



THE ON GUARD

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President runs with Guard Soldier at White House.

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GUARD ROLLS OUT NEW STRYKER BRIGADE



Photo by Master Sgt. Dick Breach, Pennsylvania National Guard

Pennsylvania Army National Guard's 56th Striker Brigade hits the ground running.

By Kevin Cramsey and Pfc. Elizabeth Jones

Pennsylvania National Guard

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. — A new era has dawned for the Pennsylvania National Guard. The age of the Stryker is here.

On an unusually brisk Saturday morning in June, a caravan of Strykers carrying members of the Pennsylvania Army Guard's 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team rolled across a training field at Fort Indiantown Gap to rousing applause by several hundred active and retired Soldiers, family members and special guests.

Three hundred of the light-armored vehicles, sometimes referred to as "ghost riders" by enemy combatants because of their stealth capabilities, will comprise the brigade which is part of the 28th Infantry Division. It is one of seven rapid mobilization brigades in the Army and the only one in the National Guard. Maj. Gen. Jessica Wright, adjutant general

GUARD ROLLS OUT continued on

New director lists keys to Air Guard success

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. — A lieutenant general with 32 years of experience faces complex challenges as he assumes a changed position.

That was the snapshot that developed from a June 14 interview with Lt. Gen. Craig R. McKinley in his Pentagon office. McKinley is the new director of the Air National Guard — a changing position.



Lt. Gen. Craig McKinley

"I like my role as not necessarily being the director anymore but LTG H Steven Blum's vision of being the vice chief of the National Guard Bureau for matters of air," McKinley said, referring to the chief of the National Guard Bureau.

"It's a deep honor and a privilege," McKinley said of the job he assumed with the June 3 retirement of Lt. Gen. Daniel James III. The 12th director of the Air

National Guard said he's privileged by the promotion and by following in the footsteps of past directors.

"I am humbled by the fact that I get to be part of this service to our nation as a militia nation," McKinley said. "I'm honored to serve with the adjutants general, to work with General Blum — who's a visionary chief and who has great feelings for our National Guard and where it needs to go — but, most importantly, to work with the 96,000 Airmen who make up our enlisted force and the officers who lead them."

Among the challenges McKinley said he faces in his new job:

- Implementing recommendations of the Base Realignment And Closure (BRAC) report.
- Implementing the vision of the Quadrennial Defense Review.
- An extensive budget review to prepare

NEW DIRECTOR LISTS KEYS TO AIR GUARD SUCCESS continued on

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Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau

WATCHING THE BORDER: The National Guard is helping the U.S. Border Patrol secure the southwestern border with Mexico against illegal immigrants. By June 30, 2,500 Guard members were serving in the four border states as part of Operation Jump Start. Up to 6,000 are expected to be on duty by Aug. 1. Arizona Army National Guard Pfc. Jacob Ellington monitors many screens, looking for people trying to cross illegally, at the Border Patrol's communications center in the Yuma Sector. Coverage of the National Guard's border mission begins on page 7.

Letter from Iraq: Guard journalist reflects on her tour of duty | PAGE 6

THE ON GUARD

Declaration on the Constitution

“He has affected to render the Military independent of, and superior to the Civil Power.

– Declaration of Independence



WASHINGTON – Have you ever considered why those of us in the National Guard and all of this country’s other military services really serve the way

we do – under the command and control of civilian authorities?

No? Don’t feel alone. Neither had I until I reread the Declaration of Independence this past July 4 after joining a few thousand other people on that blistering hot Tuesday morning for the annual Independence Day recitation outside the National Archives.

The list “of repeated Injuries and Usurpations” committed by England’s King George III included the line that still resonates through our military 230 years after the 2nd Continental Congress adopted the Declaration on July 4, 1776, in Philadelphia, two days after adopting the resolution for independence.

It is a fundamental reason, it seems to me, why the thousands of National Guard members who are being sent to the southwest border are serving under Customs and Border Patrol, a federal civilian agency within the Department of Homeland Security. It is a fundamental reason why the members of the National Guard, and everyone else who wears a military uniform, serve elected civilian leaders – the governors of our states and territories and the president. It is a fundamental reason why this country will not tolerate a military force that is “independent of, and superior to the Civil Power.”

Yet, most Americans don’t know this because most have never read the document that cut our ties with England and set in motion the events that led to the creation of our United States.

Thomas Jefferson told me so this past Fourth of July. Actually, it was Steven Edenbo, who portrayed the author of the Declaration with conviction and candor at the Archives. “Not many” was his succinct reply to the question about how many Americans have actually read one of this country’s most cherished and celebrated documents.

Shame on us. It is remarkably easy to understand, and it takes only 12 or 13 minutes to read whole thing. The good news, I suppose, is that we do have a national holiday to honor with speeches, barbecues and fireworks that document and the 56 men who had the courage to adopt and ultimately sign it.

Fortunately, the same can now be said on behalf of our Constitution. Although it is not yet as prominent on the American calendar as Independence Day, we do have a United States Constitution Day. It is Sept. 17, the day in 1787 when the founding fathers signed that document in Philadelphia. It was

first observed in 1997, and President George W. Bush made it official by signing House Resolution 1848 on Dec. 8, 2004. This year, retired Gen. Colin Powell will lead the country in a coordinated recitation of the Preamble on Monday, Sept. 18.



By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell
Senior Correspondent

Honoring the Constitution is just as important – indeed, more so – than celebrating the Declaration of Independence because it defines and shapes our country.

Unfortunately, many Americans, including a lot of military people who have sworn to uphold and defend it, do not know very much about it.

“Various studies over the years have indicated that Americans tend to have great pride in their Constitution, but this veneration is based upon ample knowledge and deep understanding. Too many Americans are insufficiently educated about their Constitution,” states a 1987 report, “Education on the U.S. Constitution,” that was published during the 200th anniversary of the world’s oldest written constitution.

How can we swear allegiance to what we don’t know or understand? How can we uphold and defend something that we have never bothered to read? Yet, it happens every day. We know more about our mortgages and our car insurance policies, our computers and cameras, than we know about our Constitution.

We pay tribute to the darnedest things in this country. We remember Pearl Harbor. We remember the Alamo. We remember the Maine. And a hundred years from now we will most assuredly be remembering 9/11. We are a nation obsessed with our calamities and defeats.

Yes, we honor the armistice in 1918 that ended World War I on Nov. 11, but we have disguised that victory celebration by making it a generic holiday in honor of all veterans. We let pass virtually unnoticed such dates as Aug. 14, the day in 1945 when World War II ended, and April 9, the day in 1865 when Lee surrendered to Grant at Appomattox to end the Civil War. Furthermore, we pay practically no attention to Jan. 1 as the day in 1863 when Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation.

We do honor the American flag every June 14, which is also, coincidentally, the U.S. Army’s birthday. But none of us in uniform

has ever sworn to uphold and defend the flag. We have sworn to uphold and defend the Constitution.

That’s the document that validates our National Guard. It’s in Article I, Section 8, clauses 15 and 16:

“To provide for calling forth the Militia to execute the Laws of the Union, suppress Insurrections and repel Invasions;” states that power given to Congress. “To provide for organizing, arming, and disciplining the Militia, and for governing such Part of them as may be employed in the Service of the United States, reserving to the States respectively, the Appointment of the Officers, and the Authority of training the Militia according to the discipline prescribed by Congress.”

That’s the document that guarantees me the right to write what I want to, to earn a comfortable and rewarding living for my family, and to publicly agree or disagree with anyone. It’s part of the First Amendment.

“Congress shall make no law ... abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press” is the fundamental reason I still uphold and defend the Constitution.

I’ll bet that everyone in this country could find his or her own reason for living the American experience if they read our Constitution.

It seems to me that observing Constitution Day by reciting the Preamble every September is a good start. But why not make Sept. 17 a true national holiday – with parades, speeches and gatherings of families and friends – like Independence Day? Why not make Constitution Day as important as the days we set aside to honor presidents Washington and Lincoln and civil rights icon Martin Luther King Jr.?

Hey, I’m all for that. It just might give Americans a little more time to appreciate and understand our most important national treasure. 🇺🇸

Artillery story hit home

To the Editor:
I thoroughly enjoyed the article about the history of the Kentucky Army National Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 138th Artillery by John Listman in the June edition of The On Guard. As an Army draftee who had just completed basic training and advanced individual training, I was assigned to XXIV Corps Artillery at Phu Bai, Vietnam. I was intimately familiar with the 2nd Battalion and with its sister battalion, the 1st of the 83rd Artillery, which were the major units of our corps artillery. I vividly recall learning about the attack on Fire Base Tomahawk and that the base had been overrun.

The article brought back memories long forgotten in the 38 years I’ve been associated with the U.S. Army and Army National Guard. I spent the last 24 years as an AGR member of the Louisiana Army Guard. Thanks for the excellent article. 🇺🇸

– Master Sgt. Ernie Hammons

ABOUT THE ON GUARD

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

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THE ON GUARD

Texas troops observe the Fourth in Kosovo

By Sgt. Matthew Chlosta
4th Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo – Soldiers from the Texas National Guard’s 36th Infantry Division and Multi-National Task Force (East), with the president and prime minister of Kosovo in attendance, marked July 4 as America’s 230th year of independence during a ceremony at the Camp Bondsteel parade field.

Kosovo’s summer rains gave way to a warm, cloudless day.

Brig. Gen. Darren Owens, the task force’s commanding general, spoke about America’s struggle for independence.

“We as Americans can proudly say the Declaration of Independence, signed in 1776, gave birth to the ideals of freedom that others in the world only dream about,”

Owens said. “We are free to love, worship and live as we want. But freedom does have a price. Our service here in Kosovo is part of that price.”

“We should pause and remember that those symbols of our power and freedom are reflected in your actions everyday as you brave men and women in uniform sacrifice being with your families and, if need be, even your lives in preserving liberty,” Owens said.

The Soldiers are more than halfway through a yearlong NATO peacekeeping mission in the Balkans.

The Soldiers and visitors enjoyed the rush of a flyover by three Blackhawk and two Apache helicopters from Task Force Talon.

“I think it went well,” said Sgt. Levi Frost, a helicopter mechanic from Waterloo, Iowa.

“I really liked the speech. I really liked the flyover. I felt the importance of the ceremony – the weight of [the deployment] for the first time with the appearance of the President and Prime Minister of Kosovo. It really makes me feel appreciated.”

“Today we not only honor the independence of the United States, we honor your service, your courage, and countless sacrifices in this distant land far from home,” Owens said. “I do not view the work that KFOR does here as just preserving the peace for a safe Kosovo. I view it in a nobler, more exalted light. I view the great work we do here as part of laying the cornerstone of liberty for generations yet to come. Through your service and sacrifice, you help make every day Independence Day for the United States of America.”



Photo by Sgt. Matthew Chlosta, 4th Public Affairs Detachment

The colors fly over Task Force Falcon Soldiers serving with Multi-National Task Force (East) during the unit’s Fourth of July ceremony held on Camp Bondsteel in Kosovo. Most of the more than 1,600 U.S. Soldiers are from the Texas Army National Guard’s 36th Infantry Division.

Guard Soldiers warned to watch financial records

ARLINGTON, Va. – The National Guard Bureau is cautioning Guard members to monitor their financial affairs with “extra vigilance” after learning that a breach in computer security may have compromised the personal information of approximately 1,850 Army Guard Soldiers.

There is no evidence that the Soldiers’ personal information has been misused, stated Col. Matthew Murphy, the Army National Guard’s chief of staff, in a memorandum sent out in mid-July by mail and e-mail to every individual whose information might have been exposed.

However, the compromised information includes Soldiers’ names, social security numbers, military photographs and duty addresses, Murphy explained.

Therefore, he has asked Guard Soldiers

to “carefully monitor your bank accounts, credit card accounts and any other financial accounts for suspicious activity.”

Meanwhile, the Department of the Army’s Computer Crimes Investigation Unit is attempting to determine the details and impacts of the cyber-intrusion that was brought to the Army Guard’s attention on June 12.

“Beware of telephone calls, e-mails, or other requests for your personal information or verification of your personal information,” Murphy has advised. “This is called ‘phishing.’ Government agencies and other legitimate organizations will not call to ask for or confirm your personal information,” he added.

Guard Bureau personnel have taken steps to minimize the potential danger result-

ing from the intrusion into personal information, to identify what information may have been compromised and assess the impact of the public release of the information, and to update and change the applicable information technology systems to prevent a recurrence.

Officials indicate that the Guard Bureau’s network systems have been returned to 100 percent capability since the intrusion but that individual systems that are part of the affected servers and maintained by various Guard Bureau sections may take longer to return to full capability.

Soldiers can obtain more information about ways to protect themselves by contacting the Defense Department’s One Source at www.militaryonesource.com (<http://www.militaryonesource.com/>) or by calling 1-800-342-9647.

Heads Up!

• SGLI premiums increased

Effective July 1, the monthly premium for Service Members Group Life Insurance (SGLI) increased 5 cents for each \$10,000 of coverage, from 65 cents per month per \$10,000 to 70 cents. Members with the maximum \$400,000 coverage saw their monthly deduction from pay increase by \$2 a month, from \$27 to \$29. Also effective July 1, Family SGLI premiums were reduced by an average of 10 percent.

• Free wrestling tickets

Service members in uniform can watch live World Wrestling Entertainment free of charge. World Wrestling Entertainment offers military personnel a complimentary ticket to a live WWE event in their area if they come dressed in uniform with a military ID. Tickets are available on the day of the event. The World Wrestling Entertainment Website at www.wwe.com includes a schedule of live events.

• Enlistment age raised

The Army has raised the enlistment age to 42. Before January, an applicant could not have reached his or her 35th birthday. Applicants must meet eligibility standards, to include passing physical fitness standards and medical examinations. People who are 40 to 42 will be given additional medical screening. Recruits of all ages are eligible for the same enlistment bonuses and other incentives.

• Not just for combat

A new Veterans Affairs insurance benefit went into effect last December when the Traumatic Injury Protection program under Service Members’ Group Life Insurance (TSGLI) went into effect. TSGLI pays up to \$100,000 to seriously injured service members and reservists. Reservists do not have to be on active duty when the injury occurred. TSGLI protects both active duty and reserve members 24 hours a day, seven days a week regardless of where the member is serving or what the mission is, not just if they are serving in combat missions or in war zones. A complete list of covered losses is available at www.insurance.va.gov.

• Condos for ID holders

Department of Defense ID cardholders are eligible for weekly condominium rentals at 3,500 resorts in 80 countries worldwide. Provided by Morale, Welfare and Recreation and sponsored by Resort Condominium International, the Armed Forces Vacation Club offers space-available condominiums for \$299 a week. The program gives Soldiers and other Defense Department workers affordable accommodations in condominiums that would otherwise go empty, according to Verlin Abbott, RCI director of AFVC. For more information, visit the Armed Forces Vacation Club Website at www.afvclub.com.

– Compiled from Army News Service, American Forces Press Service, the Veterans Administration and usmilitary.about.com.

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FROM PAGE 1
New director lists keys to Air Guard success

for the 2008 through 2013 Program Objective Memorandum, a defense department budget tool.

- Recapitalization of Air National Guard equipment.
- Retaining experienced Airmen and matching the Army National Guard's recruiting success.

Juggling money and missions will be at the top of McKinley's inbox. And he said recruiting is an immediate challenge.

"The Air National Guard has not met recruiting goals these past several years," he said. "We have to do a better job recruiting, and I certainly applaud the Army National Guard's model for recruiting – making all of us recruiters."

A smorgasbord of experience dating back to the Vietnam era gives the new director and vice chief a large leadership toolbox.

"I don't think any one position has given me the total insight to do this job well," McKinley said. Rather, he will be calling on experiences he has gained from more than six years of active duty, almost 16 years' service to the Florida Air National Guard and in senior leadership positions in Europe and the United States.

That experience includes being a Cold War fighter pilot and a wing, sector and field commander. It also includes service as deputy director of the Air National Guard, deputy Air Force inspector general, commander of the 1st Air Force, director of Mobilization and Reserve Affairs in Europe and deputy strategic plans and programs director at the Pentagon.

"All that gave me the fundamental skills that have brought me to this point," McKinley said, "to be prepared to lead the Air National Guard into the very uncertain and challenging times we find ourselves living in."

As a young man, McKinley watched the Vietnam War unfold on the evening news. "I felt compelled to serve my nation," he said. "By the time I graduated from undergraduate pilot training, the war had come to an end, and those great veterans were coming back home. So I found myself in an Air Force that was somewhat retrenching from a very high tempo and getting ready for what was to become the culminating years of the Cold War."

His training focused on being a fighter pilot ready to join the battle if the Cold War turned hot. A command pilot, McKinley has flown more than 4,000 hours in eight aircraft, primarily the T-38 Talon, F-106 Delta Dart, F-16 Fighting Falcon and F-15 Eagle.

As the Cold War continued, McKinley said, "we were very large. Our Air National Guard units were very capable. And yet we were flying some very old aircraft. Once I became a commander in the Guard, we transitioned from older aircraft to new fighters and new tankers with re-engined airplanes. The active Air Force was pushing equipment to the Air National Guard so that we could become as relevant as possible in the event we had to fight the Cold War."

That history is the foundation of the success of today's National Guard, the lieu-



U.S. Air Force photo

Lt. Gen. Craig McKinley had lots of high-caliber help pinning on his third star when he became the 12th director of the Air National Guard in early June. From left are Gen. T. Michael Moseley, chief of staff of the Air Force; Secretary of the Air Force Michael Wynne; and LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

tenant general explained.

"It was really the modernization in the 1980s and the '90s that created an Air National Guard that could go and be part of Desert Shield and Desert Storm, be part of the Balkans crisis and support both Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom as we have done – a very relevant Air National Guard."

But McKinley called the fall of the Berlin Wall, the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks and the Guard's response to domestic crises like Hurricane Katrina the most significant shifts in focus during his career.

"The Air National Guard is finding itself in ever increasingly challenging roles that we never thought we would face," McKinley said, "and I use an example of driving a convoy truck or being part of air base defense, which were traditionally Army roles and Army National Guard roles."

Maximum flexibility, continuous training, a positive attitude and a willingness to adapt to change are musts for today's Guard members, McKinley said. Complacency is unacceptable.

"We're all going to have to be able to adapt to the new realities of our military service," McKinley said. "The facts are that we're going to have to become more efficient and more effective, that our services will probably get smaller over the years and that we are going to have to leverage our technology to do a better job of combating this very elusive enemy that we face."

"Our strengths as Guard men and women are to be trained, to be well-equipped and to be ready to respond to any type of crisis, whether it's manmade or natural, so that we can support our citizens and defend freedom wherever we're challenged," he added.

McKinley appealed for every Airman and Soldier in the National Guard – whether in traditional drilling status, working stateside

full time or deployed – to do his or her part.

"We in this long war are faced with maintaining a very high degree of morale and spirit," he said. "I hope every Guardsman and woman will remember the feeling they had the day they joined – that feeling of exhilaration, of pride, of joining a family, of being part of something bigger than themselves – so we can carry the great strength of our militia nation forward by inspiring those younger than us to continue in our footsteps and to do those things which we have loved to do over our careers. It's a great organization, it's a caring organization, and it's an organization that we can all be very, very proud of."

Air Guard gets active duty associate squadron

By 2nd Lt. Kelly George
 314th Airlift Wing

CHEYENNE, Wyo. (AFP) – The Air Force's 30th Airlift Squadron became the first active-duty associate squadron, forging a groundbreaking partnership between Air Mobility Command and the Wyoming Air National Guard, on July 8.

Under the active-duty associate concept, the 30th AS will be the first active-duty air mobility squadron to operationally report to an Air National Guard unit.

The Wyoming Air Guard's 153rd Airlift Wing will provide operational support and aircraft to the 30th AS and the active-duty aircrews. Administratively, the 30th AS will report to the 463rd Airlift Group, Little Rock Air Force Base, Ark., which will provide funding, equipment and personnel.

The 30th AS and the Wyoming Air Guard will share C-130 Hercules aircraft and other assets to provide support to combatant commanders in theater. Nearby F.E. Warren Air Force Base will provide support including housing, medical treatment and amenities to Airmen and their families.

The 30th AS was officially reactivated July 1 with an initial staff of 10. By the end of October, the squadron will gain 64 more authorizations, for a total of 74 people.

Col. John Gomez, commander of the 463rd Airlift Group, officiated at the ceremony. He presented the 30th AS guidon to Lt. Col. Steven Hopkins, the squadron commander. Hopkins previously was the 463rd Operations Support Squadron director of operations at Little Rock AFB.

KC-135: 50 years of flying high

The 50th anniversary of the KC-135 Stratotanker is scheduled to be celebrated at Oklahoma's Tinker Air Force Base Sept. 8-9.

Still in service, the KC-135 serves as an air-to-air refueling platform, flying command post, transport or electronic reconnaissance vehicle. The Air National Guard has 20 air refueling wings, according to the National Guard Almanac. Nineteen of them are in the Air Mobility Command.

Planned anniversary celebrations include a golf tournament, welcome reception, displays and flyover. Events conclude with a formal banquet at the National Cowboy & Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma City.

For more information, including online event and hotel registration, visit www.kc135.org.

THE ON GUARD

★ Guarding America ★

MARYLAND: Army National Guard Staff Sgt. George Brosenne was presented the Soldiers Medal in Kuwait for attempting to save the lives of his comrades following a fatal accident in October. Sgt. Brian Conner, Cpl. Bernard Ceo, and Cpl. Samuel Boswell of the 243rd Engineer Company were killed. "You stand as a symbol," said Lt. Gen. James Kelley, 3rd Army deputy commanding general, as he presented the medal to Brosenne. "As we salute you, we salute the best in American tradition."



RHODE ISLAND: One hundred thirty-two Soldiers of the Rhode Island Army Guard's 1207th Transportation Company departed on July 8 for training at Camp Shelby, Miss. They will be deployed to Iraq. A standing room only crowd packed the training hall at The Camp Fogarty Armory to show their support for the troops. The Soldiers are trained to transport people and products in tractor-trailer trucks. They are slated to spend two months at Camp Shelby before serving overseas for one year.

MISSOURI: The Missouri Army Guard deployed approximately 70 Soldiers for Operation Iraqi Freedom during the Fourth of July weekend in Springfield. The 206th Area Support Medical Company consists of healthcare professionals who will provide medical support for Soldiers serving in Southwest Asia.

SOUTH DAKOTA: Members of 200th Engineering Company have set in place a new wooden bridge along a serene section of the Oahe Trails in Pierre. The site will be known as Storms' Crossing and will be dedicated to veterans of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Money for the five-ton wooden bridge was donated as a memorial by the family of Lenis Storms and by members of the 200th Engineering Company. Lenis Storms' son Abe is a member of that unit and an Iraqi war veteran. The Pierre Economic Development Corporation has been working on the trails project for several years. PEDCO's Jim Protexter said the bridge is a focal point for the nearly 50 miles of fully developed trails now skirting the Missouri River in Pierre and Fort Pierre. Storms' Crossing is located along the Lewis and Clark Trail.

NEW MEXICO: Retired Maj. Gen. Alex Rudy Garcia, New Mexico's former deputy adjutant general, died on June 22. He was 65. He enlisted in the New Mexico Army Guard in 1958, before his senior year in high school, and was promoted to brigadier general in 1994. He was promoted to major general when he retired in 2001. Garcia held full-time Guard positions throughout New Mexico. He served in Belen, Albuquerque, Roswell and Santa Fe among other places.



Photo by Sgt. John Cervone, Rhode Island National Guard

After 17 months away from home, the Rhode Island Army National Guard's 861st Engineer Company returned to a warm homecoming in June. The ninety-five Soldiers out of Camp Fogarty in East Greenwich served for 12 months in Iraq. Working out of Ramadi, they participated in raids on weapons caches and strong points, cleared mines and removed explosives.

Maine artillery unit fires its final rounds

By CWO4 Mark Houdlette
Maine National Guard

CFB GAGETOWN, Canada – The guns of the Maine Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 152d Field Artillery fell silent on June 21 after 84 years of service to this country.

The battalion that is based in Aroostook County, Maine's northern-most county, conducted its final fire missions during its two weeks of annual training at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown, in New Brunswick, Canada.

Furthermore, Lt. Col. Charles McFarland, the battalion's commander, turned over the command to Maj. Michael Pooler who will oversee the battalion's decommissioning during the next year. He will also be instrumental in establishing a new Army Guard engineer company that will be based in northern Aroostook County.

The Maine battalion has trained at the Canadian post since 1971. CFB Gagetown is the closest military base to Aroostook County that can accommodate live fire

training for the towed 155mm howitzers that have been the battalion's primary weapons. The 1st Battalion has enjoyed an outstanding working relationship with Canadian forces over the past 35 years, said a Maine Guard spokesman.

The battalion, located primarily in Aroostook County throughout its history, was organized May 15, 1922. It was mobilized for World War II and received campaign participation credit for service in Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes-Alsace and Central Europe.

Since World War II, battalion members have participated in every mobilization in which Army National Guard soldiers have served. They include Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm and more recent missions in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Battery A recently returned from a deployment to Iraq where it assumed oversight of the Abu Ghraib Prison in Baghdad following a highly publicized prison guard scandal. The Maine Citizen-Soldiers restored order and respectability to the prison.



Photo by Spc. Kelsey Vance, Maine National Guard

Maine Army National Guard Spc. Larry Cochran pulls the lanyard to fire a 1st Battalion, 152nd Field Artillery howitzer during annual training at Canadian Forces Base Gagetown in New Brunswick, Canada, in June. The battalion fired its final rounds and will be disbanded after 84 years.

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Letter from Iraq: A National Guard Soldier remembers

By Staff Sgt. Lorie Jewell

Florida Army National Guard

TAMPA, Fla. — On the day I turned 41, the war in Iraq treated me to a wild ride through Baghdad in an up-armored sport utility vehicle.

It was the first of two times during my year-long tour that I would leave the International Zone without the armed, Humvee-led convoy security escort I traveled with on dozens of other missions.

I sat sideways in the rear right seat, facing the tinted window with my M-16, locked and loaded, in a modified ready position. I did my best to stay steady as the driver careened through streets choked with traffic. An elevated pucker factor helped glue my rear end to the seat, especially when congestion forced our vehicle to slow down, or worse, to stop. I thought that it would be a really bad thing to die on my birthday.

I rarely thought about dying while I was there, actually. Traveling in ground convoys were the only times it came to mind, and even then, there were only about three times when danger wasn't just imaginable, but tangible.

One of those managed to put a Combat Action Badge on my uniform. I was with a small unit of Iraqi police commandos in March, convoying to their base in unarmored Nissan pickup trucks when we were ambushed with small arms fire. We barreled through it, returning fire, and nobody on our side was hurt.

I considered myself lucky compared to a lot of others. My trips outside the IZ were frequent enough to keep life interesting, but they were not a daily source of danger. My luck held steady on my birthday, June 23, 2005, and we arrived safely at the Special Police Forces Academy in Baghdad.

From my arrival at Baghdad International Airport on Super Bowl Sunday 2005 through the following January, I served as a public affairs specialist with the Multi-National Security Transition Command — Iraq, MNSTC-I for short.

I volunteered to go without my Florida National Guard unit after learning about the command, its mission and its urgent need for a military journalist. The opportunity to show through words and photographs what United States and Coalition forces were doing to help rebuild Iraq's military and police forces was something I couldn't pass up.

"We are the tip of the exit strategy," insisted U.S. Army Capt. Steve Alvarez, a Florida Reservist and the command's public affairs officer at the time, in his pitch to entice me to come over. Alvarez finished his year-long tour two months after I joined the four-man public affairs shop. U.S. Army Lt. Col. Fred Wellman took his place, and by the time he and I left, the office swelled to double its size in manpower.

I was the lone journalist for most of my tour, traveling the country to seek out stories and images of Iraqi soldiers and police officers building their ranks, going through training, receiving and maintaining new or donated equipment, bonding with U.S. and Coalition advisers and 'doing the deal' with operations outside the wire.

I also put out a weekly Web-based publication called "The Advisor."

My first overnight mission was to an Iraqi military base in the southern tip of the country for a recruiting drive for the Iraqi Army. Officials were hoping for 6,000 potential recruits. The best conservative estimate came to about 20,000. As the sun rose, men of all ages spilled out of cars and buses near the base entrance and walked several miles to the first checkpoint. When one or two picked up the pace, others followed. Soon, men were running. Most were barefoot.

Later, in the afternoon, an Iraqi soldier caught a pigeon and presented it to me as a gift while using hand gestures that indicated he wanted to marry me. Not wanting to appear rude, I accepted the pigeon and then released it — quietly praying that it didn't mean I was engaged.

One of my favorite stories is about a small company of female Iraqi military police serving on a small base in Baghdad. Unlike their male counterparts, the women could not live on the base. They left their homes wearing civilian clothes early each morning, changed into their uniforms when

they arrived at the base, and then changed back for the journey home at night. Most were married and said they had the full support of their husbands and parents.

One woman, however, said her husband divorced her when she joined the Army. Her parents were helping her to raise her two young children. Months later, I saw her at a conference where she was working security. I asked her how her children were. She said she hadn't seen them in four months. Word had somehow gotten out that she was serving in the Army, and she began receiving death threats. She left her home to protect her family.

It boggles my mind to think of serving my country under those kinds of conditions. There aren't many days that go by that I don't think of her and say a little prayer that she's OK. One thing is for sure: I'll never take for granted the incredible support that citizens lavish on our Soldiers in this country.

When I'm completely honest, I will admit there were a few times when I questioned my sanity for volunteering to go over



Florida Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Lorie Jewell made many friends with Iraqi soldiers and police officers during the year she served with the Multi-National Security Transition Command — Iraq.

there. The doubts came when I was physically overwhelmed — trudging through blinding sandstorms that colored the sky a burnt orange; schlepping camera gear, a laptop and accessories, an overloaded backpack (my knitting accompanied me everywhere, just in case I had down time) and of course, my M-16, on missions and slopping through endless streams of mud and muck during the rainy season.

When temperatures soared above three digits, sweat soaked my uniform through and through. Flies there are bountiful and brazen beyond belief. At their worst, they give considerable effort to finding refuge in any open body orifice — nose, ears, and mouth. They boast Medal of Honor-levels of pesky proficiency.

That was the bad side. Well, that and the occasional mortars and rockets that insurgents lobbed into the International Zone and the frequent threats of improvised explosive devices that stopped or rerouted traffic flow.

There was also the November night that Iraq beat Syria in a big soccer game. Red tracer rounds lit up the night like fireworks in a cacophony of celebratory gunfire. Dozens of soldiers stood outside trailers, gaping at the show until the ping, ping, ping of spent rounds dropping on metal roofs forced us back inside.

Fortunately, my overall experience was filled with more positive experiences than negatives. I don't regret going over there for one minute. Never in my life have I felt like I was contributing to something greater than myself than I did in Iraq.

We sent out "The Advisor" every Saturday, and by Monday there were e-mails from new readers — civilian and military — thanking us for telling a side of the war they weren't aware of.

(Current and past issues of the Advisor can be found on the MNSTC-I Web site at www.mnstci.iraq.centcom.mil)

I also appreciated being a part of the most unique and diverse group of people I've ever encountered. MNSTC-I was a melting pot of soldiers and civilians from at least a dozen other countries. The United States, Britain and Australia were the most heavily represented. There were also uniforms and faces from Iraq, Italy, Spain, Poland, the Netherlands, Croatia, Iceland, Albania, Macedonia and South Korea, among others.

One of my more memorable international bonding moments occurred at breakfast one morning, sitting with a group of Australian officers. A couple of them were spreading what looked like chocolate jam on their toast. So, naturally, I asked about it. It was Vegemite, a staple as common Down Under as ketchup is in the U.S. The tube it came in described it as fermented yeast extract.

I didn't know that when I popped a small square of coated toast into my mouth and began chewing. All eyes were on me. Not wanting to spoil our Aussie alliance, I swallowed. It was bad beyond belief. It brought tears to my eyes. I did everything I could not to gag. I managed a weak smile when they asked me how I liked it. I said it must be an acquired taste.

Within the command's U.S. contingency, all the service branches were there except for the Coast Guard. For the first half of my tour, the 98th Army Reserve Training Division supplied a good chunk of our command strength. The 80th Reserve Training Division came next.

The rest were individuals, a mix of active duty and reserve troops. To my knowledge, I was the only National Guard soldier in the command. The only time that distinguished me from the crowd, though, was when I decided to reenlist and when my leadership there and at home wanted to promote me to staff sergeant. I like to think I helped make navigating the system smoother for Guard members to follow.

I had plenty of National Guard company elsewhere in the country, even in the International Zone. For the first few months of my tour in Iraq about half of the U.S. combat forces were from the National Guard. The first time I drew casual pay, I was thrilled to see the Florida Guard patch on the uniforms of the Soldiers staffing the finance office.

I became good friends with an Iraqi man who works for the Ministry of Defense. The Marines had nicknamed him "Danny." We worked similar jobs and went on several missions together. On our first mission, we were the only two people on a bus shuttling us from the landing zone at the Kirkush Military Training Base to a graduation ceremony for Iraqi soldiers who were completing basic training. That's when we began to bond.

The Sunday before I left, Danny brought his wife and four children to say goodbye. I had met his two sons, ages 3 and 10, and his 11-year-old daughter a few times before. We visited for about 30 minutes and then went outside for a few photos. Danny and I hugged. I told him that I would come back one day when I could come to his house for dinner. He said no, I would be their guest for a few days, at least. As I walked away, his daughter called out one of the new English phrases she learned for the occasion: "See you soon!"

I lost it.

I've been home for a few months now, and I returned to my civilian job in April. I've stayed in touch through electronic mail with Danny and a few other Iraqi friends who serve as translators with Coalition adviser teams. They try to stay upbeat, but lately Danny has admitted that things are not going well in his neighborhood. He tries to keep a low profile.

One of the hardest things about going over as an individual is coming home alone, leaving friends and colleagues behind. I have a hard time watching the news. It only makes me worry about them. Life seems leisurely now, and I sometimes feel a bit guilty that I'm home and they aren't. But I know it won't be that way forever. ♪

Staff Sgt. Lorie Jewell of the Florida Army National Guard's 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment was named the Defense Department's best print journalist for 2005.

THE ON GUARD

▶▶ On the Border ◀◀

New Mexico paves the way

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

COLUMBUS, N.M. – Ninety years ago, this New Mexico border town was the flashpoint for the last significant raid on the continental United States before the terrorists attacked on Sept. 11, 2001. Now it is hosting some of the first National Guard members who are helping to make the border between the United States and Mexico more secure.

After 500 guerillas led by Gen. Francisco “Pancho” Villa killed 10 Columbus residents and 14 Soldiers on March 9, 1916, thousands of U.S. Army troops descended on the dusty settlement three miles north of Mexico.

Led by Gen. John Pershing, they hunted Villa. The U.S. Cavalry used horses for the last time and motorized vehicles and airplanes for the first time during that campaign.

Now, New Mexico Guard Soldiers in the 2nd Battalion, 200th Infantry Regiment are using trucks and helicopters while conducting a peaceful mission: Helping Border Patrol agents tighten the country’s southern border against illegal immigrants as part of Operation Jump Start.

By June 30, 2,500 Army and Air Guard members were in the four Southwest border states supporting the operation. “The National Guard is on track to provide up to 6,000 Guard personnel in support of Operation Jump Start,” said LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau.

The Border Patrol is part of Customs and Border Protection in the Department of Homeland Security. Agents patrol 19 sectors in the continental United States – four of them along the U.S. border with Mexico.

“We are not militarizing this area,” insisted Staff Sgt. Harold Baker, 29, as he watched the border in the 97 degree heat from Johnson Mountain in southern New Mexico in mid-June. “We’re saving lives – literally.”

“The more people we can stop here from trying to cross 30 miles of desert with only a gallon of water, [the more] we’re saving lives,” Baker said.

Thirty-one people died in the Border Patrol’s El Paso Sector this year through June 9, according to news reports.

For the Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, annual training meant taking part in Operation Jump Start due to President George W. Bush’s decision to send National Guard members to help watch the international border from California to Texas.

Up to 6,000 National Guard troops are expected to be on the border by Aug. 1. The mission could continue for up to two years while the Border Patrol increases its force from about 11,000 agents to about 17,000.

Leading the way

The 185 men and women of the New Mexico battalion are among units leading the way for Jump Start. The lessons they learn will help other units. Their cooperation with Border Patrol agents and local residents will set the tone. They’re helping to write the procedures for future Soldiers and Airmen to follow.

“This battalion has been in the middle of the biggest events in this country’s history,” said Lt. Col. Eric Judkins, the commander.

The 200th Infantry is descended from the 200th Coast Artillery which earned four U.S. Presidential Unit Citations and a Philippine Presidential Unit Citation during its defense of the Philippines in 1941-42. Known as the “Battling Bastards of Bataan,” they were forced to surrender to the Japanese in April 1942. The survivors suffered terribly during the death march and internment that followed.

That tradition of service and sacrifice continues today. About 15 percent of the 2nd Battalion’s Soldiers have served in Iraq; about 25 percent pulled homeland security missions; around 60 percent deployed for Hurricane Katrina; and, through June 17, some 30 percent had volunteered to extend their Operation Jump Start duties for up to a year.



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau

National Guard members in an entry identification team man their post on Johnson Mountain in New Mexico. The team gathers intelligence about possible undocumented aliens attempting to enter the United States from Mexico and relays it to Border Patrol agents. Mexico is south of the ridge. The skybox provides Soldiers with a higher vantage point and contains equipment that enhances their ability to see people by day and night.

“That just shows the heart of these Soldiers,” Judkins said. “They are staying motivated because they know it’s an important mission. They know they’re contributing to the security of the border.”

The unit started annual training June 10 and was scheduled to go home to Las Cruces, N.M., June 24. The Soldiers were to be replaced with other units, building up to about 500 on the border in New Mexico by Aug. 1, according to Lt. Col. Kimberley Lalley, the New Mexico Guard’s spokesperson.

“New Mexico’s plan is to continue what we’ve started here and then grow the mission out,” Judkins said.

Immigration is a fixture of daily life for southern New Mexico residents.

Traffic merges into one lane and filters through an inspection station near mile marker 121 on Interstate 10 that leads west from the Border Patrol’s El Paso Sector headquarters.

“Are you a United States citizen?” a Border Patrol agent asks. “Is this a rental car? ... How far are you going today, sir? ... Have a good day.”

All traffic stops for a similar checkpoint at mile marker 13 on Highway 11, which runs from the border with Mexico through Columbus and 30 miles north to Deming.

The Guard members work in support roles, freeing Border Patrol agents to screen or intercept more people. The Guard provides a highly visible deterrent.

“We’ve fully integrated with Border Patrol,” Judkins said. “It is truly a team effort.”

Operations run around the clock, every day, and are divided into three overlapping shifts. Activities vary. Twenty people were sighted and the Border Patrol apprehended 13 on June 16. Seventeen were spotted the next day, but none were apprehended, according to records tracked at the Deming National Guard Armory.

The Guard unit counted 325 sightings through June 19, and Border Patrol agents had apprehended 121 people.

Soldiers and agents say there’s an element of cat and mouse to watching the border. As troops help lower incursions in one trouble spot, activity moves elsewhere.

Troops use surveillance techniques. So do smugglers, who set up their own observation posts, sometimes on the U.S. side of the border, and try to learn the Guard’s and the Border Patrol’s tactics and routines. A network of people smugglers – known as coyotes – and drug runners even conduct their own probes of border defenses.

“We are intimately familiar with the border issues,” Judkins said. “It is intrinsically more important to us than it is to a lot of other states. It’s hard to understand the magnitude of the problem without seeing 184 miles of open desert.”

In southern New Mexico there is no river to separate the countries. Often there is not even a fence. In places, the border is defined by parallel dirt roads on each side of a slight berm or depression.

On June 18, Spc. Griselda Rivera watched the border from a skybox on Radar Hill. The 24-year-old criminal justice student from Las Cruces has volunteered to extend her stay beyond her two weeks of annual training.

“The purpose of the mission motivated me to volunteer,” Rivera said. “I feel proud to help out the Border Patrol – to be here for them and for my country.”

The landscape Rivera surveys from an armored, air-conditioned box has a harsh beauty – sharp rock ridges punctuating flat desert where dust devils pick up sand and race across the horizon.

Irrigated crops on the 100,000 acre Johnson ranch that borders Mexico make a bright patch of green on the dusty tan landscape. Locals say that one settlement immediately south of the border serves as a stopping point for would-be immigrants and smugglers.

Migrants walk through prickly pear cacti and thorny mesquite bushes, sometimes carrying backpacks or water jugs.

Staff Sgt. William Duffer was the noncommissioned officer in charge of Rivera’s position. “Everybody here’s been real great, so it’s been kind of easy for me,” the Operation Iraqi Freedom veteran said.

NEW MEXICO PAVES THE WAY continued on

THE ON GUARD

FROM PAGE 7

New Mexico paves the way

Duffer dropped bottled water into an ice chest and contemplated what he would tell a Soldier or Airman volunteering to support Operation Jump Start who has never been to the border.

"It takes a few days to get used to the heat," he said. "They need to start getting a lot of water into them a week or two in advance. Your hands and your lips get dry. The wind and dust just thrash your nose and eyes and everything else. When the wind kicks up a little bit, it's like ... when you open an oven."

Agents' eyes and ears

When Rivera sees something from her skybox, she calls the Border Patrol. The National Guard does not apprehend people. It gathers intelligence to help the Border Patrol agents who will deter the migrants or detain them.

Then Rivera calls a Guard field tactical operations center situated in a camouflage net next to the Columbus Border Patrol office.

Spc. Jacob Bermudez receives reports in the traditional SALUTE format, adapted to Operation Jump Start.

- Size: How many migrants?
- Activity: Were the migrants being dropped off? Walking? Driving?
- Location: Where were they?
- Uniform: What were they wearing?
- Time: When were they seen?
- Equipment: Did the migrants have backpacks? Water jugs? Knives?

Bermudez also receives reports of blown tires or field equipment that requires maintenance.

"We're the problem solvers," said the 19-year-old from Alamogordo, N.M., who enlisted because of the impression the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks made on him when he was still in high school.

"I like doing it," Bermudez said. "We're really helping out here."

Reports say the cost to be smuggled in a car or guided across the border has increased since the Guard members arrived.

"Seeing us has an impact," Judkins said.

Bermudez has volunteered to stay an extra year.

The Guard members at the field operations center also are helping to make sense of individual intelligence reports. What are the patterns? What areas stand out as particularly vulnerable? Are there daily or seasonal variations in the number of attempts to cross the border illegally?

For the Soldiers in the field, shifts start with a briefing at the Deming Border Patrol Station where supervisors brief Guard members and Border Patrol agents about the latest sightings, weather, and logistics or communications issues. A Border Patrol slogan declares the station "America's frontline."

Deming has had the highest immigrant traffic in the Border Patrol's El Paso sector and the third highest in the nation, according to news reports. The migrants are trying to work their way north to Deming and Interstate 10.

The New Mexico Guard Soldiers have focused on 24 miles of border where crossings were particularly high.


Support for the Border Patrol also takes place back at the Deming National Guard Armory where dozens of Soldiers sleep on cots.

First Lt. Gary Stewart commands the 729th Field Support Company that provides the cooks, maintenance, transportation and fuel for the 2nd Battalion, 200th Infantry Soldiers and for the Border Patrol.

Unit members have refueled Border Patrol vehicles, pulled a truck out of the desert sand, loaned a generator and worked side-by-side with agents maintaining vehicles.

"Just in logistical support alone, the Border Patrol is seeing a result," Stewart said.

Lessons learned will help future troop rotations. For example, Stewart moved a maintenance team closer to the border to reduce the down time for vehicles and equipment by having mechanics closer to the action.

"There's numerous ways we've assisted," Staff Sgt. Martin Serna said as he worked on a Humvee. "Not only on border security, but also with the maintenance of the vehicles. Any little bit makes a difference." 

Border Patrol:

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

YUMA, Ariz. – The sight of National Guard members pulling in to the Yuma Border Patrol Station on June 18 thrilled Richard Hays.

The supervisory Border Patrol agent said Operation Jump Start – up to 6,000 National Guard members assigned to help his agency secure the nation's southern border with Mexico – already is making a difference.

"Having the National Guard troops here is going to allow us to put agents – law enforcement personnel, the badge-wearers and the gun-toters that have been providing mission support roles – back on patrol," Hays said.

The Border Patrol is part of Customs and Border Protection in the Department of Homeland Security. The continental United States is divided into 19 Border Patrol sectors, with Puerto Rico in a 20th sector. The Border Patrol has 143 stations within those sectors. About 11,000 agents are active nationwide, a number President Bush has vowed to increase by 6,000 by 2008.

"As these 6,000 Border Patrol agents start to come on, the number of National Guard troops on the border will decrease proportionally," Hays said.

In the meantime, the arrival of Guard members "is going to provide an immediate, short-term solution and speed up our national strategy to secure our borders," Hays said during an interview at the Yuma Station where, on a peak day on March 7, agents arrested 840 people in 24 hours.

"We're very pleased to have the National Guard here," Hays said. "It's a force multiplier to us. It's a win-win situation."

Border Patrol agents are highly trained in law enforce-



National Guard Soldiers in the 2nd Battalion, 200th relieve colleagues helping the Border Patrol secure

Once an undocun

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

DEMING, N.M. – Once she was carried across the Rio Grande from Mexico, an illegal entrant to the United States. Now she's a National Guard Soldier who is guarding her adopted country's border.

Spc. Veronica Ortega's earliest memories include working in the fields as a migrant farm worker. Now this member of the 2nd Battalion, 200th Infantry of the New Mexico National Guard is on track to be the first member of her immediate family to earn a college degree.

Like a third of the Soldiers in her unit, Ortega volunteered to extend her commitment to Operation Jump Start when the 2nd Battalion's two weeks of annual training wrapped up June 24.

"When we came through, it was very safe," Ortega said during a mid-June interview at the Deming National Guard Armory. "The person that did it was family. It was easy. But now it's not. People are dying."

It was December 1988. Ortega was 11. A cousin made five trips across the river and back to carry family members to the American Dream – including Ortega's 2-year-old sister and

her grandmother.

"All we would get was our feet wet," Ortega said. "He would be almost completely underwater."

Ortega views Operation Jump Start – President Bush's to put up to 6,000 National Guard troops on the border by 1 to assist the Border Patrol – as a lifesaver that might protect other people born in Mexico from those who treat human beings as though they are a commodity, charging exorbitant fees to be guided across the desert, sometimes rob them, and frequently leaving them to die in the desert at the first sign of trouble.

"It's a mixed emotion," Ortega said. "It's good because of the drugs and the smuggling of people. We're saving lives. I'm stopping a lot of these guys that are abusing people and charging them money to bring them over. And they don't bring them over. All they do is just sit them on the border and let them cross. But I also think, 'What if somebody would have stopped me? Turned me back around?'"

She was born in Delicias and raised in Meoqui. She learned to count to seven in English when she climbed on a cousin's back to be carried across the Rio Grande to the American side. Her mom had sent for her from the States.

They hid in a hole in a wall and watched a Border Patrol

THE ON GUARD

Jump Start a winner



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau Infantry, New Mexico National Guard, load up before dawn to the border with Mexico south of Deming, N.M.

ment techniques, law and languages, and it takes about two years for an agent to get fully up to speed, Hays said.

The Border Patrol culture would be no shock to a Guard member. It places similar emphasis on technical and tactical proficiency, discipline, courtesy and competence.

Someone who is interested in being an agent first talks with a recruiter. They take a written test and go before a hiring board where the candidate is quizzed by three senior agents. Medical screening, drug screening and a background investigation follows.

Candidates attend the Border Patrol Academy in Artesia, N.M., for 19 weeks.

"You will be challenged not only physically but academically," Hays said. "Immigration law and naturalization law, which our agents learn, are some of the most nebulous laws on the books."

Graduation from the academy is followed by six to eight weeks in a field training unit. Newly minted agents must pass a law exam and a Spanish oral board at six months and again at 11 months.

"If you are not successful at completing both of those both times, you will then be asked to leave the service," Hays said.

For those who pass, agents get on-the-job training in their area of responsibility.

"Being a Border Patrol agent, you are required to work in such a dynamic environment," Hays said. "The border is a living, breathing thing that constantly changes, and we must be willing as it changes to adjust what we do in enforcement."

National Guard troops are not apprehending anyone or militarizing the border. Missions that Guard members will have, Hays said, include maintaining sensing

platforms that warn agents when the border is being violated, maintaining vehicles, and performing administrative duties to free up Border Patrol agents.

The Guard also will gather intelligence for agents to act on. "They are going to serve as our eyes and ears," Hays said.

Hays comes from Pennsylvania, and he hadn't seen the border before he joined the Border Patrol. "It was an eye-opener," he said. "It was a different world. It's been a phenomenal experience. It's likely to be a memorable experience for the troops that come down."

Guard members are coming at an active time. Through June 19, Yuma Sector agents had arrested 105,829 people since the fiscal year began on Oct. 1. In the same period a year earlier, 99,935 were arrested.

More than 36,000 pounds of marijuana had been seized in the Yuma Sector this fiscal year through June 19 – drugs with an estimated street value exceeding \$30 million. "We've pretty much doubled our narcotics seizures this year already," Hays said.

At the same time, 102 assaults against agents were reported – up from 85 a year earlier.

"Unfortunately, that's a good sign," Hays said. "It lets us know we're having an effect on these smuggling organizations. As we continue to disrupt their illicit trade, they cannot carry out what they have done illicitly in the past, which they did at will at points. As we start to affect them financially, they're going to lash out."

"When business is good, nobody wants to rock the boat. The narcotics loads are getting through. The smugglers' loads are getting through. There's no need. But when we start targeting stash houses, identifying smuggling rings, arresting their people, seizing their narcotics – when business is bad – they become frustrated."

mentent alien – now a Soldier

drive across the Santa Fe Bridge. She remembers crossing a street, riding a bus, being reunited with her mom at an El Paso, Texas, plaza and being driven to Las Cruces, N.M., where the 28-year-old woman still lives.

They had never seen a supermarket door that opened automatically as you approached. They had never met a black person. Her mother had worked in the onion, chile or cotton fields, carrying her little girl with her.

"I've been doing it ever since I can remember," Ortega said. "I was the only child most of the time in the big trucks they used to take us in. Since I was the only kid, I was pretty spoiled. So, one of the guys would put me on his shoulders, because I was so little I had a hard time breathing."

For a while, when Ortega still lived in Mexico, her mom would disappear to the United States for three to six months at a time, returning with money to support the family.

Coming to the United States permanently meant that everyone moved up.

At first, Ortega said, "It wasn't much different because she was still doing the same job." But her mother worked her way off the land, cleaning motel rooms. Finally, she landed a job at Wal-Mart.

"All we did when we came here was work," Ortega said. "It

was work, work, work. The one thing my mom would never ever let us do was quit school."

Ortega recalled coming home one day and telling her mother she was done with school. Her mother didn't argue. "I was like cool, I'm off the hook," she said.

"But the whole day I was home I did nothing but wash diapers, clean house, cook, iron. I was exhausted by the end of the day. Next morning, I was all ready to go to school."

"Where are you going?" her mom asked.

"I'm going to school," Ortega said.

"Oh," her mom said. "OK. You changed your mind. Good."

They're all legal residents now, and Ortega's family returns to Mexico about twice a year to celebrate weddings and other milestones for their extended family.

She joined the National Guard in 1995, her senior year in high school, following in the footsteps of a friend. She said she's proud of both of her heritages, but Ortega doesn't believe she would have had the same opportunities in Mexico that she has found in this country. "If I wouldn't be here, I wouldn't know so much," she said. "I wouldn't be so far ahead. My education wouldn't be."

But, as a Citizen-Soldier, she said, "I don't have limitations with anything."



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau New Mexico Army National Guard, Spc. Veronica Ortega, fields calls for Operation Jump Start at the Deming National Guard Armory in June.

THE ON GUARD

Javelin live fire is a first for Army Guard

FORT CHAFFEE, Ark. – To Arkansas Army National Guard Spc. John Mitchell, firing the new Javelin anti-armor missile was "awesome." To the Army National Guard, it was a milestone.

Thursday, June 8, marked the first time any National Guard unit has fired the shoulder-held weapon. Mitchell and three other members of Arkansas's 39th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) earned the honor of being the first National Guard Soldiers to fire the high-explosive weapon after 10 days of intensive training. The Arkansas National Guard's Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center, near Fort Smith, Ark., provided the training site and firing range.

The Javelin was first fielded in 1996 and has been delivered to 90 percent of its intended units in the active Army and 65 per-

cent of the intended Army Guard units, according to Wilton Ranson, Javelin program manager at the Redstone Arsenal. The missile system has a range of 2,500 meters, more than twice the range of its predecessor, the M-47 Dragon.

The Javelin is a fire-and-forget missile. It locks on a target by laser before launch and is automatically guided to the target. A small team of Soldiers can rush the low-weight system into place and lock on and fire the weapon quickly, using the self-guided missile to destroy an armor vehicle or emplacement.

The 39th BCT returned from Iraq in the spring of 2005 after an 18-month mobilization. It has been equipped with the Javelin as part of the Army Transformation program.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Durney, Arkansas National Guard
Four Arkansas Army National Guard Soldiers in the 39th Brigade Combat Team fired Javelin missiles on the Fort Chaffee Maneuver Training Center June 8. It marked the first time a National Guard unit has conducted a live-fire exercise with the anti-armor missile system.

FROM PAGE 1
Guard rolls out

of the Pennsylvania National Guard, vowed that the 56th Stryker Brigade would be second to none.

"We will be the best because of the Soldiers of the five-six," Wright said. "They are enthusiastic about change. They embrace technology and they are warriors."

"The combination of soldier and machine will be a formidable force anywhere in the world," Wright added.

Gen. Richard Cody, the U.S. Army's vice chief of staff, said the National Guard is more vital than ever to national defense because the active Army is not as large as it once was.

"We in the Army's senior leadership are committed to producing units that are fully ready to serve this nation," Cody said. "Whenever our nation has called, the Pennsylvania National Guard – especially the 28th Division – has been there."

Cody said the 56th Stryker Brigade is at the leading edge of the Army's transformation efforts to meet the challenges of modern warfare.

"The experience of this brigade from concept development to material fielding is not only serving as a catalyst to lead change across the Pennsylvania Army National Guard, but across the entire force," he said.

The Stryker brigade is the largest program undertaken by the Pennsylvania National Guard since the conversion of the 28th Division from infantry to mechanized infantry in 1994. The Stryker project is an investment of \$1.5 billion, which includes 85 construction projects across the commonwealth.

Stryker brigade Soldiers began training on the new vehicles and equipment in April and are expected to be fully trained by the end of 2008.

Pennsylvania Congressman Tim Holden said the Stryker project speaks volumes about the confidence the Army has in the Pennsylvania Guard.

He praised his colleague, Pennsylvania Congressman John Murtha Jr., for his efforts in securing the Stryker project for Pennsylvania and for his continuing commitment to the Pennsylvania Guard.

Murtha, a ranking member and former chairman of the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee of the House Appropriations Committee, delivered keynote remarks. He congratulated General Dynamics Land Systems, the general contractor of the Stryker, for getting the job done so promptly.

"Instead of 15 years it took four; a magnificent achievement," said Murtha who served 37 years in the military.



Photo by Master Sgt. Dick Breach, Pennsylvania National Guard
Pennsylvania Army National Guard Soldiers in the 56th Stryker Brigade Combat Team show off their new combat vehicles at Fort Indiantown Gap in June. They are being transformed into the only Stryker brigade in the National Guard.

President runs with Oregon Guard Soldier.

By Donna Miles
 American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – President Bush kept his promise to a wounded National Guard Soldier on June 27, jogging around the White House running track alongside Staff Sgt. Christian Bagge from Oregon who ran with his new prosthetic legs.

The president and Bagge, who wore his PT uniform with "Army" emblazoned across his chest, hit the track in a light afternoon drizzle.

In doing so, Bush kept a promise he made to Bagge at his bedside while visiting him and other wounded troops undergoing treatment at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio on New Year's Day.

Bagge was serving with the Oregon National Guard's 116th Brigade Combat Team when he lost both legs near Kirkuk, Iraq, in June 2005.

Bush told reporters he was inspired and a bit surprised by Bagge's request. "He said, 'I want to run with you,'" the president recalled on the White House South Lawn. "I looked at him... (and thought), 'There's an optimistic person.' But I could tell in his eyes that he meant it."

Bush immediately agreed to the request, and Bagge said it helped him set a goal for his recovery. "There's no bigger thing to aspire to than to run with the president," he said. "In the military, you can't get any higher than that."

The president said he was impressed with Bagge's progress. "It's an amazing sight for me to be running with a guy who, the last time I saw him ... I was wondering whether or not he'd ever get out of bed," he said. "But there was no doubt in his mind that he would."

The pair disagreed on who's the better runner. "After a lot of hard work and a lot of compassionate care, this fine man is here on the South Lawn running with the president," Bush said. "And he ran the president into the ground, I might add!"

Bagge said it was he, not the president, who was sucking more air. "He's in great



shape," Bagge told CNN. "I was sweating pretty good, but he wasn't hurting at all."

The soldier declined to say exactly what he and the president talked about during the run, calling it "just chit-chatting."

"We talked about what I've been through and where I want to go," he said. "No big issues."

Bush praised Bagge for his commitment to his country and his recovery. "I'm proud of you. I'm proud of your strength, proud of your character," he said. "Thank you for your service."

At that point, Bush excused himself and Bagge from the reporters who surrounded them. "We're not through running yet," the president said. Then he jokingly added, "Get out of the way!"

Bagge called his run with the president "extremely motivating" and said he hopes it inspires other wounded troops and reminds the American public about the sacrifices being made for them.

The American people hear about troops killed in the war on terror "but never hear about the wounded," Bagge told CNN. "[Wounded troops'] lives are forever changed," he said. "It really is a life-long struggle."

Bagge said he hopes the run sends a message to other wounded troops. "I see a lot of guys who are depressed," he said. "Hopefully they can look at me and say, 'If he did it, I can do it as well.'"

THE ON GUARD

History: The National Guard keeps its own calendar

ARLINGTON, Va. – On the National Guard Bureau's Web site, located at www.ngb.army.mil, you can find a 365-day event calendar of Guard history. Many dates have multiple entries, arranged in order by year. Most have images, from period color lithographic plates to black and white photographs to appropriate NGB Heritage or Presidential series artwork. The calendar features all aspects of Guard history, from important people to dates important to specific units, key federal and state active duty missions, and some of the political and social stories that are part of the Guard's long history. Here is a sampling of the August listings. Many have been abbreviated because of space limitations.

Aug. 1, 1956, Floyd Bennett Field, N.Y. – Capt. Norma Parsons joined the New York Air National Guard. She became the Guard's first female member after Congress passes a law permitting women to join. Today, nearly one in five members of the Guard are women.

5-1917, nationwide – The entire National Guard was drafted into the Army, allowing it to serve overseas during World War I. Even with the reforms started with the 1903 Militia Act, commonly referred to as the "Dick Act" after its sponsor Congressman Charles Dick, Congress never addressed the issue of the Guard fighting outside U.S. territory. The only expedient solution was to "draft" all Guard Soldiers, in effect taking them as individuals for overseas service. Not until passage of the 1933 Guard Status Act was a dual status created to permit the Guard to serve outside the country in times of crisis.

6-1945, Hiroshima, Japan – The B-29 bomber "Enola Gay" dropped the first atomic bomb. Among the crew was Sgt. Robert Shumard, a former Guardsman from Michigan. He entered active duty in 1941 when his field artillery unit was mobilized. He soon transferred to the Army Air Corps, forerunner of the Air Force.

9-1990, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia – Seven days after Iraqi forces seized the Kingdom of Kuwait, President George H.W. Bush ordered the deployment of American forces to the region as part of Operation Desert Shield. Among the very first troops to arrive were two South Carolina Guardsmen, both members of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 228th Signal Brigade. They quickly began operating a single channel tactical satellite radio link with the U.S. Third Army at Fort McPherson, Ga. They were the first of the 37,848 Army Guardsmen to serve in theater during Desert Shield and later during Desert Storm.

11-1965, Los Angeles – Rioting broke out in the area known as Watts. Mobs of angry African Americans battled police, setting fires and even exchanging gun fire. Some press reports referred to the area as a "war zone." As the mob action spread, eventually destroying large sections of the area, it became obvious that the police could not control the situation without help. The gov-



"The Battle of Bennington," a National Guard Bureau Heritage Series painting by Don Troiani.

ernor mobilized 12,758 Army and Air Guardsmen to help restore and maintain order. It was the largest mobilization for a state mission in Guard history. Before the rioting ended, 34 people were dead (none of them Guardsmen), about 1,000 were injured (some of them Guardsmen) and 4,000 were arrested. For their heroic actions in saving other people's lives, at the risk of their own, two Guardsmen were awarded the California Medal of Valor.

12-1676, Mount Hope, R.I. – Wampanoag Chief Metacouet, better known as "King Philip," was killed by Indian scouts working for Capt. Benjamin Church who commanded a force of Rhode Island militia. Philip's death ended the two-year war he had launched to end white encroachment on native lands. This conflict, which involved colonists from Massachusetts, Connecticut and Rhode Island, saw at least 1,000 whites

killed and probably twice that number of Indians. With its end, the natives were forced off much of their land and made to settle on reservations, setting a pattern of European-Indian relations for centuries to come.


14-1989, Washington – Secretary of the Army John O. March resigned after eight years in the position, the longest serving Secretary of the Army to date. A former lieutenant colonel in the Virginia Army Guard, he oversaw the largest peacetime buildup of the U.S. Army and Army National Guard. Under his direction, the Guard truly became part of the Total Force, with units receiving brand new equipment and many extra training days. The positive effects of work and reforms Army-wide became apparent when America undertook Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990-91. For the Guard, it proved to be the

smoothest mobilization and integration with the Army in its history up to that time.

16-1777, Bennington, Vt. – An American militia army composed of units from Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York and Vermont, commanded by General John Stark of New Hampshire, annihilated a 900-man German auxiliary detachment sent by British General John Burgoyne to find horses to aid his army's march toward Albany, N.Y. This battle effectively reduced Burgoyne's force by nearly 20 percent, helping to lead to its eventual surrender in October at Saratoga, N.Y.

26-1969, Lia Khe, South Vietnam – Five members of New Hampshire's Battery A, 3rd Battalion, 197th Artillery were killed when their truck struck a landmine. The men were less than two weeks from returning home, having been in country almost eleven months. The battalion was one of eight Army Guard and four Air Guard units to actually serve as units in Vietnam. Thousands of other Guardsmen, some from mobilized units not deployed and others as individual volunteers, also served in the war.

29-1944, Paris – Soldiers in the Pennsylvania Army Guard's 28th Infantry Division marched in the Liberation Day parade down the Champs Elysees before reentering combat on the outskirts of the city. The 28th landed on Omaha Beach soon after D-Day and fought through the Normandy campaign to its end in late July. After its famous march in Paris, the division was severely weakened by its heavy fighting in the Huertgen Forest on the German frontier. Moved to a 'quiet' sector of the Ardennes Forest to rebuild its strength, some of its units were the first to be hit by the massive German offensive known as the Battle of the Bulge. While the 28th's regiments fought hard, they were soon overwhelmed or forced to give ground. But they bought precious time for other American forces to stop the assault and then successfully counter-attack.

29-2005, Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi – Hurricane Katrina, a Category 3 storm, ravaged the Gulf Coast portions of these states, destroying thousands of homes and businesses and killing at least 1,836 people, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Guard members not on active duty and serving overseas were quickly called to state active duty in those states to aid in evacuations, rescues and other emergency operations requiring immediate assistance. However, due to several factors, Guard personnel and equipment from all over the country was soon moving to the Gulf Coast to lend assistance. In its largest interstate deployment of troops for a natural disaster, the Army and Air National Guard fielded more than 80,000 personnel from all 54 states and territories. Some stayed for a few days, while others remained for several weeks. 



National Archives and Records Administration photo
Members of the National Guard's 28th Infantry Division marching in the Liberation Day parade in Paris on Aug. 29, 1944.

THE ON GUARD

Water, water



Photo by Tim Leedy, courtesy of the Reading Eagle

A Pennsylvania Army Guard helicopter crew lifts a tractor operator to safety in the Hamburg area of Berks County, Pa., as torrential rains flooded much of the state.

Guard responds to Northeast flooding

By Spc. Jo Michael

Pennsylvania National Guard

FORT INDIANTOWN GAP, Pa. (AFPS) – More than 1,000 members of the Pennsylvania National Guard conducted water rescues, evacuations and other emergency operations as widespread flooding in late June and early July caused a disaster emergency to be declared in 46 of the state's 67 counties.

"Our National Guard performed superbly in what was many times a difficult and dangerous environment," said Pennsylvania Gov. Edward Rendell.

The Pennsylvania Guard members were among National Guard Soldiers and Airmen in several states who supported flood relief missions after torrential rains left large areas throughout the northeastern United States underwater and without power.

In New York, more than 300 Guard members responded.

Pennsylvania Guard troops assisted in almost 1,000 water rescues after Rendell declared a state of emergency June 27. Guard members also helped with evacuations, transported meals, delivered water and joined Pennsylvania State Police at access control points, state officials reported.

More than eight inches of rain fell in some areas. In northeastern and southeastern Pennsylvania, along the Susquehanna and

Delaware watersheds, water levels reached record levels.

Much of the Guard's effort focused on Wilkes-Barre, where tens of thousands of people were evacuated.

In addition to flying missions throughout the commonwealth, Guard members in the state's aviation battalions flew to the small town of Conklin, N.Y., just over the Pennsylvania border, where residents were trapped by floodwaters as the Susquehanna River rose to nearly 30 feet.

Crews from the 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation Regiment and the 628th Division Aviation Support Battalion flew north in CH-47 Chinook and UH-1 Huey helicopters to assist.

Broome County officials evacuated more than 4,000 residents to the Susquehanna Valley High School in Conklin, but as the river continued to rise, the school was surrounded by water, trapping evacuees. The Pennsylvania Guard dispatched five CH-47 helicopters to transport evacuees from the high school to Conklin Fire Station No. 2. From there, they were taken by bus to emergency shelters.

Maj. John Kubitz and Chief Warrant Officer Patrick Quinton led one of the crews. They maneuvered their helicopter around power lines and trees to land on the high school foot-

ball field. Crew members Sgt. Carl Hinton, Sgt. Dan Schmick, Sgt. Gregory Karli and Sgt. Justin Reynolds then led the evacuees onto the helicopter and secured them for the flight.

Staff Sgt. Greg Heinbaugh and Sgt. William Wrede were crew members on another Chinook that rescued three people who were trapped on a roof. With nowhere to land, the crew hovered over the house while Wrede was lowered in a jungle penetrator to rescue the residents. Heinbaugh operated the hoist and directed the pilots.

Meanwhile, more than 350 New York National Guard members were called to active duty to respond to flood-related missions in the Empire State.

Gov. George E. Pataki ordered the New York National Guard into action June 27 in advance of the threat of severe flooding, according to Lt. Col. Paul Fanning, a New York Guard spokesman.

Guard engineer and aviation forces surged forward the following day in support of local authorities in several communities, including the town of Walton and the city of Binghamton, rescuing trapped residents. The Guard troops helped rescue an estimated 80 residents from homes, trees and rooftops, officials reported.

The Guard also provided aircraft and 2-and-a-half-ton trucks for rescues and to carry


emergency supplies. The Guard transported law enforcement, emergency and hospital workers. Engineering support was provided to Delaware and Broome counties.

In New Jersey, National Guard Soldiers transported police from Ewing and Trenton in high-wheeled vehicles as they conducted evacuations along the Delaware River, reported Staff Sgt. Barbara Harbison, a New Jersey Guard spokeswoman.

Fanning called the National Guard response to flooding in the region a testament to the force's readiness and flexibility. "Once again, the Guard was ready and there when needed," he said.

He noted the Guard's role in a wide range of missions, often simultaneously. As the New York Guard provided emergency support in flood-stricken regions, for example, other Guard members continued their homeland defense missions at Grand Central and Penn Stations in New York City and at the state's nuclear power sites.

Every state that mobilized its National Guard in response to flooding also continued to provide troops for operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in support of the Global War on Terrorism, officials noted.

"When you have a mission in your backyard, people really want to serve," said Col. Xavier Stewart, emergency operations coordinator for the Pennsylvania National Guard. 

THE ON GUARD

everywhere!

Pennsylvania assists New York

By Staff Sgt. Peter Towse

New York National Guard

WALTON, NY – Soldiers of the New York Army National Guard's 204th Engineer Battalion worked alongside residents here to help bring relief from catastrophe wrought by flooding in late June.

In New York's Broome County, officials evacuated more than 4,000 residents to the Susquehanna Valley High School in Conklin, but as the river continued to rise the school became surrounded by water, trapping the evacuees.

The Pennsylvania Guard responded with five CH-47 "Chinook" helicopters and coordinated with 204th Engineer Battalion Soldiers on the ground to transport more than 1,000 evacuees from the high school to a nearby fire station for ground transportation to emergency shelters.

The Citizen-Soldier cited for coordinating the aircraft response, Staff Sgt. David Youngs from the 204th's Headquarters and Service Company, received an award for his initiative

and quick thinking.

"It just made sense to me," Youngs said. "I saw the aircraft nearby and arranged to get their radio frequencies with a call back to the battalion (in Binghamton). A quick radio call and we were in business."

Guard members from central New York towns such as Horseheads, Binghamton and Walton converged on the town to offer assistance.

The Soldiers' annual training – conducted just two weeks before the flooding – proved essential to the unit's response. "Our guys were at their peak for this mission," said Maj. Carlton Cleveland, the 204th's commander. "Two weeks of training in early June gave our equipment operators and planners plenty of preparation. When the call came in, we hit the ground running."

With floodwaters reaching their highest levels in more than 100 years, Main Street in Walton turned into a canal of thick mud. Water rose to five feet in some places. The rushing waters washed out roads and parking lots, moving cars and even garages downstream.

"Everything in my store was floating," said Anna Nochtka who owns a small business in Walton. "There isn't much I will be able to save. I don't know what I would have done without the help of [the Guard engineers]."

The Guard responded to Southern Tier flooding in New York 10 years ago, but local residents say the scope of damage back then doesn't compare to this year's flooding

"We had the Guard out back in '96," said Marty Way, a local resident whose home received extensive water damage. "But it was nothing like this."

As the waters receded, the Guard used its vehicles and Blackhawk helicopters to help local officials and road construction crews assess the damage and determine a way to restore the washed out sections of roads that stranded some residents from the rest of the town.

Bulldozers, dump trucks, excavators, rollers, graders and loaders all played a major role in the cleanup. Within hours, residents and Soldiers devised a plan to remove all the waste material threatening critical roads, bridges, key businesses and homes. Assisting emergency responders, the Guard engineers also surveyed damaged roads to ensure access by police, fire and other emergency vehicles.

In a matter of hours, residents in communities across the Southern Tier began to rebound. In less than 72 hours after the rains, local residents could see the impact of the Guard's response. Debris was piled on the sidewalks as engineers moved from house to house, business to business and removed the refuse with heavy equipment, making the cleanup seem easy. ♪



Photo by Lester Millman, New York National Guard

New York Gov. George Pataki surveys the flood damage to New York's Southern Tier with Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, adjutant general for the New York National Guard. Approximately 350 New York Guard Soldiers responded for evacuations and rescues during the flooding in late June.

Meanwhile, in the South...

By Donna Miles

Armed Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – National Guard troops were called to duty in Louisiana and Texas in late June in response to an outbreak of violence in New Orleans and flooding in Houston.

The call-ups came as the number of National Guard members along the nation's southwest border increased for Operation Jump Start. That mission is expected to involve up to 6,000 National Guard members in support of the U.S. Border Patrol.

About 100 Louisiana National Guard troops were initially called to duty with another 200 to follow to support the New Orleans Police Department in the wake of a violent weekend that left six people dead.

Louisiana Gov. Kathleen Blanco announced plans to mobilize the troops at New Orleans Mayor Ray Nagin's request. The National Guard last provided law-enforcement support in the city following Hurricane Katrina last fall.

The troops were to be posted in less-populated parts of the city – mostly the 9th Ward and Lakeview – to prevent looting, according to state National Guard spokesman Lt. Col. Pete Schneider. Both areas were devastated during Hurricane Katrina, and many residents haven't been able to return to homes there.

Stationing the Guard troops in these areas would free up city police officers for duty in the more populated areas, Schneider said.

Meanwhile, Texas Gov. Rick Perry mobi-

lized about 120 Texas National Guard troops after torrential rainfalls flooded low-lying areas in the southeastern part of the state.

The Guard initially provided 50 high-water vehicles with crews, two HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopters with flight crews and an element of the 6th Civil Support Team, according to Col. William Meehan, state National Guard spokesman.

The Guard also supported the mission with a satellite communications system that enables responders to coordinate from wherever they are operating, Meehan said. Two CH-47 Chinook transport helicopters with flight crews were also on alert.

"We are closely monitoring the situation and are prepared to provide full support to local officials," Perry said. "We will do whatever it takes to help keep Texans in the affected region safe."

Louisiana still had a contingent of 25 to 30 Guard members with specialized skills who were helping local parishes re-establish their government processes following Hurricane Katrina, Schneider said.

Recognizing that the Louisiana Guard's services could be required again this hurricane season, the state is keeping its members as close to home as possible. Fewer than 200 Guardsmen from the state are deployed in support of the war on terror, and none are currently supporting Operation Jump Start, Schneider said. ♪



Photo by Sgt. Ed Balaban, New York National Guard

An excavator operator with the 204th Engineer Battalion removes debris blocking a bridge in the village of Walton following the late-June flooding of New York's Southern Tier.

THE ON GUARD

Contacting a Family Readiness 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.

Send changes/corrections to:

Edelina Villavicencio
Marketing/Communications Specialist
National Guard Bureau-Family Programs
1411 Jefferson Davis Hwy.
Arlington, VA 22202
(703) 607-5526 DSN 327-5526

Alabama

State Family Program Director
 SGM Hubert Chance
 1720 Cong W.L. Dickerson Dr.
 Montgomery, AL, 36109-0711
 Office/DSN: (334)-271-7283 / 363-7283 or
 (800) 231-2846

117 ARW
 Pamela Lacey
 5401 East Lake Blvd.
 Birmingham, AL 35217
 Office/DSN: (205) 714-2699 / 778-2699

187 FW
 Sharon Hubbert
 5187 Selma Hwy.
 Montgomery, AL 36108-4824
 Office/DSN: (334) 394-7119 / 358-9119 or
 (800) 368-4481, option 2

Alaska

State Family Program Director
 SMSgt Jan Myers
 49000 Army Guard Rd.
 Anchorage, AK 99503-2552
 (907) 428-6663 / (317) 384-4663
 Mailing address: PO Box 5800
 Ft. Richardson, AK 99503-2552
 (888) 917-3608 (works only within AK)

168 ARW
 Nola Barnes
 2680 Flightline Ave., Ste. 117
 Eielson AFB, AK 99702-1740
 Office/DSN: (907) 377-8715 /
 (317) 377-8715

176 WG
 Gretchen Nealy
 5002 Raspberry Road
 Anchorage, AK 99502
 Office/DSN: (907) 249-1130 / 626-1130

Arizona

State Family Program Director
 CPT Jon Michael Cookson
 5636 E. McDowell Rd.
 Phoenix, AZ 85008-3495
 Office/DSN: (602) 267-2593 / 853-2593 or
 (800) 233-7758

161 ARW
 Glen Klassen
 3200 E Old Tower Rd.
 Phoenix, AZ, 85034-7263
 Office/DSN: (602) 302-9094 / 853-9094 or
 (800) 435-542, ext. 2-9094

162 FW
 Ms. Jolene Helt
 1650 E Perimeter Way
 Tucson, AZ 85706
 Office/DSN: (520) 295-6566 / 844-6566

Arkansas

State Family Program Director
 Mary Myers
 Camp Robinson
 Building 6402 Missouri Ave.
 North Little Rock, AR 72199
 Office/DSN: (501) 212-4102 / 962-4102 or
 (800) 446-4645

188 FW
 Eva R. Patton, CIV/FAM
 Family Readiness Support Coordinator
 188 FW Air National Guard
 Ft. Chaffee
 4850 Leigh Ave.

Fort Smith, AR 72903-6096
 Office/DSN: (479) 573-5167 / 778-5167

189 AW
 Mrs. Stephanie Wynn
 112 CMSGT Williams Drive
 Little Rock AFB, AR 72099-4802
 Office/DSN: (501) 987-5952 / 731-5952

California

State Family Program Director
 Steven Read
 CAJS-FP Box 54, 9800 Goethe
 Sacramento, CA 95827
 Office/DSN: (916) 854-3252 / 466-3252 or
 (800) 449-9662

129 RQW
 Carolann Wenderlin
 HQ 129th Rescue Wing/Family Readiness
 Bldg. 680, Macon Rd.
 California Air National Guard
 Moffett Federal Airfield, CA 94035

144 FW
 Barbara Draughon
 5323 E. McKinley Ave.
 Fresno, CA 93727-2199
 Office/DSN: (559) 454-5383 / 839-5383 or
 (800) 516-8277

146 AW
 Jo Ann Bellen
 100 Mulcahey Dr.
 Port Hueneeme, CA 93041-4002
 Office/DSN: (805) 986-7468 / 893-7468

163 ARW
 Debbie Hambrick
 1620 Graeber St.
 March ARB, CA 92518-1624
 Office/DSN: (951) 655-2165 /
 447-2165

Colorado

State Family Program Director
 Charlene Shields
 6848 S. Revere Parkway
 Centennial, CO 80112
 Office/DSN: (720) 250-1190 / 250-1190

140 WG
 Mrs. Grace Finley
 Buckley Air Force Base
 140 S. Aspen St., Stop 37
 Aurora, CO 80011-9544
 Office/DSN: (720) 847-9116 / 847-9116

Connecticut

State Family Program Director
 Kimberly Hoffman
 Connecticut National Guard
 Office of Family Programs
 360 Broad Street
 Hartford, CT 06105-3795
 Office/DSN: (860) 493-2745/636-0745 or
 (800) 858-2677

103 FW
 Donna Rivera
 100 Nicholson Rd.
 E. Granby, CT
 Office/DSN: (860) 292-2730 / 220-2730

Delaware

State Family Program Director
 LTC Willie Barnes
 1st Regiment Rd.
 Wilmington, DE 19808-2191
 Office/DSN: (302) 326-7268 / 440-7268 or
 (877) 482-7333

166 AW
 Yolanda DiVirgilio
 2600 Spruance Dr.
 New Castle, DE 19720
 Office/DSN: (302) 323-3327 / 445-7327

District of Columbia

State Family Program Director
 SGM Patricia Williamson
 2001 East Capitol St.
 Washington, DC 20003
 Office/DSN: (202) 685-9826 / 325-9826

113 FW
 Connie Moore
 Family Readiness and Support Office

Rm. 106
 3252 E. Perimeter Rd.
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Florida

Acting State Family Program Director
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 Office/DSN: (904) 823-0360 / 860-7360 or
 (800) 226-0360

125 FW
 Robin Severson
 FL Air National Guard 125 FW/FR 14300
 FANG Dr.
 Jacksonville, FL 32218
 Office/DSN: (904) 741-7027 / 641-7027

Georgia

State Family Program Director
 CPT George Arp
 935 E. Confederate Ave. SE, Bldg. 21
 Atlanta, GA 30316-0965
 Office/DSN: (678) 569-6454 / 338-6454 or
 (800) 625-5843

116 ACW
 Eileen Byrd
 555 Borghese Dr.
 Bldg. 2078
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 Office/DSN: (478) 201-1286 / 241-1285

165 AW
 Frank Baker
 1401 Robert B. Miller Jr. Dr.
 Garden City, GA 31408-9001
 Office/DSN: (912) 966-8363 / 860-8363 or
 (866) 812-8363

Guam

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 430 Army Dr., Bldg. 300, Rm. 128
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 Office/DSN: (671) 647-2717 / 271-2722

Hawaii

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 Hickam AFB, HI 96853-7049
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 (818) 341-7608

154 WG
 Lorna Souza
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 Hickam AFB, HI 96853-5517
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Idaho

State Family Program Director
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 4150 Cessna
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 (800) 543-0007

124 WG
 John Spurny
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Illinois

State Family Program Director
 MAJ Joe Schweickert
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126 ARW
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182 AW
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 2416 S. Falcon Blvd.
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183 FW
 Perry Jackson

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Indiana

State Family Program Director
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181 FW
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122 FW
 Connie Douthat
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 (800) 841-3104

Iowa

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132 FW
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 (800) 257-1693, ext. 8786

185 ARW
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Kansas

State Family Program Director
 AGKS-HRO-SFPD, 2800 SW
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190 ARW
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123 AW
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THE ON GUARD

Family continues 167-year tradition of Guard service

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Ethan Pulket balanced Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn’s helmet on his small head, grinning, eyes barely visible under the rim.

The 4-year-old boy’s father and mother were paying a June 2 office call to Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, because the father, Brian Pulket, was about to be pinned as a sergeant major.

Young Ethan Pulket has better odds than most boys his age of one day donning a similar helmet as a National Guard Soldier. His family has a tradition of 167 years – and counting – of combined service to the Army National Guard.

“All of us who have done anything with our careers have surrounded ourselves with the very best people,” Vaughn said during Pulket’s promotion ceremony at the Army National Guard’s Readiness Center. “Brian represents the very best.”

Sgt. Maj. Pulket has served 19 years in the Maryland Army National Guard and at the National Guard Bureau, where he works in the domestic operations directorate. He is the third generation of his family to serve in the Army Guard. He is the first to attain the top enlisted rank of sergeant major.

“We need jobs,” he said, laughing. “My grandfather started the ball rolling.”

Pulket’s grandfather is retired Brig. Gen. Art Pulket, with 42 years’ service to the



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau

Lt. Gen. Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army National Guard, gives Ethan Pulket, 4, a dog tag during a June 2 office call at the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., before the promotion of Ethan’s father, Sgt. Maj. Brian Pulket. The Pulket family has a combined 167 years’ service to the Army National Guard through three generations. 1st Lt. Christi Harmon, Sgt. Maj. Pulket’s wife and Ethan’s mom, is also pictured.

Maryland Army Guard and 21 years’ service as an Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve volunteer.

Sgt. Maj. Pulket’s wife, 1st Lt. Christi Harmon, and his father, two uncles, a cousin and other family members also have served or are still serving.

“It was instilled in my dad and his brothers from my grandfather, and growing up it was the natural thing to do,” Pulket said. “They’re all my personal heroes. They are what made me who I am today. They demonstrated the things that I admired, and I just modeled myself after them.”

Pulket said he also has learned from the Soldiers and other service members he has served with. “I’ve been fortunate to have a few mentors along the way,” he said. Those include Sgt. 1st Class Tim Norman, who also serves at the Guard Bureau, and retired Command Sgt. Maj. Larry Pence, who was the Army Guard’s fifth command sergeant major.

But Pulket said his faith and his family are the most important influences. “This couldn’t happen without my faith,” he said during his promotion ceremony. “Most of all, my family. They’re my world. They’re my rock. They’re my joy. They’re my life.”


And most of them were at the promotion ceremony – a line of uniformed Soldiers and men in suits with the bearing that remains after a lifetime of service. 



Photo by Sgt. Jim Greenhill, National Guard Bureau

Members of the Pulket family who have served in the Army National Guard flank newly pinned Sgt. Maj. Brian Pulket (second from left) after his promotion ceremony at the Army National Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., on June 2. The family has 167 years’ of service to the Army National Guard through three generations – including Pulket’s wife, 1st Lt. Christi Harmon (third from left). Maybe the couple’s son, Ethan Pulket, 4, will follow suit?

Pulkets’ Patriotism

Members of the Pulket family have served for a total of 167 years in the Army National Guard at all levels of the enlisted and officer ranks. Family members have also served in other branches of the military. The Pulkets have given years of service as Department of the Army civilians or Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve volunteers.

- ◆ Sgt. Maj. Brian Pulket has served 19 years in the Maryland Army National Guard at the National Guard Bureau.
- ◆ Pulket’s wife is 1st Lt. Christi Harmon, with 11 years’ service in the South Dakota and Virginia Army Guard.
- ◆ Pulket’s father is retired Col. Bill Pulket, with 31 years’ service to the Maryland Army Guard and National Guard Bureau. Col. Pulket continues serving as a Department of the Army civilian.
- ◆ SGM Pulket’s grandfather is retired Brig. Gen. Art Pulket, with 42 years’ service to the Maryland Army Guard. The general also has 21 years’ service as an ESGR volunteer.
- ◆ Two uncles are retired from the Maryland Army Guard: Maj. Dennis Pulket with 20 years and Maj. Gene Pulket with 25 years. Maj. Gene Pulket also has five years’ service as an ESGR volunteer.
- ◆ Other family members with Army Guard service include Spc. Dan Pulket (five years, Pennsylvania); retired Col. Ken Pulket (12 years, Maryland, with an additional 16 years in the Army Reserve); and Pfc. Stephen Pulket (two years, Georgia). 