

THE ON GUARD

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Guardsmen honored



Title 10 Guardsmen honored for service. Page 5.

MOUNT Training



Vermont Soldiers train with civilian law enforcement. Page 8.

Leadership



DC National Guardsman leads Presidential inauguration. Page 16.

President signs National Defense Authorization Act into law

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The 54 states and territories do not have to use their allotment of National Guard appropriations to pay their National Guard troops who perform homeland defense missions considered "necessary and appropriate" by the secretary of defense.

The federal government would provide those additional funds for troops called up to protect the citizens or the infrastructures, such as bridges, railroad facilities and power plants, in the states and territories. Furthermore, those troops would remain under the command of their governors.

That is a significant provision for the National Guard in the 2005 National Defense Authorization Act that President George W. Bush signed into law on Oct. 28.

The law allows governors, through their adjutants general, to maintain command and control of their Guard forces performing homeland defense activities even though they are being paid with federal funds.

National Guard troops will be able to serve under this provision for up to 180 days, but the governors may extend their tours one time for an additional 90 days "to meet extraordinary circumstances," with the defense secretary's approval.

"We needed a clear, unambiguous law so that the National Guard could legally perform operational missions at home funded by federal funds but in the command of the governors and the adjutants general. Now we have it," LTG H

Steven Blum, chief of the National Guard Bureau, recently told Guard Bureau staff members.

"It is not fair for the states to have to pay for their National Guard members to perform national security events," Blum added. "This is a huge arrow in the quiver of the secretary of defense."

The law makes it possible for Guard members to perform, in Title 32 status, homeland defense activities in support of the secretary of defense and the states, Guard Bureau officials pointed out.

The law states that the defense secretary can provide appropriate funds to the states where Guard members take part in approved homeland defense activities to pay for:

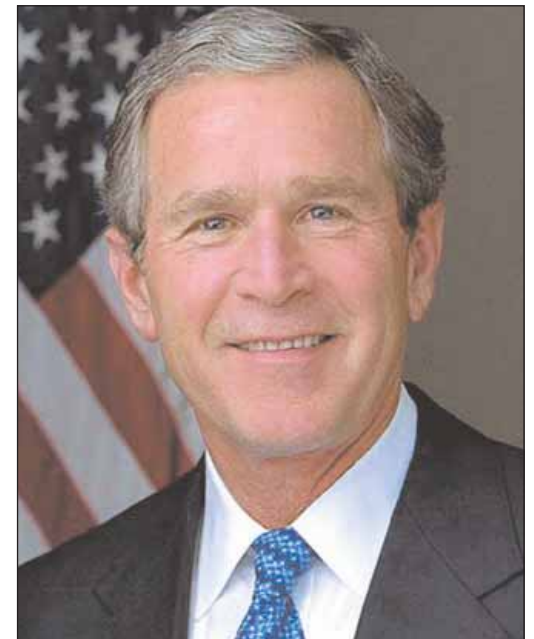
-- Pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel and related expenses of Guard members in that state.

-- Operation and maintenance of equipment and facilities.

-- Procurement of services and equipment and the leasing of equipment.

Guard members would receive full federal pay and allowances based on their military rank and time in service and would be eligible for medical, disability and other benefits available to federal, or Title 10, service members.

"Homeland defense activity" is defined in the law as "an activity undertaken for the military protection of the territory or domestic population of the United States, or of the infrastructure or other assets of the United States determined by the Secretary of Defense as being



Bush

critical to national security, from a threat or aggression against the United States."

The law also states that homeland defense activities must not degrade the training and readiness of Guard units and personnel.

"The performance of the activities is not to affect adversely the quality of that training or otherwise interfere with the ability of a member or unit ... to perform the military functions of the member or unit," the law reads.

"The performance of the activities is not to degrade the military skills of the members of the National Guard performing those activities."

Kentucky Soldier becomes Guard's senior enlisted advisor

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – A railroad man who has served as the Kentucky Army National Guard's state command sergeant major since 2002 has been appointed as the eighth senior enlisted advisor for the entire Army National Guard.

Command Sgt. Maj. John Gipe, 47, will assume the duties as the command sergeant major for the Army Guard's 306,000-member enlisted force next year after observing and evaluating Army Guard Soldiers and their training and personnel issues.

"I've always liked a challenge, and this is about the biggest challenge I'll ever find," said Gipe who has been the command sergeant major for Kentucky's 5,800 enlisted Army Guard members.

He will succeed Command Sgt. Maj. A Frank Lever III who will step down after serving as the Army Guard's senior enlisted advisor since January 2001. Lever, from South Carolina, will retire after serving for more than 35 years in the National Guard since graduating from The

Citadel in 1969.

Lt. Gen. Roger Schultz, the Army Guard's director, said he selected Gipe to be the Army Guard's senior enlisted Soldier based on his duty, performance, assignments and potential.



Gipe

unknown quantity here."

A native of Owensboro, Ky., Gipe joined the Kentucky Army Guard's 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor Battalion in July 1982 and climbed the enlisted ladder in that organization as a traditional Guard Soldier. He has served as first ser-

geant for D Company and as the battalion's operations sergeant major.

Gipe has also served as chief instructor, non-commissioned officers academy commandant and command sergeant major for the 238th Regiment at the Kentucky Army Guard's Regional Training Institute.

He has worked for CSX Railroad in Louisville, Ky., for 10 years, and as a locomotive engineer for more than eight years, before taking a leave of absence to become Kentucky's fulltime state command sergeant major beginning in May 2002.

"CSX has set the standard among American companies for taking care of its employees who serve in the National Guard and other reserve components," Gipe said.

"The fact that I've been a traditional Soldier for 20 of my 22 years in the Guard gives me a good perspective of what our Guard Soldiers go through, as far as their families and their jobs are concerned," Gipe observed.

See GIPE On Page 6

About The On Guard

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The Guard will always be an all volunteer force

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON – The National Guard is not affiliated with a military draft in this country, and, overall, the people now volunteering to serve in the Guard are the highest quality Soldiers and Airmen in its history, the chief of the National Guard Bureau recently said at the U.S. State Department.



Blum

"There is no way that the word 'draft' can be associated with the National Guard. The [modern] National Guard has never had any of its members brought into its ranks by a draft, and we never plan to use a draft to fill our ranks," LTG H Steven Blum said

at the State Department's Foreign Press Center on the Friday before Columbus Day.

The Guard Bureau chief was responding to a reporter's question about whether "the Guard nowadays is a means of a backdoor draft" for the global war on terrorism.

Absolutely not, insisted Blum, who has been the Guard Bureau's chief since April 2003 and who has served in uniform for nearly four decades.

"The National Guard [is] a volunteer force; it will always be a volunteer force," he responded.

To suggest anything otherwise, Blum added, is a disservice to the "citizen Soldiers and Airmen patriots that have willingly pledged to interrupt their lives or education and distance themselves from their families to protect their nation and their communities," according to a transcript by the Federal News Service.

Blum made that observation following his presentation about how the National Guard has transformed its state and national headquarters into joint force headquarters to more effectively support the war on terrorism at home and abroad since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and to still respond to traditional domestic emergencies such as this year's destructive hurricanes.

No one has been required to serve in the militia or the National Guard since the Civil War, pointed out National Guard Bureau historian Renee Hylton.

Draftees were sent to National Guard divisions which had already been federally mobilized for World Wars I and II as "fillers" to bring them up to war strength, she added, but Blum made it clear that the Guard does not require a draft to obtain new National Guard Soldiers or Airmen. Blum also said the quality of the force is unparalleled in

National Guard history.

"I have never seen the quality of the Soldiers and the Airmen that we have in our ranks today any better than it is right now," Blum responded to another question. "It actually is the best-quality force, the most professional force, the most committed force, the most versatile force that I have seen in my 37 years in uniform."

He further expressed confidence in the Guard members' willingness to continue to serve and in the Guard's ability to continue attracting volunteers.

"I am very pleasantly surprised that as we have used the National Guard in an unprecedented manner, in greater numbers than ever before ... that our retention rate or our reenlistment rate or our experienced Soldiers who deploy are staying with us at higher rates today than at any other time that we've measured this in the last 13 years," Blum said.

"That's a very, very reassuring indicator that the Guard is healthy and alive and will remain a viable force," he added.

"Are we going to be able to recruit new members into the Army and Air National Guard?" Blum asked. "So far, our experience says yes, we will; that the young men and women of our country are willing to stand up and be counted, and when their nation needs them, they are ready to serve."

Command of California Air National Guard changes hands

By Capt Anni Mu Loeb

California National Guard

McCLELLAN BUSINESS PARK, Calif. – After dedicating 42 years of service to the state of California and this great nation, Maj. Gen. Daniel J. Gibson retired on Sept. 29, 2004, as commander of the California Air National Guard.

More than 190 people were in attendance for this special occasion officiated by Maj. Gen. Thomas W. Eres, the adjutant general, California National Guard. The families and guests included Gibson's wife Joan Bennett and sons, Tyler and Ken; his brother Kent Gibson, retired KC-135 pilot; Mr. John C. Truesdell, deputy assistant secretary of the Air Force for Reserve Affairs, and Maj. Gen. Albert P. Richards, Reserve components assistant to the commander, United States Pacific Command.

Gibson was responsible for command and control oversight of four wings and one large combat communications group, comprised of nearly 5,000 military and civilian personnel serving at twelve locations within California. As commander, he served as the senior Air National Guard officer responsible for providing operationally trained, equipped and mission-ready forces to support national defense requirements worldwide and emergency response, relief, and recovery operations throughout California.

Gibson graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1967. After graduating from pilot training, he completed flying assignments in Korea, Thailand and the United States. He joined the California Air National Guard in 1979 where he held many positions at the 163rd Air Refueling Wing, March ARB, CA, to include group and wing commander. In 1989, General Gibson trans-



Maj. Gen. Daniel J. Gibson relinquishes command of the California Air National Guard from Maj. General Eres during a ceremony Sept. 29, 2004.

ferred to the State Headquarters, holding positions as the director of plans and programs and director of operations. In 1993, he was assigned as the Chief of Staff, California Air National Guard. General Gibson was appointed as the commander in September 1999. He is a command pilot and has flown more than 4,700 hours, including more than 1,300 combat hours in the OV-10 and F-4 in Southeast Asia.

The new Commander of the California Air National Guard is Brig. Gen. Dennis G. Lucas. In the audience was Lucas' wife, Judy and son and daughter-in-law, Sean and Theresa, as they proudly watched Lucas assume command. General Lucas was the assistant adjutant general for the California Air National Guard. He also served as a principal military assistant and advisor to the adjutant general for Air National Guard matters in the state of California.

Lucas began his military career by receiving a commission through Officer Training

School in 1971. After completing undergraduate navigator training, he continued training in the F-4E at Homestead Air Force Base, Florida. Upon completion of F-4 training, he was assigned to Korat Royal Thai Air Base, Thailand, where he flew 130 combat missions during the Vietnam War. He also completed flying assignments in England and the United States. He joined the California Air National Guard in 1980, where he held a variety of positions prior to his current assignment. Lucas is a master navigator with more than 2,400 hours including nearly 400 combat hours in the F-4 in Southeast Asia. Lucas was promoted to Brig. Gen. May 24, 2001.

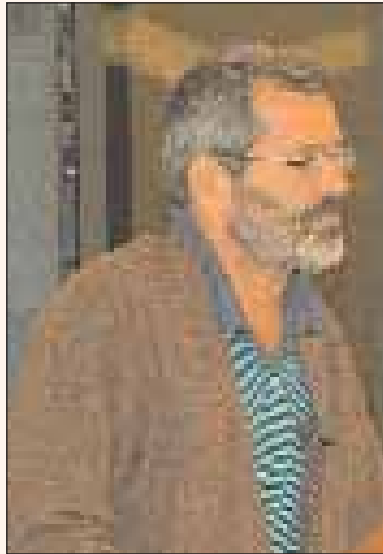
The luncheon following the ceremony culminated in a 30-minute video produced by Tech. Sgt. Andrew Hughan showcasing all the wings and Combat Communications Group with their well wishes for Gibson for his future endeavors.

Iraqi Visitors Say, 'Thank You' for freedom'

By Tech. Sgt. Darin Overstreet
Colorado National Guard

BUCKLEY AFB, Colo. – Buckley Air Force Base was a stop for two touring Iraqi citizens. Amid Kalid and Hamela Aqrawee are two of many Iraqis traveling the U.S. as a part of the Iraq-America Freedom Alliance. They are spreading the word about the benefits being experienced by them and their countrymen.

Amid is a civil engineer by trade, but in 2003 he was elected to the Baghdad city council. His family was directly



Kalid

affected by Saddam's destructive policies when his two brothers were killed in the Iran-Iraq war.

Hamela has utilized her English skills as an interpreter for the U.S. military. She has translated, many times under fire, for such events as the 101st Airborne's invasion, which led to the death of Saddam's sons,

Uday and Qusay. Like many Iraqis, having lost multiple family members to the Saddam regime, Hamela has been very aggressive in her support for the American-led coalition and its efforts to rebuild a stable Iraq.

Both speakers were grateful to have the opportunity to thank the troops and the family members who allow their loved ones to perform their important humanitarian duties.

Amid began by explaining how impressed he's been with the courtesy and willingness of the American troops. "The troops have been very patient with us. They are always willing to assist us. They have a strong message to convey

"Iraqis love you and Iraqis want you to stay in our country. You are not occupiers. You are liberators."

– Hamela Aqrawee

and have done a great job." He added, "There have been many times when I've forgotten about something I asked them to do. Days or weeks may pass and when talking to the Soldiers they'll remind me of something I said. They have been so good about paying attention and doing anything we ask."

Explaining that with freedom comes the expansion of commercial and civic organizations, Amid said, "Under the Saddam regime we had 4 newspapers. Now we have 150." He added, "We didn't have city councils. Now we have 9 in Baghdad, alone." explained Amid.

When addressing the American media coverage of the war, Amid asked that the media be fair and represent the humanitarian and restoration efforts as well. "Over 600 schools have been built and renovated, hospitals established, sewage treated, water treatment facilities created. Many positive things have happened. I have not seen any American media represent these things. They only show blood and bombings."

Hamela explained how the devotion of the American forces motivates her to keep speaking out about the atrocities of the past and the benefits being seen today.

Though her 24 year-old sister was killed because of what she's doing, Hamela continues to spread the news. "When I see troops come a thousand miles, from the United States, I know I can never stop what I'm doing. This motivates me everyday."

Hamela stated with passion, "Iraqis love you and Iraqis want you to stay in our country. You are not occupiers. You are liberators." She added, "This is a truth that all Iraqis know." Hamela was very clear about this point, even to correct a reporter who referred to the American presence in Iraq as an occupation.

"When I wake up in the morning I wonder if it's true or



Photos by Tech Sgt. Darin Overstreet

Hamela Aqrawee expresses her gratitude to troops, their families, and America, in general, for their devotion to the liberation of Iraq.

if it's a dream," said Hamela. "I keep telling my parents that if it's a dream, I'll have to kill myself afterwards, because I've already touched the freedom of democracy."

A significant benefit, addressed by both speakers, is Iraqis now have access to information. Hamela noted, "When people found out I was coming to America, I got thousands of e-mails from people wanting me to say 'thank you.' We never had e-mail before. We never had access to the Internet. Now Iraqis can even have satellite television. We were never allowed to see news from other countries before, only what Saddam wanted us to see."

Deep into an American election season, many Americans have become complacent and take the right to vote for granted. "We never thought we'd have an election.

In elections of the past, 99.999 percent said Saddam was elected. That was our life," explained Hamela.

When addressing the scope of the liberation, Hamela noted, "I'm a woman. I can now act. I can have my role in the government. Women now make up 25% of the Iraqi government. Is this little what you did for us? It is not little. It is too much." She added, "Don't ever think that Iraqis will forget what you're doing. We will never forget."

"For 35 years we have had contaminated water. For three years I've filtered my water, but we now have clean water," said Amid.

Hamela added, "Thousands of people died of cancer from the water."

"We now have water. We have democracy. We have freedom. We have women acting in the government," expressed Hamela. "You are welcome in our country. You are our liberators."

"I don't know that one word of thank you will be enough, but for all Iraqi people, 'thank you very much!'"



Of the nearly 100 people in attendance, the majority of the audience consisted of Colorado National Guard members, active duty Air Force, family members and high school students.

President Bush addresses National Guard Association

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

LAS VEGAS, Nev. – President George W. Bush praised the National Guard for taking on a significant part of the United States' global war against terrorism during a Sept. 14 address that was punctuated with pep and policy.

"The National Guard has played a critical role in every aspect of Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom. You are a vital part of the defense in America," said Bush while personally addressing more than 4,000 people at the Las Vegas Convention Center on the first day of the National Guard Association of the United States' 126th General Conference and Exhibition.

"We're fighting our enemies in Iraq and Afghanistan and across the globe so we do not have to face them here at home," Bush said. "America is safer because of your service."

"When tragedy strikes, America can always count on the Guard," said the 43rd president who received thunderous ovations because of his status as this country's military commander and chief and after he was introduced as a former jet fighter pilot in the Texas Air National Guard and a former commander in chief of the Texas Guard during his six years as governor.

"Nineteen individuals have served both in the Guard and as president of the United States, and I'm proud to be one of them," Bush told the packed assembly hall.

Among those who relished the president's praise were LTG H Steven Blum, chief of the

National Guard Bureau; Lt. Gen. Roger Schultz, director of the Army National Guard; and Lt. Gen. Daniel James III, director of the Air National Guard who served as the Texas adjutant general when Bush was governor.

"His remarks were outstanding. They were focused. They were very motivating to the citizen-Soldiers and Airmen that he depends on very strongly to defend the homeland both here at home and abroad," said Blum.

It was the second time that Bush has addressed the National Guard Association's annual conference as a presidential candidate. He addressed the gathering in Atlantic City, N.J., via satellite connection in 2000 when he made his first bid for the White House.

The president's father, George H. W. Bush, addressed the NGAUS conference in 1992, and Sen. Bob Dole spoke to the gathering in 1996 when they were Republican presidential candidates.

Bush focused on issues that are important to the large number of Guard members involved in the war against terror.

They included:

- Striving for 30-day notifications before Guard members and other reservists are mobilized so they have time to make arrangements at home.

- Determining the length of mobilizations up front so the troops will know when they can resume their civilian lives.

- Expanding TRICARE health benefits so that Guard and reserve forces and their families are eligible for up to 90 days before the troops report for duty and 180 days after sep-

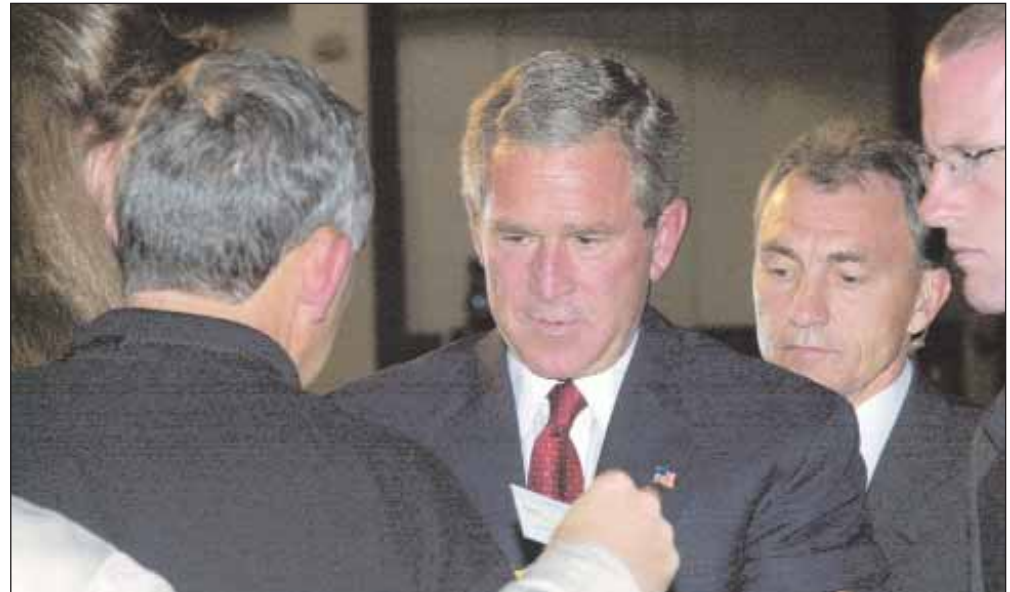


Photo by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

President George W. Bush shakes hands with delegates to the National Guard Association of the United States' annual conference following his address on Sept. 14 in Las Vegas, Nev.

aration.

"I'm going to ask Congress to make that expansion permanent," the president promised.

Those issues are important, National Guard Association officials pointed out, because today nearly 100,000 citizen-Soldiers are mobilized for the war on terror and other missions at home and abroad. Most are in or are preparing for fall deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. Others are on Balkan peacekeeping duty or homeland security missions. Still others are helping Florida residents recover from hurricanes Charley and Frances.

"In all, more than 225,000 Guardsmen - roughly half the force - have been called to active duty since the Sept. 11 attacks," it was explained.

None of that has been lost on President Bush.

"These are dangerous times. We cannot waiver, because our enemies will not waiver," he said. "You've shown your commitments, service, your standards and honor and your performance of duty. American citizen-Soldiers reflect great credit on the military and on the country, and I'm here to thank you for your service."

Constantine assumes duties as Massachusetts National Guard's assistant adjutant general

By Spc. David J. Claffey
Massachusetts National Guard

MILFORD, Mass. – For Col. Manuel J. Constantine, being named the Assistant Adjutant General of the Massachusetts National Guard after 37 years of service in the organization was a pleasant surprise.

Scheduled to retire at the end of August, the Framingham resident quickly changed his mind when he was offered the new position.

"I am very excited and proud to take this position," he said. "There is nothing like leading and working with Soldiers and Airmen; and we have some of the best."

Constantine began his military career with the 109th Signal Battalion as an enlisted soldier in 1967.

He earned his commission in 1972 as an infantry officer and rose through the ranks, eventually becoming the chief of staff for the Massachusetts National Guard. Now he takes on this new, governor appointed position with renewed energy and responsibility.

"We need to accelerate the transformation and modernization of the Guard," he said. "There are a lot of old procedures that don't work as well today. We have a smaller force and we must identify ways to be more efficient and work in a 21st century Joint Force environment."

He now oversees a variety of departments in the Military Division, including legislative affairs, administration and finance and historical services. He is the primary liaison between the Guard and the officials in the Massachusetts state government and other state agencies.

Married to his wife Dolores for 34 years, Constantine has two children, Brian and Julie.



Photo courtesy of Gov. Romney's Press Office

Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney congratulates the Massachusetts National Guard's new assistant adjutant general, Col. Manuel J. Constantine, after a swearing in ceremony at the State House. Flanked by his wife, Dolores Constantine, and Maj. General George W. Keefe, the Adjutant General of Massachusetts, the 37-year veteran will act as a liaison between the state government and the Guard.

Blum hosts GWOT Expeditionary Medal presentation ceremony

By Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. -Almost 300 members of the Army and Air National Guard gathered at the Double Tree Hotel Sept. 10, 2004 to honor fellow Active Duty Title 10 Guardsmen who were decorated with a medal their efforts in fighting the war on terror.

LTG H Steven Blum, chief, National Guard Bureau, Lt. Gen. Daniel James III, director, Air National Guard and Brig. Gen. Frank Grass, deputy director, Army National Guard, were among the officials to hand out 43 of the 77 medals to recipients of the Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal. Some recipients were unavailable to attend due to on going deployments and other service commitments.

"It's not everyday that Title 10 individuals get to deploy," said Sgt. Maj. John Leonard, command sergeant major, National Guard Bureau. "I'm proud to be here today with the Chief to recognize these individuals." Leonard, along with Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith, command chief master sergeant, Air National Guard, and Sgt. Maj. Roberto Munoz, Army National Guard Readiness Center installation sergeant major, also assisted Blum during the medal presentation.

The recipients were presented with the GWOT Expeditionary Medal one day before the 3rd anniversary of the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks. An executive order to create the award was signed by President George W. Bush in March 2003. "In consideration of new military roles in a post-Sept. 11 environment, the Department of Defense developed these awards for military members to provide flexible and tangible recognition for those serving in the current war against terrorism, a war that spans the globe and includes many diverse campaigns," said department officials.

During the ceremony, Blum stressed the importance of the Guard's role in the war on terror. "There is no question as to how essential the Army and Air National Guard are," he said. "No one in the history of the Guard has ever been asked to serve, we have always volunteered and we should be proud of that."

He also urged everyone in attendance to recognize what



Photo by Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley

LTG H Steven Blum offers closing remarks at a medal presentation ceremony after helping present over 40 Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medals to Army and Air National Guardsmen in a ceremony at the Double Tree Hotel in Arlington, Va.

it means to call the Guard to war, "When you call out the Guard, you call out all of America." Calling out to America distinguishes how the Guard brings the hometown support from family, friends, employers and neighbors to the war, Blum explained.

For one recipient, it was the first time in his 24 year Army career he was called up to serve. Master Sgt. Kenneth McKnight spent five months stationed in Iraq near the Baghdad International Airport from April to September 2003 as an operations sergeant.

"It was a great experience being over there," he said. "It let's you know that you can accomplish the mission you train for when you enter war."

An Air National Guardsman who received the award

remarked on how easily the Guard fit into the Total Force.

"There were only a handful of Guardsmen deployed to my location out of 300 military and civilian personnel," said Lt. Col. Michael Smith, who served for four months as the deputy commander of the 380th Expeditionary Maintenance Group in the United Arab Emirates.

"But the Guardsmen rolled right in without missing a beat and you couldn't tell who was a Guardsman and who was not."

Smith, who received his medal from Blum, was grateful to be recognized. "I'm proud to have done my part in the fight against evil," he said. "And I'm really proud of all the young Americans out there doing their part, too."

Red Horse Squadron saves town's water supply

By Spc. James Cornwell

Florida National Guard

BARTOW, Fla.- This Central Florida town seems to be in the middle of Mother Nature's bulls-eye this year.

Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Jeanne have all passed through this small Polk County town on their way through the state. Those storms had not threatened the town's water supply until now.

The nearby Peace River, which was expected to crest Sept. 29, flooded well over its banks and threatened a lift station that forwards contaminated water to the sewage treatment facility for Bartow.

When Bartow city officials saw the crisis coming, they asked the state for help. In response the state

"You really made a difference in the town here."

- Brig. Gen. Michael Fleming

sent eight members of the Florida Air National Guard's 202nd RED HORSE Squadron, a civil engineering unit based at the Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, near Starke.

Once dispatched, the Airmen began building a berm around the lift station and pumped the water around it out.

The unit started work Sept. 28 and finished some last-minute cleanup before the weekend, said Master Sgt. Allen Brinkley, the team leader.

The Red Horse Squadron used 3,600 cubic yards of dirt, provided

by Falcon Contracting of Bartow, to build the berm with two bulldozers, an excavator and a front-end loader in just two days. The team completed the berm and began pumping water away from the lift station's electrical transformer.

"We put a cork in the Peace River," said Staff Sgt. Haywood Brown, a heavy equipment operator with the Red Horse Squadron.

The completed task ensured clean water would continue for about 6,500 customers, said Brinkley.

The task was nothing new for the Airmen who have been on state active duty since Aug. 13. Since

the four hurricanes that pummeled the state, the squadron has deployed in West Palm Beach, Port Charlotte, Punta Gorda, Bradford County, Vero Beach and Pensacola.

Many of their missions involved clearing roads, removing debris from airports and fixing some buildings. In Pensacola, they focused on clearing and repairing schools.

Now, the Red Horse men and women perform missions in Lakeland - building a berm to prevent flooding of the Oak Hill Burial Park; Winter Haven to prevent further flooding from the Chain of Lakes; St. Lucie County removing of debris and roof repairs at six different schools; Indian River County debris removal for

schools; and Bartow debris removal.

The Red Horse Squadron also supported the Global War on Terrorism last year; sending Airmen to Afghanistan, Iraq, Qatar, the United Arab Emirates and filled positions for deployed active duty Air Force members at Moody Air Force Base, Ga. The squadron rebuilt the runway at Baghdad International Airport after coalition forces secured it.

"You really made a difference in the town here," said Brig. Gen. Michael Fleming, assistant adjutant general of Florida National Guard, as he visited the work site thanking the Airmen for their efforts.

New York National Guard military police train in Sri Lanka

By Master Sgt. KC Kelly

New York Army National Guard

KUKELEGANGA, SRI LANKA – At a remote training site nestled in the steamy mountainous jungle here, forty-five citizen-Soldiers of the 105th, 107th, and 442nd Military Police Companies, New York National Guard, joined forces with ten other nations for Exercise "Sama Gamana '04."

On this teardrop-shaped island in the Indian Ocean, just off the southeastern tip of India, the MPs trained this June with soldiers from Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, and Mongolia, in a multinational platoon exercise to learn peacekeeping operations.

"Sama Gamana," or "Peace Walk" in Sinhalese, brought together nearly 270 troops from the five nations, plus advisor/observers of the United Nations Training Assistance Team representing the United States, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bangladesh, Mongolia, Croatia, Uruguay, Ghana, Malaysia, Hungary and Norway.

The U.N. mission-based scenario training included checkpoint operations, patrolling, convoy operations, civil disorder control, and improvised explosive device detection and disarming. Each of the five nations provided a platoon of soldiers and a controller team.

Capt. Roberta Comerford, commander of the 107th MP Co., Utica, has been preparing for this event for over a year. She assisted in selecting the training site and planning the exercise, created a platoon from three MP companies, and designed a team of trainers to teach checkpoint operations. Then she successfully deployed them all overseas. "I've never been this involved in planning an AT," she admitted.

"Sama Gamana" was the third exercise of its type, and the first in Sri Lanka. The first MPE was in Nepal in 2000, followed by one in Bangladesh in 2002.

"Each nation's troops understand their own tactics, techniques and procedures, but we wanted them to see how others do it," said John O. Derick, United Nations Training Advisor. Derick helped design the concept of the Multinational Platoon Exercise. He has planned, executed,

and monitored all three MPEs.

"At the same time, we wanted to show them that a situation can go nasty very quickly, very easily, if they don't understand the [U.N.] concept," Derick said. "I always tell them, 'Try to de-escalate the situation, not make it worse.'"

"In this scenario, you must learn to negotiate, use the minimum force necessary, and keep in your mind that you are here not to fight, but maintain the peace," said Lt. Col. Mahinda Mudalige, commander of Headquarters Battalion, Sri Lankan Light Infantry.

Military Police are trained to immediately control many dangerous situations, always ready to use force if necessary. "It's hard to turn that off," Comerford said.

English was the standard language for the training. Each platoon had at least one officer fluent in English, who translated between the soldiers, lane trainers, and U.N. observers when necessary.

"This is the most amazing thing that we've ever done!" said Spc. James Nessia, 107th MP Co. "When you go to Ft. Drum, the trainers are reading out of the same book you are. Here, you learn that there are other ways to do it."

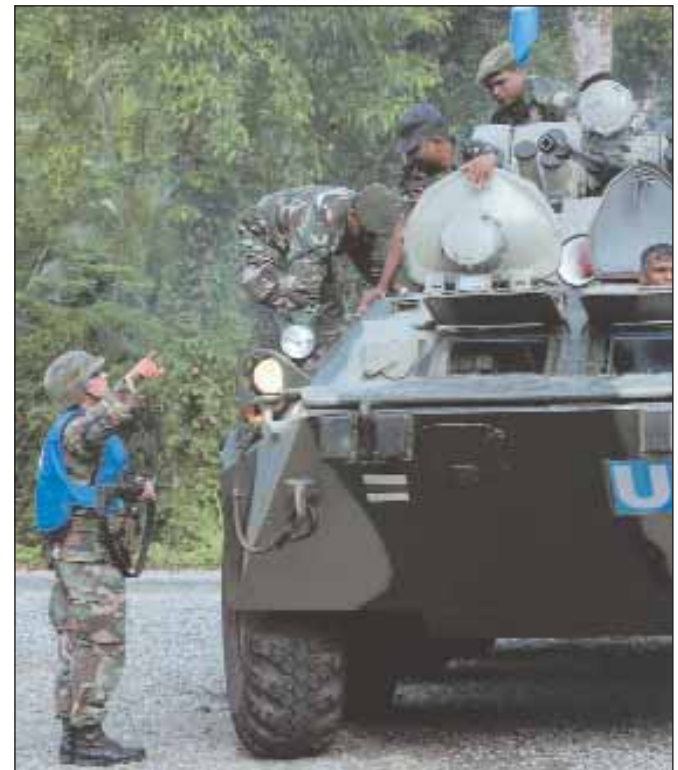
The MPs sweated for nearly three tropical weeks during Sri Lanka's southwest monsoon season, with daytime temperatures in the low nineties Fahrenheit, and nearly 100 percent humidity.

"During the first week, the platoon went through 12 cases of water a day!" said platoon leader 2nd Lt. John A. Vanlaningham, 107th MP Co. That's over a gallon per soldier each day.

But it wasn't all work and no play. When off duty, the Soldiers toured a local tea factory, and had a chance to shop in a nearby village.

Sri Lanka was once called Ceylon, and is still world renowned for its high quality teas. Each morning during the training, there was a short break for tea. "Sri Lankans are very hospitable," Comerford said. "I'm not used to having tea time during AT!"

The Soldiers enjoyed Sri Lankan hospitality, which includ-



Photos by Master Sgt KC Kelly

New York Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Paul Jaworski coordinates with Sri Lankan mechanized infantry troops to establish a checkpoint.

ed traditional meals, often heavily laden with curry and hot pepper. "Spicy, spicy, spicy!" Nessia said. "And everything with rice. I think I'll be off rice for a while!"

As the militaries of 11 countries were represented at Kukeleganga, there was a multitude of uniforms present. After the exercise's closing ceremonies, many of the Soldiers began trading uniform items for souvenirs. The barracks area quickly became a bustling flea market, as berets, rank insignias, pins and patches were bartered for patrol caps, T-shirts, and even combat boots from far-away lands. The Asian troops were particularly enamored with the American Soldiers' "Leatherman" and "Gerber" multi-tools, and "Camelbak" hydration packs. Some MPs returned home with brown-camouflaged Mongolian "Boonie" hats. Others, with a coveted Gurka Kukuri knife from Nepal.

"We learned not only the business aspect, but the personal aspect as well," Comerford said. "We have new friends around the world."

Three of the five platoons that trained during "Sama Gamana" are already slated for U.N. peacekeeping missions. The Sri Lankan platoon is going to Haiti, the Mongolian platoon is going to Iraq, and the Nepalese platoon is going to Burundi.

The Citizen-Soldiers from New York certainly stood out among the other troops. Not only were they the only military police involved in the training, they were the only non-active duty Soldiers.

"The hardest part was explaining the National Guard to them," Nessia said. "Enlistment in the Sri Lankan Army is for 12 years. If you want to re-enlist, it's another eight-year commitment. They didn't understand when I said, 'I'm part-time. I'm going home.'"



New York Army National Guard 2nd Lt. Christopher P. Rowe instructs a platoon of Nepalese Infantry soldiers during "Sama Gamana '04" in Sri Lanka.

FROM PAGE 1

Gipe

Thousands of Kentucky's Army and Air Guard troops have taken part in the global war against terrorism during Gipe's tenure as state command sergeant major, and, he pointed out, more than 1,100 Kentucky Army Guard engineer, transportation, aviation and military police personnel are

preparing to deploy during the next couple of months.

About 450 are already serving in that theater.

Gipe already anticipates that his biggest challenges will include improving the Army Guard's readiness and strength. "We also

have to help our Soldiers' families and work with the employers," he added.

He has already spent time overseas, visiting Kentucky Guard Soldiers three times in Afghanistan and once in Kuwait, Gipe said.

Gipe has attended Western Kentucky University and Brescia College since gradu-

ating from Madison Consolidated High School in Madison, Ind., in 1975.

He resides in Floyds Knobs, Ind., near Louisville, Ky., with his wife Tony. Their daughter, Courtney, is a freshman at Western Kentucky University in Bowling Green.

Guard training continues throughout the winter

By Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley
National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. - If there is one war the Guard will continue to fight, it's against Mother Nature. This year alone, Guard members have dealt with four hurricanes in Florida, flooding in West Virginia, and wildfires in California. And now the winter months are upon us all. Even though the temperatures drop, the training for the National Guard continues.

"We don't stop training just because it's cold," said Capt. John Wisniewski, Minnesota's 55th Civil Support Team operations officer. "However, we try to limit our exposure to the elements."

CSTs are important elements of the National Guards preparedness for homeland defense and homeland security. Their mission spans all 54 states and territories 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and 365 days a year. From the tropical weather in Hawaii to the cold weather in Minnesota, the teams have to be prepared to answer a call for support at anytime, rain or shine, hot or cold.

The 55th CST will be take part in a joint training with the Coast Guard in Duluth,

Minn., on Lake Superior in February. Last year, the team trained near there where temperatures reached 30 degrees below zero with windchills of about minus 50.

Extreme temperatures like that can prove to be a challenge for using equipment, but it doesn't stop the mission.

"The cold weather really drains our equipment, but it just takes more energy to run everything," said Wisniewski.

Training year round allows Guardsmen to recognize any equipment concerns they may face with climate changes. The 55th has already discovered a need to bring in new decontamination equipment because of the cold weather. Also, medical personnel on the team have to shift their training and safety concerns.

"The medical team has a new direction when it comes to the cold," said Wisniewski. "They have to watch for additional cold weather injuries such as frostbite."

"A lot of people don't stop to think about the dangers of working in their Personal Protective Equipment during the cold," agreed Lt. Col. Alicia Tate-Nadeau, Illinois Guard spokesman. "After working, people sweat in their suits and we have to watch

"They learn basic winter survival skills such as building a snow cave for warmth, how to ski and snowshoe, and ice climbing."

– Staff Sgt. John Brooks

them as they begin to cool down in a cold environment."

Illinois' Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear or High-Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package will perform decontamination training this month and again in January.

"January in Illinois is really cold," said Tate-Nadeau.

But again, the Guard is ahead of the game. The Illinois Guard is ordering special gloves to outfit the heavy decontamination gloves the CERFP team members wear during their training.

Other weather barriers the CERFPs face are hoses freezing and ice around the decontamination site. These are just a few of the hazards team members are on the lookout for during their training, said Tate-Nadeau. Warming tents are also provided on site for Guardsmen while training in cold weather.

By continually training, the Guard is prepared to overcome any issues, weather relat-

ed, or not. For those states that face Old Man Winter, such as Vermont and Maine, Guardsmen are taught additional cold weather survival skills.

"Eventually every Soldier goes through a two week Mountain Warfare School in Vermont," said Army Staff Sgt. John Brooks, logistics NCO at Bravo Co., 3/172 Infantry, Maine Army National Guard. This preparation can provide Soldiers with the additional knowledge of working in a cold weather environment. They also learn survival tips like keeping their canteen upside down because water freezes from the top down so they can still drink from their canteens, said Brooks.

Across the states and territories, the Guard is prepared to train and fight even as the cold weather sets in. Whether from Mother Nature or a terrorist attack, this organization proves itself ready for any "snowballs" thrown its way.

West Virginia Guardsmen help restore life after flood

By Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley
National Guard Bureau

WHEELING, W.Va. – Two weeks earlier Spc. Charles Robinson was sworn into the West Virginia Army National Guard. Now, he is already serving on state active duty. While thousands of Florida National Guardsmen aid in cleaning up after Hurricanes Charley, Frances and Ivan, West Virginia activated troops for flood clean up duty when Ivan caused severe storms that led to flooding in eight West Virginia counties.

"We're bringing all the necessary supplies to the disaster areas," said Robinson, a truck driver. "We've got a lot of bleach, brooms, mops, water and buckets from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. All this is necessary to sanitize the flooded areas."

Soldiers and equipment from Kentucky and Virginia are also supporting the state clean up mission.

Flooding on the Ohio River was anticipated, but the tremendous amount of rainfall caused flash flooding in parts of West Virginia unprepared for it.

"State officials are calling this the worst flooding since the 1930s," said Maj. Mike Cadle, West Virginia National Guard spokesman.

Ohio County has been hardest hit, and over 400 Soldiers are stationed in that county alone assisting in the clean up efforts. It is also the main distribution point for the supplies. That is where Robinson is working.

"Every morning there is a line of semi-trucks waiting to drop off more supplies," he said. Supplies are hauled out to distribution sites almost as quickly as they arrive.

FEMA is paying for the landfill fees and the thousands of cleaning supplies the Guard is distributing. "The county requests a need to the state for supplies or clean up, and we do what we can to fulfill it," said Maj. Joel Sandy, liaison officer.

Across the counties, 1,500 Soldiers and Airmen are doing their part. Jobs vary from picking up trash in front end loaders, driving five-and 10-ton trucks to landfills, vehicle repairs, distribution of supplies, flying supplies and state officials to flood sites, and traffic control.

On Wheeling Island a week after the flooding occurred, residents continue to clear inches of mud out of their homes and throw away everything damaged from the flood. Nearly every house's front yard is stacked with debris for the troops to pick up and haul to landfills.

Clean up efforts can last for weeks; it might even take more than a month. "We'll be here until the job gets done, or the Guard can't do anymore," said Sandy.

As the five-ton trucks filled to their brims with garbage roll down the streets, residents are grateful for the help the Guard is providing.

"We really couldn't do it without them," said Joyce Piefer, a Wheeling resident who lives adjacent to the river. "We appreciate all they are doing, but I just don't think there are enough of them for all the work that needs to be done."

The West Virginia National Guard is a strong, but small force. It has 6,200 Soldiers and Airmen of which 1,300 are on federal active duty supporting the global war on terrorism. And much of the equipment they need for clean up efforts stayed in Iraq after the engineer unit spent nearly a year and half there.

At times like this, West Virginia can call on the Emergency Management Assistance Compact it has signed with surrounding states. And call on it they did.

Kentucky responded immediately and sent much needed Soldiers and vehicles here, and Virginia has provided some of their equipment, too. Connecticut and Maryland also have resources on stand-by if needed.

"Each state helps each other out," said Sgt. 1st Class James Dean, a platoon sergeant from Kentucky.

West Virginia National Guard has now activated 77 percent of its total force for state or federal duty since Sept. 11, 2001. Many of the Soldiers and Airmen activated within the state have recently returned from long overseas deployments, so the help from surrounding states is necessary to get the mission done.

"They would have done the same for us," added Sgt. Thomas Dalton, an engineer. "Especially if a lot of our troops were deployed overseas like theirs are." All the Kentucky Soldiers volunteered for state active duty.



Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell

Soldiers fill 5-ton trucks full of the garbage residents had to throw out after the flood caused damaged to many homes on Wheeling Island.

But that is the duty of the National Guard, to serve both the state and federal government. The Guard is needed overseas to fight the global war on terrorism as much as it is needed at home for something like flood clean up.

Robinson may have to drop out of this college this semester, depending how long the clean up will take, but he doesn't mind.

"Folks have a real hard time recovering after something like this," he said. "It's important that I am here to do my part."

Vermont's Mountain Battalion trains for

By Spc. Whitney Hughes

Vermont National Guard

BURLINGTON, Vt. – Since 9/11, it's no longer been business as usual for the Guard. For the last three years, Soldiers have seen changes across the board, not only in preparing for deployments, but also enhancing homeland security.

And no training better illustrated this new agenda than the Military Operations Urban Terrain and Close Quarters Battle training that the 3rd Battalion of the 172nd Mountain Infantry, in conjunction with 17 law enforcement agencies, conducted on Sept. 11.

"We've revamped our training a lot in the last two years, solely on the possibility of being deployed," said 1st Lt. Mark Dooley, a special operation officer, with the Mountain Battalion. Dooley added that in their traditional role his Soldiers would be focus more on mountainous terrain and tactical skills.

However, in this training exercise the Soldiers were honing skills that would be used for combat in urban areas, such as room clearing, in simulated building settings and other urban areas.

The training is critical because the National Guard is being deployed in increasingly more versatile roles. The need for soldiers to be prepared to fight in different situations is key to mission readiness, Dooley said.

In addition to learning new skills



(Above) Vermont Army National Guard Soldiers and a local civilian policeman stand in a stack formation as they prepare to clear a room at the Mission Oriented Urban Training exercise at the Ethan Allen Firing Range in Jericho, Vt.

(Below) Capt. David Matzel, the supply officer for the 3rd Battalion of the 172nd Mountain Infantry, serves as a member of Opposing Force team.



s for urban warfare with local authorities



(Above) A Vermont Soldier performs an enemy of prisoner of war search during the exercise. (Left) Capt. Lianne Tuomey, an officer with Police Services at the University of Vermont stands at the ready as a room is being cleared.



Soldiers and local civilian police train their weapons on an Opposing Force role player while receiving a situational report as the team clears a room during a clearing exercise at Ethan Allen Firing Range in Jericho, Vt. on Sept. 11.

FROM PAGE 8

MOUNT

and tactics, it was the first time Soldiers participated in urban combat training with civilian law enforcement agencies.

"This joint training exercise demonstrates the Guard's continued cooperation with State agencies and commitment to our communities," said the Vermont National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Martha T. Rainville.

The training was based on basic Soldier skill fundamentals and principals, but they also drew on training skills used at the Army Ranger training battalion. The soldiers

were taught using the crawl, walk, run methodology of training.

First, they were given a block of instruction in a classroom. Next, they used the skills in training lanes. And last, they had to sweep a compound under simulated enemy fire using the skills that they had learned in the previous training.

Dooley said they wanted the Soldiers to grasp the basic fundamental principals of urban terrain and close quarters combat.

"As long as they learn the basics here they can always build on their skills from there,"

he added.

Although the exercise was run solely based on Army procedure, both the civilians and the Soldiers were able to capitalize on each other's tactical experience.

"It's always good to get out and get as much training to keep up your skills," said Detective Ray Nail, a member of the Burlington Police Department.

Meanwhile, the Soldiers were able to have a different perspective to offer additional input to their training exercise. At the end of the exercise the Soldiers gave the civilian

law enforcement officials an opportunity explain where their training varied from the Soldiers, and what they would have done differently, said Dooley.

Overall, the training provided an opportunity for the both Soldiers and civilian law enforcement train on essential skills.

"Our Soldiers and Airmen remain ready and capable to fulfill both their state and federal commitments to protect the safety and stability of Vermont," Rainville said.

Guardsmen serve the homeland with combat experience

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – This year's busy hurricane season that caused so much consternation and billions of dollars of damage in Florida and her sister states demonstrated how combat seasoning makes National Guard Soldiers more confident and capable to conduct homeland security missions in their own backyards.

National Guard officials are eager to share that message with all Americans who are paying Veterans Day tributes on Nov. 11 to military personnel who are serving at home and abroad during the global war on terrorism as well as to those who have served before.

More than 6,800 Florida Guard Soldiers and Airmen were pressed into state service in August and September to help civil authorities and other Floridians cope with a tropical storm and four hurricanes, including Charley and Francis, said Lt. Col. Ron Tittle, a Florida National Guard spokesman.

A significant number of them, including hundreds of members of the Florida Army Guard's 124th Infantry, had recently completed combat tours in Iraq.

Undoubtedly, they were moved by the devastation that left millions of people without

homes, running water, and electricity for lights and air conditioning in their state. But they were not intimidated because they had all too recently served in places where other Soldiers and civilians had been killed and wounded by snipers, roadside bombs and rocket-propelled grenades.

Guard men and women distributed water, ice and food to thousands of Florida people who were without. They supported local law enforcement agencies by patrolling neighborhoods, enforcing curfews and directing traffic at busy intersections until power was restored to traffic lights.

No one was shooting at them in the Sunshine State, but the skills that they employed in such Iraqi places as Baghdad and Ballad served them well in Florida communities such as Punta Gorda and Port Charlotte.

"Having served in Iraq gives us a lot more confidence to do this job here at home," said Sgt. Jonathan O'Connor who served in Iraq from May 2003 until last February with the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry. "It's not nearly as dangerous, and everyone speaks the same language. So that's not such a big problem."

"It's essentially the same kind of work," said commander of the 124th Infantry's 1st Battalion that reported for duty in mid-

"Because of the experience they gained in Iraq they're following all of the proper radio procedures almost automatically. They report in when they are leaving for their patrols, where they are and when they return. Two years ago some of these guys wouldn't have thought to use the radio."

– Lt. Col. Sean Ward

August because of Hurricane Charley. "Over there, these guys handed out leaflets and asked people for information about suspected terrorists and their activities. Here they're telling people about food and water distribution points and seeking information about victims of the storm. They use the same tactics, techniques and procedures in both places.

"I can't believe how much this battalion has matured during the last two years," Ward added. "Because of the experience they gained in Iraq, they're following all of the proper radio procedures almost automatically. They report in when they are leaving for their patrols, where they are and when they return. Two years ago some of these guys wouldn't have thought to use the radio."

Dealing with the civilian agencies, such as state and federal emergency management officials and deputy sheriffs and municipal police officers, was also no big deal, Ward

said, because in Iraq they frequently dealt with police officers from that country and coalition Soldiers from other nations.

"And they're used to thinking on their feet," Ward said. "All of their experience adds a tremendous amount of value to these communities."

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston recently cited the Florida Guard troops as examples of the many citizen-Soldiers who have taken part in "the full spectrum of operations that Soldiers around the world are doing."

"Look at the 124th Infantry that served last year in Iraq," Preston said while visiting the Army Guard's Readiness Center in Arlington, Va. "You saw them all over the television guarding cities and other communities in Florida as the hurricanes came through. They all look very good, and they're all combat veterans."

Criminal Investigation: A rewarding career in the Guard

By Staff Sgt. Cheryl Hackley

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. - When he enlisted in the Army so many years ago, he never expected it to have such an impact on his life. Today, he has proudly served almost 40 years in a demanding but rewarding career in criminal investigation, a career field that is in great need of Army Guard Soldiers to follow in his footsteps.

"I couldn't have asked for a better military career and gone to the places I have been," said Senior Special Agent Michael Turner, who retired his civilian career as a law enforcement officer in 1998, and is now the training coordinator at the Criminal Investigation Command Headquarters at Fort Belvoir, Va.

He deployed most recently to Iraq and was assigned to protect senior leaders of the provisional government. His work has also taken him to Afghanistan, Africa, China and Russia, to name a few countries, he said.

"It's keeping me in well past my retirement," Turner said proudly. "If I had only served just one weekend a month, in another occupational specialty, I probably would have gotten out."

As a criminal investigator, a CID special agent is responsible for investigating serious crimes within the Army, or crimes in which the Army has an interest. This may consist of, but is not limited to, death, robberies and larceny on military facilities. Additionally, agents provide secret service-like protection to senior leadership within the Department of Defense as protective services special agents. Turner has been part of a security detail for the secretary of defense.

"Traveling with the SECDEF is an experience I couldn't have imagined," he said.

After the first Gulf War, the Army downsized the CID, but now they are recognizing a need to rebuild their force, said Turner. That, coupled with a heavy reliance on military police to fight the global war on terrorism, has required the CID to recruit even harder.

Both enlisted and warrant officer positions are available. An Air National Guardsman would have to switch to the Army Guard to be eligible. Applicants are mainly military police or security forces, but a Guardsman with another military occupation specialty who has a civilian background in law enforcement is also qualified for the program.

"It's a tremendous opportunity for Soldiers to become one of the Department of Defense's premier law enforcement agents," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Misianowycz, CID's senior NCO.

"We used to have to turn Soldiers away who were interested in these positions," said Turner. "Now with all the new detachments, we have a lot of positions available."

"It takes a unique Soldier to be in CID," he added. "As a reserve component Soldier, CID requires a high level of commitment, but our badge is the same as the active duty."

The dedication of each of these unique agents was evident after the attacks on Sept. 11, 2001. Most showed up the next day, ready to serve. Some were immediately assigned to investigate the site at the Pentagon while others provided security to the SECDEF on down, Turner said.

To apply, applicants need at least two years time in service, rank of at least an

-- E-4, be a U.S. citizen, possess 60 semester hours of college credits and able to obtain a top secret clearance.

Once accepted into the program, Soldiers are required to attend Basic Agent Training for four months in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. Agent training offers a wide range of specialized investigative skills in areas such as polygraphs and hostage negotiations, Turner said.

CID has five National Guard detachments in the United States with 22 agents per team, but is planning on expanding to 23 detachments by 2009. National Guard units are currently located in Austin, Texas; Fulton, Mo.; Montgomery, Ala.; Sacramento, Calif.; and Washington, D.C.

New detachment locations have been identified for California, Illinois, Minnesota, Missouri and Texas so far. All



Photo courtesy of the U.S. Army CID

Rumsfeld: Part of the CID mission is to provide protective services to high ranking Department of Defense officials such as Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld.

applications are reviewed and approved at the CID Command Headquarters at Fort Belvoir.

"If an individual is interested in becoming an agent in one of these locations before the slots are available, the best thing they can do is join a MP unit now because that is where the bulk of the agents are drawn from," said Capt. Scott Peterson, military police organizational integrator at National Guard Bureau.

Otherwise, Soldiers should contact their nearest CID unit or visit www.cid.army.mil for more information on the program.

The opportunities for training in law enforcement, being an active participant in the global war on terror and the pride found within a career field as challenging as criminal investigation is well worth your time and then some, as demonstrated by Turner.

"I wouldn't have traded it for the world," he said.

Command chief addresses enlisted: Priorities and challenges ahead

By Tech. Sgt. Bob Oldham

189th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

LITTLE ROCK AIR FORCE BASE, Ark. – Recruiting and retention, fitness and a busy operations tempo are just a few of the challenges Air Guard members are expected to face, according to Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith, the Air National Guard's command chief master sergeant.

The chief was here on a weekend visit, Nov. 5-7, to speak to the Arkansas Air National Guard's Enlisted Symposium for chief master sergeants and first sergeants and to meet and talk with enlisted ANG members.

Recruiting and retention are top priorities for the chief.

"We were within a few hundred (recruits) of where we need to be" for last year, the chief said.

He said retention was a key in fiscal year 2004 with more than 91.3 percent of ANG members reenlisting when their commitment was up. That exceeded the retention goal of 88 percent.

"We met our end strength by overachieving our retention goal," he said. "But that means we didn't meet our recruiting goal."

As the Air Force draws down to meet its Fiscal year 2005 end strength, the chief said Palace Chase opportunities could help recruiters meet their goals.

"I like having an Airman walk in that's a 5-level or 7-level, and we just put them to work," the chief said. "We bring in somebody that's been active duty; it obviously helps our mission, our unit vacancies ... because we bring in a trained person."

A busy operations tempo plays a role in recruiting and retention and does help Airmen decide if they want to stay in the service or move on.

With around 6,800 Air Guard members mobilized or deployed on an Air and Space Expeditionary Force rotation, the chief said this is the lowest operations tempo it's been for the Air Guard since the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11, 2001.

"For the most part, we're really down from where we were in March-April 03," he said. "Ops tempo is really an issue we have to watch."

In line with being ready to deploy, the chief said Air Guard members must place physical fitness as a top personal priority.

While active duty troops live on or near a base with a fitness center, Guardsmen might live hours away and not have access to a workout facility.

That's a challenge, the chief noted, but he pointed out that running, push-ups and sit-ups can be done just about anywhere.

"Our PT testing is obviously a culture change that all our people need to be aware of and working on," Chief Smith said.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper has made fitness a Total Force priority with his Fit to Fight initiative and Air Guard members have taken it to heart. According to the chief, 48,000 Air Guardsmen have tested and 42,000 have passed the physical fitness test since testing began in April.

"We have to change the mindset of our enlisted members, and our officers, that we need to be a healthy force through exercise," he said.

Exercising three to five times a week and eating right is a culture change Guardsmen will have to embrace, the chief said. Education of the force will be key if members are to succeed.

While many of the full-time force takes advantage of time off from work for physical fitness, a traditional Guardsman may not have an employer who allows time off for exercise.

"Seventy percent of our force is traditional Guardsmen," Chief Smith said. "We don't see them for 28 days after they walk out (of drill) on Sunday night. We don't know what they've done, so that's where the educational piece comes in."



Smith

With the Air Force recruiting 11,000 fewer Airmen this year, a bright spot for the ANG is the opportunity to send more Air Guard recruits through basic training without making them wait for a BMT slot. In addition, the chief said, he hopes the Air Guard will be able to send more of those same BMT graduates straight through technical schools instead of them attending BMT for six weeks, returning to home station for a period of time and then returning for technical school.

"There are signs that some of (the Air Force's) career fields are still stressed," he said, noting that the schools stressed for the Air Force are also stressed for the Air Guard.

Special counsel upholds job protection rights for Guard, Reserve

By Donna Miles

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, Nov. 3, 2004 – There's good news for federal employees who have filed claims that their bosses denied them job rights because of their National Guard or reserve service, an attorney with the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve told the American Forces Press Service.

Sam Wright, also a captain in the Naval Reserve, said a new special counsel who took office last January is helping speed along backlogged claims and ensuring that federal employers who violate the law are held accountable.

Wright said Special Counsel Scott J. Bloch is helping ensure the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, commonly referred to as USERRA, is effectively enforced.

The law, which has been in effect for the past 10 years, prohibits employers from discriminating against their workers because of their military service. Congress passed the law to safeguard the employment rights and benefits of servicemembers upon their return

to civilian life.

USERRA applies to the federal, state and local governments and to private employers, regardless of size.

Employees who believe their employers have violated their rights under USERRA file a complaint with the Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service, Wright explained in an article in this month's "The Officer," a publication of the Reserve Officers Association.

If a Department of Labor investigation concludes that the case has merit and the employer is a federal agency, the Labor Department refers the case to the Office of Special Counsel, Wright explained.

A General Accountability Office report issued last month criticized the speed in which the Office of Special Counsel moved forward on USERRA complaints.

But Wright said the report covered the agency's operations before Bloch took the reins, ushering in a sea change in the way the complaints are handled. "Referring a USERRA case to OSC is no longer a useless formality," Wright wrote.

So far this year, the Office of Special

Counsel has processed "about a dozen" USERRA cases, some of which had been backlogged as long as two years, according to spokeswoman Cathy Deeds.

Deeds said all but one of the cases resulted in settlement.

One, a complaint filed against the U.S. Postal Service, was referred to the Merit Systems Protection Board for further action.

Wright said this new momentum represents a positive step in protecting Guard and reserve members' job rights.

During a July 8 Pentagon ceremony, Bloch signed a statement of support for the National Guard and reserve and said he supports USERRA, not only as a representative of the administration and a citizen, but as the father of an active-duty Marine.

Bloch's son, Lance Cpl. Michael Bloch, recently returned to Iraq for a second tour of duty.

Wright said the Office of Special Counsel's new emphasis on USERRA enforcement "helps ensure that the federal government stands as a model employer in its treatment of National Guard and reserve employees."

Web references

**Biography: Special Counsel
Scott J. Bloch**

<http://www.osc.gov/specialcounsel.htm>

Related Sites:

**National Committee for Employer
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<http://www.esgr.org/>

**Uniformed Services Employment
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<http://www.osc.gov/userra.htm>

Veterans' Employment and Training

<http://www.dol.gov/vets/>

Office of Special Counsel

<http://www.osc.gov/>

General Accountability Office

<http://www.gao.gov/>

Alabama chaplain helps troops combat life issues

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

LANDSTUHL, Germany - Chaplain Robert Hicks has some words of wisdom for America's National Guard Soldiers and Airmen and other military people who have seen more death and destruction in Iraq and Afghanistan than they can endure.

Seek help. Talk about it. Scream. As soon as possible and as often as you can.

Don't bottle it up. Don't hold it inside. Don't think for a minute that the ugly memories from the combat zones will just go away. Sooner or later they will come back to haunt and hurt you.

So warns Chaplain Hicks, a lieutenant colonel in the Alabama Air National Guard, who this fall is ministering to hundreds of wounded and injured National Guard men and women at the U.S. military's Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in western Germany.

The idea, he said, is to help American service members affected by the images of this global war against terrorism avoid the posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) that still afflicts veterans of the Vietnam War 30 years after they came home to an uncaring and ungrateful nation.

Hicks and Oregon Air Guard Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Richard Sirianni are, to be sure, concerned about the spiritual wellbeing of the National Guard patients from Iraq and Afghanistan who, for the most part, spend a few days at Landstuhl before being sent to another medical facility or returned to duty.

They are also conducting a ministry of the mind. That requires a lot more time than the brief time that the chaplains and doctors can attend to the patients at Landstuhl, Hicks explained. The combat veterans need to talk to someone safe, who will not judge them, about what happened to them and what they have seen after they get home or go back to their units.

"One of the lessons we learned from Vietnam is to get them talking as soon as the bullets stop flying," explained Hicks. "It's important for them to talk as soon as possible."

Hicks, who is also a Baptist minister, is an expert on the subject. He holds a Ph.D. in family development and has counseled and consoled many people experiencing emotional and spiritual trauma.

He coordinated the care for the families of the 137 people who were killed when a jetliner crashed near Dallas, Texas, in August 1985. He has written books about coping with PTSD. One of them, published in 1993, is "Failure to Scream."

"Burying one's pain is unhealthy. The individual outwardly may continue to appear well but inwardly may never grow beyond the moment of the traumatic event," Hicks wrote in his book's introduction.

"If we don't take the time to scream when painful events hit us, we will do our screaming later. But we all scream," he added. "Not to scream may reveal the extent to which we are bleeding to death on the inside."

One remedy, Hicks said, is to learn to live with the situation in order to get on with your life.

The father of three has learned firsthand the truth about his observation to a spiritual wellness group at Landstuhl that "crisis is a part of life, but, unfortunately, life does not prepare you for all of the crises."

His daughter, who was 32, died last February from complications associated with cancer, Hicks explained.

"I will always have three children. It is hard to accept the fact that one of them has died," Hicks told the group. "But I have to incorporate my crisis into my life. I have to wrap my arms around my crisis even though it's the hardest thing I have ever had to do."

That, he and other chaplains claim, requires talking about the crisis, no matter how painful, to someone like a chaplain who will take the secrets to their grave.

Talking to chaplains is a good option for members of the military because "we have confidentiality. We have the highest level of confidentiality of any of the military career fields," explained Chaplain (Col.) John Ellington Jr., chief of the National Guard Chaplain Service.

Chaplains don't have to submit reports or take notes or tell anyone else anything that could affect anyone's military career, he explained. They can't be made to testify during any proceedings under the auspices of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, Ellington added.

But he also stressed the importance of service members telling someone, as soon as possible; that they need help from a chaplain or someone else.



Photo by Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

Military people afflicted with the stress of combat can seek help from chaplains who have the highest level of confidentiality of any military career field, explains Chaplain (Col.) John Ellington Jr., chief of the National Guard Chaplain Service.

"It's OK to seek out someone and talk about this stuff," said Ellington, "someone who is safe and who will not judge you or your career."

Arkansas National Guard joins Bella Vista community to honor veterans



CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark. - Maj. Gen. Don C. Morrow, the adjutant general of Arkansas, represented the state's National Guard in honoring the nation's veterans at the dedication of the Veterans Wall of Honor in Bella Vista, Ark.

The afternoon ceremony marked the end of major construction on the two-acre Veterans Wall of Honor, which is adjacent to Lake Bella Vista. The Wall is dedicated to those who served in the U.S. Armed Forces, and was constructed by the Veterans Council of Bella Vista, which is made up of members from American Legion Post 341 and Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 9063.

Morrow served as a guest speaker at the well attended dedication, and shared the stage with Medal of Honor Recipient Nick Bacon, U.S. Congressman John Boozman, State Senator Kim Hendren, State Representative Shirley Borhauer, State Representative Darrel Pace, U.S. District Judge Jim Larry Hendren, Rogers Mayor and guardsman Col. Steve Womak and other dignitaries.

The Veterans Wall of Honor features 3,000 granite tablets that will be incised to display the name, rank or unit, time period served or other information about our veterans.

Maj. Gen. Don C. Morrow, the Adjutant General of Arkansas, addresses a large crowd gathered to celebrate the dedication.

Transformation:

Time to make it happen

By Master Sgt. Bob Haskell

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – The time is ripe for the Army National Guard to begin transforming its brigades that are returning from combat duty into units that will be primed to take part in future Army operations, the Army's top enlisted Soldier advised Army Guard Soldiers on Oct. 12.

"If you bring units back from a combat zone; if you reset them, patch up the bullet holes in the vehicles, put new tires on trucks and new tracks on tanks and Bradleys and if you reset them back into their legacy configurations, then shame on you," Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston told troops at the Army National Guard's Readiness Center.

"Now is the time to reset those units into the configuration in which they need to be for future operations," Preston added. A window of opportunity now exists to begin that process, he said.

It was friendly advice, not a do-it-or-else message, which Preston offered to the troops he talked with that morning during his first visit to the readiness center as the 13th sergeant major of the Army, the job he assumed last January.

He had run for 25 minutes before dawn that morning with an estimated 80 Army Guard Soldiers at nearby Fort Myer, where he lives, and Preston's visit to the Army Guard's national center was friendly and upbeat.

It was "a historic occasion," observed Command Sgt. Maj. A. Frank Lever III, the Army Guard's top enlisted Soldier and advisor to Lt. Gen. Roger Schultz, the Army Guard's director.

Sgt. 1st Class Sean Niemi, Staff Sgt. Kevin Winn and Sgt. Lana Luciano accepted the challenge to recite, from memory, The Soldiers Creed, with Preston during a town hall meeting.

Still, the big picture about Army transformation that Preston presented during the nearly two-hour meeting was appropriate for all concerned, including the current and future generals and the colonels who will oversee the Army Guard's part of the transformation during the next five years.

The active Army will increase its number of brigades from 33 to 43 by the end of 2006 with the option to add five more brigades by the end of 2007, Preston said, and the Army Guard will have 34 fully-manned brigades.

That, he projected, "is going to help take the pressure off those units that are performing back-to-back deployments." It will also help make it possible to reduce



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Gail Braymen

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston displays and explains the new Army Combat Uniform to Army National Guard Soldiers while visiting the Army Guard's Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., on Oct. 12. Staff Sgt. Shajn Cabrera is holding the uniform.

the length of deployments to places such as Iraq and Afghanistan from a year to nine months or perhaps six months and make Soldiers' lives more predictable and stable, Preston said.

"We want to get away from these 12-month boots on the ground deployments as soon as we can," said Preston who clearly understands the hardships they create for reserve component troops who actually serve for about a year and half so they can train first and then be demobilized afterwards.

"The impact they have on our Guard and Reserve Soldiers and their families; the impact they have on their civilian careers and on their civilian employers out there is very real," he observed.

"Ideally, we want to get to a place where, during a three-year life cycle [for active

duty] Soldiers or during a six-year cycle if you're in the National Guard, a unit will do a six-month, maybe a nine-month deployment," Preston said. "Transformation is really all about predictability and stability for our Soldiers and their families."

Transformation has already started, Preston explained. The 3rd Infantry Division this year has already been transformed from three brigade combat teams into four brigade units of action, and the 101st Airborne Division is undergoing the same process, Preston said.

The Army Guard and Army Reserve will complete their transformations in 2009, he said.

The Army Guard will have 34 brigades, Preston explained, and all of them will be fully manned, whereas now many of the

Army Guard's brigades remain at only 70 percent strength, he pointed out.

There will be 21 infantry and 12 armor brigades and a Stryker brigade, Preston said.

"All of those Guard brigades will be manned at 100 percent and will be equipped with all of the newest equipment to ensure that they are postured just like their active duty counterparts," he said.

And this is a very good time, he maintained, to begin transforming the Guard brigades as they return from deployments in Iraq and Afghanistan because the Army has money and resources for transformation.

"There is narrow window of opportunity," Preston said. "The resources are available to slingshot the Army through transformation."

Contacting a Family Program Coordinator near you

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

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Brigadier General Lodrige lands top inaugural position

By Lt.j.g. Penny Cockerell and
Lt. Cmdr. Pam Warnken

JTF-AFIC Public Affairs

WASHINGTON — U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Duane Lodrige was recently named to provide day-to-day command of the Joint Task Force-Armed Forces Inaugural Committee. He is the first non-Army general officer to serve in the position. An Air National Guard member, he brings more than a decade of *The 55th Presidential Inaugural* command experience and nearly 30 years of flying experience. His title is Deputy Commander, JTF-AFIC, which is overseen by the newly established Joint Forces Headquarters, National Capital Region.

Lodrige is the conduit between JTF-AFIC, the Presidential Inaugural Committee, the Joint Congressional Committee on Inaugural Ceremonies, and various government agencies.

“The mission of the Joint Task Force-Armed Forces Inaugural Committee is to provide ceremonial support on behalf of all the men and women of the Armed Forces,” said Lodrige. “We are comprised of all five services, plus National Guard and Reserve members. We’re behind the scenes coordinating the command and control and military logistical requirements to support the inaugural

events including any military involvement in the galas, special events, the inaugural parade, the inauguration itself and the inaugural balls.”

Lodrige graduated from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1975 and has approximately 4,500 hours of flight time in several aircraft, including F-4 and F-16 fighter jets. After serving six years on active duty, Lodrige joined the Guard. He has also flown more than 13,000 hours as a commercial airline captain.

Lodrige’s combat experience includes Operations Southern Watch and Northern Watch in Iraq. As commander of the 113th Operations Group for Andrews Air Force Base, Md., he helped coordinate the initial Combat Air Patrol and Presidential aircraft escort procedures for the National Capital Region in response to the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks in New York and Washington, D.C. He also flew missions over the Capital in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

“The National Guard has a long history of inaugural involvement, dating from the earliest days of nationhood,” Lodrige said. Forerunners to the Guard such as the Potomac Dragoons and the District of Columbia militia have been involved since the early 1800s. His own District of Columbia National Guard has two marching units that traditionally participate in the Inaugural



Lodrige

parade.

Lodrige joins the inaugural team after serving as Commanding General for the District of Columbia Air National Guard at Andrews AFB, Md. On Jan. 28, 2004, Lodrige was promoted to Brig. Gen. His career accomplishments have brought numerous awards, including the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Medal and the Aerial Achievement Medal.



Submitted photo

During the 2001 inaugural parade, about 5000 active, Guard, Reserve and service academy cadets joined scores of civilian bands and performers in marching down a damp Pennsylvania Avenue. As planners map out President George W. Bush's Jan. 20 inaugural celebration, weather and security are major factors.