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# THE ON GUARD

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February 1999

## Rees returns as Bureau Vice

**Back from the Field:**  
*Former Oregon Adjutant assumes Number 2 post*

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

A man who has looked at the National Guard Bureau from both sides will soon return to Washington, D.C., to serve as its vice chief for the second time this decade.

Army National Guard Maj. Gen. Raymond (Fred) Rees, 54, the adjutant general for Oregon, has been appointed to the Guard Bureau's No. 2 position by Secretary of Defense William Cohen.

Rees previously held that post from September 1992 to January '94. He will help Air Guard Lt. Gen. Russell Davis, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, manage the bureau and advise the Army and Air Force chiefs of staff on National Guard matters.

"I'm looking forward to working with the fine team that General Davis has put together at the bureau," said Rees after his appointment was announced on Jan. 12.

Rees has learned about the Guard Bureau as the head of a state National Guard force and as one of its senior military leaders.

He expects to assume his new duties in mid-March, after his replacement, Brig. Gen. Alexander Burgin, is appointed.

Gov. John Kitzhaber strongly endorsed the appointment that will send the four-year leader of Oregon's nearly 10,000 National Guardmembers to the other side of the country.

"The selection of General Rees as Vice Chief of the National Guard is a tribute both to the professionalism and far-sighted vision of this fine Oregonian," Kitzhaber

stated. "His recognized leadership and expertise in military matters will serve the National Guard and the nation well."

Rees, a former practicing lawyer and 1966 West Point graduate, served with the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam and later became an attack helicopter pilot. He has also been a managing partner for his family's Rees Farm in Helix, Ore.

He became a Beltway veteran after first serving as adjutant general in his native Oregon from 1987-91.

Rees became Director of the Army National Guard in July 1991, and he was appointed Vice Chief of the Guard Bureau in September 1992. He was the acting Chief from January to July of 1994 before returning to Oregon as adjutant general at the request of former Gov. Barbara Roberts.

"It has been good to get back to the field and get my batteries recharged," Rees acknowledged, "but I have missed working in Washington and helping to influence issues on the national level."

He hopes to help Davis address budget issues, he explained, so that National Guard forces can be adequately funded to perform the more active and dramatic missions they have assumed since the end of the Cold War.

The appointment completes a year-long transition in the Bureau's military leadership. Davis, the former vice chief, became chief in July. Maj. Gen. Paul Weaver Jr. became the Air Guard director last January, and Maj. Gen. Roger Schultz took charge of the Army Guard in May.

Rees' appointment was hailed on many fronts. For example, Rees and his wife, the former Mary Len Middleton of Colorado, are staunch advocates of the National Guard's Family Program that supports families when Guardmembers are on state or federal active duty.

They have two grown sons, and their daughter is attending Western Washington University.



Maj. Gen.  
Fred Rees



Photo by Spc. Clinton Wood

## WINTER WARRIOR

An Army Guard soldier runs the biathlon event while attending Camp Ripley's Winter Operations Course. The Minnesota Army Guard-operated camp hosted 84 soldiers from eight states bent on testing their abilities to survive and operate in cold weather.





## COMMENTARY

• On Guard Staff Moves • Formidable Force • News on the Net

## ABOUT the PAPER

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Send on disc (with clean copy) or e-mail your stories to us by the 20th of each month. We prefer that photos (B&W or color print) be mailed.

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## GUARD MAIL

## A Guard-rich Force

*I thoroughly enjoyed MSgt. Bob Haskell's article (Jan. 99) regarding the Air National Guard's command and control role in the air sovereignty mission. First Air Force, whose transition from regular Air Force to Air National Guard became complete in October 1997, is, however, just part of the story.*

First Air Force couldn't complete its mission as the continental U.S. component of NORAD without Air National Guardmembers at the state level working 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week, at our nation's three air defense sectors: the Southeast, Northeast and Western sectors.

*We would be remiss if we didn't point out that these Guard men and women are members of the Florida, New York and Washington Air National Guard.*

*They epitomize the role of our state militias by defending the homeland and "Guarding America's Skies."*

Brig. Gen. Doug Burnett  
Commander, Florida Air Guard

*Editor's Note: See pages 3 and 11 in this issue for a story on the 1st Air Force's history-making performance during its recent Operational Readiness Inspection.*

## Web Watcher

*I frequently visit the National Guard Web site in search of news. Being a*



Photo by Leslie Filson

**FIRST-CLASS FORCE**—Capt. Ryan Calloway, an Air Guard senior weapons director assigned to the 1st Air Force at Tyndall, Fla., watches for enemy aircraft.

traditional Guardsman, the only information most of us in this status get regarding ongoing activities in the National Guard is only on drill weekends, and most of the time, if it is something really important, it would be too late to participate.

Unfortunately, whenever I visit the web site's news section it does not have up-to-date news. Kindly look into this, and if there is a way I could contribute

kindly respond. I am a highly motivated airman.

Sgt. Albert Olagbemiro  
California National Guard

*Editor's Note: The National Guard Bureau recently hired a person to redesign and post The On Guard each month on the Guard's web site. The site also will include updates on breaking Guard-related news.*

## 'On Guard' staff moves

The staff of *The On Guard*, and members of the National Guard Bureau Public Affairs Office's environmental and historical services teams moved to a new address in February.

'Letters to the Editor' can be mailed to: NGB-PAI-C, Suite 11200, 1411 Jefferson Davis Highway, Arlington VA 22202-3259. You also may FAX your letters to DSN 327-3680 or (703) 607-3680. Our e-mail address is: malthanerj@ngb.af.mil

## GUARD TOONS

By Lyle Farquhar

Comments or ideas: lfquhar@ngb.af.mil



"With this new pay raise I'll be able to get us that Ketchup dispenser you always wanted."





## IN THE NEWS

• Woman Chief of Staff • First-Rate Force • 'Don't Ask' Enforced

## D.C. woman assumes historic post

### Female First: Barbaranette Bolden named District of Columbia Guard's Chief of Staff

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

Someday, Col. Barbaranette Bolden predicted, all of the trails will be blazed. Someday, women and members of minorities who land high profile positions will no longer work in the fish bowl of public scrutiny. Someday, she forecasted, "people will say it's just another person doing an important job."

Feb. 1 was another threshold to someday. That is when Col. Bolden began her new duties as chief of staff of the District of Columbia Army National Guard. That is when she became the first woman in the Army Guard's 362-year history to shoulder those considerable responsibilities at the state level.

She succeeded Col. George Rogie who has held that post for three years and who is returning to the district's 260th Military Police Command as deputy commander.

After two decades of full-time Army Guard service in the nation's capital, the 46-year-old, Arkansas-born Bolden is making her mark in an age when military women are coming into their own. Col. Martha Rainville in Vermont is concluding her second year as the country's first female National Guard state adjutant general. Women pilots are now flying Navy combat patrols in the Persian Gulf.

Bolden became the Director of Plans, Operations, Training and Military Support for the District of Columbia's 1,600 citizen-soldiers. And the wife and mother of four already knows how she wants to be remembered as the Army Guard's first woman chief of staff.

"I want to institute a mentoring program in our organization," she explained on January's final Friday during the rush of the Army Guard's Senior Leadership Conference in Arlington, Va.

"I want to give people a chance to develop in our organization so it continues to grow after we are gone," she added.

Her mother was her mentor and her hero, explained Bolden who was the youngest of 10 Twillie children raised on their family's small farm in Forrest City, Ark., a 45-minute drive west of Memphis, Tenn.

Her mother, Lula, did not finish high school but instilled the importance of education in her children, Bolden explained.

"She was a very talented woman, and she taught us to do our best and to not let other people prevent us from realizing our goals," Bolden added. "She told us that there will be stumbling blocks and that we have to pick ourselves up and keep going."



Col. Bolden

Three sons are high school principals. A son and a daughter became ministers. Another daughter started the first licensed daycare for minority children in Forrest City.

Barbaranette earned bachelor's and master's degrees from Arkansas State before heading to Washington to acquire a law degree at Howard University. She married Rodney Bolden, now part of the Washington Gas utility's management team, in 1980.

Her advanced degrees opened many doors. She focused on the Guard, Bolden explained, "because it's a family. It has its ups and downs, but it offered upward mobility and the chance to serve my country and community."

She joined the Arkansas Guard in 1975 and earned her commission from the D.C. Guard's Officer Candidate School in 1978.

She has been climbing the Guard's management ladder ever since. She's been a company and battalion com-

■ See BOLDEN, Page 4

## Guard-run 1st Air Force deemed 'Outstanding'

By Capt. Don Arias  
1st Air Force

Any questions that may have existed about the readiness of the airmen and women who guard America's skies as part of the Guard-run 1st Air Force have been answered.

And then some.

This after the Tyndall AFB, Fla.-based air sovereignty team hit the Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) equivalent of a grand slam as its headquarters and three air defense sectors each received "Outstanding" ratings recently.

While members of the Continental United States North American Aerospace Defense Command Region (CONR) were put through a four-day NORAD Operational Evaluation (NOE), its Northeast, Southeast and Western air defense sectors demonstrated their command and control skills during concurrent Air Combat Command ORIs.

"It just doesn't get any finer than this," said Maj. Gen. Larry Arnold, 1st Air Force and CONR commander of his outfit's unprecedented accomplishment. Arnold said the results were particularly gratifying given that the numbered-Air Force is staffed

and led by Guardmembers -- it was converted to Guard control in October 1997. Dozens of Canadian Forces members also are part of the team.

"There's never been a grand slam ORI/NOE in the history of this outfit," reported Brig. Gen. Kenneth Stromquist Jr., 1st Air Force vice commander.

The inspections, which ended Jan. 23, were the culmination of seven months of exercises that included simulated and real-world scenarios.

Florida Air Guard commander Brig. Gen. Doug Burnett, along with

■ OUTSTANDING, Page 11

## NATIONAL BRIEFS

### Majerick selected for high level active Army job

Alabama Army Guard Brig. Gen. Paul M. Majerick was recently selected to serve in the position of assistant chief of staff, G3, with the Eighth U.S. Army in Korea.

The assignment is part of a program endorsed by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dennis J. Reimer to integrate Reserve Component senior leaders into key Army assignments. Majerick will report for duty in Korea later this year.

"General Majerick is an excellent choice. We have begun a tradition of Alabama National Guard general officers serving in positions of great responsibility in the active component," said Maj. Gen. Clyde Hennies, Alabama's adjutant general.

Majerick is the second Bama Army Guard senior officer to go on active duty with the Army in the past two years. Brig. Gen. John Scales was assigned as Deputy Commanding General (Reserve Components) with the U.S. Army Special Forces Command at Ft. Bragg, N.C., in February, 1997.

### Supreme Court again lets 'don't ask, don't tell' stand

The Supreme Court once again left intact the military's "don't ask, don't tell" policy recently, rejecting a challenge by former California Army Guard 1st Lt. Andrew Holmes who was discharged in 1993 after declaring his homosexuality to a commander.

The court, without comment, turned away arguments by Holmes and a former Navy man that the policy is based on prejudice against homosexuals and violates their free-speech rights.

The action, while not a definitive ruling, marked the fifth time in recent years that the highest court has rejected efforts to invalidate the policy.

The policy was adopted in 1993 after President Clinton's initial effort to end the ban on homosexuals serving openly in the military sparked heavy criticism in Congress.

It prohibits inquiries into a service member's sexual orientation, but allows discharge for homosexual conduct or for a "propensity" to engage in homosexual conduct. A service member's statement that he or she is gay is considered evidence of a propensity to engage in such acts.

Every federal appeals court that has considered the issue has upheld the policy.



## IN THE NEWS

## BOLDEN

From Page 3

mander, held battalion, brigade and district area command staff positions, and overseen two different directorates.

As of Feb. 1, she became the Army Guard boss for her boss, Maj. Gen. Warren Freeman, the district's commanding general. She will supervise eight other colonels responsible for training, engaging and paying those 1,600 Guard soldiers.

"My job is making sure that the job gets done," Bolden explained. "The chiefs of staff run the Army side of the state organizations. We have to reduce the number of issues that reach the general officer level so the generals can focus on funding and getting the resources that we don't have."

"I've watched her progress since she was an OCS candidate," explained Freeman who appointed Bolden director of personnel before give her charge of plans, operations, training and military support.

"She has excelled at working through the minutia and at resolving difficult issues," Freeman added. "She is in the best position to pull this staff together even tighter than it is now. We already have a good team. Her job is to make it better."

There is also her own family to raise. Her two oldest are in college. Her two youngest sons are in high school and middle school. She is the assistant scoutmaster for their Boy Scout Troop 1005 in Oxon Hill, Md., near the family's home in Temple Hills.

Now, her appointment as chief of staff gives her the chance to climb another step above the glass ceiling on behalf of military women even though she is not terribly comfortable with all of the attention.

"I am working in a fish bowl because there are still so few women at the levels of colonel and above," she acknowledged. "Someday I would like to be looked at because of my performance as a soldier and not second-guessed on everything I do because I'm a woman."

Col. Barbaranette Bolden is confident that someday will come.

## Non-duty heroism given its due

## Meriting a Medal: Pennsylvania's Klynoot gets unjust law changed

By Lt. Col. Chris Cleaver  
Pennsylvania National Guard

**H**eroic Guardmembers and Reservists can now receive the Soldier, Airman, Navy or Marine Corps Medal for their actions thanks to the determined efforts of Brig. Gen. Eugene Klynoot.

In a quest that began in 1992, then Keystone State National Guard chief of staff Col. Klynoot, tried to award the Soldier's Medal to Joseph Dea, a Guardmember who had pulled three children from a burning building while in a non-duty status.

"There were two issues," explained Klynoot in the same matter-of-fact manner he used to convince military officials of the inequality that existed in awarding Dea, and other heroic members of the reserve components, with the highest medal for valor given to military men and women during peacetime. "One, Joe Dea was a hero; he deserved the Soldier's Medal," Klynoot continued. "Two, Guardmembers should be recognized for their valorous acts no matter what status they are in."

Armed with these solid arguments and his personal commitment, Klynoot met with dozens of senior military and elected officials over the last six years to correct this injustice.

Dea's heroics were difficult to ignore. A prior-service Desert Storm veteran, Dea was returning home from his civilian

job in Philadelphia when he noticed an upper floor of a building on fire in early 1992. With no emergency vehicles in sight, Dea raced into the downstairs bar where patrons quickly informed him three children were in the upstairs apartment.

With no access, he climbed his way up the building to the second floor and plunged into the burning apartment. Feeling his way through smoke-filled rooms, Dea pulled two children to safety. After finding the third child and upon trying to return to the entrance, he was overcome by smoke and collapsed with a two-year-old in his arms. Moments later, a fireman pulled them both to safety.

The rescue ended with three safe children, but Dea was hospitalized in intensive care suffering from severe smoke inhalation.

After learning of his heroic actions, Klynoot submitted Dea for several awards, including the Soldier's Medal.

As each response of "not approved for Soldier's Medal" arrived on Klynoot's desk, his personal momentum only increased.

Building a coalition from the Reserve Forces Policy Board, to the Pennsylvania National Guard Associations and the National Guard Association of the United States, he set course to change the law.

"While we had plenty of rejections, there were also many people who viewed this issue as just plain wrong," Klynoot

said. A letter written by then Maj. Gen. C. G. Marsh, U.S. Army Forces Command Chief of Staff, prompted many to take notice.

"A soldier's status at the time of a heroic act is not relevant," Marsh wrote. "To continue to refuse award of the Soldier's Medal to Reserve Component soldiers who are off duty deprives not only the soldier, but also the Total Army of valuable and well-deserved recognition."

Klynoot's dedication finally came to fruition with the release of the 1998 Defense Authorization Act. By simply adding: "includes authority to award the medal to a member of the Ready Reserve who was not in a duty status ... when the member distinguished himself by heroism;" the law (Title 10, Section 574) was changed.

Victory was at hand.

Only one mission remained: pinning the Soldier's Medal on

Dea, who has since left the Guard. As Klynoot read the award citation, Terrence O'Connell, a combat-wounded Vietnam Veteran and chairman of the Reserve Forces Policy Board, pinned the medal on Dea.

While the pinning took seconds to recognize an heroic act that took minutes, it was a dogged six-year effort by one officer that left some wondering if the ceremony came up one medal short.



**MEDAL WORTHY**—Joseph Dea (left) displays the Soldier's Medal Brig. Gen. Eugene Klynoot (right) fought six years to get him.

## Anthrax BOOSTER

Army Guard Senior Enlisted Advisor CSM John Leonard Jr., receives the second in a series of six inoculations against anthrax. Anthrax immunizations for the Army Guard are scheduled to begin in FY 2000 with a pilot program in Florida. The remainder of the Army Guard will start receiving the inoculations in FY 2002.



Photo by SFC Lorna Geggis





## PEOPLE

• Clark Constructs Cleat • Butter Art

TSgt. Larry Clark made a heel cleat to help keep his unit's honor guard in step

## Mr. Click

By TSgt. Phillip L. Guerrero  
California National Guard

Timing, so say those in the highly scrutinized and precision-based Honor Guard business, is everything.

And thanks to the ingenuity of TSgt. Larry Clark and a heel cleat he made, the men and women of the California Air Guard 163rd Air Refueling Wing's honor guard can be seen and heard.

Clark, a member of the wing's maintenance squadron, was approached recently by TSgt. P.K. Schultz, an honor guard member. Schultz had designed a cleat that when attached to the inside heel of a boot or shoe would produce a resounding "click" sound.

The noise would help improve the timing of the group's 16

Guardmembers and seven Air Reservists from March Air Reserve Base charged with providing service for an 80,000-square-mile area that spans from San Diego to Los Angeles, from Blythe to central California. One of those duties requires Honor Guard members to bestow military honors 40 times each day at Riverside National Cemetery. That's more daily burials than take place at Arlington National Cemetery near the nation's capital.

It's a solemn duty they take seriously, said SMSgt. Robert Kevari, the 163rd Services Squadron superintendent and honor guard member.

"We've promised our veterans this honor and it's important that we follow through," Kevari said. "Our veterans sacrifice so much during their military careers, it's the least we can do to honor them."

Part of that honor, Kevari explained, involves putting their best foot, ahem, forward.

Enter Larry Clark.

After modifying Schultz's design, the structural maintenance NCO took a 2-inch by one-inch piece of carbon steel, cut, rolled and spray painted it to form a metal cleat.

"It sounds great when they bring their heels together in unison," Clark remarked, "but if someone's off cue or out-of-



Photo by SSgt Jim Gordon

**CALL HIM MR. CLICK** — TSgt. Larry Clark, a structural maintenance NCO with the California Air Guard's 163rd Air Refueling Wing, bends a piece of carbon steel to make a heel cleat.

sync, everyone knows."

The noise created by the cleat didn't come close to rivaling the distance travelled by the news of Clark's invention.

"The word got out," Clark said. "It takes about five minutes to make a set of the cleats using metal left over from a previous job."

To date, Clark has manufactured nearly 80 sets of the heel clickers for honor guard members throughout California. The NCO also has modified the design for use on the low-quarter shoe.

"It's easy for us to do," he added, "and it sets our honor guard apart from the crowd."

And, as it turns out, the cleat has carved an enviable reputation for a certain NCO many in the unit have taken to calling "Mr. Click."

"It's kind of funny when you think about it," Click, uh, Clark observed. "I've been in this unit for 15 years full-time and four years of active duty, and this is my claim to fame."

## The Michelangelo of MARGARINE

By Lt. Col. Chris Cleaver  
Pennsylvania National Guard

Carving a niche has taken on a whole new meaning for TSgt. Edward Shank.

A traditional Guardsman with the Pennsylvania Air Guard 193rd Special Operations Wing's public affairs office, Shank recently spent nearly 70 hours carving a 400-pound butter sculpture of Ms. Commonwealth for the Pennsylvania Farm Show. The show draws some 200,000 people annually.

Ms. Commonwealth, who in real life is a three-ton gilded bronze statue standing atop the State Capitol's dome in Harrisburg, was the sculpted butter centerpiece attraction. She had recently received widespread media



Photo courtesy of the Pennsylvania National Guard

attention after being lifted off the dome, refurbished and returned to her perch.

Shank, an experienced sculptor and painter who trained at the Art Institute of Fort Lauderdale, Fla., and Shippensburg University, Pa., draws his inspiration from Impressionist sculptors Auguste Rodin and Michelangelo.

While this project was not his first stab at butter, he said it was one of the more challenging.

**CARVING A NICHE** — TSgt. Edward Shank works on a 400-pound butter sculpture of Ms. Commonwealth.

"It was hard to get her hand and fingers to stand free and it was difficult getting her facial expressions correct since the original mold was done in clay," Shank recalled nonchalantly. "This is my sixth butter sculpture."

Some of his other subjects for the farm show have included Eisenhower feeding a calf, an Amish boy leading a cow and a school lunch setting with a lady placing a carton of milk on a tray.

"There are two types of sculpting processes: additive and reductive," Shank explained. "Clay is an additive substance because you continue to add material as you work; while marble, my favorite, is reductive because you continue to shave it away."

Butter, Shank acknowledged, is better suited for bread. "It's difficult because it involves both processes," he said. "It's additive until it freezes. Then it becomes reductive, making sculpting difficult. And it smells."

"On the bright side," Shank added. "It keeps my tools nice and oiled."





**ONE ARMY** — Army Guard Director Maj. Gen. Roger Schultz (left) presents Army Secretary Louis Caldera a 'Minuteman' statue for his efforts in helping the Guard.

Army Secretary Caldera delivers encouraging words to National Guard leaders

## 'ACTIVE'ly APPRECIATED

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

Six months after observing Army National Guard troops training in the desert during the California summer, Secretary of the Army Louis Caldera delivered some encouraging words to Army Guard leaders inside the Beltway recently.

"The Guard will continue to play a vital role in helping our total force meet future challenges -- not just in peace, but in war," the West Point educated Caldera promised nearly 700 high-ranking Army Guard officers and noncommissioned officers attending their annual Senior Leadership Conference beside the nation's capital.

"I am pleased to report that appreciation for what you do is more widely shared throughout our Army than ever, and that's partly due to the success of our integration initiatives," added Caldera on January's final Thursday.

The challenge of change was the underlying theme for the conference attended by adjutants general and command sergeants major from the 54 states and territories and by a host of others involved in charting the future course for the Army Guard's 360,000 citizen-soldiers.

Maj. Gen. Roger Schultz, in his first



Photos by MSgt. Bob Haskell

**"We are restructuring the force to meet the needs of a different world"**

**GEN. DENNIS REIMER**  
U.S. Army Chief of Staff

year as the Army Guard's director, and some of the Defense Department's top guns, addressed the issues. Other luminaries included Lt. Gen. Russell Davis, who is in his first year as Chief of the National Guard Bureau, Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre and Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dennis Reimer.

"We're making progress in the Army Guard, but I'm not quite satisfied yet, and I hope you're not either," said Schultz who repeatedly addressed two pressing matters:

- A critical lack of full-time staff people in the nation's armories to take care of the part-time soldiers.
- The need to spend every penny allotted for military schooling to keep the force trained and ready to perform its growing number of missions at home and abroad.

"Full-time staffing is something we are going to face. It's something that needs fixing," Schultz maintained.

"Our school execution quotas should be 90 to 95 percent," the director admonished. "We can't let our Primary Leadership Development Course quotas go unfilled, because we have too many specialists who want that training."

Despite those concerns, there were plenty of signs that the Army Guard remains ready to support the Army's missions in Europe and Southwest Asia; to help Central American neighbors rebound from last year's two devastating hurricanes; and to step up its participation in homeland defense against weapons of mass destruction.

"The Army Guard can do combat today," stressed Davis, pointing to the suc-

**CHIEF CONCERNS** — Gen. Dennis Reimer, Army Chief of Staff, addresses senior Guard leaders in Washington D.C.

cess of a Virginia infantry company that spent last winter guarding a bridge in Bosnia as part of the peacekeeping effort.

Furthermore, the 49th Armored Division's headquarters from Texas will take command of America's active and reserve forces in Bosnia beginning in March 2000.

"That's going to happen, and it's going to work very, very well," predicted Reimer who pointed out that 54 percent of the total Army's strength is based in the Guard and Army Reserve.

"We are restructuring the force to meet the needs of a different world," he added.

Meanwhile, Hamre asked the state adjutants general to be prepared to respond to any significant situations brought on by Year 2000 computer problems without alarming the public by calling out large numbers of troops beforehand.

He does not want to call out the Army.

"Americans get nervous when active duty people start driving around," he pointed out. "The centerpiece for dealing with these domestic situations has to be grounded in the Guard."

Along with that, the Guard must prepare to defend the homeland against new and dangerous threats, Caldera said. "Few missions are of greater importance than securing our homeland from terrorists seeking to employ weapons of mass destruction against our people."

That the Army is "identifying Guard officers to command active component units," and that two infantry divisions consisting of Guard combat brigades and commanded by active Army headquarters will be organized by year's end further indicates how much the nation is relying on the National Guard, Caldera said.

The Guard can also expect some help in the pocketbook, he projected.

"The Guard's budget has grown by about half a billion during each of the last two years, an annual growth rate of over 7 percent," he said. "While we have not yet released the fiscal year 2000 budget, I can tell you that it will reflect a continuing increase for both the Army National Guard and Army Reserve."

Last July, soon after becoming the Army's civilian leader, Caldera visited the National Training Center in California where he watched the Army Guard's Idaho-based 116th Cavalry Brigade go up against the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, the Army's most intimidating opposing force.

"I was deeply impressed with both the tough, realistic training of the National Training Center and the warrior spirit of the Army Guard soldiers I saw training there," he told his Washington audience in January.

The mission now, the nation's Guard leaders acknowledged, is to keep that spirit alive and kicking into the next millennium.



## INSIDE THE LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

'Select, Train, Promote, Assign' receives many high-level endorsements

## PROMOTING a better WAY

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

The tide is turning in favor of the Army National Guard's enlisted promotion system that has been a hot-button subject for much of its six-year history.

That was the consensus from state command sergeants major attending January's Army Guard Senior Leadership Conference in the shadow of the nation's capital.

Give it time to work. It's not perfect, but it's better than the previous system, which was no system at all. Let the senior noncommissioned officers supervise the promotions for the enlisted people. Don't go back to the good-old-boy way of promoting people.

Such were the endorsements for the Select-Train-Promote-Assign (STPA) program introduced in 1992 as a fair and uniform process for promoting most of America's enlisted Army Guard soldiers.

"I've never heard so many positive comments about the new promotion system from this group as I have heard here today," said CSM John Leonard Jr., the Army Guard's command sergeant major in Washington, D.C., on January's final Wednesday.

Today's enlisted force of 321,000 citizen-soldiers includes 145,000 people who wear sergeants stripes and another 107,000 specialists, many of whom want to be

**PITCHING PROMOTIONS—SGM Tom McNamara, the Army Guard's personnel sergeant major, says the new promotion system levels the playing field for enlisted troops.**

sergeants, explained SGM Tom McNamara, the personnel sergeant major at the Army Guard's Readiness Center in Arlington, Va.

The STPA program is based on a point system intended to level the playing field for every Guard soldier who is eligible for promotion to buck sergeant and higher, and to do away with the arbitrary ways that people previously made rank.

Now, Guard soldiers earn up to 750 points for nine specific areas including length of service, weapons proficiency, physical fitness, and military and civilian education. They receive as many as 250 more points based on their leadership potential. The Guard soldiers then compete for promotions with their peers in their specific career fields.

"It's working well in New York. Now we're more interested in stabilizing the system," said Empire State CSM Don Brawley. "If we go back to the old way, we will be undermining the NCO system as we know it today."

"We are making promotions a senior NCO responsibility," stressed Pennsylvania CSM John Kline. "We need to let this system work for a couple of years."

Those observations were refreshing indeed to Leonard who picked up the STPA banner two years ago from his predecessor, retired CSM Larry Pence.

"Some of the state sergeants major used to really beat me up on this policy," Leonard recalled. "Their comments are a good sign that this program is beginning to be accepted by the troops in the field."

"We all know the system is not perfect, that parts of it still need some tweaking," he added. "But, for the most part, the senior enlisted leadership is now more interested in improving the parts that concern them than they are in throwing out the whole program."

## Pine Tree PALACE

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

The imposing brown brick armory on Western Avenue in Augusta had always seemed festive enough with its streamers and balloons of red, white and blue during the 26 previous military balls the Maine National Guard has traditionally held in late winter or early spring.

It sparkled like new for the Maine Guard's 27th Big Dance recently thanks to a \$5.6 million construction project that has primed the Maine National Guard complex for the 21st century.

The balcony that hovered over one side of the armory's drill floor has been replaced with a huge room for office space or meetings. New lights and coats of white paint make the remodeled building seem bigger than it used to when the interior was a considerably darker green.

The armory, originally opened in 1954, has been given a \$3.6 million facelift that includes a new 2,400 square-foot maintenance bay and a video conference center.

The other \$2 million was spent on a three-story addition to the state's Army Guard headquarters up the hill at Camp Keyes where Maine militia units and Guard brass have trained and served since the Civil War.

Harris Bradeen, a retired Army sergeant major who served with the Special Forces in Vietnam, has overseen the project for nearly two years, since Maine's 118th Legislature anted up the \$1.6 million in state funds needed to complement the \$4 million in federal money the National Guard Bureau designated for the project.

"From beginning to end these projects were executed as a model of efficiency and cooperation," praised Maine Gov. Angus King in a letter framed and presented to Bradeen during an open house.

Eight new classrooms and an expanded kitchen make the armory more functional for the resident 240th Engineer Group and 152nd Maintenance Company.

A distance learning center, al-

ready set up with \$180,000 in interactive television equipment, will be used to train citizen-soldiers in military occupational specialties and will also be available for civilian groups for a fee, explained Capt. Kevin McDougall.

A dozen workstations have been installed, and plans call for 10 more plus a separate video training room, all part of the Bureau's distance learning network, McDougall said.

Up the hill at Camp Keyes, the 17,600 square-foot addition to the state Army Guard headquarters mirrors a flat-roof brick building constructed in the early 1940s. That became home to the State Adjutant General's Department in 1941 -- when Maine units were being marshaled for World War II.

The camp, ironically, is named for a Civil War general who probably never saw the place. Massachusetts-born Erasmus Darwin Keyes commanded the Union's IV Corps during the 1862 Peninsula Campaign and earned the respect of Maine men who served under him.

He resigned from the Army in May 1864 and moved to San Francisco where he prospered as a gold



Photo by MSgt. Toby Youngs

**A CUT ABOVE — Maj. Gen. Earl Adams, Maine TAG, cuts the ribbon symbolizing the reopening of the Augusta State Armory.**

miner, banker and wine maker before dying in 1895.

Although Maine Civil War regiments did muster at Camp Keyes on the way to the front off and on for the rest of the conflict, it would be another 80 years before the camp established on the old Mullion farm would become the center of the state's military organization.

Had he by chance visited the camp bearing his name in its infancy, Gen. Keyes wouldn't recognize the 38-acre facility today. Most of the buildings have been constructed since the 1920s, according to a report about Maine's oldest National Guard facilities.

The 300 or so who danced the night away recently in the remodeled armory experienced that sentiment. It was hard to believe it was the same place.



## YEAR OF THE ENLISTED

Rob Thomas is one of a growing number of highly accomplished enlisted

## Comfortable in CHEVRONS

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

Rob Thomas II has the pedigree of a commissioned officer. He holds a master's degree in information systems management from Colorado Technical University. He is settling in to his new job in Washington, D.C., as chief of architecture and technology for U.S. Customs' vast informational network. He has been a school board chairman and a pastor for a Baptist church in Montana. His four years of active Air Force duty took him to NATO's military headquarters near Brussels, Belgium. At 37, the marathon-leaned, 6-foot Thomas could easily be mistaken for an Air Guard major well on his way to colonel. He speaks with a quiet intensity that might mark him as a pilot rather than a seasoned noncommissioned officer.

Yet, the uniform he wears one weekend most months feature the chevrons of an enlisted man. He is a master sergeant, and he has recently transferred to the Virginia Air Guard's 192nd Fighter Wing in Richmond as a computer network supervisor.

This is the Air Guard's Year of the Enlisted. Rob Thomas II is an example of the educated Guard men and women who believe they can best serve their country by wearing stripes instead of brass.

"I love wearing the uniform," said Thomas who left his family's small ranch in Montana in 1979 to expand his horizons in the military. "But I want to do the job for which I am best qualified. If I became an officer, I would probably have to do something else. I know I wouldn't be as good at anything else as I am at information technology."

Thomas is not alone. According to the Personnel Information and Analysis Office, more than 6,500 of the Air Guard's nearly 95,000 enlisted people hold bachelor's degrees that could

qualify them for commissions should they desire to undergo officers training. Civilian bankers, teachers and engineers are peppered throughout the 88 flying wings, the 54 states and territories, who have already mastered the management techniques required of today's military leaders.

But many have their own reasons for remaining in the ranks.

- They like the stability of doing one job.
- They like doing essentially the same jobs that they do as civilians.
- They like the edge that their military training gives their civilian careers.
- They like dealing directly with and supervising other enlisted people.
- They like doing the immediate work instead of the long-term planning.
- They don't want to endure long months of officers training school.

The best officers, it has been argued, have paid their dues in the enlisted force. "Being on the ground floor gave me some common sense. I got good training from good people," said Raymond Bussiere, a retired Maine Air Guard lieutenant colonel who put in 11 years as an Army and Air Guard enlisted man before earning his commission as a captain in 1980, when he was 34.

"The enlisted people who worked for me knew I came from the enlisted ranks. That may have helped earn their respect," added Bussiere who is an assistant principal at Bangor High School and Maine's Assistant Principal of the Year for 1999.

But enlisted people who stay in for at least 15 years also earn the respect of their peers and from most of the officers. They also earn respectable monthly paychecks, commissary privileges and retirement points, it has been pointed out.

Many, to be sure, have other reasons for making a career in the enlisted ranks.

Thomas, who became a traditional Guardsman in 1987, claims it

has been easier to transfer into different units as an enlisted man while following civilian jobs to Colorado three times, to Montana, and now to Virginia.

His status also makes it easier for him to remain a member of the National Guard's marathon team, he said.

Overall, however, he believes that remaining in the ranks has enabled him to balance his civilian and military obligations and his commitments to his wife and four young children.

"I know that I would make more money as an officer. But I'm not in the Guard for the money. I'm staying in to serve my country," Thomas explained.

"I've decided that I'm going to retire as an enlisted man, and I'm perfectly content with that."



Photo courtesy of Rob Thomas  
Virginia MSgt. Rob Thomas II at his U.S. Customs job.

# Remembering a HERO

A tragic refueler crash claimed TSgt. Rich Visintainer's life, but not his indelible legacy

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

They called him "Vis," and a lot of people really liked the guy.

Rich Visintainer was a man with a quick smile and a thousand stories, a trucker who talked about flying and a flyer who talked about trucking. He wore a Chicago Cubs jacket because that was his team; he played as much golf as he could get in; and he loved Notre Dame football.

That is how the Air National Guard's newest enlisted hero, TSgt. Richard Visintainer, was remembered and mourned this January by his friends in the Washington state Air Guard's 141st Air Refueling Wing following a KC-135 Stratotanker crash in Germany that killed its entire four-man crew.

Visintainer, 48, was the boom operator on the plane out of Fairchild Air Force Base from Spokane that crashed and burned in the woods near the Dutch border, beside Geilenkirchen Air Base, on the Wednesday night of Jan. 13 following a routine refueling mission.

The three other crewmen were Maj. David Fite, the pilot; Capt. Kenneth Thiele, the co-pilot; and Maj. Matthew Laiho, the navigator.

The tragedy galvanized the eastern Washington city and gave every Air Guard man and woman reason to reflect about their commitments to their families and this country.

It also made the tall and slender Rich Visintainer, the father of two teen-agers, an unexpected hero among the Air Guard's 95,000 enlisted members early into its Year of the Enlisted.

"He was a true citizen-Guards-

man," said MSgt. Sam Via, a close friend and one of the wing's 17 remaining "boomers" who routinely pump thousands of pounds of fuel into military air-planes at 27,000 feet from boom pods in the tails of the tankers.

"He put in lots of hours in his civilian job as a truck driver," Via added, "then he put in lots of hours to stay proficient as a flyer. He was a classy kind of guy."

"He loved to converse. He was a very personable guy. It was easy to make friends with him," recalled MSgt. Bruce Olson, another 141st boom operator. "When he was out here [at Fairchild] he was talking about trucking, and I'm sure that when he was with his trucking buddies he was talking about flying. He always wanted to eat at truck stops, even when he went to boom school."

Richard Visintainer's military career spanned three decades. He grew up in Michigan and enlisted in the Air Force for four years in October 1968. He spent a tour in Vietnam. He joined the Washington Air Guard in September 1977, got out three years later when he moved away from the Spokane area and returned in October 1986. That's when he met Via and Olson.

Other friendships followed.

He played golf with Capt. Thorne Tibbitts, a tanker pilot, at the Wandemere and Esmerelda golf courses near the Visintainer family's home in eastern Spokane and in Istres, France, during an 18-day deployment last fall.

"He had, realistically, a 15 handicap. He believed he could drive every hole to the green," recounted Tibbitts.



Photo courtesy of the Washington National Guard

Other memories endure.

His former wife, Susan, recalled a trip they took to Hawaii with other Air Guard couples in February 1979, soon after they were married. A photograph of them lying side-by-side in

a boom pod is one of her treasures. They had been married for about 20 years.

He called home from France as often as he could last fall because his son Rocky played on a high school football team that was in the playoffs, Via said.

And two things punctuated Visintainer's last night in Spokane

before two of the 141st's tankers took off for two weeks of NATO duty Germany on Jan. 3.

He gave Tibbitts his copy of former Notre Dame football coach Lou

THEY CALLED HIM 'VIS' Washington Air Guard TSgt. Rich Visintainer was remembered for his indomitable spirit by his many friends.

Holtz's most recent book, "Winning Every Day," that he had gotten for Christmas.

He told his 18-year-old daughter Bridget over the telephone that he would see her in a couple of weeks as casually as if he were driving an 18-wheeler into neighboring Idaho.

Fate, however, took a tragic turn for Visintainer and the three other men in Germany 11 nights later.

"It's hard on the children because they didn't get a chance to tell their father goodbye," explained his former wife.

The Air Guard, she added, took care of its own after the crash.

"You feel just wrapped up by them," said Susan. "They've been there every step of the way for us."

A Jan. 22 memorial service for the four crewmen that packed 2,200 people into the Spokane Opera House "was a tremendous tribute to those men's lives," she added. "It exceeded all of my expectations."

Washington state Gov. Gary Locke, Gen. Charles Roberts, commander of the Air Force's Air Mobility Command, Maj.

Gen. Paul Weaver Jr., Director of the Air National Guard, and CMSgt. Gary Broadbent, Weaver's senior enlisted advisor, paid their respects to the patriots who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

"We have lost four of our most treasured," said Col. James Wynne, the 141st Wing commander, during a moving eulogy reported by *The Spokesman-Review* daily newspaper.

"They were us, now part of us is gone. They will someday be replaced. Yet they are irreplaceable."

Each man was honored with the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal.

Rich Visintainer, the Air Guard's newest enlisted hero, was laid to rest following a Jan. 27 memorial service at the Redeemer Lutheran Church in Spokane.

Susan Visintainer remembered him in her own way during a telephone interview a day earlier.

"He was a great father," she said. "We loved him very much."

## Helping shape 'Minutewoman'

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

Freddie Vega never shirked his day job, but his extracurricular contributions as a gifted sculptor have secured his special place in the rolls of Air National Guard enlisted people who have made a difference.

The Puerto Rico Air Guard's retired chief master sergeant and senior enlisted advisor basked in his 15 minutes of fame last July in Washington, D.C., with the unveiling of "The Minutewoman."

The occasion was the retirement dinner for Lt. Gen. Edward Baca as Chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Vega's two-foot tall sculpture was dedicated to the women who have stood shoulder-to-shoulder with the National Guard's historic minutemen.

The piece that first occurred to Vega back in 1979 depicts a determined woman grasping a musket while her son and daughter clutch her waist. A pitchfork,



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

VEGA'S LEGACY -- Retired CMSgt. Freddie Vega admires a crucifix he sculpted from his Puerto Rico home.

symbolizing domestic duties, stands beside them.

"This woman may have never heard from her minuteman again," Vega reflected in the cozy home he shares with Aurora, his wife of 36 years, in Carolina that borders Puerto Rico's capital of San Juan.

"The minutewoman had to raise her family and defend her home and our values and beliefs in his absence," Vega added. "She also represents today's women in our Army and Air National Guard who, through successful dedication, have earned their places in every career field from clerk typist to jet fighter pilot."

"Protecting families has been the primary motivations for the defense of our country," Vega pointed out.

He is hardly the only enlisted member who has celebrated the Guard's cause with artistic insight.

SMSgt. Walter Sistrunk, a visual information manager at the Air Guard's Readiness Center at Andrews Air Force Base in

Maryland, in 1996 fashioned the bust and award named for retired Mississippi Congressman G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery. It is the highest honor presented by the National Guard Bureau during its December birthday celebrations.

Other gifted Guard men and women routinely charm crowds with renditions of the National Anthem and other moving musical tributes that require preparations above and beyond their normal duties.

They call it giving something back. "It's my way of paying back what the Guard has done for me and my wife and two daughters," said Vega, 62, who served 40 years in the Puerto Rico Air Guard as a jet mechanic and quality assurance inspector.

He retired in 1996 after four years as the enlisted leader of the U.S. territory's nearly 1,200 Air Guardsmembers.

The native New Yorker began perfecting his art at the select Manhattan High School of Aviation Trades. He moved to Puerto Rico in 1955 and joined the Air Guard in February 1956.

He also perfected his eye for archery that carried him to the 1972 Olympics in Munich where he got acquainted with members of the Israeli team who were massacred by Arab terrorists.

"I grew up in a Jewish neighborhood in the Bronx, so I made friends with the Israeli athletes," Vega recalled. "What happened to them was a terrible tragedy."

But sculpting gave him his unique identity. His works include a kneeling archer, Christ on the cross, and Cervantes' heroic figure Don Quixote.

The inspiration for "The Minutewoman," Vega explained, struck him while he

was sculpting his own version of a minuteman late into many nights for the Professional Military Education Center at McGhee-Tyson AFB, Tenn., while attending the NCO Academy in 1979.

"I had plenty of time to think about my family back home. I began to get a lonely feeling. You might call it homesick," Vega explained in a 1980 letter to his Puerto Rican superiors. "At those late hours (sometimes 2 a.m.) my only companion was the minuteman I was making."

"Then it hit me like a light," he added. "Why should I complain about just six weeks away from home? The minuteman has been alone without a companion for 203 years."

Maj. Gen. Donald Shepperd, then Director of the Air National Guard in Washington D.C., bought into Vega's idea 16 years later, in April 1996. The Air Guard enlisted man kept on giving for 21 more months, well into his retirement, as he molded his feelings about National Guard womanhood into his enduring work of art.





## SPORTS

## • The Ironman: 2.4-Mile Swim, 112-Mile Bike Ride, 26.2-Mile Run

Nebraska's Ned Greene is the only general officer to conquer Ironman triathlon

By SMSgt. Vicky Cerino  
Nebraska National Guard

If you get tired thinking about spending an hour doing physical exercise, imagine up to 17 hours of non-stop swimming, biking and running.

Nebraska Air Guard Brig. Gen. Ned Greene doesn't need to. Last October he finished one of the most physically and mentally grueling world competitions -- the Ironman Triathlon World Championship in Kona on Hawaii's Big Island.

Greene, who was never an athlete and really doesn't enjoy running, finished the Ironman -- a 2.4-mile ocean swim, 112-mile bike ride and 26.2-mile run -- in just over 16 hours.

This is the same 5-foot, 5-inch, 140 pounder who had to stop three times while running a mile 10 years ago after deciding he needed to get in shape.

The Cornhusker State Air Guard Headquarter's chief of staff, and instructor at the University of Nebraska Medical Center College of Dentistry, said his transition from little exercise to one of the most physically-draining feats known to man was accidental.

"Once you get past four, five or six miles, it's like cruise control," Greene said. "It doesn't take much more."

"Running frees your mind up to a new dimension," he continued. "I've come up with so many creative ideas while running."

He started setting goals for himself to keep motivated. Since 1989, he has participated in many competitions, including two marathons and three Canadian Ironman competitions, one of which he didn't finish. But the marathons were just not enough.

"A lot of people can do marathons, but it's harder to put it all together to do a triathlon," he said. "The top people in the world train for the Ironman."

"The harder it is, the more meaningful it is when you finish."

The Ironman, which began in February 1978, is the brainchild of Navy veteran John Collins. The name of the race came from his description of the type of athletes who would compete.

"Anyone who can finish this surely has the right to be called an 'Ironman,'" Collins concluded.

Most of the 1,500 people who compete in the Ironman qualify by competing

among others in their age category. It's difficult to even get into the competition. Every year athletes from 50 countries vie to compete, Ironman officials reported.

Athletes gain entry into the Ironman by earning it at one of the 12 U.S. domestic qualifying events, or at one of the nine international races held throughout the year, officials explained.

Greene was lucky -- he won by the lottery system. He was one of 150 men and women out of 3,000 in the world who applied to the lottery.

He's been applying for eight years.

"Each year I'd call up on May 1st and hear the same thing, 'Thanks for trying, keep trying,' the person would say."

"I found out you don't have to call and ask if you made the lottery or not. They come to you," Greene said.

A television crew showed up at Greene's civilian workplace and caught him by surprise.

"I didn't know what they were there for," he said. "I saw a bag of gifts, and they told me I was chosen in the lottery. I couldn't believe it."

In order to compete, he had to qualify at one of 23 worldwide qualifying events. He qualified in Springfield, Ill. According to Ironman records, he is the only general officer to compete in and finish the race.

The lottery celebration, however, was shortlived. From May through October he pushed himself to the limit to get ready for Hawaii. Fellow Air Guardsmen, Col. Bob Bailey, Lt. Col. Carl Willert and Maj. George Boshae helped him train -- in heat, wind and rain.

Greene knew the Ironman would be no walk in the park.

On the day of the event, triathletes battled a hot sun and 25 mph winds that gusted to 45 mph.

He started his 2.4-mile swim in rolling waves at the pier in Kailua, Hawaii.

"It was a bad start, a tough swim," he recalled. "I was just tired and exhausted and I wasn't feeling too well. I had salt water in my mouth and was stung on my arms, legs and neck by half-inch jellyfish for about a half-hour."

One man's tongue swelled after being stung on his tongue, he said.

Greene also trailed many other swimmers.

## IRON

IRON AN IRON



## MAN

cally sick.

He kept running.

The winds, 45 mph at times, were said to have been the most vicious in Ironman history.

"The wind in Nebraska is tough, but it was severe in Hawaii," Greene said. "I was looking for divine intervention at one point."

"You want to be in the mix, not behind everyone. It took me a while to get back into the mix," he said.

The next challenge was a 112-mile bike ride into strong winds.

"It was terrible," he said. "I almost quit."

That gut-check occurred at mile 25 when headwinds reduced him to a crawl.

"I was thinking, 'I can make it. People quit and kick themselves. You may not make it, but you don't want to quit. I was so afraid of not making it.'"

"I was emotionally distraught," he added. "I thought, 'If I ever finish this, I'll never do this again.'"

Never say never.

After completing the bike ride, Greene laced up his sneakers to take on the 26.2-mile run over Hawaii's rolling hills that basically sits atop a volcano.

"The scenery was beautiful," he said.

Greene encountered many people throughout the race who were having a tough time -- many whom couldn't finish because of dehydration, injuries, flat tires and other barriers.

Half of the participants also get physi-

"When you're out there 14 to 16 hours, you realize how many different emotions you go through, from severe depression to euphoria," he continued. "So much of it is mental."

Greene said he pondered many things on his way to the finish line.

"You start making promises to God ... like when you have to take a test and you say you'll never wait until the last minute to study again," he related. "I promised I'd be a better person if I got over this."

Racers had a midnight deadline (17 hours) to reach the finish line.

"If you don't get there by exactly midnight, you aren't considered an official finisher and don't get a finishing T-shirt. There are no excuses."

The end was in sight shortly after 11 p.m. With two-tenths of a mile remaining, Greene recalled being overcome by emotion.

"All of a sudden there were many people," he said. "It was the greatest moment. It was crowded, late at night, like a parade. The feel of it ... seeing the finish line, was all worth it."

At 16 hours, 7 minutes and 23 seconds, the general ended a day of physical activity that had begun at 7 a.m.

"I felt like I came in first," he said.

He crossed the finish line with his wife, Linda, and daughter, Effie, 7, right behind him.

"You realize the importance of support. It keeps you going when you know a family member is there at the end. I can't imagine doing it alone," he said.

When the jubilation and euphoria of the Ironman was over, Greene said he experienced one of the biggest let-downs of his life -- a typical feeling athletes have after big events.

"The worst thing about achieving the goal is the let-down afterward," he said. "It was a very big let-down."

He didn't stay down for long. The general's current training for another marathon and said he hopes to compete in the Ironman again.

His next goal: to hike the Grand Canyon this July. That adventure will entail a rim-to-rim, up and down hike that will cover 45 miles in three days. He and 20 other members of the Nebraska Army and Air Guard fully expect that "vacation" to tax their bodies and minds.

Perhaps there is a subtle lesson of life when it comes to physical obstacles.

"The feeling of physical exertion helps to overcome a defeatist-type attitude," Greene said. "You know any attitude you have will pass. Meeting and conquering obstacles is kind of like life."

"It's not so much the event," he observed, "but how you perceive it."



Buckeye women help hearing-impaired, medically-underserved in Guatemala

# Angels of MERCY

By SrA. Elizabeth Dubina  
Ohio National Guard

It was as if "God had smiled in the room." This was how Capt. Kathy Tyree recalled a recent trip to Guatemala where she helped teach two brothers who had not heard a sound their entire lives utter their first words.

"I taught them to say 'Mama,' and then I took them to their mother so she could hear them," she recalled.

"It was an extremely emotional moment for everyone."

Many of the medically-deprived Guatemalans that Tyree and SrA. Nicole Buntin served during a humanitarian medical mission would swear that the two members of the Mansfield, Ohio-based 179th Airlift Wing had brought a slice of heaven to earth.

Tyree, a 179th readiness officer who works in audiology in civilian life, and Buntin, a public health technician, flew to Guatemala City to deliver much needed medical relief to some of that Central American country's poorest communities. To reach those people they endured a seven-hour trip up a dusty, winding road in an overcrowded, antiquated bus.

The Buckeye ladies visited four villages in eight days, logging 15-hour days in austere conditions.

"We were doing everything," Buntin reported. "From administering parasite immunizations and pulling teeth,



Photo courtesy of the Ohio National Guard

**MERCY MISSION** — Ohio Air Guard Capt. Kathy Tyree, a readiness officer with the 179th Airlift Wing who works in audiology in civilian life, fits a young Guatemalan girl with a hearing aid.

to teaching public health classes on how to wash hands."

She said that one family walked four-and-a-half hours to receive medical attention.

"On average," Buntin recalled, "800 people would wait in line each day for medical treatment."

"In the last village, on our last day, 2,400 people stood in line in hopes of seeing a doctor," she added. "Unfortunately, we ran out of medicine and could not treat everyone. We moved the children to the front of the line to treat them first."

Tyree spent her time helping the hearing-impaired. She administered hearing tests, and passed out hearing aids and ear molds to people who had never heard before. Various civilian companies and military organizations provided \$35,000 in medicine and medical supplies.

According to Tyree, the relief mission not only had a profound effect on her and many villagers, but also for their Guatemalan Army translator, Lt. Oscar Asensio.

"He didn't like American people, he thought we were greedy," Tyree explained. "After he met us, he fell in

love with Americans. He said it was because he saw how much we cared when we helped the people, and how we cared when we couldn't help."

"You want to help everyone so badly," she continued, "but we only had the daylight hours to work."

It was the discovery of a hearing-impaired school named *Escuela Por Su Ninos Sordos* that made Tyree and Buntin realize their job wouldn't be finished before their deployment ended. The Guardmembers were only able to treat a handful of the school's 60 students.

As a result, both were allowed to return to Guatemala for three days a month later.

Tyree said the first day was spent educating the local population about hearing loss, hearing conservation and hearing protection. She explained that many adults suffered from hearing loss because occupational health programs are not enforced.

"One soldier I treated admitted to shooting his weapon without hearing protection," she said, adding that many factory workers also failed to safeguard their ears even though they are surrounded by loud machinery.

Hearing loss in children, however, was mostly due to genetics or disease.

"When you realize this region is full of remote villages, with incomes averaging \$2 a week, it's easier to understand why resources to treat diseases like meningitis just aren't available."

The remaining two days were spent conducting more classes and fitting the school children with 152 hearing aids, generously donated by the Minneapolis-based Starkey Hearing Aids.

"One woman told us we were angels sent to Guatemala by God," Tyree related, "to help her child hear again."



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

**MONITORING SUCCESS** — SSgt. Jan McNally, a weapons director with the Tyndall AFB-based Southeast Air Defense Sector, checks his radar screen for potential enemy aircraft.

## OUTSTANDING

From Page 3

Southeast Air Defense Sector commander Col. Ted Kraemer, were present when inspectors shared their evaluations.

"It's significant that the Guard has been able to achieve such superior results in the time that we have," Burnett said. "The Air Force leadership has come to trust us with the most sensitive mission, and that's air defense. We're proud of that."

Kraemer expressed pride, but not surprise, over the performance turned in by those in his sector.

"The teamwork I have seen every day at the sector is what brought such awesome results," he insisted.

Canadian Forces Brig. Gen. Jim Hunter agreed, adding that the cooperation between American and Cana-

dian forces at Tyndall "exemplifies the spirit" of NORAD's 40-year-old bi-national agreement.

Col. John Cromwell, Western Air Defense Sector commander, was ecstatic over the inspector's findings.

"An 'outstanding' not only demonstrates how well we have come together within the sector, but with the other sectors and our headquarters," he said.

For Northeast Air Defense Sector commander Col. Michael Corbett, who can recall the days when the 1st Air Force was transitioning from the active component to the Guard, the inspection's outcome was particularly significant.

"It's apparent this mission is well suited to the Air National Guard," he observed. "Combine this achievement with the current trend in flight safety statistics, and it is evident the Air National Guard is now setting the standard, perhaps even a benchmark, that others must now strive to meet."



## NEWS

## MAKERS

Compiled by MSgt. John Malthaner  
National Guard Bureau

**Charles Fleming and MSgt. Travis Haberman**, members of the Air National Guard Training and Education Center's training and education development branch, were recognized by the National Guard Bureau for making the Supervisory Development Course available on computer.

Fleming, the program's manager, and Haberman, curriculum developer, converted the mandatory 32-hour, in-residence course for all new supervisors into a distributive learning, computer-based training format.

The course is currently taught two to three times a year in each state. Often, supervisors must travel from their unit to attend the course, incurring both travel and per diem expenses. By delivering the course in a distributive learning format, officials noted, it will allow supervisors to take the course at their home or unit.

**Eight members of the West Virginia Air Guard 130th Airlift Wing's turbopropulsion shop** in Charleston won the U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff's Team Excellence competition recently beating out 22 active component squads.

According to SMSgt. Joseph Neenan, the 130th's propulsion section superintendent, the group was the first such Air Guard unit to win the competition since its inception in 1992.

The purpose of the competition, Neenan noted, was to improve the quality and the way things are done in all the Force's maintenance sections.

Not content with simply winning, the Charleston crew also identified four repair processes that could be improved.

One of those money-saving ideas involved the replacement of the propeller blade heater boot. Most units, Neenan said, send the boot to a facility that performs depot-level repairs. The boot is a rubberized heating pad that prevents the propeller's rotating mechanism from freezing.

Neenan's crew realized they could do the replacement locally after a visit to the Robbins AFB, Ga., depot site. After getting approval, the group spent a week at Robbins learning the intricacies of the process.

"Across the fleet, people are having trouble with the gluing process," Neenan reported. "We've pretty much got the process nailed here. The good part is that we have told other C-130 units about what we do and they're stepping up and doing the replacements too."

To date, Neenan's shop has replaced 108 heater boots without a problem.

**A penciled imprint of a friend's name** taken from the wall at the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C., sits on the desk of Brig. Gen. Thomas Maguire.

"When I see this etching, I think of the person, not the rank, not the title, but a friend who I knew," said Maguire, commander of the New York Air Guard's 105th Airlift Wing in Newburgh.

It was prompted the construction of the 105th Memorial Park, which features a tiled wall listing the names of all the unit's former members. The names are listed without rank or title.



Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dennis Reimer (left) recognizes Oklahoma's SFC Darrell Robinson and SSgt. Dwight Oaks.



Lt. Col. Woodward Lamar, the 187th Fighter Wing's safety chief, displays his unit's hardware.



A record 8,000 Minnesota ice fishers turned out to raise money for deploying air traffic controllers.

**Army Chief of Staff Gen. Dennis J. Reimer** recently presented the Chief of Staff Supply Excellence Awards. The following won at the Guard level:

**Company with Property Book:**

1st -- Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 30th Engineer Brigade, N.C.

2nd -- 1436th Engineer Company, Mich.

**Company without Property Book:**

1st -- 43rd Army Band, Lincoln, Neb.

2nd -- Company A, 1st Battalion, 133rd Infantry, Iowa

**Battalion with Property Book:**

1st -- 109th Medical Battalion, Iowa

2nd -- 210th Finance Battalion, Miss.

**Battalion without Property Book:**

1st -- 1st Battalion, 632nd Armor, Wis.

2nd -- 199th Support Battalion, La.

**TDA Lower Level:**

1st -- 90th Troop Command, Okla.

**TDA Upper Level**

1st -- Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, STARC, Miss.

**Supply Support Activity:**

1st -- USPFO, W. Va.

2nd -- USPFO, Miss.

**The Arkansas Air Guard's 187th Fighter Wing** in Montgomery was awarded the Air Combat Command Flight Safety Award for flying during a 12-month period without a Class A or B mishap.

It was the fifth time in the last decade that the unit has received the honor.

Additionally, 187th F-16 air crews have received the National Guard Bureau's Flight Safety Plaque seven out of the last 10 years.

**An ice fishing fund-raising extravaganza** was held to purchase morale boosting items for 20 air traffic controllers with the Minnesota Army Guard's 47th Air Traffic Services scheduled to deploy to Kuwait for nine months later this year.

As one of the U.S. Army's 11 ATS units, the group will support Operation Southern Watch.

The fundraiser, hatched by SSgt. Steve Nelson, drew a record-breaking 8,000 anglers.

**The Maine National Guard received a Community Service Award** during the Kennebec Valley Chamber of Commerce's annual awards banquet in the capital city of Augusta, Jan. 29.

Maj. Gen. Earl Adams, Maine's adjutant general, accepted the award on behalf of Maine's 3,700 citizen-soldiers, including 950 full-time workers.

Adams praised the troops' "Maine work ethic and innovative skills" for winning U.S. repair contracts, for helping the state recover from a crippling ice storm in January 1998, and for producing the nation's supply of National Guard paper forms at the Camp Keyes printing shop in Augusta.

The National Guard is one of Maine's largest employers, with Army and Air Guard units located throughout the state. It is financed by an annual budget of \$80 million to \$100 million.



Maryland engineers help restore wetlands destroyed by flooding 30 years ago

# RIGHTING Mother Nature's WRONG

By MSgt. Bettina Puckett  
Maryland Army National Guard

**M**aryland Army Guard engineers went to work recently to fix a problem severe flooding caused more than 30 years ago.

Members of the Free State Army Guard's 243rd Engineer Company were tasked with restoring two wetlands next to Marshyhope Creek in Federalsburg, Md., that were destroyed three decades ago when town officials asked the U.S. Corps of Engineers to dredge the creek and dump the sediment into the bordering wetlands.

While dredging the creek eased the flooding, the silt-filled wetlands disturbed the balance of nature. Wetlands, insist environmentalists, are vital to the health of the Chesapeake Bay's flora and fauna. Experts say they serve as a natural filter, keeping some pollutants from entering the bay, and are a habitat for wildlife.

The project, reported Capt. Stuart Mellon, 243rd company commander, was not easy.

"We have exercised every piece of equipment we have on hand," he said.

Earth-moving unit members operated bulldozers, front-end loaders, all-terrain cranes, scraper pans, 20-ton dump trucks and other pieces of heavy equipment.

Spc. Sean Taylor, who is assigned to



Photo by Sgt. Ed Rollins

the company's headquarters at Camp Fretterd near Baltimore (the company's Detachment 1 is located in Salisbury, while Detachment 2 is in Oakland), saw the environmental project as a great opportunity to get in some "stick time" -- meaning shifting gears on the big construction vehicles.

"We get a project and we like to knock

it out," said Taylor, a Germantown resident who drives Metro buses in Washington D.C., in civilian life.

Despite difficult conditions, the soldiers worked full-speed, scooping silt out of one wetland and transporting the material to locations where fill dirt had been requested.

"They would work night and day if you

**RESTORING 'HOE'PE** -- Maryland's Spc. Bill Ramey uses a backhoe to help restore a wetland area near Marshyhope Creek.

told them to," said SFC James Evans, 243rd first sergeant.

Evans recalled years ago when Army bulldozers were used for digging, then refilling, tank trenches.

"This is good training because (the wetlands) will be used after we're gone," he said.

While the unit was only expected to complete work on one of the wetlands during its two week training, Maryland engineers began work on the second wetland after just eight days.

"They have been busting butt," Mellon marvelled. "It totally blew us away that we could get that far."

Although the Guardmembers routinely logged 10-plus-hour days, no one seemed to mind.

"It's not like you're watching the clock," said Spc. Steve Duckers, a part-time Guard truck driver from Oakland who works full-time for a construction company.

The wetlands project -- the first community foray for the recently activated engineer company -- also allowed the citizen-soldiers to work with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and several other agencies.

"They are saving us a lot of money," noted Nancy Stewart, a project manager with the DNR's Watershed Restoration Division. "These guys are doing a fantastic job."

Stewart said if the DNR had contracted out the work, it would have cost roughly \$220,000. Therefore, Mellon estimated, the Guard was saving the state about \$150,000.

The project has a number of environmental benefits, Stewart added, including helping to restore rare state plants like the pumpkin ash, which was thought to be almost extinct.

When the three-year project is finished this summer, she noted, the wetlands will be accessible to the public.

Which is just fine for Spc. Bill Ramey.

The backhoe operator said he intends to show his eight-year-old son Billy what he and other hard-working engineers did to right Mother Nature's wrong.

## EQUIPPED to RESCUE

CWO2 Robert Vetscher, an instructor pilot with the Minnesota Army Guard's 3rd Battalion, 147th Aviation, sits in one of his units Cobra attack helicopters equipped with a new thermal imaging system. The system, attached to the nose of the aircraft, allows pilots to detect people and objects based on small differences in temperature. The unit will use the imaging system to help them in its newly assigned, state-supported search and rescue mission.



Photo by Sgt. Thomas Porter





## STATES

• Burgin Takes Charge • Ventura Visits • Medics confront Mitch

## OREGON

**Brig. Gen. Alexander Burgin** has been selected to lead the more than 10,000 Beaver State Army and Air Guard members.

He will replace Maj. Gen. Raymond (Fred) Rees, who was recently named the National Guard Bureau's Vice Chief.

"General Burgin is a tried and tested leader with an excellent record, who understands my vision for the Oregon National Guard. He clearly possesses the ability to lead the Guard into the 21st century," Gov. John Kitzhaber said.

Burgin's nomination caps a distinguished 30-year career that included serving as Oregon's interim adjutant general from October 1993 to August 1994.

He began as an enlisted soldier in Vietnam and has served more than 25 years in the Oregon National Guard. He has held numerous leadership positions, including rifle company commander both in Roseburg and Medford; battalion commander of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry in Cottage Grove. Burgin was deputy brigade commander of the 41st Infantry Brigade.

"General Burgin has that rare combination of talents that makes him not only an outstanding combat seasoned field commander, but also a great administrator who's number one concern is the welfare of his soldiers," said Rees.

## NORTH DAKOTA

## BEAMING to BOLIVIA

North Dakota Army Guard PFC Calvin Osborn hauls a steel beam used for a seven-room medical clinic built by members of the Peace Garden State's 141st Engineer Battalion and Bolivian Army engineers in southern Bolivia. More than 200 troops from the state have returned home after deploying to the region as part of a 45-day humanitarian mission.



Photo by SFC Eric Wedeking

## MINNESOTA

**Gov. Jess Ventura**, a former Navy SEAL, expressed an eagerness to fly high in an F-16 with the Duluth-based 148th Fighter Wing during his first visit as the Gopher State's commander in chief.

The governor added that being in charge of nearly 12,000 Army and Air Guardmembers was like living a dream.

"You can go from an enlisted man to a commander-in-chief, and this is the only place in the world you can do that," Ventura said.

In a one-hour meeting, Ventura showed he was familiar with the Guard's operations and received a commitment for the F-16 ride and a tour of Camp Ripley. He rode in a humvee back to the Capitol.

Ventura also was jovial with Guardmembers, loudly quering, "Is there any Navy here? We gotta get more Navy here."

## WYOMING

**Twenty-two members of the** Cheyenne-based 153rd Medical Squadron deployed to Honduras to provide medical assistance to citizens still reeling over the aftermath of Hurricane Mitch.

"We are all excited about the opportunity to put into practice what we do in training," said Maj. James Woehl, deployment commander. "We have many highly qualified medical personnel."

## NEW YORK

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

**More than 150 Army National Guard soldiers** were on duty in support of western New York state's battle with blizzards that buried Buffalo and created a state disaster emergency in three counties during January's second week, Guard officials reported.

Gov. George Pataki initially placed more than 30 troops, members of the Buffalo-based 152nd Engineer Battalion, on state active duty to help dig out that city with five-ton dump trucks and front-end loaders.

"While snow in this region is not unusual, it is unusual to receive a winter's worth of snow in one week," the governor pointed out.

He brought more citizen-soldiers on board Jan. 6 to help Department of Transportation workers deal with the blizzards and high winds that led to the state of emergency for Chautauqua, Niagara and Erie counties along the shores of Great Lakes Erie and Ontario.

"Once again the men and women of the New York National Guard are there to help when New Yorkers need them most," Pataki said.

"The Guard's commitment to getting the job done will go a long way toward getting life back to normal as quickly as we can," he added.

Some 50 Guardmembers with at least 15 pieces of equipment were dispatched to Dunkirk, situated on the Lake Erie shore, and to North Tonawanda and Lockport north of Buffalo with Thruway Authority snowplows and personnel.

"The teams will augment local efforts to help clear the line of sight at intersections and open secondary roads to emergency vehicles," the governor said.

New York's Guardmembers know the winter drill.

Some 4,000 were called out for last January's ice storm that paralyzed parts of New York and three other northeastern states.

Guard soldiers also helped Buffalo with snow removal during a blizzard in 1995.

"During the storm of 1995, the National Guard was there for the people of Buffalo and our entire state," pointed out Maj. Gen. John Fenimore, the Empire State's adjutant general. "We are proud that Gov. Pataki has decided to call on the Guard once again to help keep our streets safe."





## HISTORY

• Commemorating Black History Month

Civil War African-American regiment  
were worthy in battle and in sculpture

## Capturing a Bronze moment in TIME

The 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment's assault on heavily-defended Fort Wagner, where nearly half the regiment was killed, may have been hopeless, but it was not in vain.

That July 16, 1863 Civil War battle on South Carolina's Morris Island, proved that African-Americans — the 54th was one of the first black regiments in the Union Army — could fight as well as white troops.

The film *Glory* recounts the story of the 54th Massachusetts and their young white commander, Col. Robert Gould Shaw. Those who saw the film may remember the incredibly detailed bronze figures that ran behind the opening and closing credits. Those figures are from the Shaw Memorial, a great work of art whose roots are firmly planted in the history of the National Guard.

Surviving members of the 54th Massachusetts first suggested a memorial to their young colonel in his hometown of Boston in 1865, but it was almost 20 years later before serious planning began. A committee suggested an equestrian statue, but Shaw's wealthy and influential parents rejected that idea.

The Shaws wanted the memorial to include the African-American soldiers their son had so ably led. Augustus Saint Gaudens, the sculptor commissioned in 1884 to produce the memorial, seized upon that idea. An Irish-born American who had spent eight years training in Paris and Rome, Saint Gaudens scrapped his plan for a traditional equestrian statue and began work on a *bas-relief*, a sculpture meant to be viewed from only one side. The *bas-relief* would include both the colonel and his regiment.

Saint Gaudens worked on the Shaw Memorial for more than 12 years, trying to solve the artistic problems presented by giving equal weight to both Shaw and his men. There was another artistic obstacle confronting Saint Gaudens. He had no experience sculpting African-Americans, whose facial features differed from Caucasians. To familiarize himself with those features, Saint Gaudens

practiced by sculpting 40 small plaster heads of different African-American men of various ages.

The work finally unveiled on Boston Common on Memorial Day 1897, depicted 16 members of the 54th Massachusetts surrounding their mounted colonel. The 25-year-old Shaw, as handsome as any 20th century movie star, is shown reining in his horse to keep in step with the regiment. Nothing like it had ever been seen before.

A bas-relief of 16 marching soldiers, or one showing just a mounted officer, would not have been unusual. But to give equal prominence to both the colonel and his men, as Saint Gaudens managed to do, was revolutionary.

Over the men floats an angel carrying an olive branch (a symbol of peace) and poppies (a symbol of death and remembrance). The 54th Massachusetts had a "rendezvous with death" off the



### GUARD HISTORY

By Renee Hylton  
Army Guard Historian

coast of South Carolina, and Augustus Saint Gaudens' genius captured the white colonel and his black troops marching together to meet their shared destiny.

The Shaw Memorial, described by a curator at the National Gallery of Art as "arguably the greatest American sculpture of the 19th century," is also a great work of history.

Motion pictures did not exist during the Civil War, and without film footage, the memorial is the closest anyone can get to seeing the Union Army on the move. It is difficult to look at the sculpture without hearing the strains of *The Battle Hymn of the Republic*. Even Southerners who revere the Confederacy are moved by it.

There are two places to see the Shaw Memorial. The bronze itself is on Boston Common, directly across from the Massachusetts State House. A



Photo courtesy of NGB Historical Services

**MOMENT in TIME** — The almost life-size memorial sculpted by Augustus Saint Gaudens to honor the 54th Massachusetts and its Colonel (on horse) is renowned for its majesty and its portrayal of a defining moment in African-American military history.

recently restored, full-sized, gold-gilded plaster version is now in the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C.

Any Guardmember who visits either of these two cities should not miss the opportunity to see a great work of art — and a great moment in the history of the National Guard.





# TRAINING



Photos by Spc. Clinton Wood

## COLD COCKING

Oklahoma artillery troops  
match their skills against  
Ripley's chilly weather

By Spc. Clinton Wood  
Minnesota National Guard

Minnesotans consider temperatures several degrees above zero in late January a heat wave.

Members of the Oklahoma Army Guard's 1st Battalion, 160th Field Artillery, however, deemed the unseasonably warm offerings at the Gopher State Army Guard's venerable Camp Ripley "a pleasant surprise."

It also marked the first time the 328-member Sooner State contingent tested its artillery and cold weather skills at the Army Guard's largest training area.

Along with 59 troops from three units in the 38 Canadian Brigade Group -- the 26 Field Regiment, 110 Field Regiment and the 116 Independent Battery -- the multi-national force skied, snowshoed and cut trails with ahkio sleds while expending nearly 1,200 105mm howitzer rounds during live fire exercises.

The training also allowed the American and Canadian artillerymen to take turns manning each other's guns.

Guardmembers like Battery C, 1-160th bombardier Spc. Thomas Kasey embraced the opportunity to load a Canadian 105C3 gun.

"They do it (load) a lot different than we do," he said, noting the country's alternative methods of determining parallel lines and trajectory.

As for the weather, Canadian bombardier Lejla Imamovic was unfazed.

"It's a little bit warmer (here)," he said. Capt. Jimmy Thomas, Battery C, 1-

160th commander -- adorned in U.S. Army-issue cold weather attire complete with black face mask pulled up to his nose -- squinted as he watched Howitzer crews toil under a near-blinding sun that created a harsh reflection off of the several inches of snow that had blanketed Ripley.

"It (the weather) could have been worse," he said, adding that his troops were "looking forward to" the temperatures dipping to 20 degrees below zero.

Although the mercury never approached those bone-chilling predictions, Thomas did recall waking up one morning and noting a thermometer reading of eight-degrees-above-zero.

"That's a major winter storm where we're from," said the Oklahoman with a laugh.

Canadian SGM Art Halliday, a member of the 26 Field Artillery Regiment, said he prefers training at the Gopher State proving ground during the winter, especially after enduring Ripley's heat last summer.

"I like the weather now," Halliday said. "It (last summer) was too damn hot and muggy."



**SOONER SKILL** -- A soldier (above) with Oklahoma's 1-160th tosses a howitzer shell casing to the ground. A Sooner State Army Guard artillery crew (top photo) load a howitzer at Camp Ripley.