Dahran, Saudi Arabia. What he thought was only going to be a two-year position ended up being 10 as he and Louise came to enjoy the country and his salary.

“It was a land of swift justice, good food and beautiful beaches,” Myers said of Saudi Arabia.

Myers retired for good in 1983 and now enjoys reading books – mainly works of history – and riding horses.

“When you retire, you have no more weekends,” Myers said. “It’s all one long weekend from there on out.”

Myers paused monetarily and lit up his corn cob pipe while a Hank Williams song could be faintly heard on the radio. Snowfall hindered the normally beautiful view from Myers’ living room window. Not a good day for flying.

What was it about flying that Myers loved so much to do it for more than 30 years?

“It was exciting,” Myers said. “You think of nothing else but flying when you are in the air in a fighter. It’s total focus when you’re in the cockpit or you’re dead. When I was a little kid I wanted to be like my granddad and raise horses. But soon as I started flying, I knew that was what I wanted to do over and above the rest.”

The Colorado National Guard, the Air Force and a grateful nation are thankful he pursued his passion. 🙏