

THE ON GUARD

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May 2005

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Recruiting



'Bring your Buddy to Drill' helps in recruiting effort. Page 4.

Rewarded



Guardsmen promoted for actions. Page 10.

Memorial Day: A salute to fallen Guardsmen

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – It was his “button picture,” the head-and-shoulders snapshot of Jeremy Fischer that was used for the metallic buttons that his young widow Sarah said their families and friends pinned on when the Nebraska Army National Guard Soldier went off to war.

That “button picture” is now among the Faces of the Fallen because Sgt. Fischer was killed by a roadside bomb in Iraq on July 11, 2004. His 6 X 8-inch portrait is among the more than 1,300 faces of U.S. service members on display at the main entrance to Arlington National Cemetery

Faces of the Fallen is a sobering exhibit of portraits of the men and women who died in Afghanistan and Iraq during the global war on terrorism between Oct. 10, 2001, and Nov. 11, 2004. It was opened to the public on March 23 at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial. It will remain there until Nov. 11, Veterans Day, organizers reported.

A reported 1,500 people – artists and benefactors, family members and friends of the deceased Soldiers, Marines, Sailors, Airmen and Coast



Photo by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

Sarah Fischer focuses on the portrait of her deceased husband, Nebraska Army National Guard Sgt. Jeremy Fisher, at the Faces of the Fallen exhibit which opened on March 23 at the gateway to Arlington National Cemetery.

Guard members visited the exhibit during a private showing the afternoon and evening before.

The list of 1,317 names published in the exhibit's booklet includes 148 National Guard Soldiers and Airmen

who died in Afghanistan and Iraq during the 37 months that the exhibit encompasses.

It is unusual as military memorials go

See FALLEN On Page 3

Deployed Guard troops opt to extend service in Iraq

By Spc. Erin Robicheaux

Army News Service

CAMP LIBERTY, Iraq – Raising their right hands and swearing to “support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic,” 256 Soldiers in Iraq extended their service as LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, administered the oath March 29.

“People back home look at you as super-heroes,” Blum told the Soldiers of the 256th Brigade Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Division. “You have tremendous support.”

To date, 334 soldiers of the 256th Brigade Combat Team have opted to re-enlist, and with a year-end goal of just under 1,000, Sgt. 1st Class Philip Flowers has faith the numbers will remain steady. Flowers is the team's retention noncommissioned officer in charge, and says that if events continue along their current pace,

there will be no problems reaching the goal.

The 256th is currently tracking about 26 extensions per week.

Though there is a significant bonus involved, Flowers feels the soldiers care about more than the money.

“The bottom line is, if you want to get out, you're going to get out, and no amount of money can make you stay in,” he said, “I think that it says a lot for the leadership of the 256th, when you consider how many soldiers are sticking around.”

He also believes that National Guard Soldiers are taking more pride in their jobs, now that they are able to perform them to full capacity.

“During our regular status, soldiers come to drill, train, and never really get to put to use the skills that they have learned. Since the deployment, though, they have been able to do their jobs, and they have done them well,” he said.

Staff Sgt. Melchiorre L. Chiarenza, personnel

strength noncommissioned officer for 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, attached to the 256th Brigade Combat Team, has extended his service after racking up 15 years.

“After that long, six more doesn't seem like much time out of my life,” he said.

A school teacher from Staten Island, N.Y., Chiarenza not only signed up for more time with the National Guard, he is also considering making it a full-time career.

“I'll be doing the same job that I'm doing here in Iraq, either with the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry Regiment, or with the Louisiana National Guard.”

Chiarenza has made so many new friends as a result of the deployment, he might possibly decide to make a permanent move to Louisiana.

“I've been working with a great group of peo-

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About The On Guard

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Submissions

E-mail your stories to us by the 1st of each month. We prefer that photos be high-quality digital (200 dpi or more) and e-mailed to:

Editor.OnGuard@ngb.ang.af.mil

Address

NGB-PAI-CI
Suite 11200
1411 Jefferson Davis Highway
Arlington, VA 22202-3259

Phone/Fax

(703) 607-2649
DSN 327-2649
FAX: (703) 607-3686

Web Site

www.ngb.army.mil/onguard

Staff

**CHIEF,
National Guard Bureau**
LTG H Steven Blum

**DIRECTOR,
NGB, Public Affairs and
Strategic Communications**
Mr. Daniel Donohue

**CHIEF,
NGB-Public Affairs
Command Information**
Maj. John Toniolli

EDITOR
Tech. Sgt. Gary Hicks

SENIOR CORRESPONDENT
Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

Family Programs partners with AMVETS for families

By Michelle Bohlen

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The National Guard Family Program has formalized a partnership with the American Veterans as part of the National Guard Bureau's continuing efforts to better support service members' families. The partnership allows the two groups to share informational materials, leverage each other's resources, and work together to build a stronger network of volunteers.

LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, and William A. Boettcher, AMVETS national commander, signed a memorandum of understanding March 23 at the National Guard Bureau's Joint Headquarters to make the partnership official.

The two organizations will use the AMVETS Family Support Network to assist National Guard members and their families.

The AMVETS Family Support Network is an essential tool for providing family support services, especially for Soldiers and Airmen isolated from normal military and civilian support networks because of the National Guard's unique structure, officials said.

Blum thanked Boettcher and AMVETS for their support of National Guard families and stressed how important this partnership is for helping the families of Guard members as well as families of all service members

regardless of their component.

"The partnership has the potential of increasing the awareness of AMVETS " throughout the country, while allowing the "widest spectrum of support" for returning Guard members and their families," said Lt. Col. Anthony Baker, chief of Family Programs for the National Guard Bureau.

Baker added that the partnership is not meant to replace military family support programs or to circumvent the chain of command. It is intended to augment them to ensure that families get the support they need.

National Guard families are scattered across 4,000 communities nationwide, and AMVETS' 1,300 posts and 41 state departments are in a unique position to provide valuable assistance, officials agreed.

Many posts and departments have already helped Guard units by raising money for the Family Readiness Fund, sending care packages to deployed troops, and supporting family members at home while their loved ones are away.

"There's a lot we can do," said Boettcher. "And we're looking to do more - at all levels of the organization - to help those who are sacrificing so much."

The National Guard Family Program is a joint force initiative that provides a foundation of support to families of Army and Air



LTG H Steven Blum and William A. Boettcher, AMVETS commander, signed a MOU in March. Also pictured is Nancy Norm of AMVETS Post 68.

National Guard members. A strong joint service family support network, organized in each state and territory by the state Family Program directors and wing Family Program coordinators at each Air National Guard wing, allows all units and states to readily communicate with one another and ensure, with appropriate support from community agencies, that no family falls between the cracks.

The 54 state Family Program directors and 88 wing Family Program coordinators are the primary providers of family readiness support to service members and families, regardless of component.

You can learn more about the NGFP or locate your state Family Program office by visiting the Web site www.guardfamily.org.

FROM PAGE 1**Soldiers**

ple, and it's going to be hard to let them go," he said.

Blum reflected on the significance of National Guard soldiers re-enlisting in a combat zone, and said he was impressed at how many signed up for more time with the military, especially when they are still just under halfway through their tour in Iraq.

He also noted that the same soldiers who postponed civilian careers and college educations to fight the war on terrorism, were still patriotic enough to raise their right hands and promise to protect their country.

"They care about what they are doing here and know that what they are doing is making a difference, and will make America safer," he said, "they are truly an American treasure."

Sgt. Corey Allbritton, from New Orleans, La. and assigned to Headquarters Company, 256th Brigade Combat Team, has been a member of the Louisiana National Guard for almost nine years. Just prior to deployment, he was performing force protection duties in his home state, but says he will eventually go back to school.

"I'm interested in biology and will probably major in a science-related field," he said.

Allbritton will pursue a civilian education, but has every intention of staying in the Guard for 20 years.

"Quitting after almost nine years would be like quitting high school when you're 16 years old," he said.

In addition, he has high aspirations for his military career.

"My goal is to be a brigade sergeant major,"



Photo by Spc. Chris Foster

LTG H Steven Blum, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, swears in 256 soldiers of the 256th Brigade Combat Team. The National Guard soldiers significantly extended their service in a combat zone, just under halfway through their cycle in Iraq.

he said.

"It's funny, though," he said, "when I was a private first class, it was simple -- I just wanted to be a sergeant."

Should Allbritton and his fellow "citizen soldiers" get the call again to serve, Blum says it won't be anytime soon. He notes that the National Guard will not be used at this rate all the time, and the troops' patriotism and willingness to serve will not be abused.

"We need to make sure that when these

Soldiers return home, we don't call them for another five or six years," he said, "We need to give the families, the employers, and the soldiers some predictability and certainty."

At the conclusion of the ceremony, Blum walked through the ranks and shook all 256 hands which had just been raised in promise to the United States.

He told the Soldiers, "Ladies and gentlemen, you have just re-enlisted in the Tiger Brigade, and I salute you."

Faces of the Fallen honor troops

FROM PAGE 1

Fallen

because nearly every name has a face, unlike the Vietnam Memorial in Washington; because every face has a name, unlike the Korean War Memorial; because it is displayed in a national forum while the war is still going on.

Gen. Richard Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, on March 22 addressed what was reported to be the largest national gathering so far of families and friends of those who have lost their lives in Afghanistan and Iraq. They came from 44 states and from Australia and India, organizers said. "We are enormously proud to have been chosen to host this extraordinary exhibit ... to pay tribute to the men and women who, while serving their country, lost their lives in the Afghanistan and Iraq wars," stated retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught, president of the women's military memorial foundation.

"We focus on the women who have served their country in uniform at this memorial," Vaught explained, "but because we're at the gateway to Arlington National Cemetery, we honor all."

Maryland Army Guard Maj. Scott Heuer, who lives in Washington, D.C., was one of the 189 artists who created the images of the fallen from photographs. The artwork includes drawings, paintings, carvings, collages, photo-based prints, clay, glass and textiles. Heuer painted the portraits of Army Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry Wilson from Thomson, Ga., and Staff Sgt. Eddie Menyweather from Los Angeles. Both died in Iraq on Nov. 23, 2003.

Blue silhouettes, it was explained, bear the names of service members for whom photos could not be located or whose portraits were not finished.

Heuer said he did not know the Soldiers he painted, but he learned a lot about them by looking into their eyes.

"He was grinning at death, but there was a sadness in his eyes. I think it was about what his death would do to his loved ones," said Heuer, who explained that he studied a small photo as he painted Sgt. Maj. Wilson's likeness in acrylics.

"That's the thing about portraiture," Heuer added. "If you do a good job, you really do have to figure out the person as much as possible."

The artists, including Washington portrait painter and art professor Annette Polan, one of the exhibit's co-chairs, examined the faces for those clues. The National Guard faces include Army Guard Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Romero, from Colorado, and Sgt. Gene Vance

"I think it's a beautiful thing, that they were able to get so many of these portraits. I was awestruck when I first saw it. It hasn't really hit me yet. That will come in a couple of days."

– Sarah Fischer

Jr., from West Virginia, the first two Guard casualties of the war. They were killed in Afghanistan, in April and May of 2002. Their portraits are side-by-side in the display that replicates a military formation.

There is Idaho Air Guard Maj. Gregory Stone, the first Guard casualty during Operation Iraqi Freedom. He was killed by a U.S. Soldier's grenade in Kuwait on March 25, 2003.

There is Wisconsin Army Guard Spc. Michelle Witmer, the first National Guard woman to ever be killed in action. She died in Baghdad on April 9, 2004.

There is Illinois Air Guard Staff Sgt. Jacob Frazier, who was killed in Afghanistan on March 29, 2003.

There is Sgt. 1st Class Linda Tarango-Griess, another Nebraska Army Guard Soldier who was killed on July 11, 2004, in Samarra, Iraq, by the same improvised explosive device that took the life of 26 year-old Jeremy Fischer.

"We had been married for eight months. We had gone together for eight years," said Sarah Fischer who came to Washington with her parents, with her late husband's mother Kathy Fischer, and with Maj. Gen. Roger Lemke, the

Nebraska Guard's adjutant general.

"After 9-11, we said we would get married if he got mobilized," Sarah said. "We were married Nov. 21, 2003, a week after he got the letter that he would be called up. He deployed on Dec. 7."

Fischer, a member of the 267th Ordnance Company from Lincoln, Neb., was killed the following July by the roadside bomb while hauling supplies from Baghdad to Forward Operating Base Speicher in Tikrit, Sarah explained. He was posthumously promoted to staff sergeant.

"I think it's a beautiful thing, that they were able to get so many of these portraits," said the composed young woman of the memorial. "I was awestruck when I first saw it. It hasn't really hit me yet. That will come in a couple of days."

"It kicks you in the butt when you come in here," said Roland Anderson, Sarah Fischer's father. "It brought tears to my eyes."

Those were the feelings that the artists and organizers hoped the exhibit would evoke.

"This is what we did to honor the men and women who went and did something for us," said William Newman, one of the artists.



Photo by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

Maryland Army National Guard Maj. Scott Heuer painted two of the Faces of the Fallen for the exhibit that will remain at the Women in Military Service for America Memorial in Arlington, Va., until Nov. 11, Veterans Day. One of Heuer's portraits, of Army Command Sgt. Maj. Jerry Wilson, is to his immediate right.

Recruiting effort: 'Bring your buddy' to drill

By Maj. Winfield S. Danielson III

Massachusetts National Guard

MILFORD, Mass. – Word of mouth has long been the Holy Grail of marketing.

Marketers believe that savvy audiences take advertising and sales pitches with a grain of salt, expecting an organization to say good things about itself. People are much more likely to believe a friend or colleague's recommendation, the theory goes.

"Bring your buddy to drill" has been a staple tool in the commander's recruiting toolbox for years. The theory is the same; current Soldiers and airmen are going to be the best recruiters. They know why they joined, what interests their friends, and their friends are more likely to take their recommendation at face value.

Bring your buddy to drill takes the word of mouth process one step further by inviting the member's "buddy" to come and observe training for a day. A Guard member can not only tell a friend about the unit, but also show what the unit does.

A Company, 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry took the process one step further Saturday, April 2.

Normally, one or two buddies might be present at any given drill. But the Middleboro, Mass., based unit scheduled a bring your buddy to drill weekend as part of their Recruit Sustainment Program. Ten buddies attended the drill Saturday.

"When I took over two month's ago, it was clear that recruiting and retention are job one," said Capt. Brian E. Leary of Canton, commander of A Company. "Sgt. Correia arrived at the same time, and we got together to come up with a plan for recruiting and retention."

Sgt. 1st Class David J. Correia, of the Massachusetts Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Command, wanted to ensure new enlistees in the Recruit

Sustainment Program successfully made the transition to become drilling members, but also saw a chance to help recruit more members.

"We wanted to boost the morale of the RSP soldiers by giving them a taste of what is waiting for them when they finish their MOS training," Correia said. "But we also saw an opportunity to have them bring some friends and hopefully generate a few new leads, too."

The Recruit Sustainment Program takes new Massachusetts Army National Guard enlistees and focuses on preparing them for basic and initial military skill training. Once that is complete, the new soldier begins drilling with his or her assigned unit.

Leary and Correia wanted to maintain the motivation of the RSP soldiers through the process by showing them the training that awaited them at the unit. They also asked the new recruits to bring along a friend who wanted to learn more about the Guard.

In all, eight RSP and 10 buddies showed up for the April drill.

The RSP soldiers were integrated into the squads they would join after completing their training. The buddies were shown videos of deployed Guard units, briefed on the history of the Massachusetts National Guard and shown military equipment, including the M-16 rifle, the Squad Automatic Weapon and a night vision scope.

Is the buddy program effective? It was for James D. Pacheco of New Bedford. "I was thinking about joining the Guard, but talking to [Pereira] finalized it," Pacheco said. Pfc. Andrew L. Pereira, also of New Bedford, is the RSP soldier from A Company who brought Pacheco to drill.

The other buddies also agreed that actually seeing the unit train was better than hearing about it second hand. "You get a better idea than you do watching TV," said Zachariah N.



Photos by Winfield S. Danielson III

James D. Pacheco (in civilian clothes), of New Bedford, Mass., watches as A Company, 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry soldiers Pfc. Anthony Acosta, also of New Bedford, Pvt. Joshua D. Hardy of Whitman and Pfc. Andrew L. Pereira of New Bedford put on camouflage in preparation for the morning's mission.



Buddies watch as members of A Company, 1st Battalion, 182nd Infantry consolidate after assaulting the trench line.

Levesque of Raynham, Mass.

For their part, the RSP soldiers also found the event worthwhile. "We got to use real M-16s instead of rubber ducks," said Pfc. Anthony Acosta of New Bedford. "Rubber ducks" are the rubberized simulated weapons typically used by RSP soldiers. "It was much better than yelling 'pow, pow, pow.'"

"Everyone in the platoon and squad were helping you every step of the way," added Taunton resident Pvt. Christopher R. Charette.

Soldiers who refer buddies that enlist in the National Guard also earn incentives that can

include Guard logo items, promotions, or even a trip to Airborne School, depending on the number of referrals who join.

It is too early to tell how effective the A Company buddies program will be long term, but the unit leadership is optimistic and plans similar events for the future.

Leary believes there may be other benefits for the unit's relationship with its community, as well. "Even if you don't join, at least you were able to see and appreciate what these guys do," he told the buddies at the end of the day's training.

What's BRAC and why is it important

Army News Service

WASHINGTON – For many Soldiers and their families, their Army installation represents security and stability, and reinforces the sense of belonging to the unique culture of the "military family."

Soldiers return from their deployments to an area that is familiar -- to "Fort Home."

For the local community, the installation represents economic interdependence and more. There is pride in being associated with and supporting our Soldiers - especially now when our nation faces undefined threats. Some communities grew solely in response to the support mission for the flow of Soldiers and their families in and out of the installation.

So how can it be good to break these bonds and reestablish a new identify at a new base, when things are working so well at "Fort Home?"

A new round of BRAC may make that necessary as transformation changes the way the Army does business, but transformation is change and change can be for the better.

Traditionally, BRAC is designed primarily to gain efficiencies and save money. For BRAC 2005, the Secretary of Defense has added the goals of transformation and joint basing, training and operations to the BRAC agenda. Although this BRAC is shaping up to be more far-reaching, it is not new.

Why do we need BRAC?

There have been four rounds of BRAC since the program's inception in the 1980s, saving taxpayers more than \$18 billion. In the 1990s, the Army alone closed 112 of its bases in the United States and realigned another 27, saving an estimated \$3.1 billion.

The Department of Defense leadership has determined that there remains a 20 to 25 percent excess capacity throughout its installations. DoD received congressional authorization for a new BRAC round in 2005.

Under the BRAC 2005 milestones, the president will nominate BRAC commissioners this month. After the commissioners review

the facilities, their recommendations will go to Congress in November.

For DoD, BRAC can achieve several goals: eliminate excess infrastructure; reshape our military; pursue joint operations; optimize military readiness; and realize significant savings in support of transforming the Department of Defense.

At a minimum, BRAC 2005 must eliminate excess physical capacity, which diverts scarce resources from defense capability. However, BRAC 2005 can make an even more profound contribution to transformation by balancing the Army's structure with its defense strategy. By creating joint organizational and basing solutions, the Army can ease joint missions, reduce waste, save money and free resources to recruit quality people, modernize equipment, and develop the abilities needed to meet 21st Century threats.

BRAC provides the Army support to meet the challenges of today's world. As our fighting forces evolve to quicker, lighter and more mobile units, the support structure must also change.

Will it be like previous BRACs??

Where prior BRAC rounds were primarily focused on saving money, the BRAC 2005 process is primarily focused on transformation and creating a more nimble and adaptable Army. Military value is the primary focus for analyzing installations. The selection criteria also consider potential cost savings, community support and environmental considerations.

In the past, "excess capacity" meant entire bases or large parcels of land. Now, the excess capacity of today's infrastructure is scattered "pockets" throughout an installation's holdings, most often in the form of underused or vacant facilities. These vacant or underused facilities can be made productive through joint use or sharing by several organizations.

More Jointness?

BRAC 2005, unlike prior BRAC rounds,

BRAC 2005 Implementation

What is the timeline for the BRAC commission to start its deliberations?

- Commissioners nominated NLT 15 Mar 05
- Confirmed by Senate
- Commission begins its review when SECDEF submits recommendations NLT 16 May 05
- Commission presents their recommendations to President NLT 8 Sept 05

How long do you have to close installations in the BRAC 2005 round?

-- According to the legislation (BRAC Act of 1990, as amended), closure actions must begin within two years (e.g. personnel reassigned and missions realigned) and be completed within six years of the date the President passes the recommendations to Congress.

-- It is the Army's intention to complete closure actions as efficiently and effectively as possible.

How are you going to apply the realignment and closure strategies successfully used by the Army to BRAC 2005 implementation?

- We are studying the previous four BRAC implementations and lessons learned to ensure a smooth process for the communities and the Department of Defense.
- We do not yet have the details of how these decisions will be implemented.
- We will ensure that implementation of BRAC decisions will be executed in accordance with Congressional guidance and applicable laws.
- We plan to sustain the momentum that we achieved in FY03 when we transferred over 100,000 BRAC acres.

will also include potential realignment and closures of United States Army Reserve and Army National Guard facilities. The focus will be on consolidating and realigning such facilities to maximize savings, reduce footprints, and enhance the mobilization process. As with the active component, the reserve component will look for joint stationing opportunities both within the Army and with other service reserve components.

Implementing BRAC 2005

The Army's implementation of the BRAC 2005 recommendations will be different from previous rounds of base closing and realignment in many ways: there will be more joint approaches and solutions, more public-private cooperation, more proactive communications, and more interagency cooperation. BRAC 2005 will provide effective stewardship of the taxpayers'

investments at all levels of government by making better use of DoD property through shared use with stakeholders or return of property to the tax rolls or public use. Cost effective, local solutions will involve extensive public participation as BRAC properties are closed, realigned or sold.

The Army will work hard to communicate the BRAC 2005 goals and strategies. The Army will work with local redevelopment committees to ensure former military properties will be ready for new economic opportunities.

The vast majority of communities affected by closure and realignment decisions of the past BRAC rounds have successfully moved to productive economic development. The Army remains committed to working with BRAC 2005 communities to repeat those successes.

California National Guard to stand up six CERFPs

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. - California is taking homeland defense very seriously these days. How do we know this? Because that state is standing up a lot of National Guard forces prepared to help residents deal with weapons of mass destruction. California is forming six teams in all.

The teams, called CERFPs, have between 100 and 120 members of the Army and Air National Guard. They are trained to support civil authorities by providing medical care for victims of weapons of mass destruction and decontaminating people who may have been exposed to chemical or biological or other deadly or hazardous agents.

The teams will also include members trained and equipped to locate and extract victims from the rubble of demolished build-

ings.

CERFP is short for Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package. They are existing assets within the Guard brought together to provide support to civil authorities during times of crisis.

California has one of 12 CERFPs situated across the country that have been sanctioned by the National Guard Bureau and that have been trained and evaluated during the past year.

But Maj. Gen. Thomas Eres, the California National Guard's adjutant general, has ordered five more state teams to be trained and equipped at key locations in the vast state, according to retired Col. John Bernatz.

"The adjutant general looked at the capabilities that these teams bring to homeland defense here in California," Bernatz

explained. "This is a huge state. It has the fifth largest economy in the world. It has many potential targets. One CERFP is simply not enough."

"We certainly applaud California's initiative in training additional personnel for response to a WMD attack," said Lt. Col. Thomas Hook, chief of the Homeland Defense Division at the National Guard Bureau.

Hook pointed out that the Guard Bureau has established a CERFP capability in 12 different states, including California, during the past year and that California was funding the additional capability it had developed.

The six teams, as well as the California Guard's two 22-member civil support teams, will be included in a Military Assistance for Civil Authorities Brigade, said Bernatz, the brigade's executive officer. The brigade can also draw on other Guard personnel and

resources, such as security forces or quick reaction forces, as circumstances require, he added.

The CERFP authorized by the Guard Bureau is located in Los Alamitos and covers the Los Angeles region, Bernatz explained. It was trained and equipped last summer.

Three of the new teams have been trained and one of them has about three-quarters of its equipment, Bernatz said. They are based in San Diego, Sacramento and Fresno.

The locations for the two other teams have yet to be determined, and all of the teams will be equipped as funding becomes available, Bernatz said.

Each team will have about 120 people. It is hoped that each will be 25 percent over strength so that members can get some rest if they are pressed into service.

Command Sgt. Major Gipe visits deployed Guardsmen

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

BAGHDAD, Iraq – Army National Guard Soldiers must be in good physical condition when they get to their combat zones. Everyone should know how to operate the crew-served weapons on their patrol vehicles. Every Soldier in every unit should be trained as combat lifesavers. Everyone should be trained to drive the heavy, up-armored Humvees because the additional weight makes them handle differently from the regular models.

Command Sgt. Maj. John Gipe is not wasting any time, nor sparing any electrons, telling National Guard leaders what he has observed and what he believes needs to be improved for Army Guard Soldiers who are serving these days in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Qatar and Djibouti - in eastern Africa.

Gipe has visited thousands of Guard Soldiers, and a lot of other U.S. troops, at sprawling camps and gritty bases in all of those countries while preparing to become the next command sergeant major for the entire Army National Guard. Most of the troops he has seen are engaged in the Global War on Terrorism. Gipe is over there for three months. At the end of March, it was two months down and one to go before he will return to the United States.

He will be one of the best traveled persons to ever take on that position when he succeeds Command Sgt. Maj. A. Frank Lever III as the eighth senior enlisted advisor to the director of the Army National Guard in late July. Gipe has been the state command sergeant major for the Kentucky Army Guard since May 2002. Now he is working for Lt. Gen. Roger Schultz, the Army Guard's director.

"We have to make sure we do this from here on out," said Gipe about giving future senior enlisted leaders the opportunity and the time to learn about Guard Soldiers who are serving in distant lands.

"It has given me a much better view of how the entire Army and all of the other services work together," he said. "There are things the Army does on a daily basis that the Guard doesn't. Therefore, we have to learn how to do them and do them correctly - such as the Uniform Code of Military Justice."

Gipe has been a Soldier since 1982. He has been a 1st sergeant and a sergeant major for many years. He has an eye for detail. That was evident in a March 27 report that he prepared for LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, who met Gipe in Iraq.

"To date, I have participated in a number of



Photos by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

Command Sgt. Maj. John Gipe is spending three months observing Army National Guard troops who are serving in Iraq and other countries while preparing to become the next command sergeant major for the entire Army Guard in late July.

mounted combat patrols and convoy escort missions," Gipe reported. "I have been to many forward operations bases where our Soldiers face the enemy, literally next door, and [have seen] how they are 'winning the hearts and minds' of the Iraqi people. I have seen firsthand Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines, both active and reserve components, working together in a seamless manner."

Gipe is there at a pivotal time because the Army Guard has taken on an unprecedented share of U.S. combat operations - nearly 50 percent, leaders claim - during this Operation Iraqi Freedom rotation. One Army Guard division headquarters, the 42nd from New York, and six brigade combat teams are serving there.

Guard commanders are leading active duty as well as reserve component troops. Their Soldiers are training and serving with Iraqi forces.

For example, Maj. Gen. Joseph Taluto, the 42nd's commander, leads Task Force Liberty that includes two brigade combat teams from the active Army's 3rd Infantry Division as

well as teams from the Idaho and Tennessee Army Guard serving in four Iraqi provinces - more than 20,000 Soldiers from 28 states and American Samoa. It is also partnered with the Iraqi Army's 4th Division and more than 45,000 trained Iraqi security forces.

On March 20, Guard military police Soldiers from his state of Kentucky validated Gipe's observation that "our Soldiers are doing some terrific things under tough conditions." Ten members of the 617th Military Police Company, in three Humvees, broke up an ambush by heavily armed insurgents against a convoy of tractor-trailer supply trucks south of Baghdad. The Guard men and women killed 27 insurgents, captured one of the attackers and seized their rifles, rocket launchers and ammunition.

Gipe's candid report to Blum and other Guard senior leaders lists many things that need to be improved, including the Guard's promotion system, the replacement system for casualties, and the training, such as medical skills, that troops need to bring to the combat theaters. "All vehicles operating outside the wire must have at least one qualified

combat lifesaver," he said until all can be trained as combat lifesavers.

Those are the things that leaders like Gipe look for and try to fix.

He is convinced, however, that Guard Soldiers are not being treated like second-class citizens.

"I have seen absolutely no indication that active component units are receiving better equipment, better treatment, better housing, better anything than the reserve component units," Gipe stated. "The Army distributes its gear based on its projected needs."

Overall, Command Sgt. Maj. John Gipe believes in two things.

He believes in the cause. "We're over here for the right reasons," he insisted. "I've seen how much progress we're really making. The Soldiers are doing a terrific job, and the Iraqi people are stepping up to the plate in a big way."

He believes in the Guard. "This mission ... has reinforced my belief that the Guard is fully capable of handling any mission they are given," he reported to Blum. "Most units I have seen are performing admirably. The Guard has done the nation proud."

The Retired Enlisted Association actively seeking new members

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The
RETIRED ENLISTED
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Serving the Total Force

Kentucky Soldiers turn the tables on heavily-armed insurgents

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany – April Wade will not let anyone get the wrong idea. The young specialist in the Kentucky Army National Guard was not there when all of the shooting was going on – when other members of her outfit turned the tables on some heavily-armed insurgents, and killed 27 of them, southeast of Baghdad on the memorable Sunday of March 20. The woman who has been matured by war insists that she was not one of the heroes.

She got there soon after 10 other Citizen-Soldiers from Kentucky's 617th Military Police Company responded to an ambush against a convoy of tractor-trailer trucks during a remarkable day for the National Guard. Wade was the driver for the company's commander, Capt. Todd Linder, and it took her 30, maybe 45, minutes to get him to the scene at Salman Pak, she recalled.

"A tractor-trailer was still on fire when we got there," Wade said. "One SUV was smashed up. A van was turned over and all shot up. It was destroyed."

Wade did, however, witness the effects of the ordeal on the military police company from Richmond, Ky., and on the Soldiers who came through it with surprisingly few injuries but plenty to think about. Three of the Guard Soldiers were wounded, according to an after-action report.

"I don't feel that I did that much. But it was a big eye-opener for all of us," said Wade on March 31 while flying home to her husband for a two-week break from Operation Iraqi Freedom. She had turned 20 two days before.

Winning that battle did not lead to a lot of high-fives or a lot of macho talk about kicking the enemy's butt, Wade indicated.

"It was a lot more sobering than it was a joyous situation," she said. "Everyone was very calm. They wanted as much informa-

tion about the situation as they could get. It let everyone know that this is for real."

The national media made heroes out of Kentucky Guard Soldiers such as Sgt. Leigh Ann Hester, Spec. Jason Mike, Sgt. Timothy Nein, Spc. Casey Cooper and Spec. Ashley Pullen after the battle that, among other things, reinforced the idea that women can fight just as well as men.

They were among the members of the squad that was shadowing the convoy and who drove their three Humvees into the middle of the ambush, between the insurgents and the supply trucks. They were the ones who drew the enemy's fire, who cut off the attackers' escape route, and who shot up seven cars that were pre-positioned for the getaway, according to reports. None of the insurgents escaped and the Guard Soldiers captured many enemy weapons and a lot of ammunition.

They were the real heroes, as far as April Wade is concerned, because they engaged and destroyed the enemy - just as they were expected to do.

Wade had many chances to make her case to some influential people. She flew back to the U.S. with LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, and his group that visited Guard troops in Kuwait, Iraq and Germany during the final few days in March.

Blum and Command Sgt. Maj. John Leonard Jr., Blum's senior enlisted advisor, visited the Kentucky military police Soldiers in Iraq.

"They performed magnificently. The Soldiers did what the Soldiers were supposed to do," Blum said. "Their training kicked in, and the leaders led. The results speak for themselves."

Wade did discover a cache of insurgents' weapons after the battle, when she parked her Humvee at the scene to deliver some messages to Linder.

"There were about 15 grenades, three or



Photo by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

Kentucky Army National Guard Spc. April Wade and Command Sgt. Maj. John Leonard Jr. talk about her combat experiences in Iraq after the 617th Military Police Company turned the tables on insurgents who ambushed a convoy of trailer-trucks on March 20. Wade was the company commander's driver that day. Leonard is the senior enlisted advisor for the National Guard Bureau.

four rocket-propelled grenades, a crate full of loaded magazines and 10 or 15 rifles," she said. She also saw dead bodies for the first time in her life.

"I see how improvised explosive devices affect people every day," Wade said. "But you never see the people trying to hurt you - the ones who set the IEDs or shoot at your truck. So it was a real eye-opener for us to be attacked by them and to fight back and kill so many of them."

Although she did not claim to do more than she had done, Wade did elaborate on the choices that led her to that battleground in Iraq.

She joined the military police company on June 17, 2002, when she was 17, Wade explained, because it was close to her home and because her other options were not all that appealing.

She did not join a nearby National Guard transportation company, "because I didn't see myself driving a big truck," said Wade who stands 5-foot-3 and weighs 110 pounds. She could have become a cook, she said, but she didn't want to do that, either.

So she became an MP - a career field that has led other women into harm's way even though they cannot serve in the infantry or the other combat arms. Her company was mobilized and left for Fort McCoy, Wis., for training last Oct. 5, four months after she had gotten married.

"I was interested in law enforcement. But becoming a combat MP never came into the conversation," said Wade who learned some lasting lessons about soldiering on March 20. "I learned a lot about our responsibilities," she said.

Guard, Active Fighter Wings Sign MOU Governing New Partnership

Staff Report

ARLINGTON, Va. –Leaders of the Virginia Air National Guard's 192nd Fighter Wing and the Air Force's 1st Fighter Wing signed a memorandum of understanding that lays out the scope of their new "associate wing," which will operate and maintain F/A-22 Raptors at Langley Air Force Base, VA.

The April memorandum marks the first time the Air Force has entered an equal partnership with a Guard unit for fighter operations, and is an important milestone in the service's development of the Future Total Force, according to a senior Air Force officer.

The associate wing at Langley is one of six new total force initiatives aimed at better integrating the active, Guard and Reserve components of the Air Force.

Other initiatives include basing active-duty personnel with highly experienced Guard and Reserve members; and integrating various unmanned aerial vehicle operations.

The Air Force recently created a new office

at its Pentagon headquarters to oversee these efforts.

The newly formed "Directorate of Future Total Force" was set up to "maximize the Air Force's overall combat capabilities and allow [the service] to continue to be a primary enabler in joint service operations through [a] new Force Structure focused on programs, forces and technology, and new Organizational Concepts that fundamentally improve the effectiveness of ... Active Duty, Guard and Reserve people," service officials said in a statement released last month.

The directorate, which also will keep tabs on emerging missions and the service's role in those missions, falls under the deputy chief of staff for plans and programs.

Brig. Gen. Allison Hickey, who previously served as assistant deputy to the service's strategic planning director, is the directorate's interim leader. Other directorate officials who serve Hickey in an advisory capacity include Maj. Gen. Patrick Gallagher, the directorate's Air Force Reserve assistant, and Brig. Gen. Duane Lodridge, the directorate's

Air National Guard assistant.

"We're living a real-life example of the organizational constructs we're helping others to do," Hickey told Inside the Air Force in an April 11 interview.

Within the next month, Hickey hopes to have 35 full-time personnel to operate the three divisions of the directorate. The mission development division focuses on concepts of operation and works closely with major commands to flesh out the details of what future units will look like; the implementation division primarily deals with cost analysis and manpower needs; and the advocacy division possesses an adaptive responsibility to answer questions on the Future Total Force and explain the directorate's various missions.

The directorate also boasts a group of about 15 "rotaters" -- field representatives from active, Guard and Reserve units who give the directorate a "reality check" about issues like the implications of trying to stand up these types of organizations, Hickey said.

In addition, the organization has two adju-

tant general representatives to act as Guard liaisons to the Air Force Structure Strategic Planning Committee and the FTF General Officers Steering Committee.

An MOU has also been worked out, but not signed, on the "Community Basing" test case, which is designed to "rebalance" the experience levels of a dozen active-duty personnel by stationing them with the Vermont Air National Guard's 158th Fighter Wing. The 12-person detachment, which includes a commander, has been established and has conducted a site visit. This test will be a proof of concept that will facilitate any movement of active duty personnel to Guard or Reserve locations, Hickey said.

The "Hill Integration" test case is focused on integrating the Air Force Reserve's 419th Fighter Wing into the Air Force's 388th Fighter Wing. Both units are located at Hill AFB, UT, and both fly F-16s.

The directorate also is overseeing Predator UAV missions in New York, Texas and Arizona, and it is assisting the Air Warfare Center at Nellis AFB, Nev.

Minnesota honors National Guard heroes

By 1st Lt. Anna Lewicki

Minnesota National Guard

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. – It was Minnesota's deadliest day in Iraq since the start of Operation Iraqi Freedom. February 21 marked the first loss of a Minnesota National Guard member in Iraq, and tragically, it also marked the third.

Staff Sgt. David Day, 25, 1st Lt. Jason Timmerman, 24, and Sgt. Jesse Lhotka, 24, were killed by a roadside bomb Feb. 21 in Baghdad.

"We will never forget. We will honor these soldiers in death. And we all feel the pain because they were part of our National Guard family," said Minnesota's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito.

All three soldiers were members of Company C, 1st Battalion, 151st Field Artillery based in Montevideo, Minn. The unit deployed with 330 members in September for an 12-month rotation in Baghdad.

All three soldiers were newly married before deploying. Day was a police officer in St. Louis Park, Minn., Timmerman was a high school teacher in Cottonwood, Minn., and Lhotka was a businessman in Alexandria, Minn.

In addition to funeral services, friends, family members and even strangers attended a vigil at the National Guard armory in Montevideo, Minn., to remember and pay tribute to Minnesota's fallen heroes.



Photos by Anna Lewicki

Minnesota National Guard soldiers and police officers line the side of the church to pay tribute to Staff Sgt. David Day.

A soldier's goodbye

In a message to the more than 12,500 Minnesota National Guard members, Minnesota's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito asked Minnesota's soldiers and airmen to do three things.

"First, I want you to reflect on your feelings knowing that we lost three of our own," Shellito wrote. "Second, I ask that you take time to create memorable moments with your loved ones. Jason, David and Jesse's family and friends cherish the memories they have of these young men. Third, I want you to understand the importance of what you do as a member of the National Guard. You truly are America's heroes, and our country needs you."

Day's funeral was one example of a tight-knit community trying to cope with a devastating loss. More than 100 squad cars from all over the state, a fire truck, a humvee and a Blackhawk carrying Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty escorted Day's hearse to Assumption Catholic Church in his hometown of Morris, Minn. for the funeral and military ceremony.

Although thousands of people lined the streets as the procession made its way through town, the only sounds were the slow-moving vehicles and the distant thudding of the Blackhawk.

"Davey loved the fire trucks, whispered Carol Wilcox, a neighbor to the Day family in Morris. The same age as her son, Wilcox watched David grow up.

"We've had to share him with the whole world now," Wilcox explained tearfully.

"But they are keeping this funeral very personal for Davey and his family."

During Day's funeral service, Rev. Alan Wielenski said that as a police officer, Day wanted to serve.

"In the end, he was 100 percent for going to Iraq. There was no holding him back. He wanted to help the Iraqi people, and he told his beloved Amy that this was important; even worth dying for."

Wielenski reminded people gathered in the crowded church that these three men were assisting fellow soldiers in an overturned vehicle when the bomb detonated.

"There is no greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends," Wielenski said. More than "merely a military slogan, these are sacred words from the Bible."

All three soldiers received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart awards, presented posthumously.

The "Total Force" policy

"We will never forget."

This is an important, and often repeated slogan among military and veterans groups around the country. It is a newly adopted slogan in three small Minnesota communities.

"The war finally came home to Minnesota when we lost these three sons of the prairie," said Col. Denis Shields, assistant to the Adjutant General of the Minnesota National Guard.

Since 9-11, the National Guard has been integrated into all facets of military operations.

"These were more than soldiers. They were friends and neighbors – a police officer, a teacher, a businessman. The whole state mourned," said Shields.

During the entire ten-year war in Vietnam, the military only called up approximately 3,000 Guardsmen and Reservists. Following

that war, however, former Army Chief of Staff General Creighton W. Abrams enunciated a policy commonly referred to as "total force," stating that the United States should never go to war again without calling up the spirit of the American people, and you do that by calling up the National Guard and Reserve.

"And that's exactly what we've done with respect to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom," Shields added. "No more would we conduct major military operations without the involvement of the National Guard. Minnesota learned what Lt. Gen. Blum means when he says 'when the National Guard goes to war, America goes to war.'"

(Editor's note: Since 9/11 nearly 6,000 Minnesota National Guard members have been activated. Currently there are about 1,000 Minnesota National Guard troops in Iraq and 800 in Afghanistan.)



Staff Sgt. David Day was well known in his community. Thousands of people lined the streets of Morris, Minn., and watched silently as the procession moved through town.

Heroes who fell in Operation Iraqi Freedom



(Above) Staff Sgt. David Day's family prepares to be presented with the American flag. Day, 1st Lt. Jason Timmerman and Sgt. Jesse Lhotka were killed by a roadside bomb in Baghdad in February. All three Minnesota Guard soldiers received the Bronze Star and Purple Heart awards posthumously.

(Left) Minnesota National Guard soldiers and police officers lined up near the church to pay tribute to Staff Sgt. David Day.

Combat Life Saver does just that, while serving in Iraq

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

FORWARD OPERATIONS BASE KALSU, Iraq – Richard Anthony, one of the "Mississippi Rifles," will not soon forget how he was promoted to sergeant, pay grade E-5, in the Mississippi Army National Guard. It happened just before noon on March 30 beside the headquarters of the 155th Brigade Combat Team.

LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, opened his knife, cut a specialist insignia from Anthony's collar and promoted him to the next higher rank on the spot on after hearing how Anthony had helped save the lives of four other Guard Soldiers in that brigade the day before.

"I didn't know what to think. That really surprised me," said the newly-promoted sergeant who showed the personal coins that he got from Blum and Command Sgt. Maj. John Leonard Jr., Blum's senior enlisted advisor, to his friends in the midday chow line.

It was a meritorious promotion, said Blum who takes advantage of every opportunity to praise and promote Guard Soldiers who he visits in distant combat zones. He made it clear that someone should get on with processing Anthony's paperwork.

Blum heard many good things about the approximately 4,000 members of the Mississippi Rifles and the Iraqi Soldiers they are serving with during that long day when the sun radiated the promise of another hot summer in Iraq.

So did one of Blum's traveling companions, Mississippi Congressman Gene Taylor, who brought 1,000 pounds of Gulf Coast shrimp to the Soldiers from his state who are taking part in the Global War on Terrorism.

They were particularly taken by Anthony's story because it underscored the importance of the combat lifesaving course that many Soldiers are taking before they deploy to Iraq and Afghanistan.

Anthony, a military police Soldier from New Albany, Miss., explained he was traveling in the third vehicle of a convoy at 10:30 the previous morning when the Humvee behind him struck an antitank mine. The blast shredded the front of that armored vehicle.

"I looked back and that Humvee came out of a cloud of dust and smoke and rolled on its side," Anthony recalled. "We all ran back to help and saw four Soldiers lying all around it. They had all been thrown from the vehicle."

One of them, Spc. William Brooks, had two badly injured legs. He was the most seriously injured of the four. Anthony said that he and Staff Sgt. Mackiel Burcham put tourniquets on Brooks' legs to stem the bleeding. They did their best to keep him calm and tried to find a vein that was not collapsed to insert the needle of an i.v.

"Staff Sgt. Burcham stayed with me the whole time," Anthony explained. "We were both covered in blood."

Everything happened fast, he added. "By the time we got the tourniquets on, the helicopters were there and took them away. All



Photo by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

Mississippi Army National Guard Soldier Richard Anthony was meritoriously promoted from specialist to sergeant the morning after he helped save the life of a severely wounded Soldier near Forward Operations Base Kalsu in Iraq. LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, promoted Anthony after hearing the story. Mississippi Congressman Gene Taylor (center) was present for the promotion.

four of them lived. I'm glad we could save them."

Brooks did lose his left leg and part of his right, Blum learned later, but at least he was alive. Blum credited the Soldiers' combat medical training with making the difference. He promoted Anthony for doing what he had been trained to do.

The Guard Bureau chief emphasized the importance of combat lifesaving training because "hot weather is coming and these Soldiers will need expertise with i.v.'s to help prevent heat injuries."

Soldiers in the 155th Brigade, commanded by Col. Augustus "Leon" Collins, have been drawing on their military training and their civilian experiences since late January while attempting to improve the economic, political and security conditions for the Iraqi people in their region south of Baghdad. Between 1,200 and 1,500 insurgents are believed to be operating there.

"There are periods of quiet and periods of not so quiet," explained Sgt. 1st Class Harold Taylor from Cordova, Tenn., who leads a personal security detail charged with safeguarding visiting dignitaries.

These Soldiers from the brigade based in Tupelo, Miss., believe they bring something special to Operation Iraqi Freedom. It's called maturity.

"The National Guard is best suited for this mission. We have so much experience," said Mississippi Master Sgt. Bill Richardson at a time when a Guard division headquarters, from New York, and six Guard brigade combat teams make up more than 40 percent of the U.S. combat force in that country.

"Our gray hair counts for something,"

added the 36-year military veteran who has also pulled a peacekeeping tour in Bosnia. "Take any National Guard headquarters unit. You have teachers. You have policemen. You have medical people. You have people who know what they are doing."

Richardson leads a 14-member team of Guard Soldiers that is training and conducting missions with two companies of Iraqi National Guard troops at Forward Operations Base Iskandariyah, named for a large power plant with four stacks that tower over the flat countryside.

Richardson and others claim the Iraqi National Guard troops are committed to bringing peace and stability to their nation during dangerous times.

The U.S. House of Representatives has recognized one of them - Maj. Mohammad Salman Abbas Ali. Congressman Taylor presented that Iraqi National Guard officer with a Certificate of Appreciation "for his exceptional dedication to duty and tireless efforts in the battle against terrorism in the Nation of Iraq." He as "consistently supported" the 155th Brigade Combat Team, the citation further states, "at great personal risk to himself and his family."

The Mississippi Rifles have something else going for them - their heritage. During the Mexican War, on Feb. 23, 1847, they "displayed a rock-like defense against a Mexican attack in response to the command 'Stand fast, Mississippians!'," according to a National Guard Heritage Series painting. They made that stand after attacking Mexican cavalry and infantry with rifles and Bowie knives. The place was Buena Vista, Mexico. The commander was Col. Jefferson

Davis, the future president of the Confederacy.

The Mississippi Rifles are holding their ground in Iraq as well as their forefathers did in Mexico.

"It was as apparent as a lightning bolt how well the Guardsmen are integrating with the Iraqi military," said Taylor, a member of the House Armed Services Committee, near the end of his fifth trip to Iraq since 1991, following the cease fire for Operation Desert Storm.

Taylor, who has served Mississippi's southern Congressional district since 1989, identifies with those Guard Soldiers. He was an enlisted man in the Coast Guard Reserve from 1971-84.

He was the skipper on a search and rescue boat. He received a Commandant's Letter of Commendation for firefighting and a Letter of Commendation for saving a crewmember's life.

"I think the good will between the 155th and the Iraqi units in that area has to do with [the Americans'] accumulated life skills," Taylor said. "They realize this is important. They are here to stand up the government. This is what they do back home. They look out for the little guys. They try to create a peaceful environment. They're [bringing] those things that they've learned back home and trying to make them happen here."

"The nation collectively made the right decision to utilize the Guard and the Reserves for this mission," Taylor added. "When you call up the Guard and Reserve, you call up America. That's the way it should be. Either all of us are in it or none of us are in it."

Money for a new house ...
Cash for a new car...

Same great family

Re-enlistment bonus for continued service in the National Guard Family

On Guard Staff Report
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – A substantial increase in enlistment and re-enlistment bonuses for Army National Guard Soldiers has begun to pay big dividends to the National Guard and its Soldier's families who continue to serve their .

The Army Guard is offering a six-year, prior-service enlistment bonus of \$15,000 with a payment schedule of 50 percent at the time of enlistment and 50 percent at the fourth-year anniversary.

The Guard is also offering a two period, three-year enlistment option of \$7,500 for the first three years and \$6,000 for the second three years. The payment schedule is 50 percent at the beginning of the three-year commitment and 50 percent upon completion of that commitment.

The Army Guard is offering a six-year reenlistment, or extension, bonus of \$15,000 payable in a lump sum upon the re-enlistment or extension. It is also offering a two period, three-year reenlistment, or extension, bonus of \$7,500 for the first three years and \$6,000 for the second three years. The payment schedule for that option is a lump sum upon the reenlistment or extension. Soldiers with no more than 16 years of service are eligible for this bonus.



The Army Guard is also offering \$2,000 bonuses to Soldiers who agree to retrain into a critical military occupational specialty (MOS) to meet the Army Guard's needs. The payment will be made in a lump sum upon completion of the training in the new MOS. This bonus cannot run concurrently with any other incentives that the Soldier has.

There is also incentive for new people to join the Army National Guard.

It is offering non-prior service enlistment bonuses of up to \$10,000 for a six-year enlistment. The Guard will pay 50 percent of that bonus upon successful completion of individual advanced training and the other 50 percent at the end of the fourth year.

Here is the breakdown:

-- \$10,000 for enlisting in one of the Army Guard's 10 most critical military occupational specialties. Those are infantryman, cannon crewmember, combat engineer, military police, light-wheel vehicle mechanic, motor transport operator, health care specialist, automated logistical specialist, food service specialist, and unit supply specialist.

-- \$6,000 to non-prior service Soldiers who choose to train in a MOS that is considered critical to the readiness of that Soldier's state. States cannot exceed 30 MOS's.

-- \$2,000 bonuses to non-prior service Soldiers who agree to perform their initial One Stop Unit Training during the off-peak months of October through May.

The Army Guard is offering \$50 for each month of obligation to another military service provided the individual agrees to join the Army Guard. The Soldiers must be assigned to a vacancy for which they are MOS qualified. The MOS must have been awarded while the Soldier was on active duty.

The Army Guard is offering \$6,000 bonuses for newly commissioned officers and warrant officers and for officers affiliating from active duty. The rate of pay will be 50 percent upon commissioning and the other 50 percent on the 24-month anniversary of commissioning. Officers joining the Guard from active duty will receive 50 percent upon the execution of their contract. The other 50 percent will be paid on the 24-month anniversary of the contract.

A \$20,000 Student Loan Repayment Program is being offered as an enlistment option for non-prior service people. Soldiers must have existing student loans when they enlist. Loans established or disbursed after the date of enlistment will not be reimbursed. This bonus is good only for the initial enlistment.

People interested in obtaining more information about the increased bonuses can call their local Army National Guard recruiters.

\$2,000 bonuses

to Soldiers who agree to retrain into a critical military occupational specialties to meet the Army Guard's needs.

The Guard needs:

11B – INFANTRYMAN
13B – CANNON CREWMEMBER
21B – COMBAT ENGINEER
31B – MILITARY POLICE
63B – LIGHT-WHEEL VEHICLE MECHANIC
88M – MOTOR TRANSPORT OPERATOR
91W – HEALTH CARE SPECIALIST
92A – AUTOMATED LOGISTIC SPECIALIST
92G – FOOD SERVICE SPECIALIST
92Y – UNIT SUPPLY SPECIALIST

Prior Service: The Army Guard is offering a 6-year prior-service enlistment bonus of \$15,000 and a two-3-year enlistment option at a rate of \$7,500 for the first three-years and \$6,000 for the second three-years.

Re-Enlistment: The Army Guard offers a 6-year re-enlistment/extension bonus for \$15,000 payable in a lump sum upon re-enlistment/extension and two-3-year reenlistment/extension options paid at \$7,500 for the first three-years and \$6,000 for the second three-years.

Citizen-Soldiers opt to remain in Iraq to share experience

By: Lt. Col. Harry González &
Lt. Connie Woodyard

Washington National Guard

IRAQ – More than 70 Soldiers of the Washington Army National Guard's 81st Brigade Combat Team remained in Iraq for Operation Iraqi Freedom 04-05 after their comrades in arms returned to the safety of American soil. These seasoned veterans of OIF II are sharing their skills and knowledge with the 29th Brigade Combat Team of Hawaii, which assumed the missions of the 81st Brigade in February 2005.

During OIF II, the Department of the Army offered all Soldiers the opportunity to remain in theater for another tour. The 81st BCT and 29th BCT struck an agreement that the Soldiers who remained would also remain with the 29th.

"It was a matter of accountability of personnel and equipment," said Master Sgt. Wayne Parker, G-1, Personnel Section Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge for the 81st BCT. The Soldiers and equipment still belong to the 81st and are attached to the 29th for the extended tour.

"For command and control they are with the 29th, but when the deployment is over they will return to Washington and the 81st Brigade," added Major Damon Hunt, the Brigade G-1.

Soldiers interviewed shared their motivations for staying which included selfless service and patriotism.

* "I put on this uniform because I believe that individuals have an obligation to serve something greater than themselves," said Spc. Jayson Howell, who remained in Iraq with the 29th BCT Public Affairs office. "I still have more to give, so I stayed."

Howell had served as a member of the Quick Reaction Force of the 81st BCT on LSA Anaconda.

* "I'm earning the right to wear our nation's flag on my uniform," said Pvt. Andrew Merchain. "I am willing to protect it and stand with all those who came and have done the very same before me."

* Spc. Jason Haack, who served as an Administrative NCO with HHC 81st BCT, now works in the G-1 of the 29th BCT. He admitted to having some doubts about his decision. "After the last of the 81st BCT left I felt like, 'Oh, man, what have I done? Am I nuts,' said Haack who left behind a wife with whom he was hoping to start a family, but it will have to wait for his return next year.

* Pfc. Novel Harris agreed, "Sometimes it seems like a long road."

* At the opposite end of the spectrum was Spc. Jonathan Laureles, who felt upon arrival he belonged so much he told his buddies he wanted to stay for another tour. His friends

told him to wait a few months to see if he still felt the same way. He waited and still wanted to stay. Even now, at the beginning of his second tour, he is considering a third.

* Staff Sgt. Robert Caver promised his Soldiers if they wanted to stay for an additional year, he would stay with them. He also extended the promise again this tour.

The Soldiers that remained were required to complete Contingency Operation Temporary Tour of Active Duty packets before transferring to the 29th BCT; however, there is no guarantee the packets will be approved. If approved, the Soldiers are eligible to receive an additional \$1000 per month for 179 days beyond their original orders. Most of the Soldiers will not be eligible for the additional income until approximately halfway through their second tour. Conversely, other Soldiers will not likely reach that status during this deployment as they arrived late in the deployment of the 81st BCT.

Soldiers like Spc. Noel Ramey, who arrived in theater late during the 81st BCT's deployment, will only spend a total of about 18 months in theater.

Some of the Soldiers have volunteered twice for the deployment. Sgt. Jonathan Spatig served as the Battalion Sergeant Major's driver and as a door gunner during OIF II. He was an interstate transfer from Arizona to deploy with the 81st BCT and volunteered to stay for a second tour.

"At first," he said, "the motivation was financial, but because of my years of service, I was not entitled to any reenlistment bonuses. I don't mind though and I feel good about what the United States is doing for Iraq. My family supported my decision."

The Soldiers all shared that their families and friends were supportive of their decision, although the initial reactions were similar – "Some think it's a little crazy, but they give me their full support none the less," shared Staff Sgt. Robert Carver formerly of Company B 1/161 Infantry in Baghdad and now serving with Task Force Konohiki at LSA Anaconda.

The support of families and friends was an important factor in each Soldier's decision.

However, the decision ultimately was a personal one for each Soldier and the family members gave their support and prayers. "...thanks to all of them. They make it easier to be over here," shared Spc. Stephen Brown, a Washingtonian who moved from Kuwait during his first tour to LSA Anaconda for his second and current tour. The Soldiers were not only single, some were married, and others had children.

Ten Soldiers of the 81st BCT that remained for the second tour were assigned to Task Force Konohiki to share their seasoned skills with the Soldiers of the 210th Battalion, 4th



Submitted photo

These four soldiers bear the distinction of being the only Soldiers in the 29th BCT who deployed with HHC 81st BCT last March. Pictured are: (back) Spc. James Lafortune, Spc. Jason Haack., (front) Spc. Jayson Howell and Spc. Scott McManus.

Brigade of the Iraqi National Guard. In their new roles, they are training the Iraqi Soldiers in more advanced Soldiering skills building on the lessons learned during OIF II under the leadership of Task Force Chinook of the 81st BCT. The Soldiers appreciate the opportunity to serve together with other extension volunteers as it continues their camaraderie as second year veterans.

"Each soldier from the 81st BCT brings with them highly valued experience and lessons learned from his previous year spent in the OIF theater. This experience has enhanced the overall proficiency across our Task Force as a whole," said Maj. Robert Harris, commander of Task Force Konohiki. The Task Force is the military transition team advising the Iraqi Army. The U.S. Soldiers have two roles in the Task Force; serving alongside the Iraqis in force protection providing security in and around the Logistic Support Area and provide guidance and advice to the Iraqi army.

North Carolina partners with the small European nation of Moldva

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

GARMISCH, Germany – The ties that bind should not be broken. That was a concern among state National Guard leaders who in mid-March were told about the United States European Command's interest in developing state partnerships with African nations.

Maj. Gen. William Ingram, the adjutant general for North Carolina, was among those who accepted the idea that promoting regional stability and civil-military relationships with African nations is a good idea, as long as it does not mean severing ties with countries with whom the states have already made commitments through the National Guard's State Partnership Program.

"We have planted some seeds. This is the time to nourish and fertilize those relationships," said Ingram whose state has been partnered with the small eastern European nation Moldova, formerly part of the Soviet Union, since 1995.

The State Partnership Program, begun in 1993, aligns states with nations around the world to help them develop modern military forces, learn the concept of civilian control of the

military, and establish civil-military relations that help the public during civil emergencies.

The first partnerships were formed with eastern European countries that had gained their independence after the Soviet Union collapsed. Now, 42 states, two territories and the District of Columbia are partnered with 48 countries in Europe, Asia, Central and South American and, with Jordan, in the Middle East.

"Even if the European Command does expand into Africa, we still need to maintain the relationships that we have spent years to develop," Ingram said. "It would not bode well for any of our relationships to leave."

That is not the intent, EUCOM representatives repeatedly assured the Guard leaders from 23 states who attended The Adjutants General State Partnership Program 2005 Conference hosted by Air National Guard Maj. Gen. Craig McKinley, director of EUCOM Reserve Affairs.

"We are not abandoning these countries," McKinley insisted. "We're just moving to the next level - over time, not right now."

McKinley also endorsed the idea that the states and coun-

tries whose partnerships have matured could work together to develop partnerships with other countries, perhaps in Africa.

He was encouraged that the Guard leaders understood why Marine Gen. James Jones, the supreme allied commander for Europe and the EUCOM commander, wants "to dot the map of Africa with SPP."

"Gen. Jones is a historian," McKinley said. "He's seen valuable time and blood expended when a region goes bad. He believes that the State Partnership Program can be the catalyst to help prevent that from happening in Africa."

Four states have already formed partnerships with African countries. They are New York and South Africa, North Dakota and Ghana, Utah and Morocco, and Wyoming and Tunisia. Eleven more African countries have been identified as candidates for the program.

"The states that have the capability can take on additional countries. I believe they're willing to take on the challenge," said McKinley.

"They have faith in us to do what we say we will do. It is important to keep that faith," Ingram said.

EPA honors Pennsylvania Army National Guard

By Rick Breitenfeldt

National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

ARLINGTON, Va. – The Environmental Protection Agency for the first time named a Defense Department agency as a recipient of its Clean Air Excellence Award.

The Pennsylvania Army National Guard was honored in an April 7 ceremony in Washington, D.C., along with eleven other local and state governments, industries and citizen groups.

"Across the nation, these award winners are using innovative approaches to help make our nation's air cleaner," said Jeff Holmstead, assistant administrator for air. "The winners of the Clean Air Excellence Awards are examples of how one person - or one organization - can make a positive difference."

The Clean Air Excellence Awards program was established in 2000 and recognizes and honors outstanding, innovative efforts to make progress in achieving cleaner air.

Chosen from more than 150 entries, the Combined Support & Maintenance Shop East of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard has become the model for pollution prevention by improving the coating applied to seal the paint on military vehicles and equipment.

According to Susan Latovich, environmental specialist for the Pennsylvania Guard, by replacing the standard solvent-borne coating with a new less toxic water dispersible coating, which emits virtually no hazardous air pollutants, the Pennsylvania Guard will reduce volatile organic compound emissions in Pennsylvania by 2.6 tons in the first year alone,

Many VOCs are human-made chemicals that are used and produced in the manufacture of paints, and contribute to poor air quality and the depletion of the ozone layer, she added.

"Air quality is radically improved without one more cent being required for new or additional equipment," said Monsoor Rashid, clean air environmental compliance manager at the Army Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va. "In fact, money is being saved." The extended filter life in vehicle paint booths and the reduction in waste that must be disposed of are just two of the many ways the Guard is making improvements, said Rashid.



Photos by Rick Breitenfeldt

(Above) Pictured left to right: Col. Joseph Laneski, Mr. Monsoor Rashid, Sgt. 1st Class James Bragg, Ms. Susan Latovich, Maj. Gen. Jessica L. Wright - Pennsylvania Adjutant General, Chief Warrant Officer Lynn Deaven, Jeffery Holmstead (Below) Chief Warrant Officer Lynn Deaven of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard receives the 2005 Clean Air Excellence Award from EPA Assistant Administrator of Air and Radiation, Mr. Jeffery Holmstead.

Acting EPA Administrator Stephen Johnson thanked the award recipients for their outstanding work and dedication. "Your innovative projects and creative programs demonstrate our national resolve for cleaner air and a healthier America," Johnson said. "These unique contributions are an important part of the of air quality improvement across our nation."

If used throughout the nation, Rashid said the Guard could eliminate four million pounds of emissions nationwide each year.

"This will no doubt make a positive contribution to the long-term sustainability of the installation and the entire Army National Guard," said Rashid.



New Program Offers subsidized child care to Guard, Reserve

By Samantha L. Quigley

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON – The Defense Department has joined forces with national agencies to help Guard and Reserve families in finding and affording child care while Mom or Dad is deployed in support of the global war on terrorism.

"Child care, as you know, is one of the top (concerns) voiced by families as well as by commands on what's needed," said Jan Witte, director of the Pentagon's Office of Children and Youth. Her office monitors the new program, dubbed Operation Military Child Care.

DoD, in partnership with the National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies, which administers the program, designed this initiative to benefit those who do not live near military installa-

tions, Witte said.

"We have a contract with NACCRRRA to assist us in finding spaces outside the military community for those Guard and Reserve (members) who are deployed and active duty (people) who are not near a military installation," Witte said. "We also hope to assist in reducing the out-of-pocket expense to the servicemember."

When a parent is deployed, she said, the remaining parent may discover that child care is something the couple hadn't had to think of before. And need is not the only consideration. The extra expense can be shocking.

While OMCC doesn't fully subsidize child care, it does work to reduce the financial burden, Witte said. The fees are based on a sliding scale that takes into consideration total family income and the care provider's actual

cost, among other things.

To take part in the program, a family member would apply through NACCRRRA via a special Web site or by a toll-free call to (800) 424-2246. The child-care provider also must apply -- an important step because of how the subsidy, which comes through the Children and Youth office, is paid out, Witte noted.

"The subsidy goes to the program, not to the individual," she said.

The program officially kicked off March 3, but has been operational as a pilot program since late November 2004, Witte said. About 40 families are through the application process.

"We feel like this is one area to provide assistance for the total force," she said. "We had not been doing much prior to this time for the Guard and Reserve as far as child care

and school-age programs have gone." She said the new program could get about 5,000 Guard and Reserve servicemembers' children into child care.

But that number could fluctuate if there is a change in the funding, she pointed out, which comes in the form of supplemental funding through Congress. Congress has funded the program for \$7 million, Witte said, though officials hope to expand the program in the future to try and accommodate some of the 38,000 children of active duty servicemembers in need of child care.

NACCRRRA also supports the Guard and Reserve through a program called Operation Child Care. OCC is a voluntary NACCRRRA program that provides up to six hours of free child care to Guard and Reserve families whose deployed servicemember is returning home for rest and recuperation.

National Guard race car reaches a wide audience

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – It's hard not to notice the National Guard these days if you are watching the news about Iraq and Afghanistan – and if you are into NASCAR racing.

Army Guard Soldiers from all over America are featured in many reports from the fronts because so many of them are engaged in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom during the global war on terrorism.

NASCAR? The Guard is a major presence there, too, because the National Guard car, No. 16, driven by Greg Biffle, is No. 2 in the early-season standings for the Nextel Cup, the premier series for the National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing.

That is giving the Army Guard's efforts to recruit new people and to retain experienced Soldiers and Airmen a significant boost in many ways, according to marketing experts.

The 16 car, a Ford that is bearing the National Guard's red, white and blue colors for a second Nextel season, was 160 points behind leading driver Jimmie Johnson after the April 10 Advance Auto Parts 500 at the Martinsville Speedway in Virginia.

Through the first six races, Biffle has driven the Guard car to one victory, on Feb. 27 in the Auto Club 500 at the California Speedway, as well as to top five finishes in two races and to top 10 placements in two others. Biffle won in California during the season's second Nextel race, a week after finishing 25th in the Daytona 500.

Going into the April 17 Samsung/Radio Shack 500 at the Texas Motor Speedway, the 35-year-old Biffle was leading such NASCAR superstars as Jeff Gordon, Rusty Wallace, Dale Earnhardt Jr., and Kyle Petty.

Biffle and the Roush Racing team, that runs car 16, are off to a considerably faster start in 2005 than last year when they won two races during the second half of the season, after starting February's Daytona 500 in the pole position, and finished among the top five four times and among the top 10 in four other races.

The Guard car ended its first Nextel season in 17th place. That was a respectable showing, but being No. 2 is a lot better for the National Guard's image, explained the marketing people.

The National Guard Race Team is, without question, showing those that may not know it that the National Guard is a top-quality organization with a unique identity within our Army community," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Rick Martin, the acting chief for advertising in the Army National Guard's Strength Maintenance Division.

The National Guard has risen to No. 2 in NASCAR. That's not an easy thing to do," Martin added. "That essentially gives us a partnership with a lot of other agencies that we advertise with. That makes it possible for our partners to do things for us they wouldn't be able to otherwise do."

The Guard is getting far more from car 16's fast start than the fact it is being regularly



National Guard Bureau photo

Car 16, primarily sponsored by the National Guard, held second place in the Nextel Cup standings after the first six races of this NASCAR season.

seen every Sunday afternoon by the second largest sports television audience in the land, next to the National Football League.

That is called "branding," registering the National Guard name with the people who see the car.

That may help with recruiting because a third of the NASCAR fans are age 18-34 and 58 percent are 18-44, according to Heather Glass, the racing team's marketing director.

Persuading people to join the National Guard and providing leads about potential recruits for the 54 states and territories are the primary focus of advertising at the National Guard Bureau," said Martin. "We utilize car 16 in many different ways to generate those leads."

There are other factors at work. The Guard is the primary advertising sponsor for car 16, but six other companies have signed on as associate sponsors for this season, Martin explained. The largest is Post-it, the notepad people, which is an associate sponsor for

nine of the season's 36 Nextel Cup races, it was explained.

Post-it is placing National Guard displays in national chains such as Wal-Mart, Target, Office Depot and Staples, Glass said. That gives the National Guard and Post-it exposure to millions of more people than NASCAR fans.

Other organizations are also getting a piece of the action.

Advance Auto Parts, that sponsored the April 10 race in Martinsville, made it possible for a unit of National Guard Soldiers serving in Iraq to say "Gentlemen, start your engines" over a live television hookup before the race got underway. The unit's top sergeant works for Advance Auto Parts, Martin explained.

There is also the loyalty factor which helps with retention, Glass said. "People who are in the Guard can identify with one car, one team, one driver. Being able to cheer for their National Guard car helps give them a sense

of family."

One thing has become clear during the first two months of this NASCAR season. Greg Biffle and the National Guard's car 16 are giving Guard people quite a lot to cheer about.

(Editor's Note: Just prior to going to press, Biffle picked up his second win of the season for the National Guard Nextel Cup team at the Texas Motor Speedway despite starting from the back of the field after switching to a backup car. He wound up leading 219 of 334 laps. The win bumped Biffle up to second place in the Nextel Cup points standings – now only 135 points behind last year's champion Jimmie Johnson.)