



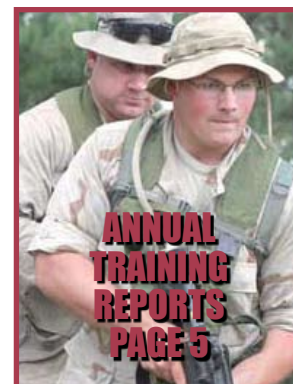
# THE ON GUARD

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Newspaper of the National Guard



ANNUAL  
TRAINING  
REPORTS  
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*Remembering Katrina*

## Soldiers assist reconstruction of Jackson Barracks in New Orleans

**By Spec. Angela Fry**  
527th Engineer Battalion

NEW ORLEANS – Nearly two years after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Soldiers from the 527th Engineer Battalion of the Louisiana Army National Guard continue with reconstruction projects in southern Louisiana.

Soldiers from the 1020th and the 1022nd Engineer Companies recently completed a

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*Louisiana National Guard photo*

Jackson Barracks sustained major damage after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita.



*Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill*

## Explosive competition

Staff Sgt. Jacob Stimson demonstrates the correct way to employ an M18A1 Claymore mine to competitors in the 2007 Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year Competition at the Army National Guard Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, Ga., on Aug. 2. Stimson is an instructor in the center's Pre-Ranger Course. [See story, photos page 6.](#)

## New simplified health program set to launch

**By Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka**  
National Guard Bureau

A revamped and less complicated TRICARE Reserve Select health care program is set to launch on Oct. 1, providing National Guard Soldiers and Airmen a new option for insuring themselves and their families for less money.

Soldiers and Airmen will be able to purchase TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) insurance Oct. 1, which features nearly identical coverage to active-duty TRICARE Standard/Extra insurance and costs far less than the current reserve select

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## Leaders endorse Pakistan, Guard partnership

**By Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill**  
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON – The chief of the National Guard Bureau and Pakistani military officials said July 25 they strongly support a partnership between the National Guard and Pakistan.

LTG H Steven Blum and retired Lt. Gen. Tariq Waseem Ghazi, Pakistan's former defense secretary, acting as the personal representative of Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, enthusiastically endorsed a recommendation made at the last meeting of the U.S.-Pakistan Military Consultation Committee (MCC).

That recommendation called for establishing a National Guard State Partnership Program with Pakistan in 2007.

The endorsements came at a dinner for Pakistani and American colonels and senior military mentors at Quarters One, the official residence of the chief of the National Guard Bureau at Fort McNair.

The officers participated in a 10-day



*Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill*

**Retired Lt. Gen. Tariq Waseem Ghazi, Pakistan's former defense secretary, meets with LTG H Steven Blum July 25.**

U.S.-Pakistan Senior Officers Program at the National Defense University in Washington.

"We're ready," Blum said. "The National Guard is ready to move forward with this partnership."

Ghazi is scheduled to report to Musharraf on his return to Pakistan. Ghazi said his messages would include "our strong support and strong endorsement for this program."

Blum and Ghazi's endorsements were also communicated to the U.S. and Pakistani delegations at the Aug. 1 MCC meeting in Islamabad, Pakistan's capital.

The National Guard's State Partnership Program (SPP) is a unique security cooperation initiative that fosters military-to-military, military-to-civilian and civilian-to-civilian cooperation; 56 countries are partnered with U.S. states or territories.

The National Guard already has helped Pakistan, Ghazi said. An Oct. 8, 2005, earthquake there killed more than 73,000

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# SEPT. 12 MARKS A SPECIAL DAY FOR THE GUARD (AND MY MOM)

I'm going to let you in on a little family secret because it's September which for many of us, since 2001, has become one of this country's melancholy months. The secret is that my mother's birthday is Sept. 12.

That's right, the day after 9/11. I'm not going to tell you how many birthdays Marguerite Haskell has celebrated, because that's a secret she would probably prefer be kept within the family. But considering that I'm her oldest offspring and that I'm a year shy of 60 ... well, you do the math.

Anyway, I've been very happy to make the "happy birthday" call to my mom on Sept. 12 the last few years because it means we have put another year between ourselves and the dreadful attacks by the terrorists. We have gotten through the annual tributes and memorials to the victims. We have heard the politicians and other experts argue that: (1) This country is safer because of the lessons we have learned and the programs we have put in place in the name of national security, or; (2) We are still in danger of going to hell in a hand basket.

My mother's birthday has become my favorite birthday of the year – even if I don't get a day off as I do in January when we honor the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and in February when we observe the birthdays of George Washington and Abraham Lincoln.

September has overshadowed the other melancholy months that we senior, and senior-senior, citizens remember – November, when President Kennedy was killed in 1963, and December,

when Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941. Those events happened so long ago that they barely put a dent into the spirit of the holiday season.

For most of us, this sixth anniversary of 9/11 is not one of the landmark anniversaries, as was the first or the fifth or as the 10th will be four years from now. Still, it is impossible not to remember the images of that horrible day and the people who died and to reflect on what it all means.

I do not recall if I called my mom on Sept. 12, 2001, because I was stuck in Anchorage, Alaska, desperately working to report on the National Guard's response to the national crisis while trying equally as desperately to get to New York City or back to Washington.

But I do remember wishing her a happy birthday on Sept. 12, 2002. I told her how relieved I was that the nightmare year of mourning and depression was finally over. It was as if the entire country had lost a close relative or gone through a divorce and had needed a year to heal.

I know that the scars of 9/11 will be with us for a long time. This Sept. 12, however, I can tell my mom my impressions of what has happened to the National Guard during these past six years of the Global War on Terrorism. We have had our tragedies. But we have also had our own triumphs.

As of Aug. 3, when I prepared to fill this space for the September edition, 493 Guard men and



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

women had perished in Iraq and Afghanistan – 375 of them killed in action – according to the National Guard Bureau's list of the fallen. It was a pretty good bet that more Guard Soldiers and Airmen would be added to that roll by Sept. 11. And many more Guard members have been left maimed in body and spirit for the rest of their lives.

There still were the weekly announcements about how Guard units and individuals were being mobilized to take the place of other outfits that were coming home after a long year or so of deployment.

And we still had legitimate concerns about how bad a hit we have taken in terms of the equipment that Guard people had to leave over there and that they need to have replaced to serve their states and territories.

We are constantly reminded that war is a grim, all-consuming business, and that, in the grand scheme of things, military people have relatively little to say about their destinies.

On the other hand, the GWOT has seasoned the National Guard as has few other events in our history.

You see it in many ways: The Combat Infantry Badges and Combat Action Badges that more and more Guard Soldiers are pinning on their uniforms and the quiet confidence that you hear in the voices of those who say "Yeah, I was in Iraq," or "I did a tour in Afghanistan."

Our GWOT veterans are different from the majority of Vietnam veterans who filled our ranks in the '70s after serving in the active Army, Navy, Air Force or Marines. Our GWOT veterans have gone to war as Guardmembers and returned as Guardmembers. They have done their bit to prove that the National Guard does indeed excel as an operational combat force.

National Guard women who have "seen the elephant" have helped dispel a lot of notions about how a woman's place is behind the front lines and that they can't cope with combat.

I would tell my mother on her birthday that the Guard has done a lot of growing up during the past six years. Yes, there have been a lot of growing pains. But I'm sure she would remind me that growing up can be a painful process. She and I know that it was for me.

So, happy birthday, mom. I hope you and I get to celebrate a lot more Sept. 12ths together. Every one has been special to me. But the last six have meant more than you can imagine – to your oldest son and to our nation's oldest military force, the National Guard.

## Commentary: Freedom Tower symbolic of recovery

**By Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada**  
Texas National Guard

Lower Manhattan is back to normal with streams of yellow cabs, tour busses dropping off and picking up tourists, street artists entertaining the passers-by, hotdogs, people rushing to and from work, and Jumbotron billboards.

The Statue of Liberty and Battery Park are once again attracting millions of tourists, but, among the day-to-day activities of New Yorkers and tourists, there is the additional constant sound of jackhammers, heavy equipment and bulldozers. Construction workers labor day and night on the Freedom Towers where once the twin World Trade Center towers soared.

Floodlights illuminate the area at night, and tourists occupying rooms at the newly renovated Millennium Hilton do not complain about the constant rumbling of machines at night because what is being rebuilt symbolizes hope, determination and defiance.

The Millennium itself experienced severe damage to its bottom eight floors on 9/11, but like many of the other buildings in the area it has been completely renovated.

The World Trade Center site, once protected



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada

**The future site of the Freedom Tower.**

by hundreds of National Guard personnel from around the country, is now largely protected by law enforcement officers, but during shift changes National Guard members can still be observed coming up from the Trade Center subway center. They seem to have become a fixture in the landscape, but to the tourists they are still a reminder that these men and women were among the many first responders bringing comfort and security during a time of great

upheaval.

There are other reminders of this horrible day. In Greenwich Village, children from across the world have transformed an old fence into a permanent reminder of the loss of innocent lives. The colorful tiles attached to the screen have inscriptions to the families who still grieve for their loved ones; but there are miracles and signs of recovery, too.

One miracle is the small church and cemetery nestled between the Twin Towers and next to the Millennium. While layers and layers of dust and debris covered its roof, St. Paul's Catholic Church stood undamaged and defiant—a powerful reminder that the faith of Americans fell, the debris did not damage any of the century-old grave markers.

And soon there will be The Freedom Tower, an architect's vision and homage to those who lost their lives, but more importantly a symbol of freedom and liberty. The freedom and liberty our military men and women fight to protect around the world and in their hometowns.

(Chief Moncada returned from a visit to New York City at the end of July.)



# Air Guard members to work at personnel center

DENVER – Seventy Air National Guardmembers are set to begin working at the Air Reserve Personnel Center later this year for the first time in the center's history.

That is a result of the center assuming the personnel services for the Air National Guard, increasing the Air Reserve Personnel Center's potential number of customers to nearly one million Airmen.

"We are consolidating our work force from the field to ARPC and bringing the workload here," said Lt. Col. Donald Johnson, an Air National Guard adviser to the commander at ARPC. Johnson is helping spearhead the transition of Guardmembers in the field to their new jobs at ARPC.

Two Guardmembers are already en route to ARPC, leaving 68 positions available. The announcements for those positions closed Aug. 2.

The fact National Guard personnel are working at ARPC mark a significant milestone for the center and the Air National Guard, he said.

"This will be the largest group of Air National Guard personnelists in the United States working together

to support the total Air Reserve component," Johnson said. "It's going to be a totally integrated organization."

Nearly 50 of the new Guardmembers will work in ARPC's Directorate of Personnel Services.

"This is huge," said Dave Aldrich, the DPS director. "Typically we have these stove pipes – Guardsmen do Guard work. Now, they're going to do (air Reserve component) work."

The Guardmembers will be on four-year active-duty tours, meaning their service is identical to active-duty Airmen.

"We're going to embed these folks in the work force," Johnson said. "When you walk through the building, you're not going to know the difference between active, Guard or Reserve."

Johnson said the new Guardmembers will improve the relationship between ARPC and their customers and the Air Force's concept of total force.

"It creates a better unity between Air National Guard and the Air Force Reserve. It strengthens that bond," he said.

## Oklahoma wing 'associates' with Reserve refueling wing



Photo by Lt. Col. Rich Curry

Col. James McCormack, 137th Airlift Wing commander, and Col. Jeffery Glass, 507th Air Refueling Wing commander, prepare for takeoff during their first duo commander mission July 26.

**By Lt. Col. Rich Curry**  
507th Air Refueling Wing

TINKER AIR FORCE BASE, Okla. – The Air Force Reserve Command's 507th Air Refueling Wing began a new partnership in August when it teamed up with members of the Oklahoma Air National Guard for its unit training assembly.

With this action, the 507th ARW became the first reserve wing to have an ANG wing associated with it.

About eight Oklahoma aircrew members are part of an initial cadre working with their reserve hosts to stand up associate operations.

As a result of the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure process, the 137th Airlift Wing at Will Rogers World Airport in Oklahoma City was identified to lose its C-130 Hercules aircraft and convert to a KC-135 Stratotankers associate unit.

Under this agreement, the 507th is the host wing with all 12 aircraft owned by Air Force Reserve Command. The Oklahoma ANG will maintain administrative and operational control but will be associated with the 507th ARW and work in conjunction with the reserve wing to fly and maintain all aircraft.

"When you think about it, starting this associate relationship is pretty exciting," said Col. Jeffery R. Glass, the 507th commander.

"We're part of a DoD-wide Total Force Initiative reorganization. We're going to show that our air reserve component mix will be just as viable and beneficial to national defense."

According to an April 2007 Site Activation Task Force report, the main body of aircrew and maintenance personnel should arrive before the end of the year.



Photo by Windy Knutson

A UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter piloted by Montana Chief Warrant Officer Scott Bare drops a bucket of water onto flames in attempt to slow a fire in his state. The structure in the photo was not damaged.

## Montana troops activated for fires

**By Maj. Garth Scott**  
Montana National Guard

HELENA, Mont.—The fire season started early this year when by early August over 13 large fires were burning throughout the state with little civilian resources to fight them.

The Montana National Guard is no stranger to fighting fire as dry conditions have been the norm for the last decade.

The Guard was first activated in mid-July providing one UH-60 Blackhawk, a fuel truck and an operations cell to run the water bucket flights. The Guard has extended its efforts in early August

to protect the people of Montana, their homes and property. By early August the Montana Guard had over 170 Soldiers and Airmen on the job with four Blackhawks, one CH-47 Chinook, and security personnel protecting property working in conjunction with local authorities.

By Aug. 8, the Montana Guard has already dropped over 10,000 gallons of water and hauled over 730 passengers, with 195 total Guardsmen on duty. This is the first year the state has seen the Chinook in action with its ability to drop 2,000 gallons of water per load and a fuel capacity of about four hours. It's a great addition

to the firefighting effort.

Most of the Montana Guard flight crews are veteran pilots with many averaging well over 200 hours of flight time and at least one tour of combat.

The Montana Guard also has about 160 security personnel, Air and Army, manning check points and helping direct traffic. At the Seeley lake fire almost 600 homes have been evacuated. "We could not do our job without them and they have the right attitude in everything we ask them do" said Pat Cross, information officer for the type II team located in the Seeley area.

## Mississippi wing used in Utah miner rescue

**By Lt. Col. David P. Buck**  
Mississippi National Guard

JACKSON, Miss.—It was a routine day at the 172nd Airlift Wing in Jackson, Miss., until the phone rang around 1:50 p.m. The call was an emergency airlift request to transport equipment to the stranded miners in Utah. Immediately, wing personnel organized an effort to get a C-17 Globemaster III in the air to get the needed equipment to the miners as quickly as possible.

One of the first calls after the initial

request came in was to George Rollins, the truck driver delivering the equipment. Our task was to coordinate the nearest airfield to the trucker to pick up this precious cargo and driver. The location chosen was Forbes Field in Topeka, Kansas, home of the 190th Air Refueling Wing of the Kansas Air National Guard.

Wing personnel from the Mississippi Air National Guard coordinated efforts across the base and nation to get the mission off the ground. Aircraft availability, trip

feasibility (will the truck fit in the plane), authorizations, coordination with the Kansas unit and higher headquarters were just some of the calls and coordination made to get the mission off. Finally, at 4:30 p.m. the mission took off from Thompson Field in Jackson, Miss.

In the early stages of organizing the mission, Senior Master Sgt. Anthony Best, of the 172nd Operations Support Flight, had to ensure the vehicle would actually be allowed to travel aboard the C-17 and physically be able to be loaded. "It was quite hectic for a while," Best said. "We had to scramble to find all the information from multiple sources and put it all together."

The high tech equipment delivered to the mine in Utah was underground video equipment from Substrata Camera Services out of Knoxville, Tenn. It specializes in providing underground video surveys for routine and emergency situations. Mr. Avery Clark, owner of the company, had flown out earlier to provide smaller cameras to the scene. The bulk of the equipment flew on the Mississippi C-17.

During the three and a half hour flight to Utah, the C-17 had no problem hauling the 19,580 pound vehicle and equipment.



Photo by Lt. Col. David Buck

Mississippi Master Sgt. Robin Dallaire, a loadmaster with the 183rd Airlift Squadron, guides a vehicle aboard his C-17. The vehicles contained special equipment used to help locate stranded miners in Utah



## GEORGIA

Twenty-three Soldiers, Airmen and employees of the Peach State Department of Defense graduated from the inaugural course of called Lean Six Sigma in late July. The graduates all earned their "green belts" after completing four weeks of combined classroom and hands-on project training. Lean Six Sigma is a structured process-improvement methodology being implemented Army-wide.

## INDIANA

The Hoosier State Guard was selected as the Industry of the Year for its operations at the Muscatatuck Urban Training Center Aug. 6 at the 14th annual Jennings County Industry Luncheon, hosted by the Economic Development Commission.

## IOWA

The Hawkeye State held a ground breaking ceremony July 26 for additions and alterations to its Readiness Center and Army Aviation Support Facility in Waterloo. The existing 49,000 square foot masonry and concrete building, which houses both the Readiness Center and Army Aviation Support Facility, built in 1973, will be remodeled as two separate projects.

## MICHIGAN

Following a 12-month tour in Kuwait, 51 Soldiers from the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 107th Quartermaster Battalion of the Wolverine State Army Guard returned home in August. The Soldiers were assigned as the command cell

# ★ Guarding America ★

for operations at Camp Navistar and served in the convoy support center which provided life support activities (food, fuel, arms, and maintenance) for more than 1,000 Soldiers, Sailors, civilian contractors, and coalition forces.

## MINNESOTA

The National Guard in the Land of 10,000 Lakes hosted a ceremonial ground breaking for a new helicopter facility located at the St. Cloud Regional Airport Aug. 7. The 140,000 square-foot facility is scheduled to be complete by January 2009. The new Army Aviation Support Facility will house three National Guard units and employ 35 military personnel full-time and an additional 300 Soldiers on a part-time basis.

## MISSOURI

Show Me State Soldiers Master Sgt. Don Lilleman and Sgt. 1st Class Dustin Green extinguished a fire in garage near their armory in Lexington. They also saved a man who was on fire. They used fire extinguishers from the armory to douse the fire.

## OHIO

The Buckeye State recently set a new standard by becoming the first state to establish its

own certification training for troops preparing to deploy. The training prepares the troops and shortens the overall length of their deployments.

## PENNSYLVANIA

After a 300-mile drive from Fort Indian-town Gap, Stryker vehicles rolled into the Keystone State armory of the 1-112th Infantry at Erie, Pa., It was the first unit in the state to receive its vehicles at home station. More than 300 Stryker vehicles are assigned to the Pennsylvania Army Guard's 56th Stryker Brigade. Each vehicle costs about \$2.2 million.

## TEXAS

As of July 9, the Lone Star State Guard had recruited 3,478 new Soldiers in the current fiscal year, surpassing the year-end goal of 3,300 new recruits set by the National Guard Bureau three months early. Recruiters expect the total number of Guardmembers in the state to exceed 18,900 by the end of the calendar year.

## VIRGINIA

Old Dominion State Brig. Gen. Grant L. Hayden assumed command of the Army National Guard's 29th Infantry Division

from Maj. Gen. Arthur H. Wyman Aug. 1. Hayden, a Maryland Guardsman, is currently assigned as the deputy commanding general, 29th Infantry Division.

## WASHINGTON

One hundred twenty-eight Soldiers from the 790th, 791st, and 792nd Chemical Companies belonging to the 420th Chemical Battalion and Airmen from the 141st Air Refueling Wing and 194th Regional Support Wing in the the Evergreen State spent their annual training learning how to operate as a CERF-P team. The training took place at Fairchild Air Force Base in Spokane, Wash., during the third week of July.

## WISCONSIN

Col. Donald Dunbar became the new adjutant general at the Badger State National Guard Armory Aug. 3. Dunbar took over for Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, who is retiring. The adjutant general serves as the senior military officer and commander of the state's 10,000 Soldiers and Airman.

## WYOMING

Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 300th Field Artillery from the Equality State recently conducted annual training at the Gillette and Douglas Armories. Unit members concentrated on turning in field artillery equipment, including 155 mm howitzers in preparation for the new distribution company in Douglas and the High Mobility Artillery Rocket System unit in Gillette.

## From page 1: HEALTH PROGRAM

premiums. One major highlight of the new version is that it offers one premium level instead of the current three-tier system.

The TRICARE insurance does not depend on employment status or whether the Soldier or Airmen has deployed in support of contingency operations. The program will also offer expanded survivor coverage and continuously open enrollment.

TRICARE officials said the primary reason for the elimination of the tiered system was to simplify the program and to give all National Guard and reserve component servicemembers the same coverage regardless of past deployment status or service time.

"We're extremely excited about the enhancements to TRICARE Reserve Select," said Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger, the deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity. "The 2007 National Defense Authorization Act eliminates the complicated three-tier system as of Oct. 1. All qualified members of the selected reserve who purchase health care coverage under the new TRS will pay the same

low monthly premium."

The new coverage plan will cost \$81 per month for servicemember coverage and \$253 per month for servicemember and family coverage. The premiums will not change through December 2008 but may be adjusted annually thereafter.

Currently, TRS offers all members of the selected reserve the chance to purchase comprehensive health coverage. Premiums for that coverage are based on three qualification tiers. Depending on which of the tiers a servicemember was accepted based on previous service or employment status, monthly costs for an individual could range from \$81-\$247 or from \$253-\$767 for a member and his family.

There are two qualification criteria for TRS in the revamped program. First, the member must be a selected reserve member of the ready reserve. Second, the member must not be eligible for the Federal Employee Health Benefits program or currently covered through the FEHB, either through their own eligibility or through a family member.

All current participants in the three-tier

TRS program must renew their coverage if they wish for it to continue past Sept. 30. Forms to continue the three-tiered program as well as the new program are located at [www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/trs/index.jsp](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/trs/index.jsp). The forms must then be forwarded to the appropriate TRICARE regional contractor along with one month's premium.

In the past, TRS eligibility was based on several qualifying factors and monthly premiums were based upon a member's qualification tier.

Tier One, the least expensive premium qualification, went to those Soldiers and Airmen who had been ordered to active duty for more than 30 days in support of contingency operations. Tier Two qualification went to those members who were unemployed, self-employed or were employed by an organization that did not offer health care coverage. Tier Three, which included the most expensive premiums, was reserved for members who had entered into a service agreement but did not qualify for Tier One or Two.

One of the biggest advantages of TRICARE Standard is that it features an

almost unrestricted choice of health care providers, including military treatment facilities, TRICARE network providers, and non-network participating providers. In most cases, a patient can see a specialist without prior authorization.

TRICARE Extra is an extra discount given to TRICARE Standard beneficiaries when a TRICARE network provider is used. There is no enrollment.

TRICARE is the Department of Defense's comprehensive health care coverage program for servicemembers, their families and survivors. TRICARE also offers health care programs for retired servicemembers, including dental and pharmaceutical services. There are about 9.1 million eligible beneficiaries worldwide within the TRICARE organization.

About 11,500 National Guard and reserve component servicemembers are currently enrolled in the tiered TRS program.

National Guard Soldiers and Airmen can find out more about the new TRS program and locate their TRICARE regional contractor's contact information at the "My Benefits" portal at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil).

## AIR NATIONAL GUARD'S DEFINING MOMENTS-SEPTEMBER

**1918** 1st Lt. Field E. Kindley, a former Kansas Guardsman, scored his fifth aerial kill. He ended World War I with 11 victories.

**1934** Members of New Jersey's 119th Observation Squadron, flying Douglas O-38E biplanes, assisted with the rescue of passengers and crew from the burning liner S.S. Morrow Castle off the Garden State's coast. They were personally directed by their governor, A. Harry Moore, who flew on some of the rescue missions.

**1946** AT-6 trainer was delivered to Colorado's 120th Fighter

Squadron. It was the first aircraft provided to any post-World War II National Guard air unit by the Army Air Forces.

**1952** Capt. Robinson Risner, an Oklahoma Air Guardsman flying an F-86 in a regular Air Force unit, shot down his fifth MiG 15, becoming the third ANG ace of the Korean War. Risner ended the conflict with eight confirmed kills. He remained in the active Air Force after the conflict and became one of the senior American POW leaders in the "Hanoi Hilton" during the Vietnam War.

**1961** A KC-97F from Illinois' 108th Air Refueling Squadron successfully executed the Air Guard's first mid-air refueling. The tanker refueled an F-84F from the 169th Tactical Fighter Squadron, Illinois ANG.

**1972** At the Air Force's William Tell 1972 aerial weapons competition at Tyndall AFB, Fla., teams from ANG units took top honors in two of the three categories. Air Guardsmen from North Dakota's 119th Fighter Interceptor Group garnered top honors in the F-101 category.





## Air Guard civil engineers pull AT in Saskatchewan

**By Senior Master Sgt. Marcus W. Falleaf**  
Texas National Guard

MOOSEJAW, Saskatchewan -- Thirty-three members of the 147th Fighter Wing's Civil Engineer Squadron participated in Exercise Winged Beaver this summer in conjunction with members of the Canadian armed forces.

The 147th was one of three civil engineering units that participated in the exercise. The 147th from Ellington Field, Houston, was joined by the 149th CES from San Antonio and the 144th CES from Fresno, Calif. Each squadron deployed for two weeks and the exercise terminated in late July.

"This is an excellent opportunity to train alongside our allies," said Maj. Matthew Allinson, the 147th CES commander.

Wasting no time after a short night's sleep and receiving their in-brief, CES members began the project of renovating the Red Knight Arena, a recreational ice rink that is home to the base hockey team. Residents of Moose Jaw also utilize the arena for youth hockey leagues, said Canadian Forces Master Corporal Mark Pollock, wing transportation NCO for the base here.

Each member of the 147th CES is specially trained to provide support in some aspect of tearing out walls, reviewing blueprints, completing preliminary structural analysis or tracing electrical lines. This crew of assorted ranks, genders, skills and countries all worked toward a common goal.

According to the memorandum of understanding, the purpose of the training exercises was to improve the readiness of North American Aerospace Defense engineering forces and to improve interaction among U.S. and Canadian forces that operate in support of North American Air Defense activities.

Four of the 147th engineers were treated to incentive flights flown by members of the Royal Canadian Air Force on CT-155 and CT-156 trainer aircraft.

Moose Jaw, where Canada's 15th Wing is based, is the principle site for NATO flying training in Canada, an international military pilot training program that has seen pilot trainees from around the globe join their Canadian counterparts in the skies over southern Saskatchewan. The world-famous Canadian Forces Snowbirds military air demonstration team is based here as well.



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Marcus Falleaf

**Master Sgt. Tim "Bull" Durham (right) directs Tech. Sgt. Rodney Blanton as he prepares to drive a Bobcat in Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, for Exercise Winged Beaver.**



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeff Lowry

## Georgia unit trains for modern, urban war

**By Pfc. Adam Dean**  
Georgia National Guard

The war in Iraq is different than conflicts fought just a few generations ago. There is no Maginot Line, no rolling tanks, no taking of hills.

Today's war is being fought neighborhood-to-neighborhood, house-to-house and room-to-room. It's deemed military operations in urban terrain, or MOUT, as the Army terms it.

"Kicking in doors and clearing building is what we'll be doing on a regular basis," said Pfc. Sean Hudson, a tanker with Headquarters Troop, 108th Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Target Acquisition Squadron.

A tanker now, Hudson is scheduled to attend infantry school soon.

During the unit's two-week annual training at Fort Polk, La., this past summer, Soldiers honed their skills and learned from Special Forces Soldiers scheduled to deploy to Iraq this summer.

**Georgia Pfc. Sean Hudson enters a "glass house" during military operations in urban terrain training. Hudson is a tanker with Headquarters Troop, 108th Reconnaissance, Surveillance Target Acquisition Squadron, which spent its two-week annual training at Fort Polk, La.**

"The next conflict we go to will probably be an urban environment," said Spc. Chris Gerhard of Troop A, 108th RSTA Squadron.

Gerhard, an Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran, is changing jobs, too. His new job will be as a scout.

"The more techniques we know, the more familiar we are, the more likely we are to stay alive, get the job done and complete the mission," Hudson said.

With white tape on the ground to outline walls of a house, 108th Soldiers moved room-to-room clearing the "glass house" of imaginary terrorists.

Special forces Soldiers conducted the training that garnered praise from the 108th Soldiers.

"The training here is top-notch," said Pfc. Bret LaFollette of Temple and an Abrams tank mechanic who is set to become a scout soon. "To receive it from Special Forces guys, you know it works."

Novice Soldiers to combat veterans appreciated the training opportunity.

"Those who lack combat experience, like myself, this extra training we received could make a huge difference," Hudson said.

He also noticed how the OIF vets took to the training.

"They're still learning, too," Hudson said. "I guess it indicates the quality of training."

## Maryland helps build artificial reef

**By Master Sgt. Ronald Pitts**  
Maryland National Guard

BALTIMORE – Cans, bottles, paper and cardboard.

That's the type of items most people consider when they think of recycling. But how about tanks and armored personnel carriers?

Sixty-three members of the Maryland Army National Guard's 1229th Transportation Company at Cade Armory in Baltimore recently got a first-hand look at just such a project during 15 days of annual training in South Carolina.

From June 3-15, the 1229th, along with the South Carolina Guard's 1052nd Transportation Company and the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources, participated in the construction of an offshore artificial reef using stripped surplus armored vehicles as building material.

The Reef-X – short for "reef exercise" – project was instituted in 1997. It creates habitat for marine life and facilitates recreational fishing.

This year, with the help of the Maryland Guard, Reef-X transported some 212 decommissioned M-113 armored personnel carriers and more than two miles of concrete pipe to the Port of Charleston.

The APCs and concrete pipes will be taken by barges to more than 40 different sites off the South Carolina coast to make artificial reefs. The reefs are popular destinations for recreational anglers and divers.

The Maryland Soldiers said the mission



Photo by Master Sgt. Ron Pitts

**Maryland's Sgt. Wanda R. Harris of the 1229th Trucking Company and Spc. Antawn Brunson of the South Carolina 1052nd Transportation Company secure some of the 30,000 tons of concrete pipe for a new reef habitat off the South Carolina shore.**

was productive.

"It helped us train for our wartime mission while doing something to help the environment at the same time," said Sgt. James Fleming, supply sergeant for the 1229th.

Project Reef-X is part of the Army's Innovation Readiness Training Program. Citizen-Soldiers support eligible civilian organizations by combining required wartime training with community support projects. Soldiers obtain the training they need while providing communities with valuable assistance in completing beneficial civilian projects.

In addition to their contribution to the Reef-X project, the 1229th filled its 15-day

schedule with several special training activities, such as preparing and verifying load plans, convoy operations, engagement skills, basic rifle marksmanship individual weapons qualification, crew-served weapons training and familiarization, and drivers training.

The Maryland National Guard is comprised of nearly 7,000 Citizen-Soldiers and Citizen-Airmen serving at 49 facilities across Maryland with an annual budget of more than \$230 million. It is a dual-status organization available to the federal government during times of war and to the state government in case of local emergency.

**For more National Guard news, visit [www.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ngb.army.mil)**





Sgt. 1st Class Maurice Brown of the Virginia Army National Guard knocks out push-ups during the Army Physical Fitness Test in the 2007 Army National Guard NCO and Soldier of the Year Competition at the Army National Guard Warrior Training Center at Fort Benning, Ga., on Aug. 2.

# NCO, Soldier of the Year competitors all winners

**Story, photos by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill**  
National Guard Bureau

FORT BENNING, Ga. – The rules dictated that just one Army National Guard noncommissioned officer and just one Soldier would emerge as the winners from two grueling days of competition here.

But those who watched seven NCOs and seven Soldiers compete in the final stages of the 2007 Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year Competition said there wasn't a loser in the pack.

"They are just extraordinary young Americans," LTG H Steven Blum, the chief of the National Guard Bureau, said as he entertained the competitors at Fort McNair in Washington Aug. 6. "Any one of these men or women could win this competition."

The winners were announced at the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States' annual conference in Oklahoma City Aug. 15: The 2007 Army National Guard NCO of the Year is Staff Sgt. Mark Dornbusch from Texas. The Soldier of the Year is Spc. Erik Nowak from West Virginia.

Dornbusch and Nowak will represent the National Guard at the Army's NCO and Soldier of the Year Competition at Fort Lee, Va., Oct. 1-5. The winners are scheduled to be announced by Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston Oct. 8.

Dornbusch and Nowak were chosen from among 14 regional winners who competed in a 48-hour challenge at the Army National Guard Warrior Training Center (WTC) at



Connecticut Staff Sgt. Jeremy Little finds humor after the land navigation segment despite getting less than three hours sleep in more than 42 hours.

Fort Benning Aug. 1-4 and appeared before evaluation boards in Washington Aug. 5.

It was the first time that the Army Guard has conducted such a competition to select its best NCO and Soldier of the year. The Army National Guard will compete directly with the 12 major Army commands. In the past, Guardmembers competed first at 1st Army, then at U.S. Army Forces Command, but Army National Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John Gipe

successfully lobbied Preston to change that.

"I felt that with the Army National Guard representing 350,000 Soldiers, we should have the right to enter the competition at the DA level," Gipe explained. "I also wanted to name a single Guard Soldier and NCO of the Year."

The Fort Benning phase of the National **ALL WINNERS continued on:**  
**Page 7**

## 2007 Army National Guard NCO & Soldiers of the Year

### Region 1

NCO: **Staff Sgt. Jeremy Little**, Connecticut

Soldier: **Spc. Jessica Miano**, Connecticut

### Region 2

NCO: **Sgt. 1st Class Maurice Brown**, Virginia

Soldier: **Spc. Eric Nowak**, West Virginia

### Region 3

NCO: **Sgt. Jessie Lindsey**, Mississippi

Soldier: **Spc. Michael Headrick**, Tennessee

### Region 4

NCO: **Sgt. Andrew Burns**, Indiana

Soldier: **Spc. Nathan Delgado**, Minnesota

### Region 5

NCO: **Staff Sgt. Mark Dornbusch**, Texas

Soldier: **Spc. Kyle Brewer**, Iowa

### Region 6

NCO: **Sgt. Russell Garrett**, North Dakota

Soldier: **Spc. Joel Erickson**, North Dakota

### Region 7

NCO: **Staff Sgt. Jorge Garcia**, California

Soldier: **Spc. Richard Olmedo**, California



Connecticut Spc. Jessica Miano tackles the Kirby Obstacle Course.



A competitor takes a plunge during a combat water survival test





**Nowak:**  
Soldier of the Year



**Dornbusch:**  
NCO of the Year

From page 7:  
**ALL WINNERS**

Guard's 2007 competition was more than a competition. It was training.

"We're going to coach, teach and mentor them, as well as evaluate them for the next 48 hours," WTC Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Siter said on the first day. "We've taken the Army's competition that they run over four or five days, all their events, and we've combined them into 48 hours."

Gipe explained why. "I wanted to insure that we really tested our competitors so they would be fully confident they could handle anything thrown at them."

The competitors included 13 men and one woman. Some work full time for the National Guard. Others are traditional Guardmembers who balance civilian vocations with family life and monthly drills. Some have only been in the Guard for a couple of years. Others are halfway through careers that started in the Regular Army. Some were the first members of their family to enlist; others are continuing a tradition stretching back generations. They represented 11 different states.

Some had been competing for a year, working their way through a selection process that began in their home units and continued through states and regions.

"This is much harder, a lot harder," Spc. Kyle Brewer of the Iowa National Guard said during the Fort Benning phase of the competition.

Brewer enlisted as a private in 2004. He balanced preparation for the Soldier of the Year competition with the demands of life as a full-time University of Dubuque in Iowa aviation student, his walk-on position as a wide receiver for the university's football team and his National Guard commitments. Like other competitors, he faced additional challenges such as a four-hour drive from college to his unit and the regional competition for Soldier of the Year falling in the middle of finals week at college.

At the WTC, Brewer and the 13 other competitors completed an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT) with a twist: Competitors were not told how long the run would be until they crossed the finish line. The normal APFT distance is two miles: They ran five.

They did chin-ups. They completed a combat water survival test in full uniform with weapons. They spent half a day performing warrior tasks such as employing an M18A1 Claymore mine and maintaining, loading and unloading an M240B machine gun. They performed first aid.

They dripped sweat in Fort Benning's humid 94-degree heat, struggling to stay hydrated and follow an azimuth as they battled through thick brush, crossed a stream and scrambled up steep slopes during day orienteering. They zeroed M4 carbines in nine rounds, then endured a stress shoot and night firing qualification tests.

They proved their proficiency with night vision devices, administered intravenous drips,

**ALL WINNERS continued on:**  
**Page 12**

# Top Air Guard members become DC VIPs

**By Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith**  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. — The Air National Guard's top six enlisted Airmen of the Year were the centers of attention and praise and received many rewards Aug. 4-11 when the Air Guard's command chief master sergeant hosted Airmen of the Year Week.

The special group conversed and shook hands with military, civilian and political leaders in and around Washington, D.C. They were lauded at several ceremonies, and they toured the nation's capital in the summer heat. When they left, they carried a suitcase full of memories as well as certificates, coins, plaques, statuettes and other special rewards which recognized their achievements.

The National Guard Bureau's top six Airmen were:

- Airmen of the Year - **Staff Sgt. Jesse Permenter**
- Noncommissioned Officer - **Tech. Sgt. Michael Keller**
- Senior NCO - **Senior Master Sgt. Lawrence Taylor**
- First Sergeant - **Senior Master Sgt. Dorothy Pearson**

## Airmen of the Year

Staff Sgt. Jesse Permenter  
Tactical Air Command and Control Journeyman  
116th Air Support Operations Squadron  
Washington

*"I am very humbled to be here."*

Permenter is a traditional Guardmember who served in Iraq last year with the Army's 101st Airborne Division. His actions overseas earned him an Army Commendation Medal for Valor for "outstanding valor in combat, under fire."

## NCO of the Year

Tech. Sgt. Michael Keller  
Loadmaster Craftsman  
179th Airlift Wing,  
Ohio

*"It's been fast paced, and the gratitude I received has been pretty overwhelming. I am grateful to represent the force."*

Keller spent about eight months in Iraq and eight months in Afghanistan flying combat missions as a C-130 loadmaster. Operations included airlifting supplies and conducting aeromedical evacuations in combat zones.

## Senior NCO of the Year

Senior Master Sgt. Lawrence Taylor  
Air Traffic Control Craftsman  
270th Air Traffic Control Squadron  
Oregon

*"It's a team effort."*

Taylor has also been recognized as one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. He said his service as an air traffic controller at home and in Iraq, along with the team members he worked with, was central to his success.

• Honor Guard Program Manager - **Tech. Sgt. Wendy Haight**

• Honor Guard Member - **Tech. Sgt. Celia Herrera**

"I think these Airmen will reflect back on their week here and realize the importance of what this award means and that it's a representation of our entire enlisted force," said Command Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith, the Air Guard's highest ranking enlisted member and host for the annual event. "We have a great Air Guard enlisted force, all 93,000 plus."

The process began with unit- and wing-level competitions and progressed to state selections. The six national winners were selected by the Air Guard's top leaders from entries submitted by the 54 states and territories. Winners were then invited to bring one guest for an all expenses paid trip to Washington.

"It's been absolutely awesome, and I've enjoyed every minute of it," said Taylor who was also recognized as one of the Air Force's 12 Outstanding Airmen of the Year. He said his service as an air traffic controller at home and at Baghdad Airport in Iraq and the team members he worked with there were central

to his success.

It's not everyday you get to visit the Guard's senior leaders at their homes, including Army LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau. The Airmen joined the Army National Guard's Soldiers and NCOs of the Year at Blum's home on Ft. McNair for an evening reception.

"They have a tremendous opportunity and great potential to be anything they want to be," Blum said. "There may be a future command chief or a command sergeant major in this group, or even a future chief of the bureau. I'm immensely proud of them. They are just extraordinary young Americans."

The Airmen went from Washington to Oklahoma City to attend the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States' annual conference.

"This is one of the best groups we've ever had," said Smith. "No matter what your job is, if you do your best, you will be recognized. The most important job you have is the one you have now, so do your best today, and you will progress. I'm living proof of that."

## First Sergeant of the Year

Senior Master Sgt. Dorothy Pearson  
First Sergeant  
116th Air Control Wing  
Georgia

*"The time here has been fantastic. It was great to meet with the other outstanding Airmen and Soldiers of the Year for the National Guard."*

As the first sergeant for the 116th's Communications Squadron, Pearson said being closely involved with other Airmen and her commander is the key to being an effective first sergeant.

## Honor Guard Program Manager of the Year

Tech. Sgt. Wendy Haight  
Services Craftsman  
123rd Airlift Wing  
Kentucky

*"It's a wonderful experience that I can take back with me and pass on to my fellow Guard members."*

As an honor guard manager, Haight ensures her team meets all regulations, develops a budget, and works with other services to perform an average of 20 honor guard and color guard details a month for the state.

## Honor Guard Member of the Year

Tech. Sgt. Celia Herrera  
Honor Guard  
107th Air Control Squadron  
Arizona

*"It took a little while for it to sink in how incredible this is and what a huge privilege it is for me to represent the nation's honor guard members."*

Herrera was selected to attend the prestigious U.S. Air Force Honor Guard Refresher Course.





# Northern Grip: New York Air Guard supports far-reaching science missions

**Story, photos by Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith**  
National Guard Bureau

CAMP SUMMIT, Greenland – The gray and orange LC-130 Hercules, one of the world’s largest cargo aircraft with skis, touched down 10,600 feet above sea level onto the frozen ice sheet here July 24 to continue an airlift mission that serves as the only supply line for some of the world’s leading scientists studying our planet.

After circling the Arctic outpost to view the airfield’s conditions, the aircraft landed inside a row of bamboo poles with black nylon flags that marked a “skiway” and gently slid to a stop like an overloaded dump truck hydroplaning down an icy highway.

At the controls was an aircrew from the New York Air National Guard’s 109th Airlift Wing, who kept the engines running in the thin air while it offloaded nearly 30,000 pounds of cargo: 2,100 gallons of fuel, three pallets of supplies and 13 passengers.

The wing’s airlift missions in Greenland are not only essential to the scientists camped out here, but its training on the ice sheet is a key factor to its readiness for airlift missions at the South Pole, where a demanding schedule and deadly environment leave little

everything that encompasses a functioning wing. All the various shops are located inside an old firehouse south of the runway.

From there, the wing dispatches flights and trains aircrews in polar airlift, which is one of its main tasks. They use a training skiway called “Raven,” which is about a 20-minute flight east where they conduct aircrew upgrades and check rides on the LC-130s as well as practice air drops and host a barren land arctic survival school called “Kool School.”

“This week is a combination of training out at Raven and conducting several airlift missions in support of the National Science Foundation (NSF),” said Lt. Col. Mark Doll, an aircraft commander. Doll is also the chief pilot for the wing’s 139th Airlift Squadron and evaluates and instructs “skibird” pilots.

The Air Guard members say they “serve pole-to-pole.” Airlifts for the NSF are a seasonal mission that alternate between summers inside the Arctic Circle with the austral summer of the Antarctic Circle and their better known airlift missions in Antarctica, which occur from October to February.

They have owned and honed the Arctic mission since 1975, much longer than the Antarctic mission, which they acquired from the Navy in the ‘90s. Trial and

error, calculated risk, shear will and clever thinking has made them the world’s experts of polar airlift, they say.

between Greenland’s coastline and its inland Arctic desert of ice. The ice sheet is about two miles thick at its deepest, and scientists drill into it to retrieve deep core samples that reveal the Earth’s past climate. There is a host of other small- and large-scale science projects that occur here including studies on glacial melting and possible environmental impacts with far-reaching effects for the planet. More than two-thirds of Greenland’s 836,000 square miles are inside the Arctic Circle. It’s so close to the magnetic pole that a compass might point down at your feet, if it could. Pilots say there are few visual reference points on the horizon. Aircraft navigators use an “old school” sextant to line up with the sun and stars and calculate positions on aeronautical charts. Weather conditions can blend a cloudy sky with the ice sheet to create a “flying inside a Ping-Pong ball” effect, which is a highly dangerous situation, pilots said, especially when trying to find remote landing sites inside thousands of miles of nowhere.

There are more than seven unimproved skiway landing sites as well as concrete and dirt runways the wing flies to, and they are spread out across the island’s eastern and western coastline and its interior ice sheet. Some dirt, coastal

opportunity for training. With these missions, plus roles in natural disaster relief and deployments in a global war on terror, the wing has groomed itself as an Air Guard unit with a fulltime schedule. They have earned four Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards for their efforts and received a grade of excellent on their last Air Force Operational Readiness Inspection.

Between late March and mid-August the wing deploys several aircraft along with nearly 60 Airmen to an operations center and flight line at Greenland’s Kangerlussuaq Airport. They rotate in on five-day deployments with

runways are comparable to assault landing strips. When exploring the unknown, missions sometimes call for the Air Guard members to land on barren ice where they are the first to put skis and feet.

Despite a clear sky and their success in landing at Camp Summit, the aircrew said returning home is often the larger challenge with skibird missions.

“There are days when the snow’s so bad that physics takes over, and you can’t take



Airmen from the 109th Airlift Wing Maintenance Squadron attach Jet Assisted Takeoff (JATO) bottles to an LC-130 Hercules “skibird” on the flight line at Kangerlussuaq Airport, Greenland. A thrust of JATO provides a few extra knots of speed to pull the aircraft’s nose up from skiways on the Greenland ice sheet.

off no matter what you do,” Doll said. When temperatures are relatively warm, often in July, the snow gets soft and sticky, which creates drag on the aircraft’s Teflon-coated skis. The drag can keep the aircraft from gaining enough ground-speed to takeoff.

Doll said pilots can reduce the drag on the skis by varying the flap settings, which can make the difference between getting airborne and waiting for better conditions, called getting “stuck-out.”

“We can [also] go up and down the skiway a couple times and find some spots that are faster than others and try to gain speed by getting to them,” Doll said. They can also lighten the aircraft by offloading any cargo they are attempting to airlift out of a camp.

Their last resort is the Jet Assisted Takeoff (JATO) bottles bolted to the side of the fuselage. A thrust of JATO is an extra push that can provide a few extra knots of skiway speed to pull the aircraft’s nose up. The only other aircraft in

the world using JATO is the Navy Blue Angels’s C-130, called Fat Albert, which performs rocket takeoffs at air shows.

Inventiveness, creativity and a shared feeling of being part of something important seems to run through the Air Guard members in Greenland. Master Sgt. Keith Audrey, flight engineer, likes to tell of the time he fixed a broken aircraft’s auxiliary power unit out on the ice sheet with a soup can, which got the engines started and everybody back to base. “You are out there,

and you don’t have any help,” Audrey said. “So you’ve got to have a ‘MacGyver’ in you.”

Soup cans aside, Airmen said they often cook meals in the barracks’ kitchen to ensure everyone eats what is close to a home-cooked meal. What free time they have is spent cooking, watching movies in a common room or trying to sleep in the 24-hour daylight.

Maintenance personnel work under the weather at Kangerlussuaq’s flight line, and the wing’s aerial port personnel and loadmasters

work in direct contact with logistics contractors for the NSF. They said their challenge is to properly handle odd-sized cargo including ice core samples, delicate scientific equipment and supplies.

“We are moving a lot of cargo and doing it efficiently and getting the cargo to the right places in a timely fashion,” said Ed Stockard, a civilian cargo coordinator from the NSF’s Arctic program.

Stockard is one of many civilians who deal daily with the Air Guard to schedule science support. “They are the only ones with the skier-Hercs, and we have projects on the ice sheet, so we are wedded in that way,” said Stockard. “We have a great working relationship.”

Loading and unloading cargo out on the ice sheet has its own challenges. The forklifts roll across the hard-packed snow on treads, and they don’t have traditional cargo loaders. “We have a sled that we slide across the snow, and it has one level,” said Senior Airmen Corey Grey. “We align it by raising and lowering the skis, then we winch the load on and off.”

With aircraft engines running, flight engineers offload fuel that powers the scientists’ equipment at remote camps. Outside, the arctic brew of engine exhaust and high altitude air can cause blackouts, so they breathe through oxygen masks.

“The exhaust, it burns your eyes, and you are already above 10,000 feet, so think about breathing in exhaust at 10,000 feet, you’re going to get quite dizzy and disoriented,” said Audrey. “We have to be able to react in an emergency.”

Not everyone from the wing’s more than 1,200 Airmen can experience the rigors of a Greenland deployment. Deployments are limited to essential personnel, like Grey, a young-faced aircraft loadmaster, who has made the trip seven times. “Last time I was up here we took ice core samples back to the states,” Grey said. “It required a ‘cold-deck’ flight, so we kept [the cargo bay] at a really low temperature, but it’s nice to be part of something like that and help the research.”

As polar airlifters, if they don’t get it right, they said it can be weeks before the schedule and weather conditions permit another flight. “We are impacting the science and the infrastructure given whatever that flight may be,” said Stockard. “I believe whatever science you do is important whether you get the right answer or not – it’s money and time well spent to further our knowledge.”

**Read a related story, “Missouri Air Guard airlifts near North Pole,” at [www.NGB.Army.mil/news](http://www.NGB.Army.mil/news)**



Master Sgt. Ray Boyea from the 109th Airlift Wing Aerial Port Squadron moves cargo July 26 on the flight line at Kangerlussuaq Airport, Greenland.



## Newsmakers



Smith

The Arkansas Army National Guard honored one of its fallen Soldiers in July by renaming a readiness center in his honor. Now known as the **Barney G. Smith** Readiness Center, the facility houses a supply and transportation company of the 39th Brigade Support Battalion, for which the late **Lt. Col. Barney G. Smith** served in various capacities.

Illinois Army National Guard Soldier **Sgt. Larry Henderson** recently made history when he graduated from drill sergeant school to become the first Illinois National Guard drill sergeant and one of the first African American drill sergeants in the history of the National Guard. "It was never really on my mind that I was going to make history," said Henderson, who is currently assigned to the Recruiting and Retention Command based in North Riverside.

Iowa Soldier **Sgt. Ryan Shaw** of the Waterloo, Iowa-based 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry Regiment, was named NCO of the Quarter April 5 and the Battalion's NCO of the Quarter March 19 in Camp Al Asad, Iraq. Shaw displayed heroics as a Humvee truck commander in Al Anbar province last September battling insurgents.



Henderson



Shaw



Taylor

Sumter, South Carolina, native **Sgt. Anthony Taylor** earned the Combat Action Badge during his deployment to Baghdad as a member of the South Carolina Army National Guard's 151st Field Artillery Brigade.

Missouri Soldiers **Staff Sgt. Dawn Mullich** and **Spc. Nicole Pendleton** recently took a day of leave to participate in the filming of a movie in St. Louis. The movie, titled "The Return" is about three Iraq war veterans who take a trip across the country after they get home. The movie stars Tim Robbins, Rachel McAdams and Michael Pena.



Pendleton & Mullich

## Guardsman wins Dept. of Army's award for work in buffer program

By **Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka**  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. -- The award on the office wall will look good for many years to come.

But the true reward for **Lt. Col. Joseph Knott**, who became the first National Guard Soldier to win the Pace Award from Headquarters, Department of the Army, on July 27, is the knowledge that the results from his superior work in 2006 that led to the award will endure forever. The award recognizes an Army staff officer whose personal efforts have made a contribution of outstanding significance to the Army.

Knott, 46, received the award, presented annually to an officer assigned to Headquarters, Department of the Army, for his work as the program manager for the Army Compatible Use Buffer Program. The program establishes buffer areas near Army and Army National Guard installations to protect endangered species and natural landscapes and to prevent incompatible development in the vicinity of military installations. The buffers significantly reduce the impact of encroachment on Soldier training and military-equipment testing.

"These buffers are forever," said Knott,

a full-time Soldier from Cincinnati, Ohio. "The thousands of acres that the Army and its partners have preserved can never be changed. That's the law. Our grandkids can walk onto that land in the future, and it's going to be the same as it is today."

According to the citation read by Joyce Morrow, administrative assistant to the Secretary of the Army, Knott partnered with the Office of the Secretary of Defense, various federal and state agencies and conservation groups to secure more than 50,000 acres of permanent buffer areas. He also ensured that 18 Army installations now have long-term plans, funding methods and actions to protect accessibility, capacity and capability for Soldier training.

"Lt. Col. Knott took this program in its infancy and turned it into the Department of Defense standard for buffer programs," said Morrow during the ceremony in the Garand Conference Room in the Pentagon. "He was the right person at the right time for this program. Through his dedication and hard work, the ACUB became the premier tool for the Army to ensure installations can continue to train Soldiers."



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Erick Studenicka

**Lt. Col. Joseph Knott is the first Guard Soldier to win the Pace Award in its 45-year history.**

Knott was passionate about the two ideals surrounding the ACUB.

"This program incorporates two of the most important things in the world – training Soldiers and preserving the environment," he said. "That dual concept is what Soldiers should take a look at when they think about the ACUB program. It enables them to continue their realistic training but also protects the Earth for their kids and grandkids."

"Those parks, nature preserves and streams that are protected now, they'll be there until no one else is around," Knott said.

## 'Guard Granny' attends basic training at 42

By **SFC Melanie R. Rowton**  
Florida National Guard

As an opportunity to fulfill her life-long dreams of traveling and learning to fly, 42-year-old Patricia A. Jones enlisted in the Florida Army National Guard last October and took advantage of the recently raised enlistment age.

Jones became the oldest "new" recruit, arriving at Basic Combat Training (BCT) just three days before her 42nd birthday.

"I had reached my full potential in my job as a business systems technician," Jones explained. "My son is married and had started his own family so I decided it was time to reclaim my life and



Photo by Sfc. Clint Boom

**Pfc. Patricia A. Jones recently became the Florida Guard's oldest "new" recruit at age 42.**

dreams. Since the age limit had been raised to 42, I knew that

would be the way for me to pursue my dreams, get paid to do it, and serve my country."

Jones enlisted as a Private First Class, completed BCT and Advanced Individual Training (AIT) as a Chinook technician. She now takes advantage of an opportunity to work full time with her unit, the 1204th Aviation Support Battalion, in Cecil Field, Fla.

The short but spirited "Guard Granny" as she calls herself jokingly, said Basic Training proved to be testing in many ways. "Physically, it was challenging for me since my only physical exercise was a couple hours of

dancing a week. I couldn't run from my car to the office door to get out of the rain without being winded," she said, which soon changed during basic training. On day one Jones was assured she would be treated fairly. "My drill sergeant, barking about my age, told me that now I was 17 just like everyone else," Jones laughed.

Luckily, she was well disciplined from her years as a single parent and sole provider for her son and she clearly had a "never quit" attitude.

**For more National Guard news, including stories, photos and video, visit [www.ngb.army.mil](http://www.ngb.army.mil)**

## Friends take cancer awareness to new level

RAPID CITY, S.D. – CHEMO IS HARD-ER.

That is the motto of two motivated friends who are champions in the fight against cancer.

South Dakota Army National Guard member **Brendan Murphy**, of Rapid City, and friend **Noland Taylor**, of Great Falls, Mont., will run 429 miles across the state of South Dakota in 14 days next year in an effort to bring awareness and to help others who are affected by cancer.

"The idea is to create awareness at a grass-roots level," said Murphy on the purpose of the Chemo is Harder Cancer Research Run. "There are some tremendously brave men and women fighting this battle, and they shouldn't have to do it alone."

Both Murphy and Taylor are well aware of the sacrifice made by family and friends in this fight as Murphy recently lost his father to the disease and his mother is a cancer survivor. Taylor's father was diagnosed with cancer last year, which led to surgery, radiation and chemotherapy.

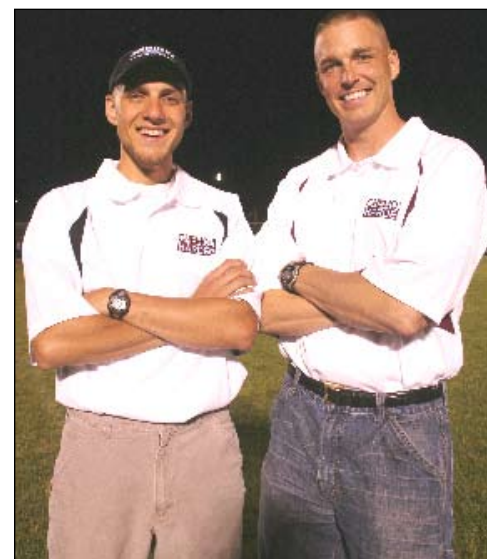
"Many of us have no idea of just how difficult it really is," said Murphy.

Taylor, who is a recreation coordinator for the Black Hills Children's Home, and Murphy hope to raise money and awareness in the name of cancer research by promoting a positive outlook on life through running and maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Murphy, who is an operations officer with the 82nd Civil Support Team in Rapid City, said the two expect to begin their journey on April 26, 2008, at Capitol, Mont., and finish on May 12 at Big Stone, Minn. They hope to average 31 miles a day.

The two friends plan on being completely self-supported during the run by pushing all their supplies and equipment in two three-wheeled strollers.

The gear is expected to weigh between 40-60 pounds and includes clothing, shelter, cooking equipment, food, water, first aid kits and communication devices.



South Dakota National Guard photo

**Noland Taylor and friend Brendan Murphy plan to run 429 miles across South Dakota in 14 days next year in an effort to bring awareness and to help others who are affected by cancer.**



# Vaccine shots leave mark on Rio Grande Valley residents

By Spc. Derek Del Rosario  
Texas National Guard

BROWNSVILLE, Texas – Four-year-old Jeremiah Burkett is ready for pre-kindergarten this fall, at least as far as immunizations go, thanks to the free vaccination service given during Operation Lone Star, a mission teaming Texas military units and local health agencies to provide free medical and dental service to South Texas residents.

Vela Middle School here is one of four sites selected for the ninth annual humanitarian mission. Among these services, various immunization shots are offered, including hepatitis, tetanus, influenza, and for the first time during Operation Lone Star, human papillomavirus (HPV).

Army National Guard Spc. Stephanie Cardenas, an emergency medical technician from the 236th Military Police Company and assigned to Texas Medical Command, is giving immunization shots to patients during her first Operation Lone Star mission. Although she has spent her military career in the medical field, this mission has been a new experience for her.

"This is the first time I have worked with civilians," Cardenas said. "Most of my medical experience has come from treating other Soldiers."

Medical personnel at the Brownsville site have administered more than 500 immunizations during the first four days of operations. They anticipate providing vaccines to more than 800 patients during their mission. Services such as these can be invaluable, since immunizations can be quite costly, according to Cardenas. For example, immunization shots for HPV can cost more than \$100.

The vaccine service being offered benefits Rio Grande Valley residents of all ages. Children can receive preventative measures for the flu, polio, measles, mumps and rubella. Female adults can guard themselves from HPV, which can be a precursor to cervical cancer. Offering the HPV vaccine for the first time is a groundbreaking initiative, according to Army National Guard Col. Marco Coppola, commander of the Texas Medical Command and the



Photo by Spc. Derek Del Rosario

**Texas Guard Spc. Stephanie Cardenas, an emergency medical technician, gives a vaccination to 4-year-old Jeremiah Burkett while he is comforted by his mother.**

Brownsville treatment site.

"Providing the HPV vaccine is a very innovative, cutting-edge initiative," Coppola said. "Health care can be hard to come by for these residents, so it is important that we provide this."

Offering the HPV vaccine is a state initiative. Coppola believes this new service is a continuing trend of

progress for Operation Lone Star and one he is promoting by using his own initiatives for this year's mission.

"This year, we are offering Motrin or Tylenol to kids before they get their shots," Coppola said. "Fever, chills and body aches can be side effects [of the vaccination shots] so offering them these medications

is a good service...most military facilities wouldn't do that."

The new vaccine could be a sign of things to come for the upcoming annual humanitarian missions. Coppola, a six-year Operation Lone Star veteran, said he feels the mission continues to make strides.

"Each year the mission grows more complex," Coppola said.

# Police dept. *rendezvous* to help at-risk youth

By Tech. Sgt. Cheryl Hackley  
National Guard Bureau

Twenty-five years ago Dave Mickelson set out to help the youth in his community. At the time he was a police detective and a member of the Army National Guard, so he had some resources he could rely on, which he continues to use through today to make a difference in Fort Collins, Colo.

After two years and two failed attempts at reaching children through a bowling league and family outings, Mickelson eventually organized the Laramie River Valley Rendezvous Camp to get youth away from the influence of their peers and to reach them with positive messages. Since the summer of 1984, camp staff have selected 40 middle-school aged children to "rough it" in the mountainous region of Larimer County for one week.

Now retired from the Fort Collins Police Department and the military, Mickelson still devotes his time to helping ensure the camp's success each summer. Currently headed up by local police officers and Guardsmen, Rendezvous Camp is intended for at-risk youth -- children who are at a greater risk of getting into trouble because of where they come from.

"These are not bad children, but they come from single family, low-income homes, and if you look at the statistics, those are the ones getting into the most trouble," said Mickelson.

To attend the camp, the sixth, seventh and eighth graders must submit an essay to the Fort Collins Police Department stating why they should be selected. In recent years, youth from Guard families where a parent is/has deployed are also eligible to register.

This year, the camp ran from July 9-13. The



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Cheryl Hackley

**Campers listen intently to Air Guard Staff Sgt. David Fort as he teaches them about survival techniques after a two-mile hike in the Roosevelt Forest in Colorado July 10.**

children who were selected were bused to the remote camp site and were told to leave behind all their electronics because they will be challenged to enjoy the outdoors. Over the course of the week, they get the opportunity to go hiking, biking, rafting, and horseback riding. For many of the campers, this is their first experience in the outdoors in that capacity, said camp staff. They slept in tents, bathed in the

river, and used portable toilets as opposed to any of their normal daily comforts of running water and electricity.

In addition to their team building exercises, the campers are educated on the dangers of drug use by the National Guard Counterdrug members helping run the camp.

Mickelson says a goal of the camp is for the youth to see positive role models: men and

women in uniform who aren't just the law or military, but a part of the community they live in.

"We want to show them we're human," he said.

After all their efforts, they have to wonder what kind of impact they have on these campers. But it's apparent in the faces of the children by Friday, according to the camp staff.

"It's amazing to see the attitude transformation over the course of the week," said Army Guard Capt. Ryan Brock, drug demand reduction administrator, Colorado National Guard Counterdrug Program. "By the end of the week, they've challenged themselves in ways they never expected to and are having a lot of fun."

Mickelson recalls months after camp one year he received a phone call from a local school. A camper from the previous summer had gotten into trouble and didn't want to talk to anyone but him. He was amazed that this girl had reached out to the police rather than just dealing directly with the school. He knew then that they were having a positive impact on the children. Today Mickelson says that student is a nurse. Mickelson hopes that the camp had a lot to do with helping her down the right path.

The camp can easily cost up to \$20,000 for the week between the food and activities for the campers and staff. Some years they've hosted as many as 70 campers, but prefer to keep the number to around 40. Funding comes from a variety of sources including private donations from the local community. And the police officers that support the camp do so on their own free time. Because of funding limitations, the Guard's role is even more important.



## From page 1: JACKSON BARRACKS

two-week annual training project at Jackson Barracks in New Orleans to prepare the site for reconstruction.

"Two of our companies traveled to New Orleans to participate in Task Force Jackson Barracks," said Maj. Larry Benton, executive officer of the 527th. "Our Soldiers spent two weeks demolishing structures that received extensive damage from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. They managed to accomplish all this while respectfully preserving the historic sites at Jackson Barracks.

"For many of our Soldiers, this was their first visit to the area after the storms of 2005. This was a much more positive experience for them than what they experienced at that time."

The decision by the Louisiana National Guard to rebuild its Jackson Barracks headquarters instead of relocating is an indication of the National Guard's commitment to New Orleans.

"This is a contributing effort to bring jobs back to New Orleans and Jackson Barracks," said 2nd Lt. Mike Smith, executive officer of Task Force Jackson Barracks. "The cost of future plans is ongoing but the estimated cost at this point and for future projects is in the hundreds of millions."

An important factor in deciding to rebuild Jackson Barracks is the historical significance it serves in Louisiana history.

"The historical value of Jackson Barracks is a heritage that started in 1834 to station troops near the river," Smith said. "The barracks, which were renamed in honor of Andrew Jackson, also served as a logistical purpose for the housing of prisoners of war from Italy and Germany during World War II."

The project includes the demolition of several buildings and the completion of extensive repairs to various historical structures. One of the main goals is to preserve its historical architecture, as Jackson Barracks is recognized as the country's largest existing group of antebellum homes.

"The scope of the projects being completed is to remove damaged structures that do not take away from the historical architecture," Smith continued. "We want to bring Jackson Barracks back to a beautiful and historical heritage for all of us to learn, live and experience."

Capt. Allen West, the individual readiness project manager for the task force, said both companies provided significant assistance toward the project.

"The 1020th began the disassembly of a metal building for relocation to Camp Beauregard," he said. "They also worked on repairing a fence and gate that was damaged by the hurricane."

He also added that, along with other projects, the Soldiers from Marksville and Pineville completed the salvage of a wooden deck from one of the metal buildings on the site.

West also said the 1022nd, whose headquarters is in West Monroe, completed the disassembly of the metal building.

"During its rotation, the 1022nd constructed a levee deck and stairs to be used to support the helicopter landing area on the levee," he said. "Along with other projects, the Soldiers also disassembled for relocation a playground set, including the removal of the area's fence and posts, as well as the removal of a concrete slab near the area."

"The 1022nd was also tasked to remove seven carports and salvaged a great deal of building material at the end of their AT," West said.



## Readying for an exercise

Staff Sergeant Jermaine Carr loads sandbags in preparation for the operational readiness exercise at the Combat Readiness Training Center, Gulfport, Miss., July 30. Carr is assigned to the 172nd Air Mobility Wing, Mississippi Air National Guard. The week-long exercise is intended to prepare Airmen for operational readiness.

Photo by Senior Airman Bradley Lail

## From page 1: PAKISTAN TALKS

people.

"It was the National Guard that was flying those (CH-47) Chinooks that were providing the airlift services that everybody in Pakistan came to recognize as angels of mercy," Ghazi said. "We are all, one and all, in Pakistan grateful for this. ... The military-to-military cooperation between the United States and Pakistan has always been very robust. It's always been a very productive relationship."

At the same time, there is always room for improvement in military-to-civilian relations, Ghazi said.

The National Guard SPP can help accomplish that, Blum said.

"It goes far beyond just military-to-military," he said. "It goes from military-to-civilian and civilian-to-civilian as quickly as the two partners want to do that."

"The only thing that limits this program is the desire of the two partners. It's much like a marriage. It's an enduring thing. Both partners have equal say in what happens. It is truly a bilateral, mutually beneficial arrangement between two nations."

Pakistan would be a significant addition to the SPP.

"This is not our first partnership, and certainly it isn't our last one, but it may be one of our most strategic SPPs," Blum said. "It's going to be very important for your nation

and ours. ... This is a very special time for our nations. Pakistan and the United States will be pivotal to both regional and world stability. We are going to have to be good strategic partners. ... Pakistan is going through a challenging time and so are we and so is the world at large."

Blum writes the family members of each Guard Citizen-Soldier or -Airman killed in connection with the Global War on Terrorism.

"Today, that is 358 people," he said. "That is less than half of the number of soldiers Pakistan has lost in the same struggle. That's not well understood in this country. You should know that the National Guard knows it, and our soldiers know it. From the bottom of my heart, I appreciate what you're doing."

Blum's gratitude is personal: His son was deployed in Afghanistan near the Pakistan border.

"His safety and safe return was largely dependent on some of the cooperative operations of some of the Pakistan armed forces that were operating on your northwestern frontier so you have a special place in my heart for your commitment," he said. "We have a mutual interest in bringing the rule of law to that region."

Objectives of the U.S.-Pakistan Senior Officers Program include enhancing cooperation and interoperability between the two nations. Activities include seminars, tours and meetings with U.S. civilian and military leaders and a military exercise.

## From page 8: ALL WINNERS

filed intelligence reports and marched 10 miles while carrying 35 pounds of equipment.

What they didn't do was sleep a whole lot. Two hours sleep on the ground, with rucksacks for pillows and nothing between them and night sky was followed by a six-point, limited-visibility land navigation course. Still, the competitors kept going, completing a 15-obstacle course and fighting each other during 30-second combatives, boxing and pugil stick bouts.

There was more: Entering and clearing a house on an urban operations range with simulated ammunition rounds and a live opposing force, also armed. Completing a 50-question written examination. Reciting the NCO or Soldier Creed from memory.

"The competitors went way over and above what our expectations were," Siter said as the Benning phase wound down. "We really were surprised to see that at the end of the competition all 14 of them were still there. All 14 of them are winners. They'll stand toe-to-toe with anybody. I would go to war with each and every one of them. It makes me really proud, more than ever, to be a Guardsman after seeing the past couple of days."

After a steak and shrimp dinner, they flew to Washington, where they faced an evaluation board that accounted for 40 percent of their overall score.

Dornbusch is a National Guard pre-air assault, basic NCO and infantry course instructor in Texas. He enlisted for active duty in 1997, joining the National Guard in 2004.

He completed the five-mile run in 32 minutes, ran the 10-mile road march and refused to tap out during combatives even when he clearly wasn't going to defeat Sgt. 1st Class Maurice Brown, his closest competitor in the Fort Benning phase.

"It's what I've been doing since I was 17," the married 28-year-old father of one said of the Army. "It's not all that I know, but I love it. It's not the pay. I just love being a Soldier. The camaraderie. I love training. I love deploying. I love all aspects."

Nowak completed the road march with 15 seconds to spare. "I knew if I stopped, I wouldn't keep going," he said. A military policeman, he enlisted in the National Guard in 2006 with no prior military experience. His preparation included a six-day-a-week personal training program.

"I've learned so much," Brewer said. "All the extra training I've received. All the people I've met."

The WTC trains Soldiers and members of other military branches in courses that include pre-ranger, light leader, air assault, pathfinder and pre-master gunner skills. About 75 percent of students come from the National Guard and 100 percent of the cadre.

Siter is planning the 2008 contest. "I think I will make it harder," he said, with a smile.

Competition at the WTC that Brewer characterized as "two days of pain" and the evaluation boards were followed by a week in the nation's capital that included visits to the White House, the National Guard Association of the United States, the Capitol, Arlington Cemetery and the Pentagon and the dinner with the chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Blum, who also entertained the six Outstanding Airman of the Year, surveyed the guests at his official residence that overlooks the Washington Channel.

"There may be a future command chief or a command sergeant major in this group," Blum said. "Or even a future chief of the bureau."

-Tech. Sgt. Mike Smith contributed to this report.



# Hunted

## Arizona infantry unit tracks insurgents in rugged Afghanistan

By Pfc. Daniel M. Rangel

22nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORWARD OPERATING BASE MEHTAR LAM, Afghanistan – Taliban and al-Qaida insurgents manufacturing improvised explosive devices in the caves and compounds of the Alishang Valley are being hunted day and night by infantrymen from the 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry Regiment, of the Arizona National Guard.

The 1-158th, combined with Afghan security forces, has been conducting regular patrols as part of a greater effort to push farther into northern Laghman province where, until recently, insurgents have been known to move relatively freely.

“We’ve seen an increase in insurgent activity in the Alishang Valley,” said 1st Lt. Darcy Jones, the battalion intelligence officer from Maricopa, Ariz.

“Foreign fighters, IED financiers, and weapons caches have been identified in the valley,” added Army Capt. Jon Cookson, the battalion plans officer from Phoenix.

The 1-158th mission in Afghanistan is two-fold. In addition to the traditional infantry missions including patrols in the



Photo by Pfc. Daniel M. Rangel

**Arizona infantrymen drenched in sweat return from a dismounted night patrol conducted July 18 in the Alishang Valley of Laghman province, Afghanistan.**

Laghman province, the battalion also provides security forces for Provincial Reconstruction Teams across Afghanistan.

“The security our troops provide the PRTs is essential so that the teams can focus on their mission – working with the local Afghans to build schools, roads, infrastructure and support for the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan,” said Army Maj. John Bozicevic, the 1-158th public affairs officer from Chandler, Ariz.

The vast majority of the unit’s Citizen-Soldiers hail from Arizona. Additional troops fill the ranks from the Individual Ready Reserve along with Hawaii, New Jersey, and New York National Guard members. For some, this is their fourth deployment in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

When not deployed, most of the Soldiers have regular full-time jobs or attend college, but after mobilizing in January, the 1-158th began training for its mission at Fort Bragg, N.C., and arrived in Afghanistan in late March.

The 1-158th Soldiers out of Forward Operating Base Mehtar Lam make regular visits to the Afghan national police compound in Laghman province to link up and conduct combined patrols.

The unit also maintains a combat outpost halfway up the Alishang in Najil in order to maintain a presence there with the Afghan Army.

During one mission, the 1-158th conducted a foot patrol in the dark and traversed many different ruins in Laghman province. For this particular mission, the unit was searching for an IED manufacturing site hidden in the bombed-out mud huts of the province.

“Night patrols deter IED emplacement in key areas,” Cookson said.

“We walk the mountains almost every day,” said Seth A. Lowell, a full-time student and Criminal Justice major from Quakertown, Pa. “We’ll hike miles.”

The team going out on the dismounted patrol conducted July 18 included Sgt. Corey Conaway from Chandler, Ariz., Sgt. Jose Rodriguez and Command Sgt. Maj. John Bauer, also from Chandler, Ariz.

The terrain is challenging and keeping a low profile requires discipline, strength and stamina.

The process of spreading the influence and authority of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan into these austere places where Humvees can’t reach begins with dismounted patrols. After securing a site, Soldiers construct a combat outpost that can store basic supplies for long-term operations.

“We want to establish a foothold in an area that’s historically been a hideout for insurgents,” Jones said.

## Task Force Phoenix aids displaced Afghan tribe

By Maj. John W. House

Task Force Public Affairs

KABUL, Afghanistan – Kuchi is a Persian word for “those who wander.” The Kuchi tribes have wandered the length and breadth of Afghanistan for centuries struggling to survive. This struggle intensified during the last 30 years of Soviet invasion, civil war, and Taliban tyranny. As a result thousands of Kuchis fled to Pakistan.

One group of Kuchi refugees, the Ahmadzai tribe, has obtained land in a vast, windswept valley southeast of Kabul. Now the Ahmadzai are returning in significant numbers.



Photo by Maj. John W. House

**Sgt. 1st Class Barbara Carter, civil military operations NCO-in-charge of Task Force Phoenix, hands out food supplies to members of the the Ahmadzai tribe in Afghanistan.**

“More [of our people] are arriving every day,” said Rasool Kahn, son of a tribal leader.

Still struggling to thrive, this indomitable people has a new ally: Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix (CJTF Phoenix), currently commanded by Brig. Gen. Robert Livingston, 218th Brigade Combat Team, South Carolina National Guard. When Lt. Col. Chuck Murff, task force civil military operations officer, learned of the Kuchis’ plight, he energized assistance for the some 3,000 families there. His first meeting with the tribal elders identified immediate needs for food and shelter.

Murff mustered resources for a substantial humanitarian assistance mission. Within a week a task force convoy carrying relief supplies was rolling across the rocky, arid desert to the camp near the village of Bagrami.

As the four trucks arrived the younger children from the camp swarmed, hoping for a treat from the Soldiers. The tribal elders gathered on the porch of the lone permanent structure to supervise. The younger men and boys got to work unloading the goods.

The mission delivered 300 tents, foodstuffs (rice, beans, oil, tea), water jugs, blankets and lanterns.

“It will be up to the elders to distribute the supplies according to need,” said Murff. “It’s a start.”

Task Force Phoenix plans continued assistance to the camp including eight wells and three school buildings. The Commanders’ Emergency Response Program (CERP), funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development, allows the Task Force commander the flexibility to initiate humanitarian projects which support the overall coalition mission in Afghanistan.

As peace and prosperity return to Afghanistan along with the exiled Kuchis, Task Force Phoenix lends a helping hand.

## Afghan police chief, Kentucky squad leader earn mutual respect

By Sgt. Jim Wilt

Combined Joint Task Force-82

QARABAGH, Afghanistan – The respect a Kentucky National Guard squad leader has for his Afghan National Police counterpart here has blossomed into near brotherhood.

“The only difference between us is the language,” said U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Matthew Linneman of Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery Brigade.

Linneman arrived in Afghanistan in March and quickly became friends with Col. Abdul Shokor, a resident of Kabul who serves as the Qarabagh District police chief. Both Soldiers are leaders, both are 51 years old and both fight against the Taliban.

Linneman said he believes in working beside the Afghan police, not in front of or behind them.

“I love taking them out on patrol with us. This is [Shokor’s] backyard,” Linneman said.

“Taliban sabat,” -- a phrase meaning “Taliban tomorrow” -- is often spoken between the two leaders. Linneman said the Afghan police often become disappointed if their joint patrols don’t find members of the Taliban.

The American said he understands there are aspects of Afghan culture he can never grasp, so he shares in the decision-making process with his Afghan friend.

“Whatever chief says goes. What ever I say goes,” Linneman said.

His respect for Shokor is partially based on the Shokor’s war-fighting experience, reflected in the five scars on his body from bullets and shrapnel.

Shokor said when he was younger he woke up one day to find tanks in his town. Shortly



Photo by Sgt. Jim Wilt

**Qarabagh District police chief, Col. Abdul Shokor, talks to Afghan policemen and U.S. Army Soldiers during a formation June 16.**

after, he started fighting the Soviet Union as a mujahedeen in a war that would ultimately defeat the Russians and fracture Afghanistan.

Shokor said he began to fight because he didn’t believe in the ideas the Russians had for his country. Soon after the defeat of the Russians, Shokor found himself fighting the Taliban.

“It is our country, we should work for the country,” he said. “As a police chief, it is my job to provide security for civilians.” Shokor’s desire to help his soldiers and the people of his district is evident to those who work under him.

Shokor spends most of his time at the Qarabagh District Center. He said he sees his wife and eight children for two days every 2-3 weeks. The rest of the time he spends in Qarabagh.

The respect Linneman and his men display toward Shokor is mirrored in the respect the American squad leader receives from the “chief” and his men.

When the Afghan policemen look for Linneman, they ask for the “commandant” or “grandfather.”

Grandfather isn’t a term spoken out of disrespect referring to the thin, grey-haired staff sergeant’s age.

It is a term of respect and means the Afghans think Linneman is a good man.



# Record number of vets receiving funeral honors

*Maine's increase indicative of rest of the Guard*

By SFC Erick Studenicka  
National Guard Bureau

Less than a decade ago, eight military honor funerals in one year equated to a busy 12 months for the Maine National Guard.

Nowadays, that would be a slow week for the Maine National Guard military funeral honors detail, which anticipates participating in about 1,100 funerals this year. (Maine was at 909 funerals on Aug. 10). That number is about 25 percent of all funeral ceremonies involving veterans in Maine this year.

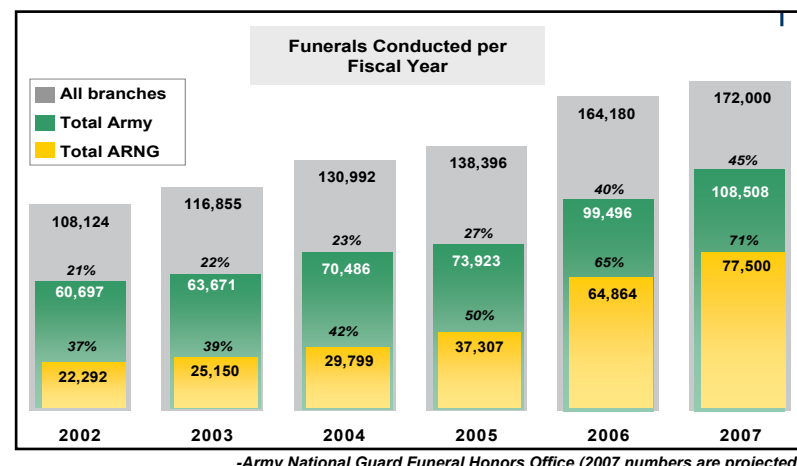
"Ten years ago, I could count on my two hands the number of military funerals we had each year," said Frank Norwood, the Maine Military Funeral Honors coordinator. "The only people who received military funerals were either very high-ranking officials or National Guardsmen who died while on duty."

The huge increase in the number of military funerals primarily stems from an ever-increasing awareness surrounding Title 10, U.S. Code 1491. Passed in 2000, the law ensures that every eligible veteran, retiree and service member is entitled to military funeral honors upon the family's request.

Norwood said all National Guard veterans who receive any type of discharge other than dishonorable are eligible for military funeral honors.

"The word has been getting out to veterans," Norwood said. "They never knew they were entitled to a military funeral."

The high number of military funeral details for the Maine National Guard is no anomaly. The increasing awareness surrounding military funeral eligibility combined with the operational tempo of the active-duty component and the reality that World War II-era service members are passing away in high numbers will lead to a record number of military funeral honors supported this year by the National Guard



across the nation. The average age of a World War II veteran at the 2000 census was 76.7 years and the Dept. of Veteran Affairs estimates about 330,000 Army veterans alone will die this year.

According to 1st Lt. Stephen Warren, the ARNG Program Manager of Funeral Honors, the Army Guard is likely to conduct more than 77,500 funerals nationwide in fiscal year 2007 and more than 90,000 in 2008. The 2007 number equates to more than 70 percent of the total number of funerals conducted by the Army.

The Air National Guard also contributes extensively to military funeral honor details. Over the past three fiscal years, the Air National Guard has officially performed approximately 12 percent of all Air Force military funeral honor details; however, that statistic is misleading as Air National Guard airmen have unofficially assisted in many more military funeral honor details in support of the active-duty Air Force. Through July 17 of the 2007 fiscal year, that 12 percent number has jumped to 16 percent, as the Air National Guard had officially performed 3,569 of the 21,774 military funerals performed by the Air Force since Oct. 1, 2006.

"We do not have a funeral honors program per se; rather, our local Air Guard Wings provide the manpower that enables many of the active duty Air Force bases to accomplish their mission of providing funeral honors," said Master Sgt. Cali Garcia, Military Funeral Honors program manager at the Air National

Guard Bureau at Andrews Air Force Base.

Garcia said there are currently 198 National Guard Airmen on orders supporting the military funeral honors mission and the states conducting the most military funeral details are Maryland, Missouri and New York.

In Maine, the 1,100 funerals the honor detail will perform this year is about 350 more than last year and nearly 700 more than the 2005 total of 424, Norwood said.

Those numbers pale in comparison to the military funeral honors numbers in larger states with a higher number of veterans. Topping the list this year is New York with 8,525 services performed already this year. The Missouri National Guard has participated in 7,800 services this year and the other states in the top-five are California (6,362), Tennessee (4,814) and Florida (3,333).

By law, a military funeral honors detail consists of two or more uniformed military person, with at least one being a member of the veteran's parent service. The law also states a funeral honors detail will include the folding of a U.S. flag and presentation of the flag to the veteran's family and the playing of Taps, either by a bugler or with audio equipment.

Families who wish to request military funeral honors for a deceased veteran can make the request through their funeral director. The director will contact the appropriate military service to arrange for a funeral honors detail.



Courtesy of Frank R. Norwood

The recent passage of new laws combined with a high number of veterans passing away has led to a dramatic jump in the totals of military funeral honors across the nation.

## Honors program funded in Alaska

For the first time in the history of the Alaska Army National Guard, a Military Funeral Honors program has been officially funded by the National Guard Bureau.

"This is a new program for the state," said Rod Julian, Military Funeral Honors coordinator. "Alaska has 67,000 veterans, that's more per capita than any other state."

Veterans with honorable military discharges and retired veterans with

honorable military discharges are eligible for military honors. The program, which is supported by National Guard Soldiers, was officially started by a specialist in 1/207th Aviation, Alaska Army National Guard.

"I started this for the Alaska Guard because I felt it was the honorable thing to do," said Spc. Shawn Francis of the 1/207th Aviation and new Military Funeral Honors NCOIC.

-Alaska Public Affairs

## Funeral honors 'details'

Department of Defense Directive 1300.15 states that Military Funeral Honors details will be standardized. Three variations of details are authorized:

⇒ **Three-Person Detail:** The three person detail will consist of one officer-in-charge, one servicemember and a bugler. A three-person detail is authorized to provide funeral honors for veterans. Veterans are defined as former servicemembers who received an honorable discharge.

⇒ **Seven-Person Detail:** The seven person detail consists of one officer-in-charge, five servicemembers and a bugler. A seven-person detail is autho-

rized to provide funeral honors for the following: retired servicemembers, currently-serving National Guard and Reserve servicemembers not killed in action and active duty servicemembers not killed in action.

⇒ **Full Honors:** Full Honors funerals are reserved for Soldiers that die or are killed while on duty or are Medal of Honor winners. The full honors detail consists of 21 servicemembers. The detail consists of one officer-in-charge, six pallbearers, one firing party NCOIC, a seven-person firing party, a bugler, a four-person color guard and a chaplain. (Courtesy of Frank R. Norwood, Maine Military Funeral Honors)



# Katrina relief beyond New Orleans

**What a Western state did to help a Gulf state**

**By Bill Boehm**

National Guard Bureau

*Second of a two-part series.*

The destruction in New Orleans from Katrina may have grabbed the majority of national focus, but the area damaged by the 2005 hurricane covered over 80,000 square miles of land in Louisiana, Mississippi, and Alabama. The rural parts of these states experienced great loss of life and property damage. In counties and parishes, the National Guard responded with an unprecedented sense of urgency and unity. This spirit was echoed in the rescue and recovery operations in Mississippi, as well as rural Plaquemines Parish south of New Orleans.

Gov. Haley Barbour initially activated over 700 Mississippi National Guardmembers Aug. 26, 2005, in anticipation of the arrival of the storm. Faced with the prospect of a mammoth Category 5 storm, the overwhelmed state gained assistance from Guard units in neighboring states and beyond. Mutual aid agreements between states helped the Guard to be the first military responder. Within 96 hours of the storm's arrival, Mississippi had about 6,000 troops from 16 supporting states and the District of Columbia at its disposal to administer life-saving operations and provide a measure of assurance to the damaged area.

Whereas flooding from failed levees caused the majority of problems in New Orleans, wind and storm surge caused the bulk of damage in Mississippi. Among the



*Courtesy 2-200th Infantry, New Mexico Army National Guard.*

**New Mexico Guardsmen wearing protective waders and safety equipment start cleanup operations in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina in Plaquemines Parish, La., Sept. 7, 2005.**

three affected states, in terms of land area, Mississippi suffered the most damage, including the inland areas. The combination of ferocious 140 mile-per-hour gusts and 15-foot waves leveled structures to their foundations, and stripped lush forests of their vegetation. The governor declared every county in the state a disaster area.

A broad range of assistance and assets from other states' National Guards arrived in Mississippi as the devastation widened. This included the highly-specialized ISISCS (Interim SATCOM Incident Site Command Set) team that drove from Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania to Gulfport, the 148th Air Ambulance units from Georgia and the 115th Military Police battalion from Maryland.

Although close to New Orleans, much of the area in Plaquemines Parish, La., is rural and lies next to waterways. This was where the hurricane first reached landfall on Aug. 29, near the community of Buras.

Once Guard leadership established multi-state task forces in order to provide aid and comfort to the stricken Louisiana parishes, it chose the New Mexico Guard to aid the devastated communities of the Plaquemines region.

This particular choice of units was wise. Having a component of men and women from a small and mostly rural state, many of whom had civilian job experiences that

meshed well with the most crucial needs of the parish as it attempted to rebound. Task Force Plaquemines, as it was called, did a wide number of jobs. These included repairing a water treatment facility after flooding, pumping water out of flooded areas, hauling away debris, delivering hay to stranded livestock, and even returning dislodged caskets to their proper resting places.

The willingness of the New Mexico contingent to "get their hands dirty" and aid the devastated residents of the parish in their darkest hour ultimately built a lasting friendship. This bond was so strong, that the Parish invited the New Mexico Soldiers and Airmen to a congratulatory celebration back in Louisiana one year after the storm.

This spirit of cooperation was best summarized by a company commander from the 2-200 Infantry, Capt. Danny Olson, who stated, "in my 18 years in the military, it was by far the most rewarding experience I've ever had .... we had entire families coming out and thanking the guys .... We were out there, helping our own, helping the citizens of the United States."

These remarks underscore the importance of the National Guard's work in its response to our nation's worst natural disaster, as it brought out the best that Citizen-Soldiers have to offer in times of need.

## It happened in September

**Events that made Guard history**

**Sept. 2, 1945**

Japan signs terms of surrender to the Allies, ending World War II in the Pacific Theater. The Japanese cede control of the Korean peninsula, where the 40th Infantry Division (CA, NV) serves as an occupation force. Many other National Guard units will return there when war breaks out nearly five years later, in June 1950.

**Sept. 4, 1940**

President Franklin D. Roosevelt orders all units of the National Guard into federal service for one year, effective 16 September 1940. This mobilization is taken in anticipation of the widening war in Europe and will continue for another six months in order to facilitate demands for Soldier quartering and related facilities.

**Sept. 11, 2001**

Arab terrorists hijack four commercial jets in an attack against the mainland United States, the first such transgression since 1916. In the days after the attack, Guardmembers are put into state active duty status, patrolling strategic infrastructure and monitoring U.S. borders.

**Sept. 13, 1847**

American forces under the command of Gen. Winfield Scott battle Mexican army and military cadets in the Battle of Chapultepec in Mexico City. Guard units, spearheaded by South Carolina troops assaulting the Chapultepec castle for a second time, were able to provide key support to American forces, thereby enabling the U.S. Army to capture Mexico City and hasten the end of the Mexican War.

**Sept. 17, 1862**

The Battle of Antietam is fought near Sharpsburg, Md. It's was the single bloodiest day in American military history, with about 23,000 casualties from both Union and Confederate armies, with many small skirmishes between Guard units taking place throughout the day.

# WWII Soldier honored on 100th birthday

**By Maj. Scott Bell**

South Carolina National Guard

SUMTER, S.C. – The century-long life of Col. Hugh F. Knight of Sumter was celebrated Aug. 3 by family, friends, civic and military leaders at a Sumter Kiwanis Club meeting held at the Sunset Country Club.

A WWII hero with the South Carolina Army National Guard's 178th Field Artillery Battalion, Knight served as the battalion's operations officer through much of the North African and Italian campaigns. The only exception was for the several weeks of service when Knight served as the acting battalion commander after the commander was wounded in action and evacuated from Italy.

Because of the unit's expert "precision of fires" supporting Gen. Mark W. Clark's 5th Army forces during their breakthrough

of the German troops holding the Gustav Line, Knight's beloved 178th was often called upon for the toughest missions. In fact, Knight's unit had an unsurpassed 630 days of combat, including 249 consecutive days on the frontline while serving in the European theater of operations.

From the battalion's initial baptism of fire in North Africa during the Tunisian campaign to firing the first allied artillery rounds during the invasion of Europe to the unconditional surrender of German forces in Italy, Knight's battalion fired 155,142 rounds from their towed 155 mm howitzers while occupying 89 different firing positions throughout Tunisia, Sicily and Italy.

For their actions at the breaching of the Gustav Line on July 27, 1944, Gen. A. Juin, the corps commander of the French expeditionary

force, awarded the battalion the prestigious Croix De Guerre with the vermillion star.

The following year Knight and his men celebrated Victory in Europe Day when the German surrender was signed in Berlin on May 8, 1945. Besides unit commendations, members of Knight's battalion received three Legion's of Merit, one Distinguished Flying Cross, 23 Silver Stars, six Air Medals, one Soldiers Medal, 52 Bronze Stars and 116 Purple Hearts.

Fifteen of the nearly 800 men who served with the 178th paid the ultimate price during the war to liberate Europe. In honor of these men, the last line from the poem "Marion's Men" was included in the official history of the unit following the war. It reads, "For Marion's Men were True and Tried: We'll ne'er forget how they fought and died."



*Photo by Maj. Scott Bell*

**During Col. Hugh Knight's 100th birthday celebration, he was presented with the Palmetto Cross—the highest military award a South Carolina Army Guard Soldier can receive from the state's Military Department.**



## Georgia mom, daughter featured in magazine

Georgia Army Guardmembers 1st Sgt. Gladys Estrada Portwine and her daughter Spc. Lucretia Portwine were featured in the July/August issue of Hallmark Magazine in its cover story about America, patriotism and faith.

It is a story told by mother and daughter and focuses on their time together in the war zone and on the crocheted cross that helped carry them through the tough times.

In early March, Hallmark editors made a nationwide appeal to National Guard units across the country searching for a female Soldier who served overseas in support of the Global War on Terrorism. A second request was for whose mother



a Soldier may have also served in the military at one time, perhaps during World War II or Korea. The editors had assumed it was unlikely to find a mother and daughter who had served together, especially in combat environment.

That unlikely mother-daughter scenario was found in the Georgia Army National Guard, however. 1st Sgt. Portwine, an 18-year veteran of the Georgia Army National Guard, was part of a year-long deployment in 2005-06.

Daughter Lucretia, a nearly 6-year veteran, actually preceded mom to the war zone by six months. For more than six months, both were deployed to the region.

Shooting for the cover story took place in April at the Oglethorpe Armory.

-Georgia National Guard Public Affairs

# Summer vacation to remember

## Arizona family helps rebuild home damaged by Katrina

By 1st Lt. Dan Dodson  
Arizona National Guard

TUCSON AIR NATIONAL GUARD BASE, Ariz. – Top summer destinations for families this year include theme parks, tropical beaches and sight-seeing tours.

Manual labor in the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast is one vacation package that didn't make the list.

For one Air National Guard family, recent holiday travel plans took them to Biloxi, Miss., to help rebuild a home damaged by Hurricane Katrina.

Tech. Sgt. Mark Hernandez, his wife Christine, and their extended family made volunteering their labor a priority during their summer vacation this year.

While planning a Caribbean cruise, Christine Hernandez wanted to include time to help out with the devastation caused by the category 5 hurricane.

"She wanted to give back to the community where she grew up," said Hernandez, a 15-year pneudraulic specialist with Tucson's 162nd Fighter Wing.

Christine called various relief agencies before leaving on the cruise to schedule a time when they could work for a day, but none accepted her offer.

"I remember she called Habitat for Humanity and they could not believe that we wanted to go there on vacation to help out," Hernandez said.



Courtesy photo

**Tech. Sgt. Mark Hernandez installs ceiling panels on a home damaged by Hurricane Katrina. He and his family spent part of their summer vacation rebuilding this Biloxi, Miss., home.**

They discovered that many support agencies are cautious about whom they let volunteer due to crime. The family learned that some people show up claiming they want to assist with the clean up but then steal tools or pillage the area.

A bit disappointed, the Hernandez family embarked on their vacation without set plans to help. With Christine, her parents Walter and Lucina Colby, his ex-wife Anita Martin, his children Brianna and Yvette, and his niece Courtney Wagner, Hernandez took off for the coast.

In Biloxi, Christine and her parents were driving around looking for the house where she grew up when they spotted a sign along the road posted by the Hope Crisis Resource Network asking for volunteers. They called the number and quickly volunteered to reconstruct a hurricane-damaged home the next day.

"The area where we were was one that was severely flooded by the hurricane," Hernandez

said.

For an entire day, the family worked side by side with other volunteers rebuilding the house.

"It gave them a new perspective on life," said Hernandez, referring to his children Briana and Yvette. "They got to see how volatile nature can be and how thankful we should be for what we have."

"The memory of this life lesson of giving back will last much longer and be of more value to our kids than any other vacation plans we could have made," he said.



# Ohio couple sustain love throughout long deployment

## 'We'd do it again'

By Spc. Levi Preston  
Ohio National Guard

COLUMBUS, Ohio -- Sitting quietly in his apartment, Spc. Michael Carden's hands are steady as he works diligently on a broadcast script. Carden is an accomplished broadcast journalist working with the 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment located in Columbus. He is a communications student, a husband and a father.

But Carden is also something else. He's a veteran of one of the most trying wars the nation has ever seen, and he is a survivor.

Combat has changed throughout the years, as have the men who have fought in it. As technology has advanced, overall American casualty rates have gone down, but one statistic has increased as the war has progressed.

According to a USA Today article, there were 7,152 divorces last year among enlisted Soldiers, 28 percent more than in 2003 and a 53 percent increase since 2000, despite little change in the number of Soldiers in the Army over this time frame.

The specialist sits, struggling to tell his story, a survivor not only of a war overseas and a struggle at home. But Carden is the exception – he's the happily-married war veteran.

"My situation is unique in that (my wife) Jamie and I began dating in high school," Carden said. "We had continued dating through her first few years of school and my active-duty time as a cavalry scout, but by the time this deployment (Carden's unit deployed to Iraq from February 2004 to February 2005) came up, we'd stayed together despite separations for five and one-half years already. It was old hat for us."

Carden recognizes the importance of keeping up to speed



Courtesy photo

**Ohio Spc. Michael Carden, wife Jamie and daughter Nora.**

with the ever-changing technologies in the struggle to stay connected with a loved one.

"You have to keep in touch through e-mail as much as possible and photos and videos have their place as well, but people have to realize the importance of the old-fashioned care package," Carden said. "In Iraq we'd get a package and it didn't matter how many mortar rounds had exploded how many yards from me, this was a great day."

Just prior to being separated from his now-wife Jamie by his Iraq deployment, Carden began to feel a lingering angst, a need to solidify his love while time still remained.

"I was an assistant youth pastor at my church, and so the

night I was going to tell the kids I had been deployed was also the night I decided to propose, so I went and got three dozen red roses," he said.

The children presented his wife with the rosebuds one-by-one as she stood confused. Carden then knelt and presented her with the final rose on bended knee.

"She was excited, so it took away some of the lingering gloom of the deployment and it made the kids feel great because they got to be a part of something," he said. "These are the things you have to do if you expect love to sustain."

Telling other people's stories is never easy in a war zone, but pen in hand, Carden struggles as he describes his own time overseas and the difficulties in discussing things with his wife upon his return.

"There are things that I saw over there that I'm not comfortable talking about," Carden said. "She knows I'm not at that place yet and that one day I'll share with her, but the support is what any Soldier needs when they first arrive home."

Carden insists that Soldiers be mindful when discussing everyday happenings with their loved ones in the United States.

"You don't share certain things when you're over there," Carden said. "There's no sense in me telling my wife that a mortar round landed 40 meters away today. She's just going to worry and there's nothing she can do about things that are out of her control."

Carden said this is the kind of consideration Soldiers must have for the ones they care about.

It paid off for Carden. He returned home with his family awaiting him. Others are not so lucky.

"Love endures," Carden said. "This story is hard to tell but when you're asked, you go, and you tell it later. I love my wife and we'd do it again."