



THE ON GUARD

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Native American heritage in action

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Learning to live off the land as a Yupik Eskimo has served Sgt. 1st Class Paul Bavilla well during his tour of duty in Iraq with the Alaska Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry.

Flying the unfriendly skies: California Air Guard to get the Predator



U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Kevin J. Gruenwald

An MQ-1 Predator comes in for a landing following a recent flight. The California Air National Guard's 163rd Air Refueling Wing at March Air Reserve Base, near Riverside, will be the new home for the Unmanned Aerial System.

Air Force News Service

WASHINGTON – As part of ongoing Total Force initiatives, the Air Force, the National Guard Bureau and the adjutant general of California have announced that the California Air National Guard's 163rd Air Refueling Wing, based at March Air Reserve Base, will become the home for a new MQ-1 Predator Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) unit.

This important Air Force transformation mission converts the 163rd Air Refueling Wing to the 163rd Wing and represents another example of how the Air Guard is using the unique talents of its units and Airmen to support global operations with its Total Force partners - the Air Force and Air Force Reserve.

"The unique characteristics that the Guard and Reserve bring to the fight provide economies of scale in experience, stability and cost savings and, as such, significantly enhance the Air Force's ability to accomplish our mission. One team, one fight," said Lt. Gen. Stephen Wood, Air Force deputy chief of staff for Plans and Programs.

Initial plans include basing the mission at the 163rd Wing, near Riverside, Calif., with flight operations being conducted in the restricted airspace in southern California. This unique and cost-effective split operation will allow the California Air Guard to optimize its

PREDATOR: Page 10



Photo courtesy of the Integration Process Team

A New Mexico Air National Guard F-16 takes off from the Royal Air Force base at Lossiemouth, Scotland.

New Mexico National Guard helps test new Eurofighter

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill
National Guard Bureau

LOSSIEMOUTH, SCOTLAND – American allies who needed help testing a new supersonic European jet fighter have turned to the New Mexico Air National Guard.

The Guard's 150th Fighter Wing (FW) - based at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, N.M. - fires rockets from F-16s so that the Eurofighter Typhoon can shoot them down. No other unit can do that. The Guard unit is part of a Navy team.

"The pilots, ground crew and aircraft were superb," said Navy Capt. Rich Walter, aerial target and decoy systems program manager. "The operation was a resounding success."

Airmen flew two F-16s and a KC-135 Stratotanker to Scotland in November so that the Eurofighter - said by its manufacturer to be the world's most advanced swing-role combat aircraft - could test its ability to acquire targets moving at supersonic speeds.

The 150th FW's unique test support branch - Defense Systems Evaluation - supports the joint services in numerous development and operational testing missions.

"We are the only unit certified to load and launch these rocket targets," Air Guard Maj. Wade Daughtrey said during a break

FIGHTER: Page 6

Army Guard recruiting and retention best in 13 years

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Army National Guard had its most successful three months of recruiting and retention since 1993 in the first quarter - October through December - of the 2006 fiscal year.

"It was the best in 13 years," said Lt. Col. Mike Jones, deputy chief of the Army Guard's Strength Maintenance Division. "We out-recruited both the Army and the Army Reserve - combined. And they've got heaps more recruiters."

The Army Guard surpassed its goal during

the first quarter by recruiting 13,466 new Soldiers, a 107 percent return.

October 2005 saw some 4,050 accessions compared to 2,546 in October 2004. In November, 4,960 accessions, up more than 2,000 from 2,902 a year earlier. And, in December, 4,456 accessions, versus 3,661 a year earlier.

Recruiters say the turning point came in May 2005. That was when the Army Guard began improving monthly recruiting figures from the same month for the previous two years. By October - the beginning of the new fiscal year - the change from the previous year was dramatic.

It wasn't an overnight turnaround, Jones said, but rather the fruits of seeds planted more than a year earlier.

"You can't overstate the command focus," he said.

That is focus from the very top, in the form of monthly video teleconferences between LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard, Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, and the adjutant general (AG) from each state. Those briefings started four months before the May 2005 turnaround.

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National Guard roundup: What's your state doing for America? Page 15

About The On Guard

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E-mail your stories to us by the 12th of each month. We prefer that photos be high-quality digital (200 dpi or more) and e-mailed to:

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How could we take on the bird flu?

ARLINGTON, Va. - I wasn't exactly delighted to be grounded with what I guess was the flu during the first full weekend of the New Year, after spending two healthy holiday weeks with my family in Maine. Nor was I thrilled to learn that my wife was suffering from the same symptoms - chills, aching joints and fatigue - at our home in the Pine Tree State.

We both needed some serious TLC, but we were too sick to get to one another.

It could have been a lot worse. We had the "normal flu." We had access to the pills that go pop and fizz to ease our pain and to the syrup that stops the wrenching coughs so we could get some sleep. We can both get the shots that are supposed to keep people from getting it again. (And I will, by God, get a shot next year.)

Furthermore, there was no sign of panic on the street where I live here in Arlington. There was no mass movement to the hospital from the neighborhood in Augusta, Maine, where the missus maintains our home in my absence. Hey, it was the flu. Yes, we know that it kills thousands of people every year, especially elderly people. We also take comfort from the fact that most people endure it and get over it.

There was only one reason that I was glad I got it. It made me wonder what would happen if everyone in my neighborhood caught something like avian influenza - the bird flu; if there was a very good chance that a lot of people around me or my wife could die; if I were not permitted to go to her in Maine. What if we had a pandemic - something like the 1918 Influenza Pandemic that killed between 50 million and 100 million people worldwide, including at least a half-million Americans?

What could the National Guard do about something like that? It seemed to be a good question considering that the media is paying a fair share of attention to the bird flu these days and that February falls during flu season.

It seems that other people have been asking the same questions and looking very hard for answers. They include Air National Guard Maj. Gen. Terry Scherling, the new director of the Joint Staff here at the National Guard Bureau, and Col. David Baldwin, director of operations for the California National Guard.

Scherling has recently completed a 2½-year assignment as deputy director for antiterrorism and homeland defense with the Joint Staff at the Pentagon. She understands that the homeland may need to be defended against a pandemic.

Both have offered sound counsel about how our Guard members could help this country and take care of themselves should the H5N1 "bird flu" virus somehow mutate and spread from human to human.

Their messages in a nutshell: The same National Guard forces that have been organized to cope with weapons of mass destruction and respond to terrorist attacks and natural disasters such as last year's Gulf Coast hurricanes are ready to respond to a pandemic. There are ways for Guard mem-

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By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell
Senior Correspondent

bers, and the people they know, to protect themselves during a widespread outbreak.

"I think Katrina was a great training ground for what could be a long term pandemic influenza situation," said Scherling just a few months after 58,000 Army and Air Guard troops from everywhere in this country answered the call to help the victims of hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma.

"If we can imagine Katrina going on for a year or more, that's probably what we would face in a pandemic situation," she cautioned. "The National Guard would be a key, as well as all of the active duty forces, to provide stability for our country and to protect the American citizens."

Stability? That would include transporting food and distributing medicine to the people who need it, she explained. It might mean making sure that power plants and transportation systems keep on turning even if their workers are not well enough to work. It would mean keeping the economy as vibrant as possible.

That could mean more work for the National Guard, Scherling said. "There will be several things that the National Guard can do - everything from monitoring our own medical system and the people who are in the National Guard to also providing expertise in any number of areas, such as transportation and the distribution of medications."

State Guard leaders proved they could pull together among themselves and with other agencies last fall, Scherling indicated. "What I saw was a National Guard that coordinated well through all of the adjutants general and that used the emergency management contacts," she said.

Other leaders are exploring ways that the Guard could help.

"The U.S. Northern Command has written a concept of operations and is in the process of developing more detailed plans on their role, and the National Guard is incorporated into those plans," Scherling said. And LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau "has directed and challenged our

staff to develop a table top exercise that will involve the adjutants general along with some of the states' other emergency personnel," she added.

Blum, furthermore, expressed his concerns about a possible pandemic to 50 adjutants general or their representatives during a meeting in Arlington, Va., in mid-November, and state public affairs officers will participate in an exercise when they meet in Arlington in late February.

Meanwhile, in California, Col. Baldwin is thinking about how Guard members and their families can care for themselves.

"Soldiers, Airmen and their families are our most precious asset," states Baldwin in an article by Lt. Col. Stan Zetzarski. "Practicing good hygiene, maintaining solid rest schedules and taking care of themselves and their families at the first hint of symptoms can make all the difference in the world.

"Finally, when troops or families do contract the flu, don't return to work when it appears that you have fully recovered, but remain at home and continue treating yourself until you're 100 percent sure or have been medically cleared to return to duty," Baldwin added. "We want you, but you're no good to yourself, family or state if you return only to be hit by a second or third wave."

Now that's not new advice. That's what health professionals encourage everyone to do during the flu season. But consider this. So far, there is no vaccine for the avian flu. If it does indeed grip this land, those precautions could amount to the National Guard's ounce of prevention that's worth a pound of cure so we could, again, serve our fellow Americans during their time of need.

Hurricane medals

Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. - National Guard men and women who helped for hurricanes Katrina and Rita are eligible for medals.

Airmen and Soldiers who helped in Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi or Texas from Aug. 29 to Oct. 13, 2005, qualify for the Humanitarian Service Medal.

Those who helped for 30 consecutive days or 60 nonconsecutive days anywhere from Aug. 27, 2005, to Feb. 26, 2006, are eligible for the Armed Forces Service Medal.

The authority was given by the Department of Defense.

Airmen and Soldiers can potentially be awarded both medals if they qualify.



Armed Forces Service Medal



Humanitarian Service Medal

Lifestyle of 'living off the land' adds to Soldier qualities

By Spc. Michael Noggie
11th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BUCCA, Iraq – Alaska Army National Guard Sgt. Paul Bavilla's personality can be summed up in one phrase. "He is a shining star, a hero among his people," says Sgt. 1st Class Todd Patnode and other members of the 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry who are serving with Bavilla in Iraq.



Bavilla

Bavilla is a Yupik Eskimo from Togiak, Alaska. At 35, and with 15 years of Alaska National Guard service, he deployed to Iraq with the unit from Nome.

Continuing an Alaskan tradition, Bavilla is known as an Eskimo Scout. The Scouts are experts at surviving in harsh weather conditions and using their surrounding environment for resources.

The designation Eskimo Scout dates back to World War II when Japanese

forces invaded Alaska and Alaskan natives were asked to help defend the territory, deter further attacks and give the U.S. and Canada time to build up more forces.

The natives from Nome and other parts of the country patrolled the expansive Bering Sea coastline and operated across south-central and southeastern Alaska. Their mission also included rescuing service members and reporting enemy positions.

"Villages were organized into an Alaska Territorial National Guard," said Lt. Col. Chip Andrews, the 1st Battalion, 297th Infantry commander. "They served as the

"When I first got in 15 years ago, there were around 2,500 Eskimo Scouts still serving in the Alaska National Guard. Now there couldn't be more than 1,200 Scouts serving in the military."

– Bavilla

'eyes and ears of the Arctic' to protect the Territory of Alaska."

Battalions were formed after the war to guard Alaska against invasion or intrusion by the Soviet Union, but the number of Scouts has been drastically decreased since the fall of the Warsaw Pact.

"When I first got in 15 years ago, there were around 2,500 Eskimo Scouts still serving in the Alaska National Guard," Bavilla said. "Now there couldn't be more than 1,200 Scouts serving in the military."

Today's Scouts continue to train in the conditions and environments of their ancestors, living a subsistence lifestyle that includes residing in remote villages, hunting wild animals and enduring extreme weather conditions.

"This guy is as hardcore as they come," said Patnode about Bavilla. "He goes out in 30 degree below zero temperatures and lives in the wilderness for months at a time."

Bavilla recalled one incident when he and his uncle got lost while returning from a 50-mile hike during the winter. His uncle lost the trail on which they had traveled.

"My uncle has taught me a lot and has been a great mentor, but during this occasion, I was the one who had to save him," said Bavilla who found the way back home.

"It has helped me a lot being a Scout and serving in the Alaska National Guard," Bavilla said. "My training has enabled me to become a better Soldier."

"He has a good reputation with everyone in the unit and

One of the first Alaskan Scouts ...

Eric J. Tetpon Sr., 86, is the sole survivor of the original 1st Battalion of the Alaska Scouts where he served as a captain in the Shaktoolik Company of the Alaska Territorial Guard from 1941 to 1947.

Tetpon and other Alaska Natives in the Territorial Guard used their native languages to communicate during the Japanese invasion of Alaska.

"The Japanese knew English," said Tetpon.

Tetpon also served as a sergeant in the National Guard from 1949 to 1953 as a signal Soldier, which required packing a 60-pound portable telephone on his back to provide communications for his unit.

Tetpon currently lives in Anchorage, Alaska.



Tetpon

leads by example," Patnode said. "There aren't too many words to describe how much this man has done for those around him."

Many Soldiers in the unit, including Patnode, are interested in learning more about Bavilla's language and culture during their time in Iraq.

"These are some excellent guys to be around," Bavilla said. "They respect me for my work ethic and want to learn to speak my native language."

"He carries a lot of pride as an American," Patnode said, "but he has just as much pride for himself and his people."

Army National Guard Transformation takes shape

By Maj. Les' A. Melnyk
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Army National Guard's transformation, highlighted by the organization of 34 new modular brigades, continues to march towards a programmed completion date of 2008.

The transformation to these cost-effective, rapidly deployable formations is occurring in the midst of ongoing deployments overseas in support of the Global War on Terror, as well as extensive deployments here in the United States for Operation Noble Eagle and for domestic disaster response.

In October, the Army Guard mounted what was by far the largest ever military response for a domestic emergency when over 42,000 Army Guardsmen deployed to the Gulf Coast following Hurricane Katrina. Over 7,000 Air National Guardsmen also responded. At the time of Katrina, some 80,000 Guardsmen were already deployed worldwide, primarily in Iraq.

For much of 2005, the Army Guard contributed half of the Army's combat forces on the ground in Iraq. These combat-proven units in many cases returned to immediately begin transformation to the new, modular configuration, with the goal being to make them identical in structure and manning to their active Army counterparts - though at a considerably cheaper price, since the Guard units are manned by part-time Citizen-Soldiers.

Seventy-three percent of all Army National Guard units are affected by transformation - the largest shift in Guard force structure since the end of World War II. The transition began in fiscal year 2005.

As in the active component, the Guard's BCTs come in three types - infantry, armored (formerly called "heavy"), and Stryker. In addition to the BCTs, the Army Guard will also be fielding a number of new modular supporting units - six "fires brigades," 10 "combat support brigades (maneuver enhancement)," 11 sustainment brigades, 12 aviation brigades, an aviation command and three sustainment commands.

As in the regular Army, the eight Army National Guard Divisions are shedding all their organic structure and transforming to a modular, deployable command and control headquarters. In peacetime, the Guard division headquarters will have training and oversight authority for four or five BCTs located in the same geographic area. In wartime, each division will have a variable number of BCTs and support units attached to it depending on its mission.

In addition, Guard division headquarters will have the capability to exercise command and control in a domestic emergency, as did both the 35th and 38th Infantry Divisions following Hurricane Katrina.

The 35th Infantry Division headquarters deployed to Louisiana to assist the adjutant general of Louisiana in his command over

tens of thousands of Guardsmen who deployed there in the wake of the hurricane. The 38th Infantry Division headquarters performed the same mission in support of the adjutant general of Mississippi.

The transition to 34 brigade combat teams represents a considerable reduction in the Army National Guard's combat force structure from only five years ago. In 2000, the Army Guard consisted of eight complete infantry divisions, each consisting of three maneuver brigades, plus 16 separate brigades, an armored cavalry regiment and an infantry group, for a total of 42 ground maneuver brigades or their equivalent. The Army Guard's authorized strength of 350,000 in 2000 was the same as it is today.

The transition is even more dramatic when compared to the Cold War height of the Army Guard in 1989, when strength stood at 457,000 and the Guard fielded 53 ground maneuver brigades or their equivalent.

The reduction in forces is equally dramatic in other branches, most notably field artillery. There, the Cold War reserve of 17 field artillery brigades and a corps artillery headquarters that are currently in the Guard will shrink to six "fires brigades" by 2008.

The initial announcement on the designations for these modular units was made at the Association of the United States Army annual convention in Washington, D.C., in October. Extensive evaluation and input from the states since then has led to a few

significant changes to the Army National Guard picture.

Perhaps most noticeable is the new designation and insignia that will be worn by Virginia's Brigade Combat Team. Initially, the unit was to be designated the 116th BCT, 29th Infantry Division, and soldiers would have continued to wear the 29th Infantry Division patch they currently wear. Virginia's leaders decided instead to designate the unit the 116th Infantry BCT and adopt the shoulder sleeve insignia of the former 116th Infantry Brigade, the famed "Stonewall Brigade." That patch sports a profile of Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson, the legendary confederate commander from Virginia, astride his horse.

In another change from the October announcement, Louisiana's 256th BCT will continue to be called "infantry" for tradition's sake, even though its structure will remain that of an "armored" BCT. The Army Guard will also have two armored BCTs - the 116th in Idaho and the 278th in Tennessee - that will adopt the designation "Cavalry BCT" because these units have long histories of service as cavalry organizations.

A conference of Army National Guard G-3s also recommended the divisions providing training and oversight of the 39th Infantry BCT (Arkansas) and the 45th Infantry BCT (Oklahoma) be swapped.

2006 National Guard drill pay tables

RESERVE PAY FOR 1 DRILL

EFFECTIVE 1 JANUARY 2006

PAY GRADE	YEARS OF SERVICE														
	<2	2	3	4	6	8	10	12	14	16	18	20	22	24	26
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS															
O-10	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	445.50	447.68	456.99	473.21
O-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	389.65	395.25	403.37	417.52
O-8	275.70	284.73	290.72	292.40	299.87	312.37	315.27	327.14	330.54	340.76	355.54	369.18	378.29	378.29	378.29
O-7	229.09	239.73	244.66	248.57	255.66	262.65	270.75	278.83	286.93	312.37	333.86	333.86	333.86	333.86	335.55
O-6	169.80	186.54	198.78	198.78	199.53	208.09	209.22	209.22	221.11	242.13	254.47	266.80	273.82	280.92	294.71
O-5	141.55	159.45	170.50	172.57	179.45	183.58	192.64	199.29	207.87	221.02	227.27	233.46	240.48	240.48	240.48
O-4	122.13	141.38	150.81	152.92	161.67	171.06	182.74	191.86	198.18	201.81	203.82	203.82	203.82	203.82	203.82
O-3	107.38	121.73	131.39	143.25	150.10	157.63	162.51	170.53	174.69	174.69	174.69	174.69	174.69	174.69	174.69
O-2	92.77	105.67	121.70	125.81	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40	128.40
O-1	80.54	83.82	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32	101.32
COMMISSIONED OFFICERS WITH OVER 4 YEARS ACTIVE DUTY SERVICE AS AN ENLISTED MEMBER OR WARRANT OFFICER															
O-3E	0.00	0.00	0.00	143.25	150.1	157.63	162.51	170.53	177.28	181.15	186.43	186.43	186.43	186.43	186.43
O-2E	0.00	0.00	0.00	125.81	128.40	132.49	139.38	144.72	148.69	148.69	148.69	148.69	148.69	148.69	148.69
O-1E	0.00	0.00	0.00	101.32	108.21	112.2	116.29	120.31	125.81	125.81	125.81	125.81	125.81	125.81	125.81
WARRANT OFFICERS															
W-5	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	190.67	197.21	203.77	210.37
W-4	110.96	119.37	122.80	126.17	131.98	137.71	143.53	149.19	155.05	164.24	170.12	175.87	181.83	187.70	193.70
W-3	101.33	105.58	109.88	111.31	115.85	121.05	127.91	134.68	141.88	147.28	152.66	154.97	157.38	162.58	167.75
W-2	89.13	94.22	98.68	101.91	104.69	112.32	118.15	122.48	126.71	129.61	132.05	136.89	141.30	145.97	145.97
W-1	78.71	85.15	89.46	92.25	99.68	104.16	108.13	112.56	115.50	118.16	122.49	125.77	125.77	125.77	125.77
ENLISTED MEMBERS															
E-9	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	134.07	137.11	140.94	145.45	149.98	157.26	163.41	169.90	179.80
E-8	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	109.75	114.61	117.61	121.21	125.11	132.15	135.72	141.79	145.16	153.45
E-7	76.29	83.27	86.46	90.69	93.98	99.65	102.83	106.01	111.68	114.52	117.21	118.86	124.42	128.02	137.12
E-6	65.99	72.60	75.81	78.92	82.17	89.50	92.35	95.51	98.29	99.27	99.95	99.95	99.95	99.95	99.95
E-5	60.47	64.51	67.62	70.82	75.79	80.07	83.22	84.22	84.22	84.22	84.22	84.22	84.22	84.22	84.22
E-4	55.43	58.27	61.42	64.53	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28	67.28
E-3	50.04	53.19	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40	56.40
E-2	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58	47.58
E-1 >4	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45	42.45
E-1 <4	39.27	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

NOTE—BASIC PAY FOR O7-O10 IS LIMITED TO \$414.44
LEVEL III OF THE EXECUTIVE SCHEDULE
NOTE—BASIC PAY FOR O4 AND BELOW IS LIMITED TO \$365.00
LEVEL V OF THE EXECUTIVE SCHEDULE

1.1%, 2006 Increase as established under § 1089 of US Code Title 37.
An adjustment under this section shall have the force and effect of law - Released October 11, 2005.
1.3% Increase for Level III and Level V for year 2006.

USD(PERSONNEL AND READINESS)

OFFICIAL

FROM PAGE 1

R&R

Vaughn dedicates 12 hours a month to being briefed by the AGs solely on recruiting and retention. "Staffs and forces don't get that kind of time," Jones said.

Unless prior arrangements have been made, Vaughn will only talk with the AG. It's unacceptable for someone else to stand in, and Vaughn won't take the briefing, Jones said.

The briefings have been held every month for a year, Jones said, and that and other changes throughout recruiting and retention are starting to pay dividends.

"We totally refocused the advertising," he said. "Not just the advertisements, but how

we deliver the advertisements. TV is less effective; the Web is more effective."

Jones held out a credit card-size piece of advertising handed out at movie theaters. The card offers a free iTunes music download in exchange for a recruiting prospect looking at Guard information online. Jones calls it economical, effective advertising. The card cost 16 cents. The iTunes is 87 cents. "For a buck, I got 12 minutes of a kid's time," Jones said.

Other measures have included increasing the number of recruiters, tracking recruiters' actions more closely as a measure of their individual effectiveness, and giving recruiters improved training.

"This program was developed to train the

force how to recruit in a wartime environment and overcome the inherent difficulties of recruiting young men and women during the Global War on Terrorism," Jones said.

The focus of advertising has changed, incentives have been increased, efforts targeted at high school and college students have increased and potential recruiting leads are more closely tracked.

Technology has also been brought to bear. Jones pulled up an adapted Google Earth program on a computer screen. He examined recruiting results zip code by zip code across the nation.

Using the program, recruiting officials can zoom in on specific homes where recruiting prospects live. They can pull up personal

information and details about how the potential recruit was first approached. They can pinpoint active Guard members living near the potential recruits - people they can potentially tap to talk to prospects. With that technology, recruiting commanders can learn what techniques are working best in areas as small as a single street anywhere in the United States, Jones said.

The changes in recruiting numbers in the first quarter didn't come overnight, Jones said. "This started 18 months ago," he said. Now, months of effort are showing promising results.

What is the bottom line goal? To maintain the Army Guard's congressionally authorized strength of 350,000 troops.

Maj. Gen. Scherling to lead Guard Bureau's Joint Staff

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – She dreamed of a ski-racing career, but joining the National Guard in college put her on a different road.

Now, Air Force Maj. Gen. Terry Scherling – who simultaneously led worldwide anti-terrorism/force protection, homeland defense and military assistance to civilian authorities – has become director of the National Guard Bureau's Joint Staff.

Scherling is the first woman to lead the Joint Staff, which coordinates the Army and Air National Guard.

She assumed her new duties Jan. 3 and now holds the same two-star rank held by the Davenport, N.D., native's father, Air Force Maj. Gen. Darrol Schroeder, before his 1989 retirement. Scherling received her second star on Jan. 5.

North Dakota residents recognized her as one of the state's 10 most inspiring people in 2004, but Scherling deflected the credit, telling a newspaper, "One of the things we learn along the way is it's not us. It's the people who work for us."

Commissioned in 1975, Scherling has served at the wing level, at state headquarters, the National Guard Bureau, on the Air Staff, with the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and with the secretary of defense. Her career expertise is in logistics – resourcing military personnel and material.

When she funded a college scholarship in her home state, she told a newspaper, "The key thing that excites me is to know that I might be able to, in some way, encourage some-

one to think bigger thoughts than they may have thought."

Scherling was deputy director for anti-terrorism/homeland defense for the Joint Chiefs of Staff and joint director of military support, advising the chairman of the Joint Chiefs and the secretary of defense on domestic military operations, homeland defense and plans to deter and defeat the enemy in the air, land and maritime domains.

It started with a decision to join the Guard. It became a career reaching the corridors of Pentagon power – while remembering her roots. "It probably has been the most exciting career I've imagined," Scherling has said.

During Hurricane Katrina, Scherling was responsible for the Joint Staff Crisis Action Team, which kept the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the secretary of defense and the president informed about the Department of Defense's response and recovery efforts.

The National Guard's response to Hurricane Katrina was the largest response to a natural disaster since the Guard's formation in December 1636.

"The active duty military and the National Guard provide a deep bench for any of the missions that are requested by FEMA and the Department of Homeland Security," she said.

Scherling's numerous awards include the Legion of Merit and the Meritorious Service Medal. She holds both the Air Force and Army commendation medals.

She is the mother of a National Guardsman, Airman 1st Class Nicholas Scherling of the District of Columbia Air National Guard.



Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Cook
Retired Air Force Maj. Gen. Darrol Schroeder pins the two stars of a major general on his daughter, Terry Scherling.

(Editor's note: Military Web sites and The Forum of North Dakota contributed to this report.)

Georgia Guard Soldiers help save Baby Noor



Photo by Tech Sgt. Mark Getsy, U.S. Air Force

Baby Noor's grandmother and father take the infant, who has the birth defect spina bifida, from a 386th Air Expeditionary Wing C-130 Hercules in Kuwait to transportation to the U.S. Georgia National Guard Soldiers found the baby in Iraq and began the humanitarian mission to save her life.

By Capt. Michael G. Johnson
386th Air Expeditionary Wing

SOUTHWEST ASIA – The C-130 Hercules aircraft here have routinely hauled more than one million troops and 76,000 tons of cargo in and out of Iraq.

But a mission on Dec. 30 was not routine.

At about 4 p.m., a C-130 from the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing touched down here carrying Baby Noor and her father and grandmother on their way to the United States for medical treatment.

Baby Noor was born with spina bifida and was given one month to live by doctors in Iraq, said Maya Dietz, vice consul for the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad.

Georgia National Guardsmen found the baby during operations in the Abu Gharib neighborhood of Baghdad. While the troops were searching the house, the baby's grandmother took the infant to the Soldiers and asked for their help, Dietz said.

The guardsmen contacted their congressional representatives and formed an elaborate coalition of humanitarian assistance. A surgeon in Atlanta offered his services free. The commercial flights to the United States were donated by airlines and a non-profit organization in Atlanta promised to pick up the additional costs for the trip.

U.S. Embassy officials met the family and took them to a local civilian airport.

Baby Noor underwent the first of possibly three operations to correct her spinal birth defect on Jan. 9 at Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, according to press reports. Although she was recovering

well, her doctor expected that the Iraqi girl would be paralyzed for life.

The C-130 crew which flew the infant out of Iraq was from Elmendorf Air Force Base, Alaska, and originally had the day off.

"We weren't scheduled to fly, so to get alerted to fly something like this is pretty darn satisfying," said co-pilot Capt. Raul Ochoa of the 738th Expeditionary Air Squadron. "We've had the opportunity to take part in a lot of missions, but this is probably the most rewarding."

The crew flew 71 troops and their gear into Iraq and flew Baby Noor and her family out.

"We're just fortunate to be able to fly them out. It was an honor," said pilot Capt. Craig Hinkley. "I've never done a humanitarian mission quite like this."

U.S. Embassy officials in Kuwait coordinated with the Kuwaiti minister of interior to allow a smooth passage to the U.S.

"They were very helpful, allowing these three Iraqis to transit through without visas," said Charles Glatz, a consul at the embassy.

While the story of Baby Noor moved to the United States, members of the aircrew won't soon forget the flight.

"[This was] one of the best missions I've ever done," said loadmaster Tech. Sgt. Dave Rea. "It's not often we get to help someone like that."

Flight engineer Tech. Sgt. Bill Thomas summed it up best: "[This flight] makes it worth getting up in the morning," he said. "I was pretty excited to do something this important."

FROM PAGE 1

Fighter

in testing. "The Guard has by far the best experience."

The New Mexico Airmen combine decades of experience from diverse military backgrounds. "It's a real pool of experience and wealth of knowledge," said Maj. Robert Reyner.

Europe has neither the AQM-37 Jayhawk rocket target nor the flight clearances to use it, said Les Perkins, a Northrop Grumman contractor on site for the tests.

"The live firing was a significant milestone for the Typhoon," Walter said. "It moves the aircraft closer to its operational phase and enhances interoperability between the United States and the United Kingdom."

But the testing was a two-way street, offering New Mexico Guardsmen a training opportunity. "We were getting icing on the targets that in New Mexico and California and Hawaii you don't see, and we weren't sure how that would affect the targets," Daughtrey said. "This is the first time I've ever flown in United Kingdom airspace, and there are always differences."

The Eurofighter - an agile single-seat, twin-engine fighter capable of close combat and ground attack - is being built by a consortium of the United Kingdom, Germany, Italy and Spain. It is powered by the new EJ200 engine and navigates with the new Captor radar, both developed for the Eurofighter by the four-nation consortium. In 2003, the partner nations took delivery of the first of 620 aircraft they've collectively ordered.

About two dozen New Mexico Guardsmen spent Thanksgiving in Scotland for live target firings at QinetiQ Deep Sea Range at Benebecula Island in the Outer Hebrides. The team was based at Royal Air Force (RAF) Lossiemouth. That is the RAF's largest and busiest fast-jet base.

Scotland is a nation of five million people - about the same population as Arizona or Maryland - living in an area somewhat smaller than South Carolina. It borders England to the south, the Atlantic Ocean to the west, the oil- and gas-rich North Sea to the east. If it was in the United States, it would be the 11th smallest state by land area; the 21st largest by population.

The primary objective of the live target fir-



Photos courtesy F-16/AQM-37 Integration Process Team

Airmen with the New Mexico Air National Guard unload supplies from a transport aircraft at the Royal Air Force base in Lossiemouth, Scotland, during recent tests for the new Eurofighter Typhoon jet fighter. Guardsmen from the 150th Fighter Wing provided testing capabilities for the allies that are not available from anyone else.

ings was to prove the Eurofighter's ability to overcome jamming from a target, allowing the Eurofighter's advanced medium-range air-to-air missile to acquire the target in spite of evasive measures.

"It's the development of allies," Perkins said as he drove around Lossiemouth on a December day when the clouds were low, the wind was 45 knots, it was sleeting and aircraft were on the ground. "We're helping them develop their capacity for air defense. They will be working side by side with us. It's obviously in our interests as a nation."

The F-16s flown by National Guardsmen launched three AQM-37 targets during the testing. A typical launch profile is 50,000

feet at Mach 1.5, but these targets were released at 30,000 feet at Mach 1.3.

The KC-135's refueling abilities got the F-16s across more than half the continental United States and the Atlantic Ocean to Scotland in a nine-hour non-stop trip. And air-to-air refueling allowed the F-16s to remain airborne longer during the tests.

Daughtrey said the Guard's part of the tests was extremely successful. The tests involved critical timing and limited windows. They called for complex choreography between the Eurofighter, the F-16s, range control and other elements of the mission - choreography at supersonic speeds.

"We were in position every single time," Daughtrey said. "We were on range, on time, on schedule 100 percent of the time, and every target launch was successful."

Adverse weather and schedule changes didn't stop the Guard from helping the team complete the tests ahead of schedule.

The cold and short days of northeast Scotland in December were a world away from the Albuquerque heat. The Guardsmen were away from their families for Thanksgiving. But the Scots made them feel at home. "We found the people very accepting and friendly," Reyner said.

"I don't want to go back home," joked Daughtrey, who enjoyed Scottish delicacies such as haggis.

The mission was a source of pride for the Guard, he said. "You're part of something important. You're in a completely different place on a different range doing something that hasn't been done before. And it's a new

fighter for the fighter community, so you feel like you're a part of something big."

Months of preparation went into the tests - coordinating between the United States and the United Kingdom, mastering a new target configuration, integrating the F-16 and target into the test range, planning aircraft maintenance at the RAF base and integrating Navy and Air Force operators into the test range team. Challenges included making sure people from different agencies and countries using different equipment could talk with each other on the same frequencies.

Shortly after these tests were completed, Britain and Saudi Arabia agreed to replace Saudi Royal Air Force aircraft with the Typhoon. Austria signed the first export order for 18 aircraft. Norway, Greece, the Netherlands, the Czech Republic, Poland, the Republic of Korea and Turkey are among countries that have also expressed interest.

Further tests are expected this summer.

"They will again involve the excellent support of the 150th Fighter Wing," Walter said.

"They are experienced," Perkins said. "They are extremely good. I say, 'Can you do this?' and they say, 'We're here to support you within the confines of the regulations.' The reason I like working with the Guard is its can-do attitude. They are a stable quantity to work with. This is one of a kind. We have nowhere else we can turn to."

The 150th Fighter Wing Guardsmen also have helped simulate raids on Navy vessels and flown training missions involving the Patriot missile air defense system, among their numerous assignments.



American and British service members stand by as a New Mexico Air National Guard F-16 moves back into a revetment at the Royal Air Force base in Lossiemouth, Scotland, during recent tests for the new Eurofighter Typhoon jet fighter.

Guard Bureau Soldiers depart for Afghanistan

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Clutching a U.S. flag in his right hand, 5-year-old Ethan Schlereth squinted through a Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport window, staring into the cockpit of the Northwest Airlines jet about to back away from the gate below.

The cockpit door swung open, and the light from the passenger cabin illuminated Ethan's dad, Maj. Doug Schlereth, in his Army Combat Uniform, waving to his boy, perhaps the pair's last face-to-face father-son moment for a year.

The plane – carrying about 17 Army National Guard Soldiers toward Camp Shelby, Miss., for about 45 days of pre-deployment training before they head for Afghanistan – backed away from the gate, and still the families and senior Army National Guard leaders stayed. The deploying Soldiers are all volunteers from the National Guard Bureau.

The crowd of 50 standing behind Ethan at the window on Jan. 7 included Brig. Gen. Frank Grass, deputy director of the Army National Guard; Col. Matt Murphy, chief of staff; Col. Renwick Payne; Command Sgt. Maj. John Gipe and other senior staff members.

It also included many spouses, among them Carol Vaughn, wife of Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard; Pat Grass, Dee Murphy, Carmen Payne, Tony Gipe and Kathryn Haynes, wife of Chief Warrant Officer 5 Poyas Haynes, the Army Guard's command chief warrant officer. The spouses formed the Army National Guard Family Readiness Group to support the families of deployed Soldiers.

"It says a lot not only to the Soldiers, but the families," said Terri Romano. She was saying goodbye to her husband, Chief Warrant Officer Tony Romano, who with this deployment becomes the fifth member of her immediate family to be serving overseas.

"These are all part of my family," said Murphy, the chief of staff, looking around the airport departure gate.

The Soldiers – including some leaders who have played key roles in the deployment of thousands of Guardsmen and now are joining their brothers and sisters in arms in the field – form an Embedded Training Team who will be teaching Afghan National Army troops.

"The faster we can train, the faster we can get our boys and girls home," said Gipe, who has spent time in Afghanistan. "I wish people could see the change that's taken place in that army. Afghans know how to fight, but they weren't good soldiers. You can see the pride and esprit de corps in the Afghan army now."

The Northwest Airlines crew which spontaneously arranged for Ethan Schlereth's last-minute glimpse of his dad in the pilot's seat was just one example of people going to extra lengths for Soldiers' families. The airline issued gate passes so that family members would have the maximum time with their Soldiers.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) brought in extra screeners on a Saturday to handle the crowd. And Col. Anthony Baker Sr., chief, NGB Family Programs, coordinated the family support effort, which included arranging the passes for family members through Northwest Airlines and efforts to avoid unusually long lines by arranging for the TSA to set up a separate line for families and Soldiers, giving them more time to be together.

"It's the catalyst for success," Baker said. "If Soldiers don't believe their families are being taken care of, Soldiers can't concentrate on the mission. The family is the glue to their success."

Departure can be a wrenching moment, even for a 15-year Regular Army and National Guard Soldier like Maj. Troy Coronado who joined the group from his Pentagon office. He brought his wife, Lisa, to the airport but decided to



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill

Sgt. 1st Class Eduardo Macaraeg and Meriam Macaraeg share a light moment with Command Sgt. Major John Gipe at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport on Jan. 7 while the Macaraeg children play. Macaraeg left for a year-long tour of duty in Afghanistan with a group of Soldiers from the National Guard Bureau who are scheduled to train Afghan National Army troops.

spare his three daughters the emotion of the moment.

Like everyone else in the all-Guard group, Coronado volunteered. "The country's at war, and the opportunity for me – not being in a line unit – was slim to none," he said.

"Several have been volunteering for a couple of years," Grass said. "They've been begging for their chance to go."

Sgt. 1st Class Eduardo Macaraeg finds it difficult to explain the reasons to people outside the military. "They ask me why I do it," he said, "and I tell them, 'I'm a Soldier.' I had to do my part, that's the main thing."

For his part, it isn't only his son Ethan that Schlereth will be separated from. His wife, Kimberly, is expecting the couple's second son in February.

"There have been many other Soldiers that have been in that same predicament," Schlereth said, eyes moist. "This is what I signed up to do. I felt that I had not been in the warfight yet, so it was my time to serve, just like everybody else. It's going to be a great mission, not only to train the Afghan army, but to help the Afghan people on the humanitarian side."

Schlereth glanced at his wife. "It's very difficult," he said. "But with the support of the Army National Guard Readiness Center and my own family, I feel that she's going to get the support that she needs."

The Soldiers anticipate joining the 53rd Brigade Combat Team out of Florida and later the 41st Brigade Combat Team from Oregon. They expect some to train Afghan troops at the battalion level, some at the brigade level.

Being leaders themselves, it appears that the trainers will help Afghan leaders increase their skills.

When the last boarding call came, the crowd of well-wishers formed lines on both sides of the gate. They waved flags, clapped, cheered and gave hugs as each Soldier walked off to war. People waiting for other flights at other gates stood still and watched. An airline official commented that he did not know anyone involved but that the sight of the departing Soldiers and of the families who will wait for their return brought tears to his eyes.

"It's real now," said Rosemary Henson. She plans to write letters and send e-mails and care packages while her husband, Maj. Ron Henson, is gone. "I'm proud," she said. As for the family support, she said, "It's important just to be able to talk to other people."

That sentiment was shared by Lisa Coronado. "It's one of the only times you get to see the spouses of the other Soldiers, too," she said.

Only when the jet had taxied out of sight did the group disperse. Terri Romano walked away thinking not only of the husband she had just seen onto the plane but also of the adopted son who left for Afghanistan a day earlier ... and of the oldest son in Iraq ... and of the youngest son on the Syrian border ... and of the son-in-law in Okinawa.

As family members and Guard leaders walked back toward the airport lobby, Baker was planning ahead. "Now," he explained, "we'll start getting ready for them to come back."

Wildfire season starts early, Nation

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va.— The National Guard fought wildfires earlier than ever as the New Year dawned.

In December and January, wildfires burned in Arkansas, Colorado, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, taking lives, scorching thousands of acres, destroying hundreds of homes, damaging businesses and forcing hundreds of people to evacuate. The wildfire season usually begins in the spring or early summer.

Just four months after Hurricane Katrina, the Louisiana National Guard was helping another state, sending UH-60 Black Hawks and crews to the Texas fires. Helicopters hauled Bambi buckets to scoop water or retardants from ponds or retaining tanks to drop on fires.

Wildfires weren't the only thing being whipped up by the weather. While drought plagued the southern plains, rain deluged the Pacific coast where dozens of Guardsmen turned out to assist civilian authorities in California where floods and mudslides were caused, in part, by the erosion created by previous wildfires. **(Related story on Page 9)**

"It's never happened this early," said Col. Bill Meehan, the state public affairs officer in his 26th year with the Texas National Guard. "Actually, we have never had this amount of fire suppression even during our worst fire season."

Texas was typical of the states where Guard members are used to multiple tasks. Some 3,000 Texas Guardsmen were returning from Iraq, more than 1,200 were heading to



A Texas National Guard helicopter dumps water on one of the many wildfires across the state.



Texas National Guard photos

Texas National Guard battled numerous wildfires that destroyed hundreds of acres of land across the Lone Star State.

Kosovo, more than 400 were going to the Sinai, and Guard troops were on domestic homeland security missions and still helping with the aftermath of two 2005 hurricanes.

But that didn't hinder Lone Star State Guard members from stomping on the raging wildfires. Gov. Rick Perry declared a statewide disaster.

Texas Guard UH-60 Black Hawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopters helped firefighters battle the blazes. Engineers used bulldozers to clear vegetation ahead of the flames.

On one day, a Texas Air Guard C-130 flew to Florida, picked up emergency suppression foam, flew on to Oklahoma and returned to Texas as part of the firefighting efforts, Meehan said.

Texas Guard members were still fighting fires that continued to threaten people and buildings well into 2006, sometimes being called to more than one fire on the same day, and they might be faced with blazes for a couple of more months, Meehan said.

Oklahoma Guard aviators were flying Black Hawk and Chinook helicopters while helping local and state agencies fight fires that had plagued that dry state since November.

Meanwhile, the Kansas National Guard took a proactive stance. "In light of the grass fires in Oklahoma and Texas and dry conditions in Kansas, I am recommending that officials in Kansas issue burning bans," said Maj. Gen. Tod Bunting, the adjutant general. "It's better to head off disaster than to endanger lives responding to one."

The fires weren't just early — they were

destructive and deadly.

Through Jan. 9: At least three people had died in Texas, where hundreds of homes had burned. Two people were dead and more than 220 homes destroyed in Oklahoma. At least five homes burned in Colorado and at least four were lost in Arkansas.

Human carelessness, accidents and maliciousness appeared to cause many of the fires. They were attributed to fireworks, cigarettes, trash-burning, sparks from vehicles, a downed power line — and arson.

In addition to the Guardsmen deployed to

help with the fires and floods, Guardsmen in other states stood ready to react if needed.

Tens of thousands of Army and Air National Guard troops from around the nation are deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism and officials say the Guard continues to have the flexibility and skills to respond to other domestic emergencies.

(Editor's note: Chief Master Sgt. Gonda Moncada from Texas and military and civilian news services and Web sites contributed to this report.)



The California National Guard coordinated efforts with numerous state and local fire departments during the wildfires.

al Guard responds to threat quickly

In California, it was water, water everywhere

By Petty Officer John Guardiano

American Forces Press Service

Soldiers from the California National Guard helped rescue victims of torrential flooding during New Year's weekend while working with civilian firefighters and swift-water rescuers.

Capt. David Marciano of the Russian River Fire Department in Guerneville said the Guard members were "indispensable."

"There's no other way to describe what they did," he said. "We don't know how we'd have managed without them."

Northern California was wracked with weekend flooding that threatened lives and property. Water crested to nearly six feet deep, making cars useless and roads impassable, Marciano noted.

California National Guard headquarters was alerted Dec. 29, and Guard troops were called up late the following day. By the morning of Dec. 31, Army Guard Staff Sgt. James Saleda and other soldiers from the 579th Engineering Battalion in Santa Rosa had left to provide emergency services and other lifesaving assistance to Californians trapped by the floods.

"Disaster relief is one of the California Army National Guard's primary functions," said Saleda, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the operation. "The troops on the ground worked long hours in arduous and dangerous conditions without complaint, he said. "In fact, the troops were volunteering for any mission that came up."

"This is the kind of stuff that kept me in the National Guard for 19 years," explained Sgt. Robert Willeford. "Going to floods and fires and helping people out. You get a really good feeling from doing that."



Saleda and Willeford were part of a nine-man team that rescued dozens of people in

and around Guerneville and Forestville on Dec. 31 and Jan. 1. A second 10-man team from their battalion rescued an estimated 30 to 40 people in nearby Ukiah on Dec. 31. A command cell with three soldiers, meanwhile, provided supply and relief efforts, repairing and replacing damaged vehicles and equipment.

Two helicopter crews from the 126th Medical Company also were on standby. One of two HH-60L Black Hawk helicopters had to abort one mission because of inclement weather, said Capt. Mirtha Villarreal, a California Guard spokesperson. The setback was temporary, however, because the 579th had large 2½ and 5-ton vehicles and Humvees that could navigate the flooded roadways.

"The roads were completely cut off. We're talking five- to six-foot-deep water," Marciano said. "Without those National Guard vehicles, I don't know what we would have done. You would have needed a boat."

A local fireman rode on each National Guard vehicle. Saleda said the firemen led the way with evacuation and emergency medical services, but the rescue efforts were a model of interagency and civilian-military cooperation.

"The firemen helped a lot with communica-

Photos by Eric Lian

Black Hawk helicopters from California's 126th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) were ready to respond to search and rescue missions and evacuations if necessary.

tions and directions. They knew the lay of the land. Some of their guys grew up there. Having them was essential," Saleda said.

The Guard also transported local water department officials to Guerneville's water pumping station. The tanks there were running out of water and needed to be refilled. Because of the floods, however, the pumping station was damaged and completely inaccessible, Saleda said. But with their 5-ton vehicles, the California National Guard ferried technical workers to the pumping station which soon was fixed and back on line.

Saleda and several of his fellow Soldiers have served in Iraq. The Iraq and California missions are "very similar in that you're helping people," he said. "I'm glad that I got to do both, but the state missions are just different. Directly affecting the lives of people that you live with and around is something special."



1st Lt. Jeanie Thomas, training officer, ran through a checklist in case the 126th Medical Company was called to respond to rescue or evacuation missions.

Information the best vaccine against the bird flu

By Lt. Col. Stan Zezotarski
California National Guard

SACRAMENTO, Calif.— Growing fears that the avian flu — a strain of the virus that begins in birds and spreads to humans — conceivably could wipe out more than 2 percent of the world's population are not reasons to panic, but its lethal potential is nothing to sneeze at either.

"Organization, education, understanding and cooperation are keys to containing any outbreaks," said Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the adjutant general, California National Guard. "Our forte has been our ability to plan, anticipate and strategically position troops and assets to support civilian authorities. This formula was instrumental in making Y2K and the O.J. Simpson civil trial of 1992 non-events. We are again working closely with state leadership to reinforce its education, containment and organization efforts."

The annual flu kills about 36,000 Americans — mostly the elderly. But health professionals around the world are warning that in a worst case scenario, the H5N1 virus could kill 150 million people worldwide — 2.5 percent of the world's population — in a matter of months. With no vaccine against this new flu strand readily available, it's not just the young and elderly who are susceptible, but working, active adults as well.

The 1918 Pandemic Influenza killed more people in 24 weeks than AIDS has killed in 24 years or than the Black Plague killed in 100 years. But based on accounts in John M. Barry's book, "The Great Influenza: The Epic Story of the Deadliest Plague in History," fear and panic may have had as

much to do with high death tolls as did the virus itself. Through extensive research, Barry found that the virus missed some of the world's communities. Those are the communities that launched the most aggressive quarantines to isolate its spread.

"Australia had escaped," Barry wrote. "It had escaped because of stringent quarantine of incoming ships. Some ships arrived there with attack rates as high as 43 percent and fatality rates among all passengers as high as 7 percent. But the quarantine kept the virus out, kept the continent safe, until late December 1918 when, with influenza having receded around the world, a troopship carrying ninety ill soldiers arrived. Although they too were quarantined, the disease penetrated — apparently through medical personnel treating troops."

A second factor that limited the flu's impact in some cities was government organization and preparedness.

"In San Francisco, people felt a sense of control," Barry wrote. "Instead of the paralyzing fear found in too many other communities, it seemed to inspire. Historian Alfred Crosby has provided a picture of the city under siege, and his picture shows citizens behaving with heroism, anxious and fearful but accepting their duty. When schools closed, teachers volunteered as nurses, orderlies, telephone operators. On November 21, every siren in the city signaled that masks could come off. San Francisco had — to that point — survived with far fewer deaths than had been feared, and citizens believed that the masks deserved the credit. But if anything helped, it would have been the organization (San Francisco's Health Director William) Hassler had set in place in

"Organization, education, understanding and cooperation are keys to containing any outbreaks and limiting the use of the state's military."

— Col. David Baldwin

advance."

Barry's research turned up some interesting trends. His research revealed that the 1918 influenza attacked in waves and that each subsequent wave was not as lethal as the previous wave. He also found that as the virus spread from the east to west coast its lethality decreased, providing western states with a warning system, so to speak. After authorities lifted mask and public gathering regulations in San Francisco, for example, the flu flared up, but the number of deaths decreased. It was the same situation in Australia after the virus penetrated the quarantine. Australia's death rates were far lower than any Western nation.

Absent a vaccine, Soldiers, Airmen and their families can inoculate themselves with knowledge and good health practices. Many people that contracted the 1918 flu initially viewed it as a bad cold, simply to be endured. Many continued going to work, to schools and to public gatherings during the early stages.

The media continually cautioned the public not to panic, and it wasn't until reports revealed that the disease was killing thousands of people daily that the public began to panic. In his book, Barry explained that "people living in the most crowded conditions suffered more than those with the most space." He also noted, however, that "those

who went to bed the earliest, stayed there the longest and had the best care also survived at the highest rates."

"Soldiers, Airmen and their families are our most precious asset," said Col. David Baldwin, director of Operations and Strategic Communications, California National Guard. Baldwin, whose undergraduate degree is in microbiology, added both practical and tactical advice.

"Practicing good hygiene, maintaining solid rest schedules and taking care of themselves and their families at the first hint of symptoms can make all the difference in the world. Finally, when troops or families do contract the flu, don't return to work when it appears that you have fully recovered, but remain at home and continue treating yourself until you are 100 percent sure or have been medically cleared to return to duty.

Wade, who commanded the Multi-National Brigade (East) in Kosovo, is well aware of soldiers' commitment and dedication to the mission, but he is also aware of stress management and force protection.

We want you, but you're no good to yourself, family or state if you return only to be hit by a second or third wave."

The best vaccination available to anyone as reports of this new threat of influenza increase is information, facts, and following the advice of the nation's healthcare leaders.

FROM PAGE 1

Predator



Photo by Senior Airman Colleen Wronke

Senior Airman Christopher Sipes inspects an MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicle's multispectral targeting system ball. He is assigned to the 46th Aircraft Maintenance unit.

personnel, increase Total Force UAS flying and maintenance training and provide much-needed predator capabil-

ity for national defense, officials said.

"The Air National Guard's growing participation in Predator operations represents the National Guard's commitment to remain out front in the new and emerging missions of the future. It displays the new direction of the Total Force and the cooperative relationship we will continue to build on," said Lt. Gen. Daniel James III, director of the Air National Guard.

"The California Air National Guard has been actively changing legacy missions into new missions in areas such as space, intelligence and now the UAS. The men and women of the 163rd look forward to this new Predator mission and to serving the State of California and the nation," said William Wade II, adjutant general for the California National Guard.

Predators are long endurance, medium altitude systems used for surveillance and reconnaissance missions. Since the first flight in 1995, Predators have logged more than 3,000 missions and over 130,000 flight hours. More than half of those have been flown during combat deployments to the Balkans, Southwest Asia and the Middle East where Predators operate in support of U.S. and NATO forces.

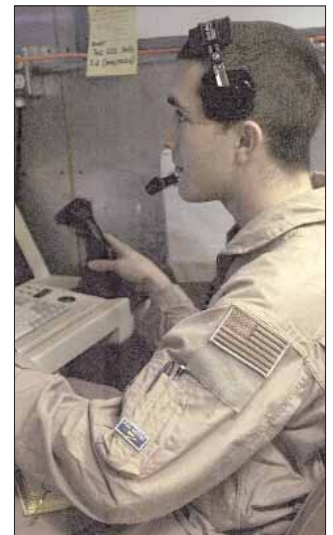


Photo by Spc. Leah R. Burton

Airman 1st Class Tyler Farley controls the virtually undetectable RQ/MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicle's cameras from his seat on the ground.

Guard supports eradication initiative, helps law enforcement rid the nation of marijuana plants

By Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – More than 2.5 million marijuana plants went up in smoke, thanks to a national counterdrug effort targeting this country's most prolific weed growers on public lands.

Historically seven states, California, Hawaii, Kentucky, Oregon, Tennessee, Washington and West Virginia, are responsible for the majority of the production of marijuana plants grown in the United States. Recently, there has been a trend by weed growers to move their cultivating efforts to public lands.

In response, the Office of National Drug Control Policy developed the Public Lands Initiative to focus resources on public lands and the National Guard plays a huge part in supporting that program. Between Sept. 16, 2004, and Sept. 15, 2005, Army National Guard aviation crews supported local, state and federal law enforcers with over 9,300 hours in those seven target states alone. Guardsmen's efforts helped rid the nation of 2,513,735 marijuana plants.

"With the National Guard's reconnaissance skills and aviation capabilities, we are able to provide a platform to the Law Enforcement Agencies for detecting, interdicting and disrupting the production and distribution of marijuana,"



Photos by Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley

Army Maj. Gary Lange, Counterdrug state support branch chief, speaks with Special Agent Wendy Haney, U.S. Forestry Service, after they discover a small marijuana plot on public land in Kentucky. A state trooper stands ready to cut the plants down.

said Army Col. Richard Loesch, commander, California National Guard Counterdrug Task Force.

Aviation efforts, in conjunction with ground reconnaissance operations, resulted in wiping out 1.3 million more plants this year than 2004's efforts, a 107 percent increase.

The National Guard's increased helicopter reconnaissance supported California's Campaign Against Marijuana Planting program. CAMP's combined efforts eradicated over 1.3 million plants this past year. The estimated worth of the marijuana is \$5.8 billion.

With Kentucky, where the Guard's combined efforts netted 421,637 plants, marijuana is their leading drug concern.

In Oregon, where marijuana is the number two drug threat, this state's National Guard Counterdrug Program supported 35 federal, state, county and local agencies in eradicating 53,756 cultivated plants.

The most successful eradication and interdiction efforts on public lands involve multi-agency task forces employing aircraft to detect and eradicate grow sites as well boost forces in these large tracts of land," said Rafael Lemaitre, a spokesman for the Office of National Drug Control Policy.

"This is support LEAs (Law Enforcement Agencies) depend on from the National Guard because there is just too much land for the officers to cover alone," said Air Force Col. Earl Bell, chief, National Guard Bureau J3 Counterdrug Division.

"Some LEAs lack the necessary manpower, equipment, money and expertise to mount a successful campaign against marijuana eradication, all of which the National Guard can and does provide to augment their Task Forces," said Loesch.

Although this past year's effort was a tremendous success, it is only a percentage of what is actually out there. In recent years there have been fluctuations in National Guard support due to a variety of reasons. Overseas deployments are typically the number one reason, but this

year it was deployments combined with the tremendous effort the National Guard provided for Hurricane Katrina.

"We sent three OH-58As to New Orleans to support Hurricane Katrina relief operations," said Army Lt. Col. Karlas Owens, Counterdrug coordinator, Kentucky National Guard. "As a result, we had to leave marijuana standing in the field in many counties because we didn't have the assets to service them."

All the agencies agree that marijuana gardens pose a huge safety risk to citizens on public lands and law enforcement because growers often set up booby traps and obstacles, and often times have weapons located within their gardens to protect their marijuana plots.

"Most of the traps are rudimentary and set up to prevent animals from ruining their gardens. Booby traps with fish hooks and rat trap fired gun shells aren't uncommon," said Loesch. "Along with an increase in growing marijuana, we have seen an increase in the amount of weapons used to protect garden areas. The fact that more drug trafficking organizations have increased their roles in the quantity of marijuana in the United States, and the increase of weapons, has also marked a rise in the violence we see each year."

"Illegal drugs are probably one of the most dangerous situations or occurrences on public lands. These activities include drug trafficking, marijuana cultivation as well as associated criminal activities and violence such as murder," Lemaitre added.

With the appropriate funding and congressional support, Bell insisted, the National Guard will continue to build on its 16 year relationship of helping counterdrug agencies across the nation stamp out drugs and make this country's public lands a safe place to live and visit.

"Our support to the LEAs is critical. It is a truly combined effort across the nation," said Bell. "We will do that mission for as long as we are able or as long as it takes to win the fight against illegal drugs."



A National Guardsman stands by as California law enforcement agents in the Campaign Against Marijuana Planting Program prepare to obliterate the plants the agents found growing in Napa Valley, Calif. The CAMP Program is a multi-agency effort that includes the California National Guard Counterdrug Program. It rid the nation of over 1.3 million plants during the 2005 growing season.

Contacting a Family Program Coordinator near you

The National Guard Family Program office in each state joint force headquarters (JFHQ) is designed to assist family members of all service members, regardless of the military organization or status, with information and/or referrals. Following is a list of Family Program offices in the 54 states and territories followed by Wing Family Program Coordinators.

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New program focuses on sexual assault victims

By Sgt. 1st Class Katherine Perez
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The National Guard Bureau has implemented a Sexual Assault Prevention and Response (SAPR) Program to increase awareness and provide a positive command climate.

The program's mission is to prevent assaults while also educating and training military and civilian personnel to ensure that the systems for reporting, responding and investigating sexual assaults are timely, effective and sensitive to the victim's needs.

Prior to the current Department of Defense policy, a sexual assault was punished as a violation of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, such as rape, indecent assault, fraternization or conduct unbecoming, according to Lt. Col. Tom Languirand, chief of the Army National Guard's Well-Being Branch. "There has always been a mechanism in place to deal with someone who has committed a sexual assault," said Languirand.

However, the old system did not address victims' needs as a priority. "In the past, the

mentality toward the victim was 'What did you do wrong? What did you do to provoke this?' as opposed to today's focus on what are the needs of the victim," Languirand said.

"We have to make an organizational behavioral change to teach commanders to deal with victims without looking immediately at what led to the assault," Languirand said.

After sexual assault allegations at several service academies, it became evident there was a lack of victim services, and the method for addressing the victims' needs right away had to be changed, separate from any administrative action.

"One of things we don't want to do is re-victimize the victim. People don't ask to be sexually assaulted. It's a crime," said Languirand. "There may be other circumstances surrounding the assault where someone feels they have an opportunity or right to take advantage of someone else," he explained.

"Our intent is to ensure the victim receives the proper care. The Defense Department has

"We have to make an organizational behavioral change to teach commanders to deal with victims without looking immediately at what led to the assault."

—Lt. Col. Tom Languirand

asked commanders to not take action immediately against the collateral misconduct that may have led to the assault, such as underage drinking, fraternization and adultery, and to allow the victim to get the treatment they need and recover from the assault first," he said.

"At the same time, there needs to be swift justice for the perpetrator. We have to strike a balance between victim care and the collateral misconduct," Languirand continued.

According to Maj. Lorraine Frojen, the Diversity Initiatives team chief in the Well-Being Branch, the National Guard Bureau plans to have one sexual assault response coordinator per state as an additional duty at each joint force headquarters.

They are the links between the states and the Guard Bureau. They can form review boards with other joint staff members and look internally at the management of a sexual assault program in their state. There is also standardized training for unit victim advocates responsible at unit levels for direct and timely advocacy of the victim.

Sexual assault is a crime that is not being tolerated in the National Guard because it has a devastating and often long-lasting impact on the victim that erodes the cohesiveness and morale of a unit.

More information about the reporting process, the SAPR policy and related links can be found at:

<http://www.ngb.army.mil/staff/j1/sapr/>

Texas passes the Iraq theater's torch to Georgia Guard

By Master Sgt. Lek Mateo
Texas Army National Guard

CAMP ADDER, Iraq – As the sun kissed the western horizon, bringing an end to a late November day, it marked the end of their mission in Iraq for the Soldiers of the Texas Army National Guard's 56th Brigade Combat Team.

The unit, part of the 36th Infantry Division headquartered in Fort Worth, Texas, officially relinquished command as the Theater

Security Brigade of Iraq to the Georgia Army National Guard's 48th Brigade Combat Team, headquartered in Macon, Ga.

Brig. Gen. Jimmy Welch, commander of the Tennessee Army National Guard's 149th Engineer Brigade, observed the transfer of authority.

During the year-long deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, the Soldiers of the 56th BCT performed more than 7,000 combat patrols, escorting con-

voys over 1,300,000 miles. The patrols protected more than 150,000 civilian trucks.

Approximately 90 percent of these operations took place at night, and the average patrol lasted 12 to 14 hours.

Soldiers of the 56th BCT encountered more than 330 improvised explosive devices while traveling on Iraqi roads, and the patrols were involved in more than 250 small arms engagements.

In other missions, supply route security patrols conducted joint operations with the Iraqi Highway Patrol to support their efforts to interdict criminal elements operating in southern Iraq, and force protection patrols located several weapons caches and several tons of unexploded ordnance.

Six 56th BCT Soldiers paid the ultimate price while serving in Iraq, and 58 Soldiers were injured because of hostile action.

Texas Soldiers, in partnership with the United States Corps of Engineer (USACE) Southern Region and the Iraqi Ministry of Education, helped build 15 new schools in the unit's area of responsibility.

This effort, utilizing local contractors, stimulated the local economy and provided for the future of the local children.

Also in conjunction with the USACE, the brigade provided local construction oversight and coordination for several municipal infrastructure reconstruction projects in towns and villages near their headquarters.

During the rebuilding efforts, brigade medical professionals and Iraqi Ministry of Health and coalition partners supported numerous Medical Civic Action Programs that helped bring basic health care to local communities.

The 56th BCT, along with several U.S. civic organizations, corporations and volunteers, supported a humanitarian mission by coordinating and sponsoring the care and travel to Houston, Texas, for a critically ill

7-year-old Iraqi child to receive a lifesaving heart operation at the Texas Children's Hospital. The operation was successful, and the child is now at home with his family in southern Iraq.

Col. James Brown of Tyler, Texas, the 56th BCT commander, expressed his thanks to his Soldiers and officers who 18 months earlier left behind their loved ones and civilian jobs and assumed their roles as Soldiers.

"I want to thank my Soldiers for the great job that they have done," Brown said. "You have served the country well, and the veterans of the 36th Division who have worn the T patch will also be proud for what you have done."

Brown said that the Citizen-Soldiers of the Texas 56th, Georgia 48th and Tennessee 194th brigades are great examples of what the Army National Guard brings to the fight and that the units have done what America has asked them to do.

"To the Soldiers of the 48th Brigade, we wish you Godspeed in your mission," Brown continued. "You have done a great job in representing your state, and we will keep you all in our prayers until you return safely to your families back home."

Col. Lawrence Dudney, deputy commander of the 48th BCT, praised the Texans for having successfully completed their dangerous and challenging mission and said that the 48th's Soldiers would continue the great work that was done by the 56th.

I appreciate your professionalism and friendship, and I want to thank you for a smooth transition and also wish you all a safe return home," he said.

Dudney reminded the Soldiers of the 48th that their job is far from over and they still have to remain focused.

"It is up to us to take the ball and continue to run with it and finish the mission," Dudney said.



Photo by Master Sgt. Lek Mateo

Col. James K. Brown (right), 56th Brigade Combat Team commander, and Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Chambliss fold the brigade color as Soldiers of the 56th BCT and the Georgia 48th BCT look on during a transfer-of-authority ceremony at Camp Adder, Iraq.

Guarding America

What's going on in the National Guard? A brief look across the United States:

ARKANSAS: Approximately 150 Soldiers from the Camp Joseph T. Robinson-based 77th Aviation Brigade have been called to active duty to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. The brigade's 449th Aviation Intermediate Maintenance Company, which makes the first steps forward for the brigade, is responsible for maintaining UH-60 Black Hawks, CH-47 Chinooks and AH-64 Apache helicopters. The brigade's 185th Aviation Assault Battalion will provide the Iraqi theater with troop carrying and insertion assets with its force of Black Hawks.

CALIFORNIA: The California Air National Guard's 163rd Air Refueling Wing at March Air Reserve Base, near Riverside, will become home to a new MQ-1 Predator Unmanned Aerial System unit. The new 163rd Wing will be both an operational and a training unit responsible for conducting overseas missions and training Airman from the Guard, Reserve and Active Duty.

DELAWARE: National Guard officers and senior NCOs reviewed the past year and planned their strategy and vision for the future during Delaware's annual Senior Leaders Conference in January. Speakers included Delaware Gov. Ruth Ann Minner, U.S. Senators Joe Biden and Tom Carper, and Congressman Mike Castle. Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, was the keynote speaker.

FLORIDA: More than 20 personnel from the Homestead-based 930th Army Liaison Team mobilized for a year-long deployment to Afghanistan under Operation Enduring Freedom. The unit deployed in 2003 and served nearly nine months in Afghanistan as a liaison between the U.S. military and other nations' militaries, including the new Afghan National Army. More than 20 Soldiers from the Orlando-based 164th Air Defense Artillery Brigade deployed for a year-long mission to help provide command and control for air defense within the United States, serving under Operation Noble Eagle.

IDAHO: Approximately 200 members of the Idaho Army Guard's 1st Battalion, 183rd Aviation are spending three weeks in Boise completing pre-mobilization training on the AH-64 Apache attack helicopter at Gowen Field. Members of the battalion have been training at Ft Hood, Texas, for the past three months to prepare for their deployment to Afghanistan at the end of February.

MAINE: A security force of 170 Maine Army Guard Soldiers is deploying to Iraq. Their departure ceremony was held Jan. 10 in Brewer. The unit is commanded and headquartered by B Company, 3rd Battalion, 72nd Infantry and includes Soldiers from the 1136th Transportation Company, 169th Military Police Detachment, 152nd Maintenance Company, 286th Petroleum Supply Battalion, 152nd Field Artillery

Battalion and the 133rd Engineer Battalion.

MARYLAND: The Maryland Army National Guard will hold a ribbon-cutting ceremony in February for the new Patuxent River Readiness Center that is the result of a joint effort by the Maryland National Guard and the U.S. Navy. More than 230 soldiers were mobilized in January to support Joint Task Force Guantanamo and will serve for one year in Cuba. In accordance with North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Partnership for Peace Program, Maryland sent three state employees to help train members of the Bosnian Department of Defense about techniques, tactics and planning considerations for using Soldiers to assist in emergency response situations.

MISSISSIPPI: About 3,000 members of the 155th Brigade Combat Team returned home following a one-year tour of duty supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom. While in Iraq, the brigade conducted hundreds of raids and joint cordons and searches, destroyed thousands of weapons, detained over 1,500 suspected insurgents, and supported many humanitarian and infrastructure projects.

MISSOURI: The Missouri National Guard has embraced the new Guard-Recruiting Assistance Program with vigor. Since GRAP was introduced in Missouri in December, the Show Me State has had more than 800 Citizen-Soldiers certified as recruiting assistants and has enlisted almost 40 new Soldiers through the program.

NEW HAMPSHIRE: Nurse Corp officers from the New Hampshire Army Guard's Medical Command have won the award for Excellence in Nursing for the years 2004-05. Capt. Richard Oberman, deputy state surgeon, received his award in 2004 and Lt. Lezlie Clark, Community Health Nurse, recently received the award for 2005. This award is given to one junior Nurse Corp officer from each major branch of the Army every year for their outstanding contribution to the field of nursing.

NEW MEXICO: A new "Guard Your Health" program targets middle school children in New Mexico. It is an effort by the New Mexico National Guard to promote safe and healthy lifestyles for the state's youth. As part of the program, New Mexico Guard volunteers go to middle schools and teach students about diet, exercise, healthy lifestyles and the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

OKLAHOMA: The Oklahoma Army National Guard deployed more than 200 soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 158th Field Artillery (MLRS) to Iraq as part of security force operations there. The 1st Battalion, 180th Infantry of Oklahoma's 45th Infantry Brigade is preparing for mobilization in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan. They will join the 41st Infantry Brigade from the Oregon National Guard.

PENNSYLVANIA: The new Military Family Relief Assistance Program is accepting donations to help Pennsylvania members of the armed forces and their families who have a direct and immediate financial need as a result of military service. Donations can be made by checking a block on the 2005 Pennsylvania Personal Income Tax Form or through direct contributions.

RHODE ISLAND: In January, the Rhode Island National Guard and Bahamian government finalized their long range cooperative strategic plan under the State Partnership for Peace Program. The adjutant general, Brig. Gen. John Enright Sr., members of his staff, and Rhode Island emergency management directors worked with the Bahamian Defense Forces and Emergency Management Agency to determine ways the two entities could cooperate, especially in the areas of hurricane relief and counter-drug operations.

SOUTH CAROLINA: Since October 2003, the South Carolina National Guard has prepared more than 700 Soldiers for combat by using the Aviation Combat Arms Tactical Trainer (AVCATT). It is a training suite designed to train Soldiers on five different helicopter platforms. Soldiers have logged 19,000 flying miles and 1,572 training hours to date. The purpose is to train units prior to their deployments without the actual cost of flying, thereby saving the government millions of dollars every year.

TENNESSEE: Nearly 3,500 Soldiers and Airmen from the Tennessee Army and Air National Guard returned home just in time for Christmas. The majority of the troops were from the 278th Regimental Combat Team and the 194th Engineer Brigade. Both deployed to Iraq in late 2004. More than 700 Tennessee Army Guard Soldiers are still serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.

TEXAS: Four hundred-fifty Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 124th Cavalry Regiment were honored in Waco during a Jan. 8 deployment ceremony before they departed for peacekeeping duties in the Sinai Peninsula. The Soldiers left for a 12-month tour to support the 1979 peace treaty between Egypt and Israel.

UTAH: Preparations are underway to host Operation Vigilant Guard on Aug. 29-31.

The exercise will test the ability of Utah's Joint Forces Headquarters to work with National Guard organizations in neighboring states and with state and federal agencies to respond to a major earthquake affecting northern Utah, Idaho and Wyoming.

VIRGIN ISLANDS: Staff Sgt. Samuel Abraham recently completed a three-day bomb scene certification course conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms at the Lionel A. Jackson Armory in Bethlehem. The course was for incident responders and law enforcement personnel. Abraham is a police officer and member of the National Guard's 661st Military Police Company.

VIRGINIA: New Gov. Tim Kaine appointed Brig. Gen. Robert Newman as Virginia's adjutant general on Jan. 15. Newman assumed the position from Maj. Gen. Claude Williams who had served as adjutant general since October 1998.

The Air Guard's 192nd Fighter Wing in Sandston welcomed its new commander, Col. Jay Pearsall, on Jan. 7. Pearsall takes the reins from Col. Pete Bonanni, who led the wing through the initial stages of its historic integration with the 1st Fighter Wing at Langley Air Force Base.

WISCONSIN: With the January mobilization of 16 Wisconsin Army Guard soldiers for an active duty mission as part of Coalition Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan, the Wisconsin Guard reached a milestone not seen since the Oct. 15, 1940, pre-war mobilization of the 32nd Infantry Division. More than 70 percent of the Wisconsin Guard's 9,500 soldiers and airmen have been called up to serve in the Global War on Terrorism.

WYOMING: The Camp Guernsey Joint Training Center hosted an event for the "America's Army" video game design team Jan. 24-27. The team gained the knowledge necessary to accurately portray military operations in the video game. Among the activities observed included a demonstration of an improvised explosive device carried on a vehicle, small arms firing and convoy operations.

(Editor's note: Items for each state should be no longer than three sentences. Deadline is the 10th of each month.)



Five Guard Soldiers make U.S. Olympic Team

On Guard Staff Report

ARLINGTON, Va. – Five Army National Guard Soldiers will represent this country while living the Olympic dream during the XX Winter Games in Torino, Italy, in February. Three of them are Olympic veterans. The five will compete and coach on that world stage from Feb. 10-26.

Spc. Jeremy Teela from the Vermont Guard has made the U.S. biathlon team for the second straight Winter Games. Spc. Steve Holcomb and Spc. Shauna Rohbock, both Utah Guard Soldiers, have been named to the men's and women's bobsled teams for the first time.

New York Army Guard Spc. Bill Tavares is coaching the women bobsledders four years after his two-woman team won the gold medal in the first Olympic bobsled competition for women. Vermont Army Guard Sgt. Tuffy Latour is coaching the men bobsledders for the first time after serving as the driving coach for the U.S. women four years ago.

All five are members of the U.S. Army's World Class Athlete Program.

Teela, 29, will compete as a biathlete for the U.S. after scoring a solid 14th place among the international field that raced for the gold in one of the biathlon events during the Salt Lake City Games in 2002.

He has been a world class competitor in the sport that combines speed skiing and rifle marksmanship since 1997.

Teela made the cut this time during the TD Banknorth Festival that was held in Fort Kent, Maine, from Dec. 28-Jan. 3.

Teela showed continued improvement during the four days of competition. He finished third in the men's 10-kilometer biathlon sprint during a snow storm on Dec. 30, second

and in the 12.5-kilometer pursuit on Jan. 2, and he won the 10-kilometer sprint on Jan. 3.

"You just have to stay focused and confident," Teela said. "At this level, confidence is everything."

"Even with the snow and rain, this is probably the easiest course we'll ski on in the whole year," added Teela.

Four years ago, Teela finished 14th during the men's 20-kilometer race, 20th in the 10-kilometer sprint and 23rd in the 12.5-kilometer pursuit in the Salt Lake City Games.

Two other Guard biathletes qualified as alternates for this year's U.S. team. They are Sgt. Jacob Beste from Minnesota and Sgt. Sarah Kamilewicz from Vermont. Beste and Kamilewicz are in the Army's World Class Athlete Program.

Rohbock, 28, a former professional soccer player, has made the women's bobsled team as the No. 2-ranked driver in the world. She was in the hunt for a berth in 2002 as a brakeman for Jill Bakken who won the gold medal.

Bakken, however, replaced Rohbock with Vonetta Flowers before the Salt Lake City Games.

Rohbock claims to be happier as a driver because she is in charge of her own destiny. "As a brakeman you feel expendable. You're always waiting for someone to come along and push better," she explained.

Tavares, who coached Bakken and Flowers to the gold medal in 2002, claims that Rohbock has picked up the driving skills faster than any other athlete he has coached. Bakken, a member of the Utah Army Guard, has been nominated as one of the two women alternates.

Holcomb, 25, is also getting his first crack at the Olympics after pulling a hamstring before the 2002 Olympic trials and failing to



Photo by Tech Sgt. Donald Luby

Vermont Army National Guard Spc. Jeremy Teela won one race and finished second and third in two others during the TD Banknorth Festival at Fort Kent, Maine, over the Christmas holidays to clinch a spot on the U.S. Olympic biathlon team that will compete in the XX Winter Games in Torino, Italy, in February. Teela is an Olympic athlete for the second straight time.

make the U.S. team.

He is a driver on the World Cup circuit in the two-man and four-man bobsleds and is expected to make his Olympic debut in both events in Torino.

Virginia Army Guard Spc. Mike Kohn, a bronze medalist in four-man bobsledding four years ago, will be an alternate for these Olympic Games.

Combat Action Badge presented posthumously to South Dakota Soldier



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald Matthews.

State Command Sgt. Maj. Michael L. Birnbaum (left) observes Maj. Gen. Michael A. Gorman, adjutant general, South Dakota National Guard (right) as he presents Cassie Morgan (center) the Combat Action Badge earned by her late husband, Sgt. Dennis Morgan, of the 153rd Engineer Battalion, Winner, S.D., who was killed in Al Iskandariyah, Iraq, April 17, 2004 in support of the War on Terrorism.

RAPID CITY, S.D. – The Army's new Combat Action Badge was presented to Cassie Morgan of Rapid City by Maj. Gen. Michael Gorman, the adjutant general, on Friday, Jan. 6. Cassie Morgan is the widow of South Dakota Army National Guard Sgt. Dennis Morgan.

Morgan, 22, of Valentine, Neb., died April 16, 2004, when an improvised explosive device exploded near his M-113 armored personnel carrier. Morgan was manning a squad automatic weapon while providing security during route clearing operations in Iraq.

"Dennis would have been very proud to wear this award," said Cassie.

Morgan was assigned to Detachment I, Company A, 153rd Engineer Battalion from Winner, S.D.

"Many Soldiers in different units up until now have not qualified for any type of badge," said State Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Birnbaum. "The Army's new Combat Action Badge will recognize many South Dakota Soldiers that have seen combat."

South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers, who engaged with or were engaged by the enemy in battle, are eligible to receive the Army's new badge.

"It is extremely important that we recognize the sacrifice our Soldiers and families have made," said Gorman. "This award is one way to honor them."

Eligibility requirements were established for the new award, as well as changes to the Combat Infantry Badge and Combat Medic Badge, in a letter published June 3, 2005 by

the Department of the Army.

This policy affects individuals who deployed and served in a combat zone or imminent danger area since Sept. 18, 2001.

The badge may be awarded to any Soldier performing duties in an area where hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay is authorized.

A Soldier's branch or military occupational specialty does not limit his or her eligibility for the award. Assignment to a combat arms unit or a unit organized to conduct close or offensive combat operations, or performing offensive combat operations is not required to qualify for the badge; however a Soldier must not be assigned or attached to a unit that would qualify the Soldier for the Combat Infantry Badge or Combat Medic Badge.

Attacks by mortars, rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers, or other projectiles qualify Soldiers for the award.

Since Sept. 18, 2001, more than 1,900 South Dakota Citizen-Soldiers have deployed to a combat zone or imminent danger area. Unit commanders received instructions for processing Soldiers for the award in July 2005.

The badge was developed and approved by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker in May to provide special recognition to Soldiers who personally engaged or were engaged by the enemy.

"Warfare is still a human endeavor," said Schoomaker. "Our intent is to recognize Soldiers who demonstrate and live the Warrior Ethos."