



# THE ON GUARD

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Newspaper of the National Guard



## Congress commends Minnesota unit for record deployment

By **Sgt. Mary Flynn**  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The 110th Congress has recognized a Minnesota Army National Guard unit for spending a long time in harm's way during the Global War on Terrorism.

The House of Representatives passed a Concurrent Resolution Oct. 1 that commended Soldiers in the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division, for completing a record deployment to Iraq. The unit's 22-month deployment is the longest continuous deployment of any military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Minnesota Congressman Tim Walz, a retired Army Guard command sergeant major, and seven other House members sponsored the resolution. Minnesota Sen. Amy Klobuchar sponsored the Concurrent Resolution in the Senate where it passed in July.

The 1/34th Brigade Combat Team received alert orders in July 2005. The Soldiers were mobilized that September and trained throughout the winter before deploying in March 2006. Originally set to return in February 2007, the unit was extended for four months as part of President George W. Bush's "surge" strategy.

During its deployment, the team completed 5,200 combat logistics patrols and secured 2.4 million convoy miles. The Soldiers discovered

**UNIT RECOGNIZED** *continued on: Page 12*



U.S. Army photo

More than 4,000 troops of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division assemble in the shape of the "Red Bull" unit crest in 2006 before their deployment to Iraq.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa

## Plunging into training

A CH-47 Chinook drops a Soldier into Lake Kingsley during training at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, Fla., Sept. 27. Florida Army National Guard aviators and Soldiers teamed up to practice helocasting diving techniques from the back of the Chinook. **See story and more photos on page 8.**

## Recruiting and retention numbers exceed goal

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

ARLINGTON, Va. – During Fiscal Year 2007, the Army National Guard exceeded its congressional end strength goal for the first time in more than three years, and the Air National Guard just missed its annual goal by 746 Airmen.

The Department of Defense announced these achievements at a press conference at the Pentagon Oct. 10 when it released the recruiting and retention statistics for the National Guard as well as for the nation's active and reserve components.

The Army Guard reported its 2007 fiscal year end strength at 352,707, which surpasses its congressional end strength goal of 350,000, a bar it had not surpassed since May 2004.

The Army Guard grew in its last two fiscal years by 19,530 Soldiers.

"It's the largest growth in the Department of Defense since the draft era," said Lt. Col. Gregg Bliss, recruiting and sustainment branch chief for the Army Guard. "It's been a tremendous year, not in just recruiting, but in retaining Soldiers and reducing our losses to go almost 3,000 over our end strength."

The Air Guard nearly reached its end strength goal of 107,000 Airmen with a reported strength of 106,254 or 99.3 percent of its goal. It also came close to its retention goal of 9,915 by retaining 9,639 Airmen, or 97.2 percent. The Air Guard reached 93.3 percent of its recruiting goal.

"The Army Guard, I think is a particularly important success story," said the Under Sec-

## Guardsmen compete with Army's top 24 warriors

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

FORT LEE, Va. – Out in a field here behind an operations center for the U.S. Army's 2007 Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year event, Staff Sgt. Mark Dornbusch and Spc. Erik Nowak both made the same sportsman's comment about their final days of competitive soldiering: it was less about winning or losing and more about the journey and the experience for the National Guard.

Nowak, Army National Guard Soldier of the Year, and Dornbusch, the Army Guard's NCO of the Year, had joined 24 other Soldiers from 12 major Army commands resting in the afternoon shade Oct. 3 to await the final deciding events for the Army's best warrior.

The Army's top NCOs and Soldiers of the year competed Oct. 1 – 5 for the title. It was the first time that the Army National Guard and Army Reserve had competed with the active duty Army as separate entities. For that, Nowak and Dornbusch will always be

**ARMY'S TOP 24** *continued on: Page 11*

**TOP  
WARRIORS**  
**Staff Sgt.**  
**Jason Seifert**  
NCO OF THE YEAR  
**Spc. Heyz**  
**Seeker**  
SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

retary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, David S.C. Chu, who called attention to the Army Guard's achievements in recruiting high school diploma graduates.

Nearly 92 percent of the Army Guard's non-prior service recruits have high school diplomas. Bliss said that number surpassed the DoD's goal.

Bliss said that as well as recruiting quality Soldiers, the states adjutants general and Army Guard leaders kept good Soldiers in the Guard. The Army Guard's retention numbers for the fiscal year show it also surpassed its goal by retaining 140 more Soldiers above a targeted 37,578.

**NUMBER EXCEEDS**  
*continued on: Page 12*

Guard fires up for California wildfire relief: Page 16



# An original Guard veteran? Check out this Church

## ABOUT THE ON GUARD

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E-mail your stories to us by the first Friday of each month. We prefer that photos be high-quality digital (300 dpi or more) and e-mailed to:

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Jermaine Walker

## First of a two-part series.

It is easy to understand why the King Philip's war and the name Benjamin Church do not resonate with the vast majority of Americans, including just about every member of the National Guard.

We have, after all, been a bit brainwashed when it comes to our own National Guard heritage, which holds that the Guard, and its militia forebears, have participated in every one of our country's wars – from the Revolution to the Global War on Terrorism.

We have gotten the impression that while the National Guard was born in Salem, Mass., on Dec. 13, 1636, it really didn't do a hell of a lot until the Minutemen faced off against British regulars at Lexington and Concord, again in Massachusetts, in April 1775, more than 138 years later.

Well, it's time to set the record straight, even if I do trespass into the realm of Guard history so capably chronicled in this newspaper by far more learned historians such as John Listman and Bill Boehm.

I feel the need because November is when we honor our military veterans, alive and dead, and December is when we celebrate the Guard's birthday – its 371st come next month.

Benjamin Church is a veteran worth remembering this month, even though he was loyal to the English crown and even though his war might not be considered politically correct by today's standards. He was an Indian fighter. He was committed to homeland defense during the 17th century when that expression meant something considerably different than it means today. It meant protecting English citizens from the ravages of the people whose lands they were occupying in order to build new lives in the New World.

To cut to the chase: if Massachusetts is the birthplace of the National Guard, then Benjamin Church of Plymouth was one of its founding fathers. Furthermore, he fought in the same way that Guard Soldiers are being trained to fight in this country today. He organized rapid response outfits. He took the fight to the enemy. He did not hunker down and wait for the enemy to come to him.

This happened in 1675-76, a hundred years before the American Revolution, during the King Philip's War which was "the first great war in American history and a traumatic conflict that threatened the very existence of the colonies," according to Michael Doubler in his book "I Am The Guard," the definitive history of the Army National Guard.

In the National Guard's history, the King Philip's War has been overshadowed by other events: the Revolutionary War, the Civil War, San Juan Hill, and World Wars I and II, among them.

But it was a big deal at the time, because the Indians, led by a man the English named King Philip, were making life extremely uncomfortable for the colonists in southern New England. The Indians may not have had the firepower to drive the settlers back into the sea, but the settlers decided that enough was enough – that something had to be done.

It all points to the fact that relations between the settlers and the

**Over the course of several months, Church's unit became the spearhead of the New England militia's efforts as he launched a series of punishing raids aimed at the destruction of Indian food supplies.**

Native-Americans was a constant state of consternation from the outset and that, in the absence of a standing army, the militia – the National Guard – assumed the responsibility for homeland security and homeland defense a few hundred years before the regular Army's cavalry battled the Sioux and Apaches in the West and before such names as Osama bin Laden became known to every



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

American household.

"King Philip was the English name the colonists bestowed upon the chieftain of the Wampanoag Indians who had considerable influence with the other New England tribes," Doubler reports. "Various

acts of vandalism in the summer of 1675 soon led to a state of war between the colonists and Indian tribes inhabiting the lands from Cape Cod to the upper Connecticut River."

The big showdown, the war's most famous battle, took place on Dec. 19, 1675, a little more than 39 years after the National Guard's birth. It was called the Great Swamp Fight. A combined force

of 1,000 militiamen from Massachusetts and Connecticut, aided by Indian allies, raided the main settlement of the Narragansett Indians who had taken refuge in Rhode Island's Great Swamp.

"Attacking in bitter cold and deep snows, the militia destroyed and burned the settlement," Doubler writes. "The Indians resisted valiantly with hundreds killed while the colonists lost approximately 200 men."

Benjamin Church came into his own after that, at the time when colonists became more effective fighters by adopting Indian tactics and employing Indian allies, according to Doubler. Church was considered the most effective Indian fighter of his time. He was an early American Ranger.

"Church organized a special company that combined militiamen and Indians into a single unit and blended European discipline with Native American stealth to create new tactics for forest warfare," Doubler states.

"Over the course of several months, Church's unit became the spearhead of the New England militia's efforts as he launched a series of punishing raids aimed at the destruction of Indian food supplies. The war effectively ended on August 12, 1676, when Church's men killed King Philip in an ambush."

What they did with King Philip's body, cutting off the head and hands and cutting the torso into quarters and hanging each quarter from a different tree, seems barbaric indeed by today's standards. But, like it or not, that was the way of it back then.

What Church and those who fought with him really achieved was homeland security for the New England's settlers – the same sense of security that National Guard troops are securing today from the New York City railroad stations to the southwest border.

"The most significant outcome was that the militia had provided an adequate defense of the colonies, broken the power of the New England Indian tribes, and gained the long-term security of the region's white settlements," Doubler concludes.

It started a trend that the Guard has carried on for well over three centuries. That's why when you take a moment or an hour to pay tribute to our veterans on Nov. 11, you might want to say a prayer of thanks for an English subject and an American patriot named Church.

*Next month: the New England way of life that the militia protected.*



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# Ohio air show features World War II Mustangs



Photo by Staff Sgt. Douglas Nicodemus

A P-51, F-15, F-16 and F-22 fly in formation in a Heritage Flight at the Gathering of Mustangs and Legends Airshow at Rickenbacker International Airport Sept. 30.

## Rickenbacker's first in 10 years brings out 250,000 fans of flight

By Senior Airman David Conrad  
Ohio National Guard

COLUMBUS, Ohio - James Denman was one of the first to arrive at Ohio's Rickenbacker International Airport for the Gathering of Mustangs and Legends, a four-day air show hosted in conjunction with Air Force Heritage Week held Sept. 27-30.

Denman set up his chair six hours before the first plane took off. "I just want to make sure I hear their engines as they take off; I've really missed that sound," Denman said. With the roar of those engines came a flood of memories.

Under the wing of a P-51 Mustang,

Denman's mind wandered to his wife, old friends, and a life as a P-51 mechanic in the U.S. Air Force. Time has taken all of them away from the 85-year-old retired master sergeant, but at the air show he smiled through a heavy tear.

"The P-51 was the first plane I ever worked on, and this weekend is bringing back everything. It's overwhelming; I don't know what else to say," said Denman, as he used a metal folding chair as a cane and walked slowly to the show's grandstand Thursday morning.

Rickenbacker International Airport, now home to both civilian and Ohio Air National Guard aircraft, once was an active-duty Army air base where Denman worked for 28 years as a mechanic on the P-51, the legendary long-range fighter that escorted bombers to their targets during World War II and helped the Allies gain air

superiority.

He joined more than 250,000 spectators who came from around the world to the quaint central Ohio village of Obetz over the weekend to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Air Force in an air show that was promised as a "once in a lifetime aerial celebration." The last time Rickenbacker put on an air show was 1997, coinciding with the Air Force's 50th anniversary.

Under the blue skies that held out for the long weekend, 10-year-old Oliver Anderson, a self-proclaimed air show connoisseur, said the gathering soared well above its hype.

"I've been to six air shows now, and this is by far the best," said Anderson, who flew from Illinois with his dad to see the show. "It's just so much bigger than anything I've ever seen before."

There were 82 Mustangs, and a variety of other new and old war birds both on display and demonstrated. Static displays and aerial performances included Air Force bombers, fighters, refuelers and cargo aircraft.

Two-year-old Zach Ertel of the Columbus area said he really liked the "blue one," and pointed to a row of more than 50 planes in front of him; many of them blue.

"If it's a plane, it's his favorite," his father Marty said.

The show celebrated both the heritage of the older war planes and the new fighters with daily flyovers of F-22s and F-16s soaring, wing-tip to wing-tip, with P-51s.

### Old Stories

The crowd was just as diverse as the aircraft.

Among a group of elementary school kids with grandparents and teenagers with funnel cakes, were more than 50 legendary Mustang war pilots who gave speeches and autographs throughout the weekend, including Roscoe C. Brown Jr.

Brown called the event, which was hosted next door to the Air National Guard's 121st Air Refueling Wing, "a real high point" in his life.

Rickenbacker used to be called Lockbourne Army Air Base. The once active-duty Air Force base was home to the Tuskegee Airmen, the first all-black military unit in the United States who garnered national attention and awards for their impressive combat record in World War II. Brown was their commander.

"This is a very bittersweet time for a lot of us," he said. "Here we are forced to think about all the people we lost, but at the same time we're also very proud to have played a role in making this country the way it is today. I told my son this morning: the world has really changed."

Brown said he enjoyed reflecting with old pilots and friends, watching flights and sharing stories over the weekend. "And most of (the stories) were true," he joked.

Next to him, retired P-51 pilot Bob "Punchy" Powell said "some people call us heroes, or legends, but we don't consider ourselves as heroes of any kind. We were just kids ... who did what they had to do. I looked up legend in the dictionary and it just means old."

## First active associate unit first to deploy to Iraq

Reports to Wyoming  
Air National Guard unit

By Staff Sgt. LuCelia Ball  
332nd Air Expeditionary Wing

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq - Shortly after its first birthday, the Air Force's first active associate unit is preparing to deploy here in October to support the Global War on Terrorism.

Activated in July 2006, the 30th Airlift Squadron is the first active duty Air Mobility Command squadron to operationally report to an Air National Guard unit, the 153rd Airlift Wing, Wyo.

The unit will deploy with two C-130 Hercules aircraft, three aircrews and maintainers to support the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing's intra- and inter-theater airlift mission.

When the Air Mobility Command unit activated, the active duty members were moved to the Air National Guard base at Cheyenne, which provided aircraft, equipment and infrastructure to share with the active-duty personnel.

"I supply the manpower," said Lt. Col. Steven Hopkins, 30th AS commander. "We share everything - the Guard sponsors everything. We provide the flying hours and the operations and management money to support what we need. But the infrastructure and equipment is supplied by the Guard."

The reason for the activation was to embody the idea of the total force concept.

"Future total force was developed as early as 2005," he said. "That's when we were developing a way, with all the C-130 issues, to access more of the Air National Guard and Reserves' C-130s. They had flyable, reliable airplanes, and the active duty planes were getting old and needed to be replaced. This concept was conceived because of the need to have the additional capability."

One of the organization's senior enlisted members said the advantages of the Total Force package have already been realized.

"It's been a great learning experience on the maintenance side because the cultures are so different," said Master Sgt. Rick Johnson, 30th AS maintenance production superintendent. "The Guard maintainers have so much knowledge and experience to share. Most of these guys have been with their aircraft since it rolled off the assembly line, and they have so much pride and ownership in their work. Our active duty Airmen have embraced this concept."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Douglas Nicodemus

A group of six recruits begin their enlistment in the Ohio Air National Guard at the 2007 Gathering of Mustangs and Legends Air Show in Columbus, Ohio.



## ALASKA

The Last Frontier State's 210th and 212th Rescue Squadrons rescued a downed pilot Oct. 7 after responding to an emergency locator transmitter and a concurrent report concerning an overdue aircraft in the Knik River valley. The 11th Rescue Coordination Center tasked the 210th and 212th at 10:55 p.m. that Sunday, and they responded with an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter and pararescuemen. At 11:51 p.m. the aircraft crash site was discovered, and the pilot was rescued and transported to the Anchorage International Airport where he was turned over to international airport law enforcement.

## ARKANSAS

The Natural State hosted over 350 of the top marksmen in the National Guard representing all 54 states and territories at the 37th Winston P. Wilson National Championship Matches beginning Oct. 10. The matches are conducted annually at Camp Joseph T. Robinson and run concurrently with the Armed Forces Skill at Arms Meeting (AFSAM), an international marksmanship competition. This year's AFSAM has over 100 competitors from Canada, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Norway, and the United States.

## COLORADO

Members of the Centennial State National Guard gathered Oct. 2 to mourn the passing of Brig. Gen. Felix Sparks, the former Colorado Guard Ground Forces commander, Colorado Supreme Court Justice and World War II hero, who helped liberate the Nazi concentration camp at Dachau. Sparks enlisted in the active Army in 1936. During WWII he fought in Italy and also liberated prisoners from the horror of Dachau, earning two Silver Stars in support of freedom.

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

An eight-man team from the Granite State's 54th Troop Command took part in a multinational peacekeeping conference sponsored by U.S. Southern Command and hosted by U.S. Army South and the Salvadoran Armed Forces Aug. 20-25. Peacekeeping Operation North focused on the concerns of nations in Central and South America and the Caribbean. More than 200 representatives from 22 Latin American countries gathered to discuss issues and challenges affecting peacekeeping operations worldwide.

## OREGON

A C-17 Globemaster III arrived at Kingsley Field in the Beaver State Oct. 5 to pick up a fire truck to be shipped to Nicaragua as part of the Denton Program. The fire truck was donated by a Michael McAvoy of Bend, Ore., to Condega, a city of 10,000 people. McAvoy donated the truck through the Denton Program which allows donors to use space available on U.S. military cargo aircraft to transport humanitarian goods

# ★ Guarding America ★

and equipment to countries in need.

## PENNSYLVANIA

Keystone State Army Guard engineers and members of the Fort Bragg Public Works Directorate joined forces Sept. 28 to determine the operating status of 104 electrical substations inside the Tobyhanna Army Depot's industrial area. At the depot's request, 22 members of the 1st Detachment, B Company, 249th Engineering Battalion from Fort Bragg, N.C., deployed here Aug. 14 to perform preventative maintenance. The test results will help public works employees prioritize future repair and upgrade projects, and minimize future unscheduled outages.



## SOUTH DAKOTA

The Mount Rushmore State National Guard's enlisted association held its Fourth Annual Black Hills Veterans Honor March Sept. 22. It paid tribute to the many sacrifices this nation's veterans have made in the past and continue to make today. It was reported that more than 120 registered for the march with 90 marchers and runners finishing the 26.2 mile course in 80 degree temperatures.

## TEXAS

The Lone Star State Army Guard enlisted 1,050 more Soldiers than the National Guard Bureau's goal for the state during the fiscal year that ended Sept. 30. As of Oct. 1, there were a total of 18,650 Texas

Guardsmen. "We would not be the force that we are today without the supportive citizens of Texas," said Lt. Col. Ron McLaurin, the Texas Army Guard's commander of recruiting and retention.

## WASHINGTON

Two Fairchild Air Force Base air refueling wings in the Evergreen State merged Oct. 1 into Air National Guard and active-duty wings. In response to the 2005 base realignment and closure process, the last of the KC-135 Stratotankers belonging to the Washington ANG's 141st Air Refueling Wing were sent to Iowa. The 141st will now share tanker aircraft with the active duty 92nd refueling wing.

## WYOMING

Equality state Command Chief Master Sgt. Douglas Hensala assumed responsibility as the state command chief master sergeant of the state's Air Guard Oct. 6. "Chief Hensala will ensure the Wyoming Air National Guard continues to excel," said Maj. Gen. Ed Wright, Wyoming's adjutant general.



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Vicky Cerino

## Fasten-ating work

Aircraft structural mechanics with the Nebraska Air National Guard's 155th Air Refueling Wing, Tech. Sgt. Bryan Hart (left) and Airman 1st Class Mary Moertl, work on aircraft "skin" for a landing gear door during a Guard training weekend in Lincoln. [Read how Air Guard KC-135 aircraft depot maintainers received the Air Force Chief of Staff Team Excellence Award on page 7.](#)

## Outreach effort ensures Guard and Reserve members stay covered by TRICARE Reserve Select

FALLS CHURCH, Va. — Monumental outreach efforts are ensuring that nearly all of the 11,000 TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) members under the "tier" version of TRS will stay covered under the restructured program. As of October 1, approximately 90 percent had either switched over to the new program—or were in the process.

The restructured TRS has also attracted interest from members of the Selected Reserves not previously covered under the tier program and nearly 10,000 have begun the

process of qualifying for TRS.

On September 30, all current members in the tier program were disenrolled as the restructured TRS went into effect October 1 under changes mandated by the 2007 National Defense Authorization Act. Despite an instruction letter sent out in early August, less than half had transferred to the restructured program by mid-September.

"All of our TRS partners made a monumental effort to reach out and touch the National Guard and Reserve members who rely on TRS for their health care needs," said Army Major General (MG) Elder Granger, Deputy Director, TRICARE Management Activity. "We did not want to see anyone disenrolled without doing everything possible."

"Monumental" means up to three separate contacts via direct United States mail, a major military media campaign and even phone calls to TRS members from Reserve Com-

ponent personnel and TRICARE managed care support contractors (MCSCs).

The few remaining Tier TRS members who still have not heard about the need to make the switch will not be left out in the cold. They have a 60-day window to qualify for the new program with coverage retroactive to October 1 under a new provision called continuation coverage. "But it was important to try and get everyone switched over before September 30 to avoid putting beneficiaries through the inconveniences that can result from disenrollment," said MG Granger.

The number of new TRS members represents a moving target as it climbs daily. "TRICARE and all of our partners have an ongoing media and outreach campaign to let Selected Reserve members know about TRS," said MG Granger. "Already, the number of Selected Reservists purchasing coverage is nearly double the average number of members in the old TRS."



## Paying the price

During a recent deployment, Spc. Joshua Dickerson, Spc. Anthony Keeler and Spc. Timothy Glore of the Missouri National Guard's 1138th Military Police, donated money to a Guatemalan Army Soldier so that his 26-year-old wife could have surgery to remove a ruptured appendix in February. She faced imminent death if the surgery wasn't performed. It cost 3,000 quetzals (Guatemala's currency) and was much too expensive for the soldier's monthly wages of 360 quetzals. Dickerson and Keeler raised the money (about \$400) and the surgery was done.

-MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## Fire contained

When Camp Guernsey firefighters Spcs. Alan Snook and Spc. Cordell Anthony responded to an off-base mutual-aid request a few months ago, a life hung in the balance. After arriving first on the scene, they found a fully-engulfed mobile home and a nearby structure that housed a bed-ridden cancer patient in jeopardy of going up in flames too. Using a fire truck that had limited water supplies, Snook and Anthony courageously contained the blaze, saving a life in the process.

-WYOMING NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## Charged to save a life

Bravery, lightening-quick thinking and the knowledge of the dangers of high power lines enabled Spc. Jed Ness, a heavy construction equipment operator, to potentially save the lives of two people in 2006 at Camp Atterbury, Ind. After a dump truck had come in contact with a power line, catching fire and trapping a man inside, Ness bolted to the rescue. With thousands of volts of electricity surging through the truck, Ness implored the truck conductor to stay static and not touch anything, knowing that the slightest contact with the vehicle could mean electrocution. Ness calmly talked the man through the crisis. He also prevented another individual (not knowing that the truck was hot) from helping, arguably saving his life. Ness galvanized his moniker as a life saver by instructing the driver to jump from the cab and to not make contact with the truck and ground at the same time. It worked.

-1ST LT. ANTHONY D. BUCHANAN, CAMP ATTERBURY PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## Baby saver

"The training just kicks in without thinking about it," said Spc. Ryan Maynard, a 20-year-old National Guardsman from Franklin, Conn., after saving the life of an infant in March. Maynard, a military policeman with the 643rd Military Police Company was on patrol when a call came that a young child at the housing area in Darmstadt, Germany, was having trouble breathing. He had never responded to a call for anyone that young before and actually volunteered to take it. Maynard arrived at the residence to find a 2-month-old girl who couldn't breathe or cry. "Her eyes were beginning to roll back in her head," he said. Maynard stepped in and used his CPR and first-aid training to resuscitate

-MATT MILLHAM, STARS AND STRIPES

## Rushing in to help

On Nov. 10, 2006, Sgt. Kristi J. Artigue of the Connecticut Army National Guard called upon skills learned during six years of service -- including a recent deployment to Iraq -- to rescue a man who may have drowned. Artigue, 23, a medic with the 141st Medical Company, pulled a man out of the cold, fast-flowing West River in West Haven, Conn. who had apparently suffered a seizure and fallen

# Life savers

*Someday you might find yourself in the rare opportunity to save a life or help someone in a dire situation. Will you know what to do? These Guardmembers did. They used qualities like bravery, composure and selflessness coupled with skills learned in the civilian world and military to come to the aid of their fellow man, often putting their own lives at risk. Read what these good Samaritans did and how their training paid off.*



Photo by Staff Sgt. Joseph Watkins

Indiana Spc. Jed Ness helped the driver of this truck escape after it made contact with a power line.

## Be ready to help someone in an emergency

It starts with good training. The National Guard provides it:

### AIR

**SELF-AIDE AND BUDDY CARE:** A required, four-hour class that covers basic first aid and expands to more advanced life-saving skills. Airmen also learn to use battlefield tools such as the combat action tourniquet, Israeli bandage, and quick clot.

### ARMY

**COMBAT LIFESAVERS COURSE:** Soldiers learn how to perform advanced first aid like controlling bleeding, conducting CPR and more in-depth medical aid, like how to give an IV.

in. After he let loose from a human chain of rescuers and went under, the Iraq War veteran jumped into the freezing water and swam out about 10 feet to where he was struggling for air. "It was too cold to talk," said Artigue, "but I grabbed his vest and tried to keep him above the water. He grabbed a hold of me and started to pull me down with him, but I was able to drag him by his vest to shore."

-SGT. JORDAN E. WERME, CONNECTICUT NATIONAL GUARD

## Stop the bleeding

Staff Sgt. Jeremy Hammond put his Soldiering skills to the test Aug. 25 while motorcycling with friends. When one of the riders in the group took a bad spill, Hammond, 26, a unit mobilization assistant with the 205th Infantry Brigade, First Army, described what he saw: "There was a huge gash in his inner right leg, his femur looked broken and his femoral artery severed. I remember his eyes rolling

back and he went ghost white." A certified Army combat lifesaver, Hammond's instinct took over. Using his belt as a tourniquet, Hammond quickly stopped the bleeding and treated the man for shock. Hammond kept the man alive until help could arrive.

-ROB COOPER, CRIER STAFF WRITER

## Even on her wedding day

Pvt. Adrea Morris stopped to render aid to a 60-year-old woman who had just been thrown to the pavement after a car clipped her motorcycle. Even on her wedding day, this member of the Alabama Army National Guard's Medical Detachment stopped her car and rushed to the woman's aid, the first one on the scene to do so. She put her recently-acquired training as a medic to use on the side of busy Interstate 59 in Birmingham, talking to the lady to calm her and checking her motor skills and vital signs.

-ALABAMA NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## Trained and ready

"If I hadn't been combat trained, I probably would have been one of the 'breakneck' people driving by," said Sgt. 1st Class Jody Miller about an auto accident that he stopped for in Indiana. This member of the 1st Battalion, 337th Aviation Regiment from Fort Knox was the second person on-scene of the collision of two trucks June 19. Miller grabbed his combat lifesavers bag that was in his vehicle and found a man with a bleeding cut on the back of his neck, a broken nose, a cut on his leg and bruising on his left side. Although the victim was in and out of consciousness and disoriented, Miller noticed that he didn't have blood in his ears and his pupils were normal — good signs that he didn't have a brain injury. Miller used supplies from his medical kit to bandage the wounds and stop the bleeding. More importantly, he may have kept the victim from going into shock by keeping him awake and alert by talking to him, sometimes rather bluntly and rudely. "It's not our job to comfort, but to stabilize, save the person's life and get them ready for transportation to the hospital," Miller said.

-AMY MAY, CRIER REPORTER

## Highway heroine

This Maryland Guardmember was so graceful under pressure at the scene of a fatal automobile accident June 9 that she received the Maryland Medal for Valor, the second-highest state award a member of the Guard can earn. 1st Lt. Amy Matthews stopped and rendered vital assistance without regard for her own personal safety. She immediately took control of the situation, administered medical attention to those seriously injured and kept everyone at the scene calm. Matthews, who previously served in Iraq as a combat medic with the Maryland 115th Military Police Battalion, is a clinical nurse.

-MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## Convoy crash caregiver

After several Afghanistan National Army soldiers were injured in a convoy accident in western Afghanistan in September, a South Carolina Guardsman didn't panic. Instead, he looked to help the most injured person first. Spc. Jarvis D. Spencer, the sole Army medic in the convoy, got out of his vehicle after the crash and came to the aid of an ANA soldier who sustained serious head wounds. With help from other ANA soldiers, Spencer, assigned to Security Forces, 218th Army National Guard Brigade Combat Team at Camp Stone, bandaged the soldier's head and moved on to assist others.

-MARINE STAFF SGT. LUIS P. VALDESPINO JR., CSTC-AFGHANISTAN PUBLIC AFFAIRS

## Good neighbors

"We were just at the right place at the right time," recalled Master Sgt. Don Lilleman and about his and Sgt. 1st Class Dustin Green's quick and selfless actions when they extinguished a fire this past summer, potentially saving a man's life. When the Citizen-Soldiers heard a commotion and saw smoke coming from a garage next door to their Missouri National Guard Armory in Lexington, they picked up fire extinguishers and ran. Lilleman, a volunteer with the Higginsville Fire and Rescue team, put his knowledge to use: "As soon as I realized that it was an oil fire, I knew that our chemical extinguishers would put it out. Green took care of flames on the man's foot. After their fire fighting exploits, the two returned to the armory and prepared for annual training.

-MICHELLE KEY, MISSOURI NATIONAL GUARD



# Army launches benefits Web site

## Army News Service

WASHINGTON - The Soldiers' Benefit Services Web site is now the Army's official one-stop resource for all benefits information.

Located at <http://myarmybenefits.us.army.mil>, the Web site contains the most current benefit information for active-duty and reserve-component Soldiers, retirees and family members.

Active-duty Soldiers - to include Reservists and National Guard members serving on active duty - also have access to calculators that figure survivor, disability and retirement benefits. Users must have their Army Knowledge Online password to access current Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System data.

"We've realized that Soldiers do not really understand the benefits available to them," said Frank Emery, SBS program manager, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff, G-1. "Previously Soldiers had to go to separate Web sites to gather information on their benefits.

We've consolidated it all in one place, so now Soldiers and families can get the best information - easier and faster."

The site features more than 150 fact sheets - in both English and Spanish - grouped by Army component, life event, index and state/territory. Subjects include pay, education, Family services, health care, life insurance, transitioning and retirement, Soldier services and social security.

Grouping information by state and territory helps users quickly find local information and sources, Mr. Emery said. A reserve-component Soldier in Alabama, for example, can click on that state to learn local tax information and get links to the closest installations.

The retirement calculator is so "simple," Mr. Emery said, that every Soldier considering their retirement options should use it to plan ahead. Numbers are already figured for Soldiers eligible for retirement. Soldiers planning before becoming eligible need only to key in what date they'd like to retire and the rank they expect to hold at the time.

Mr. Emery shared the calculator with an NCO considering retirement.

"This NCO was ready to retire, and his wife was ready, even though he was on the promotion list. But when I showed him how to use this tool and he entered a future retirement date with the higher rank, there was such a significant difference that he and his wife changed their minds," he said.

The site will also help casualty assistance officers provide surviving family members a clear, accurate report of benefits, he added.

In 2004, Congress mandated that the Army evaluate the benefits process and improve benefits understanding and awareness. After studying Soldiers' and families' overall awareness regarding benefits, the Army created the SBS Web site prototype, approved last year by the deputy chief of staff, G-1.



South Dakota National Guard photo

South Dakota Soldiers from the 235th Military Police Company stop for a moment while patrolling, as they continue conducting a multitude of security missions during a year-long deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan.

## S. Dakota MPs continue fight for freedom in Afghanistan

By Maj. Orson Ward

South Dakota National Guard

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan - Nine months down and three to go. Soldiers from the 235th Military Police Company, South Dakota Army National Guard, remain actively engaged conducting security missions during a year-long deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The 130 Soldiers from the Rapid City-based unit began their 12-month "boots-on-ground" deployment in January and served for the past several months in four separate locations; Bagram Air Base, Forward Operating Base Salerno located just north of Khwost, FOB Fenty at the Jalalabad Airfield in northeastern Afghanistan, and at Camp Eggers in Kabul.

According to 1st Sgt. Dana Nelson, the unit's operations include law-and-order and convoy security missions, provincial reconstruction team site security, customs inspections, and detainee security. He said the unit also provides additional support to the bases where unit members are stationed. With a mobilized reactionary force, the 235th provides immediate military response in case of an incident or attack.

"We are staying pretty busy and the troops are doing great," said Nelson.

Nelson said one of the reasons the morale of the unit remains high is because of the satisfaction of knowing the service they are providing and the interaction with the local population is having a positive effect.

"Our troops are well received because

they're getting things done to make things better here," he said, "Like building schools, hospitals, bridges and that type of thing."

"The locals know you're here to help them out," said Spc. Jeremy Timmer, who has had a great deal of interaction with the local population. His platoon was assigned to conduct village assessments the first few months of the deployment.

"We have interactions with everybody, from far away into the mountains to right next to the base," said Timmer. "It's really good to know that you are doing something for the locals around here, and it's nice to go out and visit with these people."

Timmer said his unit has been able to help by providing food and fresh water from newly dug wells, and its presence reduces the threat of attack from the Taliban.

"The Taliban is real big out here, so we talk to them about making sure the Taliban is gone and if they show up we can help," he said.

This is Timmer's first deployment overseas, but for Spc. Andrew Martinmaas, this is his second as he deployed for a year to Iraq in 2004-05 with 2nd Battalion, 147th Field Artillery. While serving with the South Dakota artillery unit, Martinmaas performed similar security escort missions that he and fellow Soldiers are now conducting in Afghanistan.

"We do some convoys that are similar but also different," said Martinmaas comparing the two deployments. "In Iraq we would spend 14 to 16 hours a day on the road and we'd travel hundreds of miles. [Now] we spend 14 to 16

hour days on the road and we may only go about 30 miles."

Martinmaas said this is due to the extreme difference in the two countries' terrain and weather. He said the mountains and climate in Afghanistan have some similarities to the Black Hills of South Dakota where he calls home.

Despite the similarities, the one thing all 235th Soldiers have in the back of their mind is the distance and absence of their families.

"Leaving my family obviously was difficult," said Staff Sgt. Seth Brennan of Deadwood, S.D.

Brennan and many of his fellow MPs are familiar with separation from family. He and about a third of the unit members serving in Afghanistan deployed to Fort Carson, Colo., in February of 2003, to conduct law enforcement missions for the active duty installation.

Brennan said he was personally disappointed when the unit got mobilized a few years ago because they weren't going overseas. The deployment to Afghanistan is an adventure he and his fellow Soldiers were eager to experience.

### Soldiers eligible for post-deployment health screening

If you redeployed more than 90 days ago from a combat zone, you are eligible for the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment, or PDHRA. Most Soldiers complete the PDHRA 90 to 180 days post-deployment. Your unit commander will notify you when it's time to take part in this required health screening. For more information, visit <http://virtualarmory.com/mobiledeploy/PDHRA> or check your PDHRA status in AKO under "My Medical Readiness."



# Process improved

*Air National Guard, KC-135 aircraft depot maintainers received the Air Force Chief of Staff Team Excellence Award for revolutionary initiative; this is how they did it*

WASHINGTON – A team of KC-135 Stratotanker maintainers from the Air National Guard and KC-135 programmed depot maintenance (PDM) facilities, received the 2007 Air Force Chief of Staff Team Excellence Award during a ceremony here at the Air Force Association's Air & Space Conference and Technology Exposition.

The team was one of five to receive the award. It also was one of three recipients of the Air Force Best Practice recognition.

The awards, presented Sept. 25 by Gen. Duncan McNabb, vice chief of staff of the Air Force, recognizes a systematic approach to enhance mission capability, improve operational performance and create sustained results.

The maintainers were recognized for Operation Team Spirit, a maintenance initiative that has produced results that have amazed a skeptical Air National Guard KC-135 aircraft maintenance community.

Team Spirit has enabled many Guard KC-135 units to get aircraft flying sooner -- from about 45 days to 11 days on average. In an environment of high operations tempo and a shrinking defense budget, advocates say it's a vital initiative.

Officials estimate savings of \$71 million in fiscal year 2006 and 2007, and \$3.2 billion in assets available to the warfighter that otherwise would be idle.

The "Team Spirit" process begins at the depot with improved maintenance quality and efficiency.

In the past, when units retrieved their KC-135s at one of three PDM sites, they were unable to inspect aircraft until the aircraft was flown home. Only then could units communicate about critical, major or minor discrepancies. Some repairs required depot maintainers to deploy to units to make repairs. And other times, aircraft had to be returned to the depot for major repairs.

Though aircraft should have been back in the flying schedule within about a week, persnickety Guard maintainers who employ a "above and beyond" maintenance philosophy often felt the depot work wasn't up to snuff. So they conducted their own post-inspection checklists, thus grounding the aircraft longer.

The depot process saves time and money by reducing the amount of re-work. Now, when units go to retrieve their aircraft, Guard maintainers conduct an assessment and any deficiencies identified are fixed on the spot by depot maintainers.

"Our philosophy is if we fix it when we're at home then it means we may not have to fix it when we're on the road. That little rattle ... we fix that right away so the aircraft doesn't break hard and you don't know where in the world you'll be when that happens," said Master Sgt. Don Russell, quality assurance representative

PROCESS IMPROVED  
continued on: Page 13

# Air refueling units eagerly rotate in and out of NATO base

By Staff Sgt. Barb Harbison  
New Jersey National Guard

"One of the last good deals in the Guard," is how Lt. Col. Rick Keasey, Air National Guard liaison officer at Geilenkirchen, Germany, describes a rotation at the NATO airbase. The 108th Air Refueling Wing deployed a small contingent of specialists and crew members for their second time in 2007 for two weeks in August.

The past 14 years, air refueling units have come to Geilenkirchen for a two-week rotation to fuel the AWACS airplanes that fly from the base. The base is located adjacent to the Netherlands border.

For 44 weeks a year, Guard units fly one to two flights a day. An interesting fact of these deployments is that outside of a real-world emergency, the flights do not fly from 10 p.m. until 8 a.m., nor do they fly on weekends; giving good reason for crews and their maintainers to enjoy their visit to Germany.

Keasey, who is a Guardmember and hails from the Chicago area, is working to have some longer tours in the upcoming years. He has scheduled two, three-week tours in 2008 and is looking at more three-week tours in 2009.

A reason for this is a number of Air Guard units have felt the pinch from the recent BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure Commission) and will be downsizing, he said. The longer

tours can lessen the burden and costs to the refueling wings.

While Keasey says the program "kind of runs itself," he has been working during his first year in the job to make improvements for the deployed Airmen.

Soon dorms with satellites for both German and AFN television and Wi-Fi will be standard for the incoming crews and specialists.

Keasey will be mounting another AFN

## NATO Air Base Geilenkirchen

**LOCATION:** Eastern Germany, along the Netherlands border

**CONSTRUCTED:** Built by the British Royal Air Force after World War II

**SIZE:** 1,530 acres

**RUNWAY:** 10,000 x 150 feet

satellite to the maintenance building off the flightline for the maintenance specialists to have the opportunity to watch sports and other shows during work day downtime.

Life and work in Geilenkirchen has its plusses and minuses. The ability to see and experience parts of Europe is tops on the list. But Keasey has seen the spotters on the end of the runway -- not tail-spotting

like the people in England -- but counting the number of take-offs so NATO does not exceed the limit agreed to with the German authorities. And after a recent non-flying air show, there were more than 250 noise complaints the following Monday as the planes departed the area.

The trips not only includes pilots and boom operators but also specialists from the many sections that are in the wing such as Avionics, Propulsion, Supply, Fuels, Mission Operations Center (MOC), R&R and crew chiefs.

Senior Master Sgt. George Phillips, a Sortie Generation supervisor with the 108th came to Geilenkirchen on the wing's first mission to the NATO base in 1993. He returned a second time in 2005 and was back for his third trip with the wing.

Phillips, who has deployed throughout the United States and around the world said that many people like to do repeat trips to this NATO base. He added that since there is no night flying, sometimes during the second week of summer deployments, crew and several specialists may fly to a base in Great Britain for a couple days to do night refuelings.

The 108th has a strong relationship with Geilenkirchen. In the liaison building, a large mural honoring the four Washington ANG members who were killed in 1999 while landing at Geilenkirchen was painted by a member of the 108th. The top of the bar in the conference room was built by another 108th member. And, a nearby World War II museum has received paint for a tank, donated by the 108th.

Trips to Geilenkirchen will remain a great deal for the refueling wings, a time to ply their trade and to experience Europe. 1



Photo by PFC Kalie Frantz

## International military relations taking hold

Sgt. Gordon Smith with the Georgia National Guard's 121st Infantry Company conducts combatives training with a Bulgarian soldier of the 61st Mechanized Infantry Brigade at the Hohenfels Combat Maneuver Training Center, Germany.



## Soldiers take to skies and water for Maritime Operations

*Story, photos by Tech. Sgt. Thomas Kielbasa*  
Florida National Guard

CAMP BLANDING JOINT TRAINING CENTER, Fla.— You’re standing solidly on the exit ramp of a low-flying helicopter, and just a few heart beats later you’re dropping through the air and plunging under water.

Florida Army National Guard aviators and Soldiers teamed up Sept. 27 to practice low-level diving into Kinsley Lake here from the back of a CH-47 Chinook helicopter.

The “helocast” training was simple they said. As the Chinook flew slowly over the lake, the Soldiers stepped off its open ramp and dropped 15 feet to the water below. Then,

**Helocasting:**  
means of inserting troops who are conducting special missions into enemy-controlled territory

Special Forces Soldiers in inflatable rafts fished the Soldiers from the lake and ferried them back to shore.

The training was practice for the Florida Counterdrug Training Academy’s (FCTA) Maritime Operations

course, which is held annually to instruct state and local law enforcement in specialized swimming and diving techniques.

“The helocast training, that the Florida Counterdrug Training Academy does, is actually for civilian law enforcement agencies,” said Lt. Col. Eric Lefevre, a counterdrug coordinator for the Florida Guard. “They come up to Camp Blanding, free of charge, and we provide the training including a helocast.”

The FCTA Maritime Operations course is taught primarily by Florida Guard Special Forces Soldiers and is geared toward law enforcement officers who “may be required to operate in a maritime environment.” Each class is usually made up of no more than 35 students from law enforcement agencies throughout the country. It teaches a variety of maritime-related techniques normally reserved for the Special Forces divers. These include small boat operations, tactical beach landings, low-level diving from helicopters and silent swim tactics.

“This ended up being a tremendous training event,” said a soaking-wet Lefevre, who completed three dives during his morning training. “This may look like a fun time with people jumping from the helicopters, but a lot of work was done by these pilots and the Soldiers on the ground (to time everything perfectly).”

He explained that even though the training is



Florida National Guard Special Forces pull a Soldier onto an inflatable raft from Lake Kingsley during training at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, Fla., Sept. 27.

fun and exciting, the instruction provided by the Maritime Operations course is serious business.

“Every law enforcement person I’ve spoken to who has gone through the training said this has been invaluable for their officers,”

Lefevre said. “There are two occasions that I know of when officers have used the skills they learned at the FCTA in real-life cases.”

The helocast training also served as certification practice for the helicopter crew from



A goodbye to the low-level diving platform: a CH-47 Chinook.

Det. 1, Company B, 1-111th General Support Aviation Battalion, based in Jacksonville.

“These are relatively new aircraft to Florida, so this type of training was beneficial to both the divers and our own aviation crews,”

said Capt. Eric Phillips, pilot. “We have experienced pilots, but this is a mission we haven’t had a chance to practice with the Chinooks yet. This was a way for us to show other units in Florida the capabilities of the CH-47.”

## New troops taken above, beyond and under water

*Story, photos by Master Sgt. Jodie Stafford*  
Indiana National Guard

EVANSVILLE, Ind. -- On an overcast September day here a veteran Soldier and a leader of new, young warriors splashed into the small lake beside the Evansville armory with an enthusiastic yell, “Yeah, that’s cold! That’s good for training,” said Staff Sgt. Joseph McCaffry.

It was McCaffry’s first of many bellowed remarks on this training day for Detachment 5 Recruit Sustainment Battalion.

The battalion’s new Soldiers trained in combat waterborne operations. It’s a rare experience for most Guardsmen they said.

The lead trainer of this detachment, Sgt. 1st Class Larry Lightburne, is responsible for making this untypical day somewhat of a norm for his newest Soldiers. “I ... [give] these guys every opportunity for training I can,” he said.

Lightburne has to prepare each of these Soldiers for combat. Many of his Soldiers are assigned to the 76th Brigade Combat Team. When their basic and advanced training is complete they will join their units including the 1-151 Infantry Battalion in Jasper, Ind., and 1-163 Field Artillery Battalion here.

Officials here said the possibility these young Soldiers may end up overseas is why the detachment continuously adds tough and interesting training to their drill schedules.

The water training begins with McCaffry and instructor Staff Sgt. Eddie Embry on a slippery Zodiac boat demonstrating what they expect their Soldiers to do: capsize it. Later, the instructors swim around their splashing Soldiers as they attempt to get each other back into the boat by pushing, pulling and shoving.

Before that, more than 40 of Indiana’s newest recruits form eight teams and race through a combat survivability course. Instructors said the goal in this and every good soldierly competition here is to be the best and strongest, to defeat one’s enemy and to win.

Team names are chosen, briefings are heard, spare boots and uniforms are donned, and then they are weighed down, tasked and going into the cold water.

The air was filled with the shouts, splashing and motivational screams from the cadre as well as their coughing, sputtering and heavy breathing as they tread water from the middle of the lake.

“The enemy’s not going to wait on you,” Embry yells as he moves alongside the Soldiers.

The instructors’ watchful eyes follow them to ensure safety, and they said their words teach lessons these new Soldiers will carry for life.



Indiana Army National Guard Warriors Pfc. Jason Johnson, Pvt. Lucas Beasley and Pvt. William Swayne put their weight into their mission as they capsize their Zodiac boat.

“Don’t you leave your buddy behind,” McCaffrey said. “Get back there and help your team.” Those words echoed across the lake as the Soldiers trained.

Each team had to cross the lake using a rope that the strongest swimmer carried across and tied off. Their teammates then floated their gear alongside as they pulled themselves across.

Once across the lake they immediately ran around to the other side and jumped into the Zodiac boat. There, they practiced getting

back into it, capsized.

“You learn to deal with what you get,” said Pvt. Hannah Apple in explaining how her team had to learn to work together in order to flip their boat and get everyone back in it to paddle it to shore.

At the end of the day, these wet warriors said they had been tested and worn out, but they smiled.

The instructors smiled too as they handed out certificates and shook hands with the winning teams.



Pvt. Santana Huffman showed true grit during a waterborne operations competition at the Evansville Army National Guard Armory.



# HEADS UP!

## Family member accounts

Deployable and TRICARE Remote servicemembers should consider setting up Family Member Accounts enabling their family to access medical, pay and human resource websites in their absence. To obtain a Family Member Account, the active duty sponsor can log on to <https://sso.dmdc.osd.mil/famAcctMgr> using his or her CAC or DFAS PIN. Family Member Account numbers and passwords will be accepted on TRICARE's new Beneficiary Web Enrollment system that is launching later this Fall. To find deployment news and resources, visit <http://www.military.com/deployment>.

## Prevent suicide

Suicide is the eleventh-most frequent cause of death in the United States. Someone dies from suicide every 16 minutes. Suicidal ideas and attempts to harm ones self are the result of problems that often seem like they can't be fixed. Together, Vet Centers and Department of Veterans Affairs VA Medical Centers stand ready to reach out and help veterans who are at risk for suicide. To aid in this effort, a National Suicide Prevention hotline was recently launched. The toll-free hotline can be reached at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

## New PTSD study

Many of the Department of Veterans Affairs Medical Centers' newest patients are those who are returning from combat — Soldiers who served in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. In a recent study, Dr. Karen Seal and her colleagues at the San Francisco VA Medical Center and USC reviewed records for more than 100,000 veterans, separated from active duty between 2001 and 2005 and who sought care from VA medical facilities. The most common diagnoses found among these patients were Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and depression. Getting help early can prevent PTSD and other problems from becoming chronic. Therefore the VA is expanding counseling and mental health services to meet the needs of the returning veterans, and providing early treatment. For more information on PTSD and its treatment, visit the National Center for PTSD's website at: [www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/veterans](http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/veterans).

## Required health screening

If you redeployed more than 90 days ago from a combat zone, then you are eligible for the Post-Deployment Health Reassessment, or PDHRA. Most Soldiers complete the PDHRA 90 to 180 days post-deployment. Your unit commander will notify you when it's time to take part in this required health screening. For more information, visit <http://virtual-armory.com/mobiledeploy/PDHRA> or check your PDHRA status in AKO under "My Medical Readiness."



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Elizabeth R. Allen

Navy Capt. Joseph Rusz, assisted by Air National Guard Senior Airman Andrew Hendrick, performs dental work on a patient at the Grove Primary School in Demerara, Guyana, Sept. 26. Rusz and Hendrick worked on the Military Sealift Command hospital ship USNS Comfort, which recently finished a four-month humanitarian deployment to Latin America and the Caribbean providing medical treatment to patients in a dozen countries.

# Air Guard teams with Navy for humanitarian mission

By PO2 Elizabeth R. Allen  
U.S. Navy

A member of the Kentucky Air National Guard, along with more than 40 other Air Guard members from across the nation, contributed to a substantial medical mission by the hospital ship USNS Comfort during a recent four-month humanitarian deployment to Latin America and the Caribbean.

Senior Airman Andrew Hendrick, a dental technician, was attached to the Dental Department aboard Comfort during its deployment. Joining him were Air Guard specialists in public

health, laboratory, nursing, dental and medical.

It was the first time such a large Air Guard group had deployed aboard the hospital ship. The Airmen's work on the ship was considered part of an Air Expeditionary Force deployment under Operation Enduring Freedom and was run by U.S. Southern Command.

The Navy ship sailed on its four-month humanitarian mission from its home port in Baltimore to provide medical care to each country's citizens in need. The group underwent some initial shipboard training before boarding the ship. Then, during 120 days, they sailed aboard

Comfort to 14 different countries.

Hendrick assisted in the extraction of bad teeth, fluoride applications, restoration work and examinations.

"We don't get the chance to do a lot of dental operations and extractions," Hendrick said of his job as a traditional Guard member.

Hendrick has been in the Air Guard for three years. While on this deployment, he received hands-on training in 11 countries including Guyana. Hendrick and many other Air Guard members departed the ship at the countries Comfort visited.

"I became a lot better at dental assisting," he said. "Also, since we're anchored so far out from the coast, we went to Guyana by helicopter. I've never ridden in a helo before this deployment."

Hendrick studies economics and Japanese and Spanish at the University of Kentucky when not serving. He said his Spanish has helped him in some of the Spanish-speaking countries they visited.

"He works so well with the dentists that he can now anticipate which tools they will need next," said Petty Officer 1st Class Brenda Bonaccorso, a Navy Reserve dental technician who worked with Hendrick.

"All military medics enjoy and benefit from participation in missions such as this but it is especially important for Guardsmen who frequently are asked to serve as medical first responders during times of crisis both at home and abroad," said Col. (Dr.) W.S. Riggins, Jr., the Air Surgeon for the Air National Guard.

"I'm not surprised that we had a significant number of volunteers for this mission because our Citizen-Airmen have a foot in both military and civilian communities and are comfortable serving anywhere in the global community," added Riggins.

The Air Guard members returned home Oct. 15 after the Comfort steamed in to Norfolk Naval Station. Officials said they hope to deploy again with the Comfort in the future.



Photo by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Robert J. Strachko

Line handlers stand by to cast the mooring lines as Military Sealift Command (MSC) hospital ship USNS Comfort gets underway.



# Non-standard load: Pennsylvania Chinook airlifts C-130 fuselage



**By Spc. Matthew E. Jones**  
Pennsylvania National Guard

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. - Residents of the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre area may have been a tad startled on the afternoon of Sept. 14 when they saw the fuselage of a C-130 aircraft flying through the sky. Especially since the tail section was nowhere in sight.

Members of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 104th Aviation Battalion airlifted the plane in two massive pieces from Forty Fort Airport in Luzerne County to Tobyhanna Army Depot in Monroe County using a CH-47 Chinook helicopter. The tail section arrived at Tobyhanna a few hours after the fuselage.

The pilots, Chief Warrant Officers Jeff Reep and Patrick

Quinton, said the 11-ton payload was among the largest loads they had ever seen carried by a Chinook. In fact, the crew was slightly nervous about the heavy cargo, they said, so they reduced their airspeed and were careful to avoid populated areas en route to their destination.

"The load was swaying more than we had anticipated," said Reep, "so it took a little longer than we had hoped to get to our destination. But you have to expect the unexpected when you're carrying a non-standard load."

Apparently, a C-130 is about as non-standard as it gets.

"I don't think this has ever been done before," said Reep. "But thankfully, the engineers at Tobyhanna Army Depot did a great job preparing the load for us."

Missions such as the C-130 airlift benefit all parties in-

involved, said Reep. The depot saves tremendous amounts of time and money by using a helicopter instead of trucks to transport the aircraft. Guardsmen, meanwhile, get to participate in an excellent training opportunity.

"The mission went very well and we got a lot of positive feedback," said Reep. "Anytime we can lift something it's a good day for a Chinook pilot. That's what we're in the business for."

The reassembled C-130, which had previously been used by a soon-to-be-inactive Air Force Reserve unit, will now be used to test the various electronic communication systems developed and maintained by the depot. The systems must be able to be transported by a C-130, so having the aircraft on site will expedite the projects.

## From page 1: ARMY'S TOP 24

the first, and they set a bar for Guard members who follow.

Nowak and Dornbusch were in the field dressed in the Army's latest combat helmet and inceptor body armor system to meet the media. The Soldiers had to don the Army's latest personal protective equipment by the standards, including ballistic glasses, flak-vests and elbow and knee pads. They wore the equipment throughout the competition. They also wore a special patch on their right shoulders.

"They get to wear the Best Warrior patch while they are here during the week," said Sgt. Maj. Anthony Aubain, command sergeant major of the Combined Arms Support Command here. "It shows that they are 26 of 500,000 Soldiers in this Army who met the standard to get to this far."

"It is showing, I think, about what the Guard has been doing for the last few years," said Dornbusch about the Guard competing here. "We are deployed all the same way together; we are doing the same fight. Yeah, there are differences between Guard and active duty but when it all comes down to it, it's all the same job. We got to go out there and do the mission."

"It is an Army, and that's what is so great about this," said Aubain, whose garrison has hosted the competition for the last five years. "The competition is pretty tough this year, and it looks like the winning football team came."

To make it this far, Dornbusch said he juggled study time and events with his responsibilities as a husband and father and as a traditional and full-time Guard member for the 136th Regional Training Institute at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas.

For nearly a year, all 13 Soldiers of the Year and 13 NCOs of the Year had climbed through their ranks in competitions at their units, regions and major commands to get here, and time and time again, they demonstrated their

expert skills as Soldiers.

Sergeant Major of the Army Kenneth O. Preston, who attended the week's events, said that in the past the Guard and Reserve had competed, but both were channeled through the Army's Forces Command. "I think it is good," said Preston of the change, "... it really puts more of a spotlight on the Guard and Reserve Soldiers. What I'm hoping is that this competition is viewed and seen by those company troop battery commanders in the Guard and reserve, those first sergeants out there and, of course, they also continue to sponsor the monthly, quarterly and annual Soldiers of the Month competitions."

Dornbusch and Nowak took their turns with the active and reserve Soldiers here in proving their best military appearance, knowledge and bearing before a formal board chaired by Preston and including six senior command sergeants major. Candidates answered questions about a variety of topics including troop-leading procedures and preparations to get Soldiers to execute missions. It also included pre-combat checks and inspections to test their knowledge on the expectations of first-line supervisors. Other questions centered on taking care of Soldiers including counseling, sponsoring, coaching and teaching subordinates.

The competitors also took a written exam and sweated in the dark during an early morning physical fitness test of push-ups, sit-ups and a two-mile run. After that, they spent subsequent days and nights navigating Fort Lee during an urban warfare orientation course competition, and they fired the M-4 rifle in zeroing-in, alternating position and weapons qualification shoot-outs. They continued with little sleep.

Nowak ran across the finish line Oct. 4 during the day urban orientation event. He was soaked in sweat. Dressed in full combat gear and carrying a 38-pound rucksack, he had run much of the five-mile course (called a "lane") while plotting on a map to locate four

checkpoints.

"They have three hours to complete their lane and check back in with their score sheet," said Master Sgt. Dan Choice, lane noncommissioned officer in charge. Choice monitored the Soldier's progress from a tent located at the finish/start line. He said that at each point the competitors had to work through four scenarios, which included interacting with actors dressed like Iraqi civilians. "Basically we are trying to recreate what the Soldiers are actually doing down range as far as combat," said Choice. "Urban orienteering is where you navigate and utilize the existing road networks."

Nowak and Dornbusch finished in time but with little help from the hot and humid Virginia autumn weather.

Before the competition, Nowak made a prediction: "It will be hard," he said. "I won't get much sleep, and there will be little time for food. It sounds like an Army day."

Nowak was here just 17 months since his initial enlistment in the military. He works full-time in recruiting and retention for the West Virginia Guard and serves as a traditional Guard member for the 157th Military Police Company there.

Approaching their final day of competition, the Soldiers woke on cots inside Fort Lee's Warrior Training Center for a mystery event that included escaping from a rolled over Humvee, starting an intravenous line, rescuing hostages from insurgents, engaging the enemy on a simulator, inspecting combat and dress uniforms, and a fighting it out in a combative skills tournament.

Using their own wits and know-how, Nowak and Dornbusch teamed up in their final weapons event to identify friend from foe in an advanced field operations. Shouldering M-4 rifles that were connected to a computer, the Soldiers stood in an engagement skills training room before a large movie screen as combat scenarios played out and tested their ability to identify the enemy.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith

**Above: Spc. Erik Nowak from the West Virginia Army National Guard plots his course at a checkpoint during an urban land orientation event. Below: Staff Sgt. Mark Dornbusch from the Texas Army National Guard fires an M-4 rifle during an alternate firing position shoot-out.**



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mike R. Smith

The competitors had to wait for the results on Oct. 8, Columbus Day, at the All Army Conference in Washington. There, during a luncheon hosted by Preston, the Army announced its top warriors.



# New agreement signed to help balance active Army, Guard

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – A new agreement between the active Army and Army National Guard represents a big step toward achieving the force structure balance Army Chief of Staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr. calls critical to the Army's transformation.

Senior Army leaders signed a memo of understanding Oct. 9 during the Association of the U.S. Army convention here to firm up a plan to rebalance force structure and resources between the active and reserve components.

Under the plan, the Army National Guard will have 112 brigades: 28 brigade combat teams, 46 multifunctional brigades and 38 functional brigades. It is slated to grow by more than 5,000 troops to 358,000 in 2013. Almost 321,000 of those Soldiers will be in the operational force.

The plan also ensures Guard units, many under equipped after leaving their best equipment in the combat theater for follow-on units, receive replacement equipment on par with their active-duty counterparts.

Gen. Richard A. Cody, Army vice chief of staff, joined Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, and Maj. Gen. Bennett Landreneau, Louisiana's adjutant general



Photo by Sgt. Mary Flynn

Director of Army National Guard Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, Army Vice Chief of Staff Gen. Richard Cody and Louisiana Adjutant General and Chairman of the Adjutants General Association of the United States Force Structure Committee Maj. Gen. Bennett Landreneau sign a memorandum of understanding to formalize the Army plan to rebalance. The signing ceremony took place at the annual Association of the U.S. Army's annual conference in Washington.

and chairman of the Adjutants General Association Force Structure Committee, at the signing ceremony at the Washington Convention Center.

Cody called the plan a "necessary journey" that will "make our Army stronger."

Vaughn said the plan will reduce stress on the force by providing more formations in the deployment cycle. "It's more capacity for the Army," he said.

He pointed to the talks that led to the agreement as a model for the future. "This is the way we need to go in (addressing) some of the hard things," he said.

Casey called adapting the reserve components a key element in the Army's transformation and its ability to confront what is expected to be an era of "persistent conflict."

"Our reserve components are performing magnificently, but

in an operational role for which they were neither designed nor resourced," he said during an address to AUSA attendees Oct. 9. "They are no longer a strategic reserve, mobilized only in national emergencies. They are now an operational reserve deployed on a cyclical basis," enabling the Army to sustain operations.

"Operationalizing" the reserve components "will require national and state consensus, as well as continued commitment from employers, Soldiers and families," Casey said. "It will require changes to the way we train, equip, resource and mobilize."

It also will require changes to outdated Cold War-era administrative policies that inhibit reservists' ability to serve. "We changed the paradigm for our reserve-component Soldiers and families, and we owe it to them to make this transition right," Casey said.

## From page 1: UNIT RECOGNIZED

462 improvised explosive devices prior to detonation and captured over 400 suspected insurgents. They completed 137 reconstruction projects and helped start two Iraqi newspapers. Over 1,400 members of the team reenlisted during their deployment, and 21 members became United States citizens.

The 1/34th BCT is part of the famed Red Bull Division, which has a long history of service. The division was sent to France during World War I but did not see combat until World War II when it became the first division deployed to Europe. Coincidentally, the division gained the distinction of spending more days in combat than any other U.S. Army division during World War II. The Army Rangers can also trace their roots to the 34th Infantry Division. Eighty percent of the 1st Ranger Battalion consisted of volunteers from the 34th.

Walz has a personal history with the Red Bulls, having retired in 2005 as command sergeant major for the 1st Battalion, 125th Field Artillery, which is part of the brigade combat team.

"I served alongside these Soldiers for many years, and I could not be more proud of them," said Walz, a first-term Congressman. "They endured their extended deployment with patience and determination, and their distinguished service record in Iraq speaks for itself. Today, every Minnesotan should be proud to call the Red Bulls our neighbors and friends."

The 1/34th is headquartered in Bloomington, and approximately 3,700 of its Soldiers are Minnesota Guardmembers. The remaining 1,300 Soldiers hail from other states, including Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Kentucky, Idaho and Washington.

## From page 1: NUMBERS EXCEED

"When Soldiers reenlist at a rate 100 percent above the fiscal year [goals], we think it's a good indication that involved parties are doing a good job taking care of Soldiers and their families," said Bliss. "We owe a great deal of gratitude to our unit leaders, because when it comes to reducing losses, it is largely a command climate and leadership function."

Another contributing factor, said Bliss, was the Army Guard's unique team of recruiting and retention NCOs who have a mission to recruit new Guardmembers, retain existing Guardmembers and reduce attrition.

"Consider it a three-component mission: recruit, retain, and manage losses," said Bliss, "but the ultimate goal is to meet or exceed our

end strength and ensure whatever capabilities might be needed when called upon."

During FY07, the Army Guard also reinforced some of its successful recruiting and retention programs, including the Guard's Recruiting Assistant Program (GRAP), which provides bonuses to recruiting assistants when referred Soldiers enlisted and finish basic military training; and the Freedom Salute campaign, which recognizes Soldiers, families and supporters with a special ceremony and awards including certificates, coins and encased flags honoring their service in Operations Noble Eagle and Iraqi Freedom.

"Really, employing some of the fundamentals of recruiting allows us to be successful," Bliss said.

The Guard initiated its "Active First" program this October, which teams the Army

Guard with the active-duty Army. Recruits, who choose this program, go on active duty for a period of 30, 36 or 48 months and are eligible for a \$20,000 bonus when they return to the Guard. They could receive up to \$60,000 between initial and returning bonuses.

"We think it's good not only to help the Army man their force, but it allows us to bring good Soldiers back into the Guard with good experience," said Bliss.

On the Air Guard side, its "107K" campaign expanded eligibility for enlistment, re-enlistment, prior-service and officer affiliation bonuses and expanded its GRAP eligibility to retired personnel.

The Air Guard also launched a 24/7 "live" operator call center where prospective applicants are provided information and connected to a recruiter at their interested locations.

## 'Red Bull' Soldier awarded Silver Star

By Sgt. Joe Roos  
Minnesota National Guard

ST. PAUL, Minn. – Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg was presented the Silver Star here Sept. 22 for gallantry in action while serving in Iraq with the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 34th Infantry Division "Red Bulls."

Malmberg became the first Minnesota National Guard member since World War II to receive the fourth-highest military decoration, which is designated solely for valor in the face of the enemy.

The St. Paul-resident was credited for his quick, concise and heroic actions when his 25-vehicle convoy was ambushed outside



Malmberg

himself in the direct line of fire to coordinate ground and air support to ensure the safety of his Soldiers.

The battle went on for 40 minutes as Malmberg navigated the convoy through barriers in the road-engaging the enemy at the same time. When the convoy began to run low on ammunition, he threw a grenade at insurgents as they attempted to attack the

Baghdad on Jan. 27. Outnumbered and trapped for nearly an hour in an ambush by 30 to 40 insurgents wielding rocket-propelled grenades and machine-guns, Malmberg repeatedly put

himself in the direct line of fire to coordinate ground and air support to ensure the safety of his Soldiers.

The battle went on for 40 minutes as Malmberg navigated the convoy through barriers in the road-engaging the enemy at the same time. When the convoy began to run low on ammunition, he threw a grenade at insurgents as they attempted to attack the rear of the convoy, killing seven of them. Through his leadership coordination and brave acts the insurgents were defeated, and the convoy made it to safety.

When Malmberg took the podium to speak after receiving his Silver Star from Gov. Tim Pawlenty and 34th Infantry Division Commander Maj. Gen. Rick Erlandson, he asked all the men who were in his convoy to stand. As each Soldier was recognized, it was clear he didn't think he was the only hero in the convoy.

"These are the guys," he said, after which the crowd erupted in a cheer. After Malmberg showed the bond of his unit and the pride he had in all of his Soldiers, he simply returned to his seat.

Malmberg is in his senior year at Minnesota State University and has aspirations to become a member of the St. Paul police department.





Photo by Sgt. Mary Flynn

Paul Teutul Sr., of Orange County Choppers fame, rides the National Guard's "Patriot Chopper" in front of the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., during a Sept. 27 unveiling ceremony.

# Orange County Choppers unveil National Guard's 'Patriot Chopper'

By Sgt. Mary Flynn  
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Hundreds of Soldiers gathered here in front of the Army National Guard Readiness Center Sept. 27 to witness the unveiling of the "Patriot Chopper," the first of three bikes to be built by Orange County Choppers (OCC) for the National Guard.

Metalworker Paul Teutul Sr., and son Paul Teutul Jr., who is referred to as "Paulie" by his fans, founded OCC in New York after introducing their first bike, "True Blue," at the Daytona Biketoberfest in 1999.

The Teutuls quickly became a household name for chopper enthusiasts, and the family, including the youngest son, Mikey, shot to fame when their own show, "American Chopper," debuted on the Discovery Channel in 2002.

The Teutuls have a history of building patriotic bikes, and they have produced multiple theme bikes for several branches of the military.

The Patriot Chopper was the result of a collaborative effort between the OCC and four National Guard Soldiers.

Earlier this year, the Army Guard invited Soldiers around the country to submit their ideas for the custom design of the Guard-sponsored bike. Four winners were chosen: Chief Warrant Officer David Vasquez of Colorado;

Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Billet of Georgia; Sgt. 1st Class Richard Crawford of Illinois and Pfc. Joseph Scheibe of Ohio.

Maj. Gen. James Nuttall, deputy director of the Army National Guard, presented certificates to the four winning Soldiers during the unveiling ceremony. He congratulated them on a job well done and a bike well-designed.

The ceremony was highlighted when Paul Sr. made his grand entrance on the bike, coasting in coolly and revving the engine to the enthusiastic cheers of the crowd.

The winning Soldiers were in awe. "To be a part of something like this is pretty cool stuff," said Scheibe. "We went to the OCC shop in New York last month, and we saw pieces and parts of the bike. But to see it finished was just really cool."

The finished bike showcases a Minuteman air cleaner. The blade spokes of the wheels feature 3-D inlaid spearheads, representing the seven Army values and an ammunition belt lines the handlebars. Chromed M-4 magazines serve as the struts, and an M-4 rifle is mounted on the side of the rear wheel.

The color of the bike is red, white and blue with an Army combat uniform pattern used throughout. A list on top of the bike includes every war and conflict the National Guard has

been involved in since its founding in 1636.

"We took [the Soldiers'] ideas and put them to work," Paulie explained, "I think for them, it really is their bike. It was a bike they designed and that we fabricated. I think it made it that much more special."

The Patriot Chopper is the first of three bikes commissioned by the Army National Guard. The purpose is twofold. First, the bikes are intended to be a recruiting tool. Army Guard recruiters will display them at rallies across the country to entice potential Soldiers to talk with them. Second, the bikes can also convey important messages about safety.

Despite the television program's tough-guy image, the American Chopper stars remain extremely conscious about safety. The stars wear helmets and other protective gear religiously, a practice they hope to impress upon Soldiers.

"They're very willing to help us out in terms of safety awareness and wearing the proper gear for our Soldiers," said Nuttall. "The bike is one part of it – the build. But the safety is really what we're trying to get after."

Before the ceremony, Paul Sr. joined Nuttall to record a public service announcement about motorcycle safety aimed at National Guard members.

## From page 7: PROCESS IMPROVED

for the 155th Air Refueling Wing of the Nebraska Air National Guard in Lincoln. "Every unit had issues with their aircraft once they got back to their base. It didn't necessarily mean safety was compromised in each aircraft, but before the Team Spirit program, we would send an aircrew and crew chief down to get the plane and all the crew chief was able to do was walk around the plane."

The Team Spirit initiative has changed all that, and has instilled confidence in the KC-135 maintenance community.

KC-135 depots are located at the Oklahoma City Air Logistics Center (OC-ALC) on Tinker Air Force Base, at Pemco Aviation Group in Birmingham, Ala. (Boeing's depot maintenance subcontractor), and at the Boeing Logistics Support Systems in San Antonio.

About 80 percent of inspection checklist items now are accomplished at the depot, whereas before they were conducted at the unit once the aircraft returned from PDM, said Chief Master Sgt. Jim Honeycutt, aircraft maintenance superintendent, National Guard Bureau.

Honeycutt, who spearheaded the Team Spirit initiative, said unit reports of discrepancies have decreased dramatically, by about 60 percent.

"That's a tremendous improvement," Honeycutt said. "The work done at the depot makes up for re-work that would require the unit or depot maintainers to fix at home station. Because we're finding them at depot, they don't have to dispatch teams anymore to bases to fix discrepancies. The return on investment is spectacular."

He credits many people for the success of Operation Team Spirit, beginning with Phill Lunderman. When he took over managing the Air Mobility Command production line at Tinker AFB, he was asked to improve the quality of maintenance. Once he heard about the Team Spirit program, he pressed full steam ahead.

"This initiative had the most resounding effect on those here at Tinker," said Lunderman, now a foreign military sales equipment specialist at Tinker. "I had a most awesome team leading the charge. It's not easy to find amazing people like Laura Montarella. Team Spirit gave our people an opportunity to fix problems themselves."

"For our maintenance people, the only feedback they used to get was a quality deficiency report (QDR), and most of the time, details about the deficiency weren't explained to them. They would be decertified on doing that maintenance task and had to get training to obtain recertification."

"By letting the war fighter in, and talking to the war fighter, it gives our people an opportunity to discuss the problem and work it out," Lunderman said. "The feedback is immediate and personal. Our technicians really want to perform the job the right way. Sometimes we don't understand the field expectation of maintenance."

Col. Ron Blunck, commander of the 151st Air Refueling Wing Maintenance Group of the Utah Air National Guard, was skeptical about the Team Spirit program. "At first I was very skeptical. But we Team-Spirited our last aircraft from the depot and the interaction and immediate feedback resulted in, without question, the best aircraft, in terms of quality maintenance, that we have ever received from the depot."

"Our last airplane was put back in service in just over a week. In the past we would have been nearly two months getting a depot return back in the schedule. This is a huge benefit to the long term improvement of the entire depot process," Blunck said.



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## Sports briefs

### Rugby dream

An Arizona National Guard Soldier assigned to the Provincial Reconstruction Team here was accepted into the All-Army Rugby Training Camp program.

Spc. Christopher Eckerson, a former schoolteacher in Gilbert, Ariz., joined the Army as an infantryman in 2006. Prior to that, he spent four years in a Marine Corps commissioning program at Norwich University.

Ironically, that program came to an end after he suffered a severe injury playing rugby. But that didn't end his drive to continue his military service or pursue his dreams of playing rugby. He traveled to Fort Benning, Ga., to try out for the team.

"They weeded through a lot of applications to find the best 36 players to invite to the camp," Eckerson said. "Within a month, the best 25 players in the U.S. Army, Reserves and National Guard will be selected to represent the team to try and win the Armed Forces Rugby Championship."

The championship tournament was scheduled to be held Oct. 23-28 at Camp Lejeune, N.C.

-AIR FORCE CAPT. BOB EVERDEEN, PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM QALAT

### Campus paintball

To increase its awareness with college students, the Army National Guard launched an exciting series of free paintball tournaments at 20 campuses throughout the United States. Beginning Oct. 10-13 at the University of Connecticut and the University of Arkansas – Little Rock, students from each campus, as well as surrounding campuses, can compete for a championship prize of \$1,000 per team. Twenty teams, with 10 players per squad, are expected to compete at each of the stops along the tour. The tours will visit the following campuses in November: University of Alabama (11/7-11/10), Southwest Texas State University (11/7-11/10), San Diego State University (11/7-11/10), University of South Carolina (11/14-11/17), University of North Texas (11/14-11/17), Arizona State University (11/14-11/17), University of Southern Mississippi (11/28-12/1), University of South Alabama (11/28-12/1), University of New Mexico (11/28-12/1).

During each tournament, students will be provided with the field of play, paintball gun, paintballs, goggles, mask, CO2 refills, and lunch. For a list of playing fields, rules and to register, students should visit [www.GuardPaintball.com](http://www.GuardPaintball.com).

-NGB NEWS RELEASE

### Peddle power

Seven members of the New Jersey Air National Guard, along with one retiree and six civilians, rode 150 miles with heart to give their support to Multiple Sclerosis. The 14 TEAM NJANG members, along with a support team of two more New Jersey Air Guard members, participated in the 2007 MS150 City to Shore Bike Tour, Sept. 29-30. This two-day event takes riders from Cherry Hill through the forests of the Pine Barrens to Ocean City. Here they spent the night and get up the next morning to start the ride back. TEAM NJANG raised more than \$6,900 of the \$4.5 million contributed by the many riders and their sponsors.

-STAFF SGT. BARB HARBISON, 108TH AIR REFUELING WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

# Deployed coach missing second high school football season

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – With the 2007 junior varsity football season underway, the Saint James High School Sharks of Murrells Inlet, S.C., are again without their junior varsity defensive coordinator, Ricky Cox.

A major with the South Carolina Army National Guard, Cox deployed to western Baghdad with the 151st Field Artillery Brigade in August 2006.

As the transition battle major for the Multi-National Division-Baghdad Fire and Effects Cell, Cox and his staff oversee efforts to return Iraqi provinces back to the sole control of Iraqi government officials.

"At this time, most of the provincial governments in the Baghdad area are unable to function without coalition assistance," Cox said. "Our job is to provide these local governments with whatever logistical and training support they need to become self-reliant."

The ultimate goal, Cox said, is to establish a civilian government capable of maintaining law and order so that coalition forces may withdraw. Although Cox regrets missing



Photo by Sgt. Nicole Kojetin

Maj. Ricky Cox, with the South Carolina Army National Guard, deployed to western Baghdad in August 2006.

a second football season, he believes that serving in a war zone will ultimately improve his coaching.

"The Army always emphasizes teamwork and maintaining a positive attitude," Cox said. "If those principles will make a unit successful in war, they will certainly help a team succeed in a game."

From Baghdad, Cox wishes the Sharks the best of luck and looks forward to reading about their games in the online section of the local newspaper.

"If I can't be their coach, I will be their biggest fan," he said with a smile!

Regarding the old adage that football is war, Cox is adamant that the two have absolutely nothing in common.

"It's ridiculous to compare the two," he said. "One is a game that people enjoy playing. The other is a serious business where people die."

When he is not serving overseas, Cox teaches drafting and pre-engineering classes at Saint James. Cox also helps coach the Saint James varsity baseball team.

## S.Dakota take top honors at Army's Ten-Miler

WASHINGTON, D.C. – The South Dakota National Guard Running Team captured first place in both the men's and women's National Guard divisions at the Army's Ten Miler Oct. 7, held in the nation's capitol.

"It was an awesome experience to run through the most patriotic part of the country and feel the pride of belonging to a great organization," said Master Sgt. Mickey Higgins, team captain for both teams. "Just participating in such an event was reward enough, but coming home with a couple of trophies was even better."

The event featured 26,000 registered runners and is considered the largest 10-mile race in the United States and the second largest in the world. Starting at the Pentagon, the course crossed the Potomac, followed through the streets of Washington and finished back at the Pentagon.

By the start time at 8 a.m., temperatures were already in the 70s and by the end of the race had reached 88 degrees. Runners not only had to fight the heat but also the intense humidity.

"The heat and humidity were wicked and really took its toll," said Lt. Michael McDaniel, who had the top time for the men's team.



South Dakota National Guard photo

The South Dakota National Guard Running Team captured first place in both the men's and women's National Guard divisions at the Army's Ten-Miler.

## Kentucky runners honor fallen heroes

FRANKFORT, Ky.—The Kentucky National Guard Running Team competed in the 23rd Army Ten-Miler race in Washington Oct. 7 to honor the lives of 16 Kentucky Army National Guardsmen killed in Iraq and Afghanistan. The team also participated in a wreath laying ceremony at the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery to remember all who have given the last full measure of devotion in service to Kentucky and their country.

The team, comprised of 11 Soldiers and Airmen from the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard, held a memo-

rial service on the hallowed grounds of the Pentagon and dedicate the race to Kentucky's fallen and injured. Simultaneously in Iraq and Afghanistan, Kentucky Guardsmen will participate in Army Ten-Miler shadow runs in Camps Victory, Taji and Al Asad.

The Army Ten-Miler is America's largest 10-mile road race and the Army's premier running event. Runners in the 23rd Annual Army Ten-Miler will start and finish at the Pentagon and will pass such national landmarks as the Lincoln Memorial, the Washington Monument and the Capitol.



Photo by Maj. Cotton Puryear

More than 250 runners from 24 countries took part in the Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, edition of the Army Ten-Miler. Many were National Guard members.



# 'The Eleventh Hour of the Eleventh Day of the Eleventh Month'

## The National Guard, World War I, and Armistice Day

By Bill Boehm  
National Guard Bureau

The observance we honor in November, Veterans Day, evolved from Armistice Day. The federal government declared this occasion after fighting between the Allied and Central Powers of World War I ceased on Nov. 11, 1918, at 11 a.m. In approximately a year and a half during the period when the United States fought after President Woodrow Wilson declared war against Germany in April 1917, the National Guard made its presence felt as it made its way across the Atlantic Ocean to Europe, to defend foreign soil "over there" for the first time. Nov. 11, 2007 marks the 90<sup>th</sup> time in which the country commemorates this occasion.

The recent 1916 National Defense Act first incorporated the modern Guard into the national defense structure. In all, the Guard's role provided about 40 percent of the strength to the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) deployed to Europe. In this "War to End All Wars," the Citizen-Soldier evolved into a critical piece of the puzzle in the attempt to stop the spread of tyranny throughout the European continent and elsewhere. The Guard was composed of college-educated men, farmers, laborers, and many others.

One of many exemplary fighting units in the War was the 30th Division, composed of National Guardsmen from North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. Having recently returned home after its Mexican border service in 1917, the War Department called the "Old Hickory Division" into federal service in July of that year to train at Camp Sevier S.C. By 1918, the division reached a strength of 27,000 men. Upon arrival in Great Britain, the 30th trained with the 2nd British Army, then departed for duty in France in July 1918. It distinguished itself as the first to break Germany's Hindenburg Line. Despite heavy casualties amongst difficult conditions, the 30th went on to become the most decorated division in the War, with 12 Medal of Honor recipients, more than any other National Guard unit.



World War I recruiting poster for the Pennsylvania National Guard from Philadelphia, circa 1917. Note the appeals to patriotism and camaraderie evident in this image. Courtesy Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, image no. LC-USZC4-7586

Future U.S. President Harry S Truman served in the Great War as a captain in Battery D, 129th Field Artillery of the Missouri

National Guard. At age 33, he was beyond the age of enlistment at the time and as a farmer need not have served, but Truman

felt a strong obligation to serve his country. Scores of other Citizen-Soldiers who would make a great impact on U.S. history in later years also served with distinction. The success of the campaigns in France and throughout the rest of western Europe depended heavily on the presence of the National Guard, which brought Army forces to necessary strength through vigorous recruiting and the sense of patriotism fervent throughout the country.

U.S.-involvement in World War I continues to intrigue those who study and read about it, due to the bloody toll it exacted in a short time, and how it would affect the entire world long after. The significance of World War I became evident in later years, as much of its aftermath caused political problems that paved the way for World War II to spread across the globe so violently by the late 1930s and into the 1940s.

In the subsequent years after World War I, Nov. 11 took on particular customs and traditions. Citizens across the country noted Armistice Day with a two-minute silence at 11 a.m., a convention still observed. Armistice Day 1921 also saw the dedication of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery by President Warren G. Harding. Congress directed the president to proclaim the holiday's observation in 1926, and then mandated it to become a federal holiday later in 1938. In order to honor veterans of later wars and distinguish the commemoration from the World War I era, President Dwight D. Eisenhower formally changed the name of Armistice Day to Veterans Day in 1954. Later legislation changed the date to the 4th Monday in October in 1968, but Congress decided to move Veterans Day back to its original date of Nov. 11 after popular sentiment throughout the nation supported it. Here, the American public saw to it that the spirit of reflection and thanksgiving that Armistice Day originally signified was not lost.

Veterans of the National Guard, of all past and present conflicts in the nation's history — we salute you this day of Nov. 11, and thank you for your service. 🇺🇸

### It happened in November

#### Events that made Guard history

**November 7, 1811:** Tippecanoe River, Indiana - Ind. Territorial Gov. William Henry Harrison, who acted also as general of its militia, commanded an army numbering about 1,000 militiamen approaching the stronghold of the Shawnee war chief Tecumseh and his brother, a mystic known as the "Prophet." The American camp was attacked by the Prophet before Harrison reached his goal. Tecumseh was away and took no part in the engagement, but high losses among the Indians did weaken their confederacy. Tecumseh and Harrison would later face each other in battle, first at Fort Meigs, Ohio, in May 1813, and then at the Battle of the Thames

River in Canada in October 1813.

**November 18, 1916:** Mineola, N.Y. — Ten JN-4 "Jennies" bi-wing aircraft lift off to undertake a historic flight, becoming the first multi-plane organization to fly a cross-country course totaling about 200 miles. They land in Princeton, N.J., and then return to Long Island. New York's 1st Aero Squadron, commanded by Capt. Raynal Bolling, an early flight pioneer, made this nationally recognized flight. Bolling Air Force Base in Washington is named for this Guard aviator.

**November 19, 1942:** Buna, New Guinea — Elements of the 32nd Infantry Division (Michigan, Wisconsin) enter combat in the jungles and mountains of New Guinea on a campaign that would last into January 1943. Their primary

goal is to halt the Japanese advance across the island which would put the enemy on the doorstep of Australia. Among the events of this two-month operation was the first large airlift of Soldiers from the 40th Infantry Division (Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah) over the Owen Stanley Mountains. By the end of the campaign, the Japanese were stopped and forced to retreat.

**November 27, 1969:** Indianapolis — Members of the Company D, 151st Infantry (Ranger), are welcomed home by families, friends and dignitaries including the governor and Indiana's congressional delegation following the company's tour in Vietnam. The last mobilized Army Guard unit to deploy to theater in December 1968, the unit was the only Guard (or Army Reserve) ground combat unit to serve in Vietnam.



# President Bush: National Guard fully engaged in wildfire battle

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

ESCONDIDO, Calif. - The National Guard is providing critical help to civilian authorities fighting Southern California's mammoth wildfires, national leaders said here Oct. 25.

"Our National Guard personnel have provided very important assistance," President George W. Bush said during a visit to the fire scenes.

Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, and Maj. Gen. William Wade II, adjutant general of the California National Guard, were among leaders



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
**President Bush praises Guard efforts in Escondido, Calif., Oct. 25.**

accompanying the president.

More than 2,500 Guard Soldiers and Airmen were assisting civilian

authorities with firefighting efforts by the end of the week.

"The contribution of the National Guard is a five-star effort," said U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein from California.

Citizen-Airmen are dropping fire retardant from C-130 aircraft. Citizen-Soldiers are dropping water from UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, patrolling evacuated neighborhoods, manning traffic control points in support of civilian law enforcement agencies and providing other logistical support.

Air National Guard crews are dumping retardant from C-130 aircraft equipped with Modular

Airborne Firefighting Systems (MAFFS).

Lt. Col. Brian L. Ratchford, an aircraft commander with the North Carolina Air National Guard's 145th Airlift Wing, is one of the pilots flying missions in a MAFFS-equipped C-130 out of Naval Air Station Point Mugu in California.

"The size of this operation is enormous," Ratchford said. "The size of the response, the size of the fire is so much larger than I have ever done."

A pilot since 1987 and a veteran of every major U.S. combat mission since Operation Just Cause in Panama in 1989, Ratchford has

fought California wildfires from the air before.

His goal this time? "We hope to fly as many missions as we can and drop as much retardant as we can," Ratchford said. "I would like to see all the fires out before we leave. This is really challenging flying, but it's also very gratifying. These aircraft are built for war but being used in support of American citizens and their property. I believe in every mission the Air National Guard has undertaken. It is especially gratifying to help someone protect their home and property."

- LT. COL. ELLEN KRENKE CONTRIBUTED TO THIS REPORT

## You asked for it, you got it: Guard's support to Southern California

As of Oct. 29, the total National Guard response was 2,727 California Army and Air National Guard members. The initial request by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger was for 1,500 personnel. Some of the Guard's efforts:

- Missions: firefighting, security, support to law enforcement, interoperable communications, transportation, medical support, command and control and public affairs
- Aviation support: Eight UH-60 Blackhawks, one Firehawk and two CH-47s operating from several airfields in California. About 40 hours flown and about 298,642 gallons of water dropped
- MAFFS: National Guard C-130 crews and aircraft, with MAFFS have flown 41 missions dropping tons of retardant on wildfires in San Diego area
- Imagery collection: An RC-26B aircraft with full motion video downlink from the 147th Fighter Wing of the Texas Air National Guard has deployed to Naval Air Station North Island to provide imagery to the incident site commander
- Search and Rescue: Two HH-60s from the 129th Rescue Wing of the California Air National Guard have been moved to Los Alamitos to provide support as needed
- Security Operations: The 40th Infantry Brigade is currently providing support to local law enforcement agencies as part of Task Force - San Diego
- Family Assistance Programs: Established at three evacuation centers
- Religious Support Teams: Four are providing support at area shelters About 19 are available if needed

**Clockwise from top: Fire burning in Rancho Bernardo near San Diego Oct. 23. A California Soldier patrols buildings and vehicles destroyed on the Rincon Reservation in San Diego County. California Army Guard Soldiers conduct security patrols on the La Jolla Indian Reservation while the Palomar Fire burns northeast of San Diego. A California Army Guard helicopter battles a blaze.**

# California Wildfires

## And the Guard's response

**"[This has] been probably the most proactive response to a domestic event that I have seen in my 40 years in uniform"**

*-LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau*

Photo by SFC Robert A. Pack



Photo by SFC Robert A. Pack



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jim Greenhill

## Soldiers patrol as residents return home

**By Master Sgt. Greg Rudl**  
National Guard Bureau

CORONADO, Calif. - Before Mike Maury could thank the firefighters who he thought had prevented his house from going up in flames, he thanked the California National Guard for protecting it from looters.

When a convoy of Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry (Light) approached his home in Rancho Bernardo north of San Diego, Maury was overcome with gratitude, going from Humvee to Humvee shaking hand after hand; his wife, other family members and neighbors doing the same.

It was about noon on Oct. 25, and just minutes earlier Maury and fellow residents had been allowed to return to their neighborhood. Soldiers from the California Guard were there providing security.

Some residents returned to find their homes untouched; others found only brick chimneys and piles of charred debris.

"We got out with the clothing on our back," said Maury, 59, with his wife Elma at his side. This 28-year resident said that a wooden overhang above the front door of his 2,000 square foot house was on fire when he left it Oct. 22. Returning three days later, he didn't know if he'd still have a house. Luckily, this former Illinois National Guard member did. Unfortunately, in a cul-de-sac just 100 meters away, blackened remains were all that was left of four homes.

This sporadic destruction was what Soldiers witnessed as they patrolled along curving, hilly roads in this upscale neighborhood: one house untouched—the next, a pile of charcoal.

The Soldiers' job, according to the patrol leader, Capt. Michael Riley, was to ensure that "the right people are getting back in their houses." Not looters or con men posing as contractors.