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# THE ON GUARD

Volume XXVII, No. 7

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April 1998

## Schultz to lead Army Guard

**A 'DOMS' Deal: Former Iowa Deputy AG to head a force of nearly 370,000**

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

In late January, Brig. Gen. Roger Schultz told 500 Army National Guard leaders gathered in Arlington, Va., about the threats that weapons of mass destruction pose to this country and how America's citizen-soldiers will be expected to deal with those challenges into the 21st century.

The Iowa Army Guard general's horizons were expanded considerably March 19 when he was named the 17th director of the Army National Guard that numbers nearly 370,000 citizen-soldiers.

Roger Charles Schultz, 52, a decorated Vietnam veteran, was tapped to succeed Maj. Gen. William Navas who has held the director's position since October 1995. Schultz will begin his four-year tour at the Army National Guard's Readiness Center in Arlington later this year.

Preparing America's cities and towns to respond to terrorist attacks of chemical and biological weapons will remain a high priority, indicated Schultz who has served as the Army's Deputy Director of Military Support at the Pentagon since September.

"Homeland defense is going to take on quite a different meaning for us," Schultz told the *American Forces Press Service*. "It will include not just domestic preparedness, but installation preparedness and our ability to protect our power and continuity of government."

He was the first Army Guard general assigned to the post in the Army Operations Center that coordinates military

support to state and local governments in times of disaster. Army Guard generals will continue to fill that job, Deputy Defense Secretary John Hamre promised due to the Guard's ability to quickly respond to natural and manmade disasters.

Furthermore, Defense Secretary William Cohen announced in mid-March that 10 new National Guard emergency teams, each numbering 22 citizen-soldiers, will be formed to help domestic agencies respond to attacks on the homeland.

"This new initiative will be the cornerstone of our strategy for preparing America's defense against the possible use of weapons of mass destruction," Cohen told the National Press Club.

"First responders have told us they need a rapid assessment of the agent or device that cause the catastrophe so they know how much danger there is to themselves and to others who will arrive later," Schultz explained.



Brig. Gen. Schultz

A native of Le Mars in northwestern Iowa's farm country, Schultz was appointed his state's Deputy Adjutant General in March 1995.

He enlisted in the Iowa Army Guard as a tracked vehicle mechanic in February 1963, and he earned his commission from the Hawkeye State's military academy in June 1967.

Schultz's 35 years of service include a 1969 tour as an infantry platoon leader in Vietnam. He was awarded the Silver Star for valor following a long night in the jungle when he was wounded and his team was cut off from its base camp.

His Iowa Army National Guard assignments have included command of the 34th Infantry Division's 2nd Brigade and Chief of Staff.

He directed a 1993 task force that helped Iowa cope with that summer's floods that devastated eight million acres in nine states. The challenges included providing clean water for 350,000 people.



Photo courtesy Iowa National Guard

## ROAD to RECOVERY

After a blizzard blanketed much of southcentral Iowa in February, a member the Hawkeye Army Guard's 224th Engineer Battalion put an end loader to work in an effort to help his neighbors find the path to normalcy.





## COMMENTARY

• Out Gunned • Writing for News • Storm Safety

## ABOUT the PAPER

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## Mailing Address:

NGB-PAI-C  
2500 Army Pentagon  
Washington, DC 20310-2500

## Express Mail Address:

NGB-PAI-C  
Park Center IV, Suite 450  
4501 Ford Ave.  
Alexandria VA 22302-1454

## Phone/FAX Numbers:

(703) 681-0716  
DSN 761-0716  
FAX: (703) 681-0732/0731

## E-Mail:

jmalthan@ngb-emh2.army.mil

## NGB Home Page:

<http://www.dtic.mil/defenselink/guardlink/>

## STAFF



Chief, National Guard Bureau  
Lt. Gen. Edward D. Baca

Chief, Public Affairs  
Daniel Donohue

Chief, Command Information  
Maj. Andrew Smith Sr.

Editor  
MSgt. John Malthaner

Senior Correspondent  
MSgt. Bob Haskell

## GUARD MAIL

## Off Target

The origin of two people -- CWO3 Ray Gabiola and SSgt. Eric Breyer -- on the "Chief's 50" list of the top marksmen in the National Guard (January issue) were listed incorrectly. They are both from Idaho, not Indiana.

Sgt. Damon M. Moysard

Idaho National Guard

**Editor's Note:** Gabiola and Breyer, earned their "Chief's 50" distinction as pistol shooters at the Winston P. Wilson championships, an annual competition in Ohio that determines the Guard's best riflemen, pistol shooters, light machinegunners and snipers. For the record, The On Guard has a strict policy against upsetting marksmen, particularly snipers.

## Paper, Senator?

Each month I read with interest The On Guard. I have been so impressed with it that I have been sending a copy to a state senator who I hope will continue to be helpful to the Guard in Rhode Island. Is there a way to have this publication sent directly to her?

Col. Turner C. Scott

Rhode Island National Guard

**Editor's Note:** Because of laws regarding publications funded by the Department of Defense, we cannot initiate the mailing of our paper to state and national law makers, unless they specifically ask us to do so in writing.

## Storm of Unsafe Acts

It's a shame that common sense and safety procedures aren't in place with today's leaders. The front cover of the February issue shows two soldiers cutting and clearing debris from a typhoon in mid-December. Again, on page 13, a soldier is shown cutting trees knocked down by ice. The soldiers had no hearing protection or hard hats, and were using a chain saw in a unsafe manner (overhead). The other soldier had all the right gear, except for hearing protection.

Other than that, the article (Guard helps break the ice) was a great opportunity to show the coordination that can take place during emergency situations.

I can relate to these stories since I'm from the great state of New Hampshire, which also had their share of ice damage during mid-December.

MSgt. Douglas W. Rasp

New Hampshire National Guard

## If the boot fits ...

In response to the letter by SSgt. Eric Lobsinger (January), I also feel that Guardmembers should be labeled "Brothers in Combat" and not "Weekend Warriors."

However, having spent 12 of 14 years on active duty I can understand how this teasing came about.

On active duty, daily uniform and common area inspections trained you to spot a Reservist or a member of the Guard a mile away.

When I attended the basic non-commissioned officer course, I noticed that many reservists did not appear to know

how to wear the uniform.

When I got to my Guard unit I realized that the majority of the soldiers had not physically attended any NCO Academy courses (only by correspondence), yet they were wearing E-6 stripes. I've seen NCOs wearing phones, keys and beepers on their belts. I've also seen brass and insignia worn incorrectly.

I can chuckle at Lobsinger's protest, because I have personally seen Guardmembers come to the NCO Academy and stay four weeks, while the active component soldiers remain for the full three to four months. That is not what I call receiving the same training.

I've tried to repair the problems at my unit, but they all think I'm too gung-ho, too know-it-all; and they say, "That's the way the Guard is."

Scary.

SSgt. Theodore S. Scott

Florida National Guard

## LETTERS POLICY:

The On Guard welcomes letters from readers. All letters must include the writer's name, address and daytime phone. Names may be withheld upon request. All letters are subject to editing for style, content and space requirements.

You may FAX your 'Letters to the Editor' to DSN 761-0732 or (703) 681-0732. Letters can be mailed to: NGB-PAI-C, 2500 Army Pentagon, Washington, DC 20310-2500. Our e-mail address: jmalthan@ngb-emh2.army.mil

## GUARD TOONS

By Lyle Farquhar

Comments or ideas: lfquhar@msa1.army.af.mil



El Nino spawned many rescues...  
Some more successful than others!

"Next time, we follow the SOP and use two slings."





## IN THE NEWS

• Women's Month • Anthrax's Aim • AWOL Attack

## Women pioneers celebrated

**Led by Ladies:** *'Let the generations know that the women in uniform also guaranteed their freedom'*

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

The Army National Guard paid tribute to nine women who have made a difference during a ceremony punctuated by the Helen Reddy megahit "I Am Woman" at the Army Guard Readiness Center in Arlington, Va., March 19.

Nearly 200 men and women spent a couple of late-morning hours celebrating Women's History Month that has been observed every March since 1987. This is also the 150th year for the women's rights movement in America, begun in 1848 during a July convention in Seneca Falls, N.Y., pointed out this year's presidential proclamation.

Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught, the driving force behind the new Washington, D.C., military memorial for the 1.8 million women who have served this country in uniform, was the Army Guard program's featured speaker.

"Women are not afraid to serve. Women are proud of what they have done. But for some, that pride has been a long time coming," said the forthright Vaught who labored for 11 years to establish the Women In Military



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

**MOTHER OF THE 'MEMORIAL'** - Retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Wilma Vaught, the driving force behind the Women in Military Service For America Memorial, addresses a group of Army Guardmembers in Arlington, Va.

Service For America Memorial.

More than 36,000 people attended last October's dedication for the \$21.5 million memorial built at the main entrance to Arlington National Cemetery.

"Let the generations know that the women in uniform

See WOMEN'S HISTORY, Page 4

## Jersey fighters scramble to rescue

By Lt. Col. John Dwyer  
New Jersey National Guard

New Jersey's Lt. Col. Maurice (Moe) Eldredge and Maj. Tom Bartel scrambled their F-16 Fighter jets shortly after midnight recently to locate and assist a private pilot who was off course and headed out to sea.

Eldredge and Bartel — members of the Garden State Air Guard's 177th Fighter Wing based at the Atlantic City airport — located the twin engine Piper Aztec, piloted by Tom Cleary of Rochester, N.Y., nearly 175 miles southeast of their base.

Cleary had filed a flight plan from Rochester, N.Y., to Teterboro, N.J.

The fighter pilots got Cleary's attention by flying along side him, lighting their jet's afterburners and flashing its lights. After turning back toward land, Cleary followed the fighters back to Atlantic City.

Before reaching their base and still 70 miles out to sea, Eldredge and Bartel "handed off" Cleary to two F-15 jet fighters from the Massachusetts Air Guard's 102nd Fighter Wing. Their F-16 jets were too low on fuel to stay with the slower private airplane.

The Bay State pilots, based at Otis Air National Guard Base, escorted Cleary to Atlantic City, where he safely touched down at 2:30 a.m.

Cleary's plane had just one hour of fuel left when it reached Atlantic City. According to reports, he was "very grateful" for the Air Guard's assistance. His Aztec had suffered mechanical and alternator problems, which disabled its communications and navigation equipment. Compounding the problem, he was over 100 miles from land and flying over a cloud cover, leaving him no landmarks to find his way back to land.

With the mission of providing air defense for the United States' east

coast, the men and women of the 102nd and 177th are on alert status 24-hours-a-day, 365-days-a-year to deal with any type of aircraft emergency or incident.

The 177th alone has responsibility for securing the airspace between the end of Long Island and the Virginia capes. The wing has scrambled fighters many times to investigate unidentified aircraft, but this was the first "rescue" of a lost airplane since the early 1980s.

Their jets were scrambled in response to a call from the Northeast Air Defense Sector, located in Rome, N.Y. They monitor all air traffic in the northeast United States.

Maj. Gen. Paul Glazar, Jersey's adjutant general, said no one else could perform this unique mission.

"The Air National Guard is the only one who could react in time to prevent this plane from being lost," he said. "We are proud to be there when we were needed."

## NATIONAL BRIEFS

### Anthrax shots scheduled

A systematic vaccination of U.S. military personnel against anthrax will start this summer, the Department of Defense announced recently.

The program, which will affect all members of the National Guard, is the result of a three-year study that examined the military's vulnerability to biological agents.

Secretary of Defense William S. Cohen concluded that vaccination is the safest way to protect highly mobile U.S. military forces against a potential threat that is 99 percent lethal to unprotected people.

The anthrax vaccine will initially be administered to about 100,000 military members assigned or deployed to the high-threat areas of Southwest Asia and Northeast Asia.

Within the next several years, it will be given to all active duty and reservists.

"Our goal is to vaccinate everybody in the force so they will be ready to deploy anywhere, anytime," explained Deputy Secretary of Defense John Hamre, who will monitor implementation of the program.

At least 10 countries have or are suspected of developing a biological warfare capability.

The program is expected to cost about \$130 million to protect the nearly 4.5 million U.S. servicemembers.

### Keystone Guard attacks AWOLs

Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Ridge recently signed into law a bill that will help his National Guard punish members that are "absent without leave," or AWOL.

"The new law ensures that we have a strong deterrent in place, something which has been lacking for many years," said Maj. Gen. James Mac Vay, adjutant general.

"I'm confident this strong measure will preclude soldiers from making the serious mistake of being AWOL. This ultimately results in their separation from the military under other than honorable conditions."

Offenders will be subject to a fine of \$50 to \$200 for the first offense and \$300 to \$1,000 for subsequent offenses.

Pennsylvania National Guard officials view the law as a necessary means of dealing with the small number of Guardmembers who fail to uphold their obligation to attend monthly training. At any given time, 200 to 250 Keystone troops are considered chronically AWOL, out of a total force of 22,000.

"This legislation ensures that our field commanders will have better control in further mitigating the problem," Mac Vay said.



## IN THE NEWS

## WOMEN'S HISTORY

From Page 3

also guaranteed their freedom," is a phrase from a letter written by a retired nurse that Vaught said will be etched into one of the memorial's glass panels.

However, women forced to leave the service because they were pregnant or because they were not needed following both world wars were denied the recognition they deserved, Vaught added.

"I want every woman to feel as if she is part of that memorial when she walks in there," added Vaught who paid some major military dues during 28 years in the Air Force before retiring in 1985.

She was the first woman to make an operational deployment with a Strategic Air Command bomber wing in 1966-67, and the medals she received as one of the few Air Force women to serve in Vietnam have made her one of this country's most decorated military women.

The nine civilian and military women described as trailblazers for the Army National Guard were introduced by Col. Julia Cleckley, chief of the Army Guard's Personnel Division.

They were: Elizabeth McIntosh, the Joint Staff's deputy director; Jenny Ladew, Army Guard security manager; Carol Reese, annual training program analyst; Col. Denise Baken, policy and communications office chief; Capt. Amelia Calder, environmental staff officer; CWO4, Viki Murray, military personnel technician; CWO2 Phyllis Winton, federal recognition section supervisor; SGM Wendy Velez, enlisted tours chief; and Spc. Brandi Cline, administrative NCO for the Future Forces Integration branch.

"I commend you on the journey that you have traveled," Cleckley told the nine. She also reminded all of the women at the ceremony: "There is work still to do."

## 'Smart Force' solves mechanic's woes

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

John Lacontora figures that the U.S. Army, and the National Guard, uses 35 or 40 wheeled and tracked vehicles on a regular basis -- from the fairly basic Humvee to self-propelled howitzers to high-tech Abrams tanks.

It's all expensive. It's all built to withstand the rigors of rough terrain. But sometimes it breaks.

Waiting for the people who can troubleshoot and then fix the problems could mean time-consuming and downright dangerous delays on future battlefields. Furthermore, expecting today's maintenance people to know how to fix every kind of vehicle, each with its own electronic or computerized makeup, can be expecting too much.

Lacontora, a major in the New Jersey Army Guard, and some of his new-found industrial and academic friends are devising a portable computer system that is intended to help just about anybody fix just about anything that won't run.

Operation Smart Force is the Army Guard's program for talking a military mechanic or a crew member through any conceivable problem and getting the equipment on the road again the first time they fix it. Hughes Aircraft, General Motors and the New Jersey Institute of Technology are part of the program that has recently been funded with \$1.2 million for six months.

The Mentis computer, that features a thin display board and a Pentium-based power pack that can be worn like an oversize Walkman, talks to you and shows you what to look for and what to do about it. It can also be used as a training device.

Getting it right the first time is one of the main objectives, explained Lacontora who is pursuing a master's degree in systems engineering at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark.

"If war-fighters can achieve first-round hits through simulation, why can't maintenance people achieve first-round fixes



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

**SMART FOLKS** - Maj. John Lacontora (left) and Stephen Tricamo discuss ways to work smarter, not harder.

through simulation?" proposed the ordinance officer who has been working on this project for two years. "We don't have enough time and money to train systems engineers. We need a device to interface with the soldiers."

It will resolve many problems.

Between 20 and 40 percent of the mechanical problems afflicting military and commercial vehicles are not properly repaired the first time, Lacontora estimated. That means they have to be fixed again. That costs millions of dollars each year.

Experience is no longer considered the best teacher. The fact that equipment is being built better means that the same things do not always go wrong, noted Col. Ronald Krisak, former commander of the Army Guard's Training and Training Technology Battle Lab at Fort Dix, N.J. Therefore, people who have to fix them may not encounter the same problems often enough to become experts.

Relying on lessons learned in a classroom is also not productive, maintained

Krisak in a recent paper, "The 21st Century Technical Training Environment."

"Research has shown that, for certain types of information, approximately 42 percent is forgotten after 20 minutes," he stated. That memory loss jumps to 66 percent after 24 hours and 98 percent after a month, Krisak added.

"This interactive technology should enable full-time and part-time soldiers to be more proficient," said Lacontora.

People who believe the new mentoring system could be used for all kinds of things, including fixing the family car faster and for less money, are paying attention.

The institute will test and validate the system to prove that it does what it's intended to do, said engaging Stephen Tricamo, the dean of engineering. A dozen NJIT people helped develop the concept.

"You can credit the Guard with being the source of the original concept," Tricamo said. "But we've all recognized the potential value of this device."

It is currently being applied, with off-the-shelf hardware, to the Humvee, the basic four-wheel vehicle that has replaced the venerable Jeep.

It will, for example, show someone with only a basic knowledge of electronics the entire ignition system and how to check the glow-plugs and, if necessary, repair or replace the starter.

"The Humvee is a good test vehicle. It's not very complicated, and we have a lot of them," Lacontora said. "It won't cost us a lot of money to test and prove this system." That could be finished in a year, he added.

Once the computerized maintenance system is applied to Humvees, he added, it would only be a matter of time and money to apply it to far more complex pieces of equipment, such as the Abrams.

That is when it may pay big dividends, because a lot can go wrong with the many computer systems that talk to each other to make the Army's primary battle tanks move and shoot. Finding a problem in a hurry, and fixing it fast, could save lives.



Photo courtesy of the Alabama National Guard

## Deploying PATRIOTS

With engines running, a Patriot launching station, belonging to the Alabama Army Guard's 1st Battalion, 203rd Air Defense Artillery, is driven off a C-5A at Maxwell AFB, Ala. Thirty-one air defenders with the 203rd's B and D Batteries practiced "hot loads" several times during a recent exercise.





# PEOPLE

• Keller's Crew • Tackling Technology

MSgt. Salina Keller 'knows more about the foreign military than the Pentagon'

## Just call her 'Mom'

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

Salina Keller could be a soap opera star. "All My Children" comes to mind.

She has two of her own in their early 20s -- a son Ryan who is in the Navy, and a daughter Shoheen who works in Orlando, Fla. She also has a daughter-in-law and a new granddaughter. There also are two stepchildren from her second marriage.

Keller, a master sergeant in the Arizona Air Guard, has many other children, in an extraordinary extended family. They are fighter jocks. They come from many places besides the United States. Belgium. Norway. Singapore. The Netherlands. Taiwan. Turkey. They call her "Mom."

Their common bond is that they have learned to fly F-16s in the skies over Tucson, home of the 162nd Fighter Wing that has earned its wings as the Air Force's training ground for Fighting Falcon pilots from around the world.

That's where they meet Salina. That's where they learn to depend on this warm, engaging woman as they would their own mothers while living thousands of miles from their homes for six or eight months at a stretch.

"She's the one person everyone goes to. She probably knows more about the foreign military than the Pentagon," said Norway's Lt. Martin Tesli.

"If she has tickets to University of Arizona ice hockey games, she offers them to the foreign students," explained Norwegian Lt. Erik Brettingen.

Keller's official title is Registrar for the 162nd Operations Group that trains the international pilots and provides the second busiest wing in the entire Air Force with 70 percent of its business, explained Col. Ronald Shoopman, the wing's vice commander.



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

Keller makes sure they are properly enrolled; that they have the manuals they need; that they keep up with their computer lessons; that these bright young people hold their academic heads above water.

So isn't that what every registrar does at every Air Force training base? To be sure. But MSgt. Keller goes the extra mile -- or five or ten of them.

She bakes their favorite cakes for their birthdays. She gets them addicted to the black and red licorice and the fireballs that she keeps in her spacious office. Her duties include providing prayer rugs for the Muslim students and keeping an eye on those who fast during the daylight hours of Ramadan, the Islamic holy days.

She lets them know what's happening during the weekends. She sees to it that they are not alone during the U.S. holiday season. She watches over those afflicted with the emotional trauma called homesickness.

One hundred sixty-three students, most of them from seven foreign countries, passed through the three squadrons that form the school last year.

This winter, 11 of the 14 students in the squadron that she personally administers are from other lands.

"I love being able to help people," explained Keller who was 29 when she joined the Utah Air Guard in 1979 as a flight medic. "Most of the pilots are the same age as my own kids."

She transferred to Arizona in 1981, and she became the fast-flying school's registrar in June 1992. She made her motherly mark on the unique institution where intense,

**LAUGHS AND LICORICE** - Arizona's MSgt. Salina Keller shares some licorice and a laugh with foreign fighter pilots.

high-strung young people learn a dangerous and deadly business.

"They've been calling me 'mom' for as long as I've been here," Keller related. "'Mom' is easy to pronounce. Salina is not."

She gets a kick out of watching young pilots mature "from wide-eyed youngsters, like deer caught in the headlights," into confident pilots.

"The grin they get when they fly the F-16 for the first time lasts for days," she added.

Keller also understands what makes fighter pilots tick. "They are very focused on what they do, which can annoy a lot of people. Some people think they are arrogant. But they need to feel like they're the very best in order to do the things that we expect them to do."

"I'll feed their egos when their egos need feeding because it doesn't take away from mine," said Keller.

Yes, some have made lasting impressions.

Eskil Amdal warmed her heart with his rosy cheeks, his big motorcycle, and his old clunker of a car with the flag of his native Norway painted on the trunk.

Nico Temming and his wife Rosalien from The Netherlands became fast friends four years ago. Rosalien taught Keller how to speak some Dutch and helped her design and light her new home in Tucson.

There is much to be gained from teaching the international students how to fly the F-16s. Shoopman maintained, including the fact that what the foreign governments pay covers 75 percent of maintaining the wing's 63 airplanes.

Some of the foreign pilots may someday fly with -- or against -- Americans in combat, he acknowledged.

"If we train them in our F-16s, we know what they'll do," said Shoopman who added that learning to fly together fosters deep friendships. He recalled how two Jordanian pilots recently thanked the Arizona Air Guard unit for "making us a part of your family."

That, of course, was after they had come to know MSgt. Salina Keller as "Mom."

## Getting a fix on TECHNOLOGY

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

Growing up in Philadelphia in the mid-60s, John Lacontora could have been as obsessed as his friends with his city's sports idols, such as basketball legend Wilt Chamberlain.

At 12, however, Lacontora's curiosity followed a different route. He became intrigued with the way electricity makes things work.



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

**EYE ON THE FUTURE** - Maj. John Lacontora is pursuing ways to make today's technology simpler.

Now, at 42, Maj. Lacontora is exploring ways in which computer technology can more efficiently help members of the Army National Guard repair other machines, including tanks.

"Ever since I was a kid, I've

been into electronics and electronic theory," he recently explained at the New Jersey Institute of Technology in Newark. That is where he is pursuing a master's degree in systems engineering and where he is doing much of the research as the Army Guard's point man for Operation Smart Force.

He has followed a non-traditional path to that point after whetting his appetite by studying as much about electrical theory as he could at Bock Vocational School and then at South Philadelphia High School.

He joined the New Jersey

Guard in November 1975 and immediately began working with equipment -- as an armorer and mechanic and tank turret repairman in the 3rd Battalion, 102nd Armor.

Lacontora has maintained his interest in things mechanical since getting commissioned as an ordnance officer in December 1982. Now, besides being a student, a husband and father of four sons, he commands a regional maintenance training site at Fort Dix, N.J. -- where he also serves on the staff at the Army Guard's Training and Training Technology Battle Lab.

He is well placed. That lab's mission includes using new technology to improve the way citizen-soldiers are trained in service and maintenance skills.

"What all of this has given me, is a good enough background so I can help make some of today's technology a lot less intimidating to the people who have to use it," he said.

He looks very much like a graduate student, long-sleeve white shirt and all, while working in a small office on the fifth floor of the institute's information technologies center.

Yet, Lacontora the citizen-soldier knows what the Mentis computer could mean for the military, should it become widely used in industry as well.

"If we train soldiers and industry in the same way on the same things," he said, "it gives us a broader base to work from, in case there's a massive mobilization."



Missouri delivers on promise to help its own find jobs after their return from Macedonia

# Show-Me CARE

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

**A**s fairs go, it was pretty small. No cotton candy or Ferris wheels; no tractor pulling or side shows. This fair was about jobs. It was about how one state looks out for its Army National Guard soldiers who have interrupted their lives to look out for the interests of their country in a place far from their homes.

A job fair for 34 Missouri Army Guard engineers who returned from six months of United Nations peacekeeping duty in the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia during the final weekend in February showed them how the Show Me State takes care of its own.

"It's the first time I've seen anything like this," remarked Spc. Donny Boyle whose eight deployments have included tours on task forces in California and Panama. "They really went all out. It shows that somebody cares."

Boyle who was among a dozen Guardmembers attending the job fair at Fort Leonard Wood on the first Monday evening in March.

In all, 65 Army Guard engineers from Missouri, aviators from Illinois and military policemen from Colorado returned to the Midwest Feb. 27 from southern Europe after helping the U.S. Army's 350-member Task Force Able Sentry keep the lid on cultural conflicts along the Macedonia-Serbia border.

They were the first members of the National Guard to participate in the UN force that has been keeping the peace in Macedonia since July 1993.

The 21 Illinois troops flew into their state capital of Springfield where Maj. Gen. Richard Austin, their adjutant general, told them during a Saturday breakfast reception that "you can be proud of the role you played in a part of the world trying to reestablish a government and an interrelationship that has totally disintegrated."

The 44 others received a heroes welcome, stirred by a military orchestra, March 2 at Fort Leonard Wood's Army Engineer Museum in central Missouri.

"You showed the world you could deploy to a foreign land and make our total

force work," Maj. Gen. John Havens, Missouri's adjutant general, told them after giving each Guardmember a personal coin; after bestowing the new Missouri Expeditionary Ribbon upon the engineers and military policemen; and after presenting Army Commendation Medals to six of them.

Havens also related how their good work in Macedonia had persuaded members of Congress to restore funds that Maj. Gen. William Navas, the Army National Guard's director, feared would be cut from the budget.

After the pomp and ceremony and pats on the back, it was time to face the realities of the real world that include raising children and paying bills. Those obligations would require paychecks after they finished their temporary tours of active duty.



Photos by MSgt. Bob Haskell

For some it meant resuming civilian occupations -- as deputy sheriffs and casino chefs -- they had put on hold last August. Others, including Donny Boyle, either did not have jobs waiting for them or they wanted to explore their options for landing better jobs.

"I'm 30 years old, and I want something with a future," said Sgt. Russell Sharman, a single man from Monett in southwestern Missouri who worked for a

**DADDY'S HOME**—Illinois Cpl. David Marquez (above) had a hug from his five-year-old son, David Jr., waiting for him upon his return from six months of peacekeeping duty in Macedonia. Several Missouri Guardsmen and women (left) were interested in road building job opportunities in Alaska.

lumber yard before leaving for Macedonia.

Spc. John Hickey, 38 and a sheet-metal worker in Joplin, said he would like to continue working for the National Guard to support his 11-year-old daughter who lived with his mother and sister in El Paso, Texas, while he was away.

"If something like this (task force) came up again, I'd volunteer for it in a heartbeat," he confided.

Something may. A road-building task force expected to come to life in April appealed to eight or 10 of the engineers because Missouri's 35th Engineer Brigade is one of the lead units, explained Maj. Jerry West.

"If they're qualified for the job and they're willing to do the work, you bet, we're hiring," said West who is recruiting





**PROMISE KEEPER** - Missouri TAG Maj. Gen. John Havens delivered on a vow to help his soldiers find jobs, and a state expeditionary ribbon to Spc. Charles McManus.

people for the task force's 88-member duration staff.

Those were among the employment considerations that Havens promised while visiting his troops in Macedonia with Missouri Congressman Ike Skelton in early January.

"We will make every effort to line up interviews for people who need jobs when you get home," Havens pledged.

The job fair was the adjutant general's way of making good on that promise, explained Lt. Col. John Warren, the Missouri Army Guard's mobilization officer.

A representative of Missouri's Department of Labor and Industrial Relations told them how and where to look for work on internet web sites and where to seek help regarding unemployment insurance and reemployment rights.

The deputy director of the Missouri Guard's proposed Youth Challenge Program -- a five-month in-residence effort offered to high school dropouts aimed at getting them a GED and life skills -- said that staff would need shift leaders and platoon sergeants and others with military backgrounds if that program gets the funds it needs to get off the ground in July.

And Missouri Warrant Officer Leon DeLong told the engineers just back from Macedonia where to look and how to apply for full-time work as Army and Air Guard technicians and members of the Active Guard and Reserve.

That is a competitive process, he acknowledged. It is also a measure of hope for these Guardmembers who want new jobs after spending six months sustaining stability for tiny Macedonia's newly independent people.

"We may not be able to give them all jobs," DeLong confided, "but at least we can show them where to look."



Photos by MSgt. Bob Haskell

**FAMILY ISSUES** - 1st Sgt. Jim Erickson (above, right) chats with Illinois Family Support Coordinator Pam Morrow. Newlyweds Sgt. Darryl and Cory Reichling had much to smile about upon his return from Macedonia.

## INSIDE HOMECOMING

A new home, a wife and family, were waiting for two Illinois soldiers

# Reaping a family after keeping the PEACE

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

1st Sgt. Jim Erickson came home to a remodeled house. Sgt. Darryl Reichling came home to a new wife and family.

Such are the tales of two Illinois Army National Guard soldiers who returned to America's heartland during the final days of February following six months of United Nations peacekeeping duty in distant Macedonia.

Their stories are examples of how today's Global Guard deployments test the resolve and the commitment of the families that the citizen-soldiers leave behind.

"You are the unsung heroes. Your job was a lot harder than theirs," Maj. Gen. Richard Austin, the Illinois adjutant general, told the families who greeted the returning Guardmembers in Springfield Feb. 27.

Erickson was the top enlisted man for 22 aviators from Peoria's 1st Battalion, 106th Aviation who maintained and flew three UH-60 "White Hawk" helicopters for the U. S. Army's 350-member Task Force Able Sentry.

Reichling was a crew chief for the big white helicopters used to carry troops, supplies and distinguished visitors along a 50-mile stretch of the Macedonia-Serbia border in southern Europe.

Erickson's story is a classic case of the military version of Murphy's Law: The worst things always happen while a soldier is a long way from home.

Two days before Thanksgiving, he related, his wife Tiffany and 15-year-old daughter Angel returned to their home in Rockford, Ill., to discover water pouring from the second floor into the living room and dining room

and streaming down the stairs.

"It was raining in there. The living room ceiling was on the floor," said Erickson, a truck driver by trade and an infantryman at heart, who stepped in as the aviation unit's top sergeant three days before the temporary tour of active duty began last August.

A broken float valve had plugged the upstairs toilet and the water had run over the top non-stop for something like nine hours, he explained. Total damage: \$7,500. Thank God for homeowners insurance.

Thank God for a wife who can deal with disaster.

"It took two weeks to dry it out. The biggest thing was replacing the carpet," said Erickson, who could find some humor in the situation three months later. "At first I was shocked. In retrospect, I would have given anything to see the look on my wife's and daughter's faces when they walked through the door."

The broken toilet saved him some labor. "We were going to remodel, anyway, after I got home," he said. "Now all my wife and I have to do is pick out the new furniture."

Darryl Reichling was in the market for a house when he returned to his new bride Cory, and her two young sons from a previous marriage, who had been waiting for him in Hillsboro, Mo.

They had met on a blind date early in 1997. Darryl had proposed before deploying to Macedonia in August. Cory had said "yes." They were planning a huge church wedding for this May. Cory had bought her wedding gown.

Then Darryl came home on leave Dec. 3. He had to return Europe Dec. 16. They got married Dec. 15 in a county courthouse in Belleville, Ill., the groom's hometown. They had decided not to wait.

"You have to marry us today," Cory persuaded Judge Annette Eckert who performed the ceremony. "He's leaving tomorrow and I want him to be my husband when he comes back."

The judge understood.

Cory also understood Darryl's desire to spend a half year on active duty in Macedonia because she had served in Holland and Belgium during her eight years in the Army.

"He's always wanted to find out what foreign duty is like," said Cory, now an executive secretary for a real estate firm. "I told him if I was him I would go. I told him to get it out of his system."

Now that he's home, Darryl expects to return to his plumbing job with Union Local 101. The newlyweds are considering a honeymoon in Florida or in Missouri's Lake of the Ozarks. And they intend to buy a house that is fit for their new National Guard family.



## INSIDE EL NINO

# N

California Guard takes on another natural disaster

# IPPING NINO

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

Remember those inflatable plastic punching dolls? The kind with the weight in the bottom that rolls right back up after you give it your best shot to the head? The thing that will not stay down?

That is how the men and women in the California National Guard roll with the punches of the natural disasters that frequently afflict their state. That is how hundreds of them are coping with the challenges of this year's weather phenomenon El Nino.

"This is a cakewalk for us compared to last year," said Army Guard Maj. Terry Edinboro, the operations officer in the high-tech Crisis Action Center at state headquarters in Sacramento.

"We can handle the El Nino season as long as we get these breaks in the rain," he added during the first week in March that was considerably calmer than most of February. "If this trend continues, we'll be doing quite well. California always gets snotty weather. We have activations every year."

Bottom line? This year's powerful El Nino system may be getting blamed for everything from droughts in Australia and Hawaii to the tornadoes that have ravaged central Florida, killing at least 40 people. It may be this year's environmental scourge of the Earth. But it is business as usual for California where the four seasons are said to be floods, forest fires, earthquakes and riots.

That is not to say that the chain of storms that battered and flooded the Golden State's northern half with high winds and torrential rains made for an easy February. Some 13,700 residents were forced from their homes. President William Clinton declared 35 of the state's 58 counties a federal disaster area.

At the peak, 1,686 National Guard members were on state active duty, assisting the civilian agencies that deal with disasters with helicopters, bridge

boats and old-fashioned muscle.

It's just that the California Guard was primed to respond thanks to the months of advance warning and the lessons learned from the floods that devastated much of the state in early 1997. And the citizen-soldiers were prepared to see the long, quirky El Nino season through to the end — into April or May, if necessary.

The planning began late last summer, Guard officials explained, when it became clear that the largest ocean-warming El Nino system since 1982-83 would work its way from Central America toward the West Coast.

El Ninos occur every two to seven years from a chain of events that begin when trade winds that usually blow west to east across the Pacific die off for unknown reasons.

The monster system caught everyone by surprise 15 years ago. It killed 2,000 people worldwide and forced hundreds of thousands from their homes. Economic losses topped \$8 billion, including \$1.5 billion in this country. Satellites and other modern detection devices made it possible to predict the severity of this year's El Nino.

California had its guard up. "We feel we're ready to respond to any challenges that the approaching rain systems may pose," predicted Maj. Gen. Tandy Bozeman, California's adjutant general. "It's through our soldiers' and airmen's ability to anticipate that I feel so confident that we'll help civilian authorities reduce risks to life and property."

With more than 22,000 Army and Air Guard troops available, California was prepared to conduct simultaneous flood relief operations in northern and southern California for up to two months, promised Army Guard Col. Bill Wade, director of plans, operations and security.

Northern California needed most of the Guard's help for 3-1/2 weeks in February.

• Army Guard helicopter crews logged more than 300 hours evacuating people to high ground, flying 140 tons of supplies and equipment in to and out of marooned communities, and inspecting the state's extensive levee system for leaks.

On Feb. 4 alone, two CH-47 "Chinook" crews flew 200 residents and tourists and 25,000 pounds of cargo from upscale Big Sur to Monterey after mud slides closed coastal Highway 1. The heavy-lift helicopters also flew utility crews, water pumps, gen-



**GUARD LIFT** - California's SSgt. Wes Farnham (right) escorts a family to safety in Monterey after being rescued aboard a CH-47 "Chinook" helicopter.

erators, 55-gallon drums of fuel, and feed for livestock during 15 sorties to the isolated area.

"We carried everything, food and water, Pampers and potato chips," said Chief Warrant Officer Doug Gould who monitored the operation from the Chinooks' base at Stockton.

• Three hundred Guardmembers helped fill over a million sandbags to shore up levees during a week in the Monterey area when other agencies such as the California Youth Authority and the Department of Corrections ran short of workers.

• Hundreds of others in heavy trucks and ambulances carried residents out of harm's way and through flooded streets in regions such as Clear Lake. That remote lake, basined in the northern foothills, flooded to nearly 11.5 feet over its normal depth, the highest level since 1890, reported Clearlake Oaks Fire Chief Jim Burton.

• Guardsmen in twin-engine bridge boats searched swollen rivers for more victims and levee breaks. Members of the 132nd Engineer Battalion patrol-



Photo by MSgt.

ling the Sacramento River rescued a man stranded in a tree and his female companion from a tent after they had spent a long, cold Saturday night surrounded by high water. The man was suffering from hypothermia and, emergency workers feared, would not have survived another night.

• The Guardmembers came through the ordeal without any serious injuries. However, an 80-year-old civilian pilot was killed on Feb. 11 when his light plane collided with the back of a CH-47 and crashed. The four-man helicopter crew was returning from the Monterey mission that had lasted for seven days. The Guard helicopter landed safely, and the





Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell



Photo by 1st Lt. Donald Peters

**FLOOD OF RELIEF -** California Army Guard Sgt. Jeff Thirnbeck (left) calls for help along a flooded street. A Golden State Air Guard woman (above) wades through Nino's wrath with a police officer searching for stranded residents.

situation," said SSgt. Doug Camden, whose aviation unit had up to nine "Black Hawk" helicopters flying evacuation missions at one time.

Officials also learned a lot from their 48 straight days of state duty during last year's catastrophic flooding when 4,000 Guard troops saw duty at various times.

Indeed, California Guardmembers are used to dealing with disasters.

Last year alone, SSgt. D. J. Lemire witnessed a 16-foot wall of water surge through a broken levee and houses knocked from their foundations while working the winter floods; then he helped haul teams of fire-fighters to fire lines in Yosemite Valley during the summer.

They are committed enough to continue balancing their military commitments with their civilian obligations.

SSgt. Patricia Allison, for example, is a registered nurse who feels as obligated to her hospital's small operating room staff in northern Yreka as she does to her medical detachment in the 340th Forward Support Battalion.

"It puts you between a rock and a hard place," she acknowledged. "It makes it hard on the hospital when I'm doing this. But you get real tight with your Guard people."

Yes, she added, she will be back in uniform if her state needs her for additional emergency duty this spring. SSgt. Allison will help California roll with any punches left in El Nino.

incident remained under investigation in mid-March.

Overall, Californians were impressed.

"This is the biggest Guard presence I've ever seen after a flood," said retired sheriff lieutenant Carl Webb. "They helped a lot of people. Just the presence of the Guard probably kept the damper on looters."

"They baled us out of a lot of stuff. My guys were getting burned out, and our equipment couldn't go where their trucks could," explained the Clearlake Oaks fire chief. "This is the first time I've worked with the Guard in a flood situation. I

would have them back in a heart-beat."

There are some solid reasons behind that praise.

Although it was severe enough to cause 14 fatalities, including two Highway Patrol officers, El Nino did not hit California as hard as anticipated. That meant the National Guard had more than enough people and equipment ready to roll from three operational area teams staged at Stockton, Salinas and Santa Rosa under the command of the 40th Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade.

"This year everything was well predicted. The assets were in place, and we just didn't have the serious



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

California Army Guard's Denis Bartz picked up his spatula and went to work

## Cooking up a STORM

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

**P**aying them and feeding them are the tried and true ways of keeping soldiers satisfied. That rule of thumb certainly applies to National Guard troops called up to help their states cope with such domestic emergencies as El Nino.

California Gov. Pete Wilson and Maj. Gen. Tandy Bozeman, the adjutant general, were ultimately responsible for paying the hundreds of citizen-soldiers who stepped forward for state active duty in February to help the Golden State deal with that natural disaster.

Denis Bartz handled part of the feeding. He kept some of those citizen-soldiers very happy indeed for about a week at northern California's flooded Clear Lake. They called him the "grill sergeant."

Denis Bartz? He's a staff sergeant in the communications section of a California Army Guard artillery battery -- B Battery, 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery out of Woodland.

He's 46, a Navy veteran who served in Vietnam, and part of the receiving crew at a discount chain's distribution center. He's also a self-taught chef who is as comfortable in a kitchen or at a charcoal grill as Julia Child. He can make a piece of steak melt in your mouth.

Preparing breakfasts and dinners for the dozen Army Guardsmen, as well as for firemen, deputy sheriffs and highway patrolmen, in a well-appointed kitchen in

**GRILL SERGEANT -** California Army Guard SSgt. Denis Bartz displayed his culinary skills while feeding El Nino emergency crews.

the Clearlake Oaks Fire Department became Bartz's main mission during the first week in March. It was one more way that Guardmembers brought a measure of relief to local people coping with El Nino's flooding.

"Different people were taking turns preparing the meals when we got here. Even the fire chief was helping with the cooking," Bartz explained. "That didn't seem right, so I jumped in to give them a hand. Since then they've kind of expected me to do the cooking."

Cooking, Bartz explained, is a hobby that he acquired growing up in Chicago.

"My mother gave me a free rein in the kitchen," he said. "I didn't like my food plain, so I learned how to marinate meat and use lots of seasonings."

His only professional experience was a job as a short-order cook for a few months before he joined the Navy at 17.

Although Bartz insists he is hardly a sous chef, this quiet, focused man in the white apron still finds satisfaction from a local newspaper's cooking prize that he won in the mid-80s. His winning dish? Seafood stuffed mushrooms.

He joined the California Army Guard in 1985, and his cooking has been getting rave reviews ever since.

"My unit is well aware of my cooking skills. I cook when we're down range or if we have a barbecue," he explained.

It was only natural, therefore, that he grill a feed of steaks for the crew at the Clearlake Oaks firehouse at the end of a damp, raw day in March when clouds heavy with rain threatened to force even more people from their lake-side homes.

Liberal applications of onion powder, pepper, garlic powder and Worcestershire sauce brought out every bit of flavor from every piece of meat.

Giving everyone a good, hot meal at the end of a day is his way of taking care of the troops, explained Bartz as 20 or so people savored their evening meal.

"Good." "Excellent." "Superb!" were their compliments to this National Guard "grill sergeant."





## SPORTS

• Pounding Pavement in Pensacola

## Guard marathoners go distance

**Blue Angels: Utah's Jay Woods, Florida's Kelly Wild lead men, women runners**

By Spc. Rick Breitenfeldt  
Nebraska National Guard

A clean sweep. A route. Total domination. These were just a few of the colorful phrases heard at or near the finish line after the running of the 15th annual Blue Angel Marathon in Pensacola, Fla., Feb. 28.

National Guard running team members finished the 26.2-mile race at or near the top in every category. And for the seventh year in a row, they brought home the hardware to prove it.

Florida native and marathon veteran Sgt. Kelly Wild finished the race with a time of 3:10:50, good enough for second among all women runners.

Wild, a 33-year-old training sergeant with the Florida Army Guard, was using this marathon to help her prepare for the National Guard Marathon Team trials, held in Lincoln, Neb., in May.

"I felt good today," Wild said. "I was thinking about just having a good time because that makes the race a lot easier and less stressful. I kept telling myself that I've got to slowdown, because this is just a training run."

Utah SSgt. Jay Woods was the Guard's top male finisher, coming in at 2:34:09. It placed him in first place in the Master's category (40 and over) and third place among all participants.

"I was just trying to run smart. I didn't want to crash," recalled Woods, a supply sergeant and member of Detachment 1 of the Utah's State Area Command. "I'm really happy with the way I ran today."

Just as impressive were the military championship team results, where the National Guard took all four of the top spots, shutting out every other team and all other branches of the Armed Forces.

The winning team finished

with a combined time 10:38:26, nearly 45 minutes ahead of the second place team. The winning military team included: Woods, Kansas SSgt. Curt Rogers, Utah SSgt. Ray Workman and Indiana SSgt. Trent Sinnett.

Heralded as the "Official Navy Marathon," a record 1,083 runners entered the Blue Angel Marathon, which takes its name from the Blue Angel Flight Demonstration Squadron based at Naval Air Station in Pensacola.

"I race here on weekends all the time," said Wild. "Pensacola is a wonderful running community."

"I think that this just goes to show that we (members of the National Guard) are fit and don't fit the stereotype of the fat weekend warrior," said Kansas Air Guard SSgt. Curt Rogers, who finished the race fifth overall with a time of 2:38:51.

"The toughest part of the course today had to be the warmth," he added. "I'm from the midwest and I'm not used to these temperatures at this time of year."

Nebraska SSgt. John Snoozy agreed.

"It was okay through the first 15 or 16 miles because the wind was in your face, but when I made the turn to come back in, it got really warm," he said. "I was taking three cups of water at every station."

Each of the 21 National Guard racers



Sgt. Kelly Wild

agreed that finishing as well as they did couldn't help but make an impression.

"I hope this sends the message that we're trying to promote fitness," said Wild.

Woods added that the Guard's impressive showing also gives citizen-soldiers

## FLEET FOOTED

SSgt. Jay Woods, 40, Utah	2:34:09
SSgt. Curt Rogers, 31, Kan.	2:38:51
SSgt. Ray Workman, 47, Utah	2:39:00
SSgt. Trent Sinnett, 36, Ind.	2:46:28
Maj. Flick West, 44, Utah	2:46:28
SSgt. Michael Zeigle, 46, Wis.	2:47:07
Sgt. Paul French, 37, Md.	2:49:51
Capt. Andrew Hyde, 33, Wash.	2:50:09
CWO Russell Hoyer, Jr., 37, N.Y.	2:50:53
MSgt. Max White, 47, Ore.	2:51:21
SSgt. John Snoozy, 40, Neb.	2:53:00
SSgt. Paul Brand, 43, N.C.	2:53:17
SFC David Taylor, 37, Utah	2:54:31
Sgt. Kelly Wild, 33, Fla.	3:10:50
SFC Terry Hubler, 46, Idaho	3:11:18
TSgt. Susan Jay, 38, Fla.	3:20:53
1st Lt. Michael Smith, 39, Penn.	3:30:35
SFC Deanne Traube, 32, Utah	3:44:28
MSgt. P.J. Lindahl, 45, Tenn.	3:50:08

and airmen a sense of national pride.

"It sends the message that we're fit and we're ready to do our job," he said. "I don't think that you could look at any of these marathon finishers and not think that they're going to do a good job if they're called upon."

## Beehive BIKERS

The nationally-recognized Utah National Guard Bikathon bicycle team pedaled more than 700 miles across the Beehive State visiting nearly 100 middle and junior high schools. In 10 days, the cyclists trekked from the Utah-Idaho border to the Utah-Arizona border, delivering their message to thousands against drug use and encouraging youths to seek alternative "natural highs" through fitness and healthy living. This was the fourth year members of Utah's Army and Air National Guard were involved in an effort that received national recognition and kudos from their Governor.



Photo by MSgt. Craig Leeper





It's not fast or pretty, but Texas aviators say the Sherpa passed the test during their first humanitarian mission overseas

## Winnebago with WINGS

By Spc. Aaron Reed  
Texas National Guard

Central casting did a fine job: a determined crew of aviators — combat veterans all — and a pioneering team of military doctors, intent on delivering aid and comfort to the people of a third world country. On the flight line, a boxy little airplane in Army gray. A craft *Peterson's Field Guide to Airplanes* charitably describes as "bizarre-looking."

The visuals were stunning: a "rosy-fingered" dawn at the southern extremity of Texas; a snow-capped Mt. Citlaltl in the distance, and pit-stops in one tropical paradise after another.

But the script ... that would have to be rewritten, because the moment of high drama, the crisis, came at the very beginning.

It was 4 a.m. at the Raytheon operations building at San Antonio International Airport when CWO4 Steve Sampson broke the bad news.

"I'm sorry to have to tell you this, but we may not be going," he informed the crew. "We still don't have our country clearance for Mexico."

Sampson, the aircraft commander, went back to the phone with a Mexico City number in hand. Three minutes later, he emerged smiling.

"I woke him up at home," he said of an unnamed embassy employee. "We're cleared."

The trip was a first for Sampson, co-pilot CWO Don Burkley and flight engineer Sgt. Clifford Frank, all members of the Texas Army Guard's Detachment 2, Company H, 171st Aviation.

"We've flown as far west as Las Vegas and as far north as Fort Drum, N.Y., but this is our first mission outside the continental U.S.," Sampson said.

The unit rolled-out their first C-23B Sherpa last September, with a second scheduled for delivery in August.

With a requirement to fly each aircraft 35 hours a month, and the possibility of getting approval for 20 additional hours for high priority missions, Sherpa pilots and flight engineers stay busy.

The Texas detachment's maiden overseas mission was to deliver an active Army and Air Force team of surgeons

and eye doctors to Soto Cano Air Base, Honduras.

There, the team from Brooks Army Medical Center and the 41st Combat Support Hospital, both at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, saw more than 500 patients during their two-week deployment, performing surgery on more than 100 of them.

Lt. Col. (Dr.) Wendell Bauman, an Air Force doctor on loan to Brooks as assistant chief of surgery and chief of retina services, said the day-long flight on the Sherpa saved his team a lot of headaches.

"If we didn't get the clearance to fly over Mexico, we would have lost a day," Bauman said, "and because of weight restrictions and the cost of flying commercially, I would have had to drop two members from the team."

The Sherpa delivered the medical team to Honduras just 40 minutes later than a commercial flight.

"This has been a very good ride, much better than I expected," he said. "I hope we can be repeat customers."

According to Sampson, that's a distinct possibility.

"We're talking to the Operational Support Airlift Command right now about taking on the Central America routes full-time," he said. "Geographically, it just makes sense."

The Austin-based unit is quickly developing the first-hand experience that make the flights south safer and more efficient.

At one fuel stop, the aircraft was met by armed Mexican Marines. Each stop along the way presented different procedures for buying fuel; and sometimes a language barrier to overcome.

"I don't know how much I just paid these guys," Frank shrugged at the Veracruz airport, as he struggled preparing a pre-takeoff weight and balance sheet that required him to convert liters to pounds. "It was either \$300 or \$3,000. They seem happy, anyway."

In addition to returning the active duty doctors to San Antonio, the Sherpa crew spent most of their spring flying helicopter parts and passengers to Ilopango AB in El Salvador, where a Texas Army Guard Black Hawk unit was supporting Operation New Horizons 98.

While such missions are typical, Burkley noted, he and his fellow crew, is not.



Photos by Spc. Aaron Reed

**TEXAS TOIL** - Texas Army Guard Sgt. Clifford Frank, a flight engineer, checks the landing gear of a Sherpa C-23B (far left) prior to takeoff.

Burkley started flying in 1965, at age 17, spending four years as an enlisted man in the Air Force, before going to work as a civilian helicopter pilot for the Maryland State Police. While there, he joined the Maryland Army National Guard and became an aviator.

In 1990, Maryland received the Sherpa mission, and Burkley was the first in line to pilot the aircraft. Since then, he has logged more than 2,600 hours in a C-23B cockpit. A

year later he was one of a handful of Sherpa pilots who served in southwest Asia during Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

The five National Guard Sherpas flew parts and passengers into forward areas of northern Saudi Arabia, and into Kuwait and southern Iraq. Over a five month period, Sherpa crews flew more than 500 missions, tallying over 1,400 flight hours — hauling more than 800,000 pounds of cargo and 400 passengers — in a primitive and demanding combat environment.

Burkley said that the Gulf deployment was important to Sherpa aviators for several reasons.

"It documented to the Army that the Guard was capable," he added. "It also demonstrated that the C-23 is a pretty good airplane for that kind of thing. We didn't have one major mechanical breakdown."

The Army noticed. Several Guard states are slated to receive 36 Sherpas to support joint and multi-service operations around the world.

It's not pretty, and it's not fast. But much like its Himalayan namesake, the C-23B is reliable. Its four-ton payload also offers a strong hauling capability. Plus, true to its antecedents as a commuter airliner, it's relatively economical to operate.

But the aircraft's greatest selling point may be the people who fly it. The experience Burkley brings to the unit as both a helicopter and fixed-wing pilot is typical.

Sampson, who for more than two decades worked full-time as the facility instructor pilot and instrument examiner at the Guard's Martindale Army Air Field in San Antonio, has logged more than 11,000 flying hours.

The youthful grandfather earned his "Screaming Eagle" shoulder patch flying UH-1 and OH-6 helicopters for the 101st Airborne Division in Vietnam in 1969. In mid-1996, he spent five weeks flying C-12s in Bosnia supporting the NATO peacekeeping effort.

For his part, flight engineer Frank can recall an early career as an Air Force crew chief in southeast Asia during the late 1960s. He said the Sherpa is a lot easier to maintain than the old C-121 Super Constellations he cut his teeth on.

"This really is a great airplane," Frank said, monitoring in-flight fuel consumption from the flight deck.

Nevertheless, Burkley said piloting the Sherpa is more business than fun.

"We fly this airplane pretty conservatively," he said. "Everything's pretty regimented. We do our best to minimize the surprises."

Judging from the response of this Sherpa unit's early customers, don't be surprised if this aviation detachment spends more time in the air than on the ground.



**'SHER'PECT** - CWO4 Steve Sampson, aircraft commander, says the Sherpa is a proven performer.



## NEWS

## MAKERS

Compiled by MSgt. John Malthaner  
National Guard Bureau

SrA. Jason B. DeHeus, a traffic management journeyman with the Alaska Air Guard's 168th Air Refueling Wing at Eielson AFB, was recently selected his state's Airman of the Year.

Born in Fairbanks of Yupic (Alaskan native), German and Dutch descent, DeHeus turned his life around three years ago graduating from the Alaska National Guard Youth Corps Challenge Program with three Presidential Physical Fitness Awards, several certificates of excellence and a high school diploma from the University of Alaska-Anchorage. The Guard Bureau-sponsored school is aimed at helping high school dropouts.

The 22-year-old enlisted in the Air Guard in May 1995 and has established a reputation for his work on and off base. He coaches youth basketball; collects canned foods for the Fairbanks Food Bank; donates toys for children at Christmas; participates in church activities and recruits people into the Air Guard.

**Brightening the day of young cancer patients** may seem a distant thought to some, but for CMSgt. Harry Fox, the Pennsylvania Air Guard's senior enlisted advisor, a warm heart, a friendly grin and an Air Guard hat, is part of a day's work.

Fox recently delivered nearly 1,000 Air Guard hats to children in Hershey Medical Center's Cancer Ward and to veterans at the Lebanon County VA Medical Center.

The project began when Fox distributed letters state-wide, asking Air Guardmembers to donate unit hats. Soon, boxes of wing, unit and squadron hats began arriving.

"This entire project made me feel real good," said Fox, who is a traditional Guardmember and owns an automotive repair shop. "I knew the kids and the veterans would appreciate the hats. Plus, it really brightened up some people that really are less fortunate."

**Georgia's Youth Challenge Academy** received a major corporate gift from the Georgia Power Company recently when the utility company presented a check for \$10,000 to the seven-year-old National Guard-sponsored program at Fort Stewart, Ga.

Fred Williams, senior vice president of the Georgia Power Company, presented the donation to Gov. Zell Miller, during "National Guard Day" ceremonies at the state capitol. Miller then presented the check to Maj. Gen. William Bland Jr., Georgia's Adjutant General.

"My first trip to Youth Challenge made a lasting impression on me," said Williams, who was among many prominent business, government, educational and community leaders who have visited the Youth Challenge Academy campus over the past year.

Challenge is a 22-week residential program for "at-risk" youth operated by the National Guard. The Peach State's Youth Challenge program is one of 15 similar programs operated by the National Guard nationwide. Since its beginning, more than 1,300 Georgia youths have graduated from the program.



Pennsylvania's CMSgt. Harry Fox tips his hats to those in need.



Georgia business rewards Challenge.



Iowa medical squadron recognizes local paramedics.



The Michigan Army Guard's aggressive effort to protect their environment was Wolverine-like.

**Members of Iowa's 185th Fighter Wing** recently presented an award to Siouxland Paramedics, Inc., for its efforts in training members of the Sioux City-based unit.

The alliance began four years ago when the U.S. Air Force began requiring that Air Guard medical technicians be nationally-registered as emergency medical technicians or EMTs.

The program, started by the 185th's MSgt. Steve Hopkins, had one or two 185th medical professionals riding with Siouxland paramedics during weekend drills.

One of the first Air Guard units in the nation to develop a partnership with a local ambulance service, the 185th's medical squadron has 26 EMTs assigned.

**The Michigan Army Guard's environmental** section received the National Guard Bureau Environmental Stewardship Award recently, recognizing it as the best state/territory environmental program.

The award was presented at the annual NGB National Environmental Workshop held in Little Rock, Ark.

"This award is special because Michigan was selected based on our proven performance rather than on a submitted nomination," said Michigan's Lt. Col. Tibor Lanczy, chief of construction and facilities.

Criteria for the award included compliance with environmental laws, meeting NGB administrative requirements and providing good stewardship of natural resources on land and facilities used by Guardmembers.

Maj. Gen. E. Gordon Stump, Michigan's adjutant general, also recognized the support and compliance of every Guardmember and employee located in every armory and training facility across the state.

Last year, the Wolverine State-run Camp Grayling received the prestigious NGB Eagle Award for environmental quality at a large, non-industrial installation, and then placed third in the same category Army wide.

**A New York Air Guard rescue crew** saved a 45-year old fisherman from the cold waters off Moriches Inlet recently.

The fisherman was immediately transported to Brookhaven Memorial Hospital in Patchogue. According to an on-board paramedic, the survivor appeared to be suffering from hypothermia.

Maj. Kevin Metz, the 106th Rescue Wing's supervisor of flying, said that the Coast Guard had requested the rescue since the inlet was impassable due to gale force winds of over 40 mph.

"The wind had forced his boat onto the sand and he had been out there for two hours," Metz reported.

On board the unit's HH-60 Pavehawk helicopter were Maj. Michael Noyes, pilot; Capt. Chris Baur, co-pilot; TSgt. William Cunningham, flight engineer; and two paramedics, SMSgt. Timothy Malloy and TSgt. Steven Cluff.





## Taking back the STREETS

Despite threats to their lives, Puerto Rico's Guard digs in against drug dealers

By MSgt. Bob Haskell  
National Guard Bureau

mission for this nation.

A force of 300 state police and National Guard troops moved in to clean up the neighborhood on Dec. 29. Police arrested 22 residents for narcotics violations and confiscated 10 vehicles while National Guard troops sealed the perimeter and watched their backs.

"This makes a lot of difference," said the New York-born De Jesus. "These kids can play outside, and people can sleep at night without having to worry about the place being shot up."

This is not emergency temporary duty

The loaded magazine locked into the M-16 rifle slung over Timoteo De Jesus's right shoulder as he stood in the middle of a hard scrabble neighborhood in Puerto Rico indicated this was not another National Guard training exercise.

Sgt. De Jesus and a lot of other Army Guardmembers prominent in their camouflage uniforms have been a constant presence since the final days of December in the Las Palmas Housing Project, where 1,400 people live in 42 concrete apartment buildings outside the capital city of San Juan.

The 40-member Army National Guard security unit assigned to that project man six guard posts and help the Puerto Rican State Police keep the peace in what is a unique National Guard

to help their neighbors bail out from a flood or to prevent looters from tearing up their town. One hundred thirty-four Army Guardmembers are serving on state active duty in that project, and four others like it, for the long haul to help police maintain law and order in their own backyards.

Another 125 Army and Air Guardmembers are working with U.S. Customs and other federal and state law enforcement agencies to search for drugs being flown and shipped into Puerto Rico in packages and on passengers.

They know it is a risky way to earn a living, Guardmembers explained, because the people who deal in the multimillion-dollar drug trade know who they are and where they live.

Illegal drugs are the root of the commonwealth's crime problem. An estimated seven tons of cocaine pour into Puerto Rico each month, said Air Guard Lt. Col. Orlando Gonzalez, Puerto Rico's counterdrug coordinator. The island has become the crossroads for drugs being smuggled from Columbia, *The Washington Post* reported recently.

After getting around customs, explained Gonzalez, nearly 90 percent of the drugs go unchecked to U.S. cities along the East Coast. The rest remains on the island.

In 1997 alone, 3.5 tons of cocaine were seized in the Port of San Juan, said Customs supervisor Hector Alvino. Of all U.S. ports of entry, San Juan was No. 3 in heroin and No. 4 in cocaine in last year's



Photos by MSgt. Bob Haskell



**CURBING BUSINESS** - Spc. Gregario Jorge watches an X-ray machine for illegal narcotics being shipped from Venezuela.

total confiscations.

Drug deals and turf wars and murders in the night have made parts of the Delaware-sized commonwealth dangerous places to live, said Army Guard Lt. Col. Manuel Brillón-Rodríguez, commander of the task force that has worked in the public housing projects since 1993.

"We are helping to rebuild confidence in the local police," Brillón-Rodríguez explained. "Public housing people seldom respect law enforcers. They don't respect anything, even each other."

Customs agents clearly respect the Guard workers.

"Without the National Guard, we would not be able to do this," said Inspector Juan Huxtado at a seaport warehouse where as many as 15 Guardmembers help X-ray or open the parcels in two or three cargo containers from such places as Columbia, Panama and Venezuela.

More than 55,000 containers have been inspected since 1989. That, however, is less than 10 percent of the total.

"If we have doubts about what is in the containers, we send them here and check 100 percent of the contents," explained

**EYE ON DRUGS** - Puerto Rico's Sgt. Timoteo De Jesus (far left photo) fixes his gaze on a housing project. Spcs. Francisco La Luz (rear) and Carlos Machuca unload packages at a customs warehouse.

Bobby Quinones, a senior inspector. "Four or five agents work here with the Guardsmen. That lets us keep more guys on the street."

The Guardmembers understand this is serious business.

"We know we are dealing with professionals. This is not the gardener trying to sneak something by us," said Air Guard TSgt. Jorge Hernandez, who helps Customs agents monitor the thousands of pas-

sengers who land at San Juan's international airport every day.

They have also learned to live with the risks of their jobs that many have been performing for four or five years so they can support their families on an island where the unemployment rate was 13.4 percent in 1996.

They receive telephone calls and notes threatening their safety and the welfare of their families.

One Guardsman, who asked not to be identified, said his windshield was smashed by rocks thrown at his car as he was driving home after midnight about three years ago.

"If you stop, they will kill you," he said.

But the Guardsmen accept the risks because they can serve their people while holding down good-paying jobs where the average annual income is under \$8,000. One sergeant said he makes about \$1,300 more per month than he did as a hotel financial controller.

Others, including people with college degrees, are happy to be employed. There are 200 names on a waiting list.

"A lot of people didn't have jobs, so they work for the task force," explained SSgt. Angel Labiera, 54, who signed on in 1993 after the electronics company where he was a machinist broke up. "I am blessed. I have a family to maintain."

Meanwhile, they are doing their bit to slow the tide of dangerous and illegal drugs that flow through their island.

The problem will not go away as long as there is a demand, noted Army Guard Maj. Maria Rodríguez.

"We have to focus on our children, when they are 7 and 8 years old, to reduce the demand for drugs," she insisted.

Until the demand is erased, members of the Puerto Rico National Guard are committed to making life uncomfortable for the drug-dealing adults.





## STATES

• Scudbusters • Outstanding Unit • Norway Alliance

## NEW MEXICO

The Patriot Air Defense Missile System has arrived in the Land of Enchantment.

The Patriot, dubbed "Scud-buster" for its repeated ability to destroy Iraqi Scud missiles targeted at U.S. and allied forces, will be operated by the 2nd Battalion, 200th Air Defense Artillery based in Rio Rancho.

Lt. Col. Timothy Olives, battalion commander, said the first piece of the system arrived at their two-year-old, state-of-the-art armory in March.

## KENTUCKY

The 123rd Airlift Wing received its ninth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, making it the most decorated unit in the Air National Guard.

The Secretary of the Air Force awards this honor to units that have distinguished themselves by exceptional service of national or international significance.

The Louisville-based unit earned the award this time for its service from August 31, 1995 to August 30 1997. During this period, Kentucky citizen-airmen and women deployed overseas to provide airlift for Operation Joint Endeavor and Joint Guard in Bosnia, as well as Operation Southern Watch, the mission to enforce the no-fly zone over Iraq.

## MISSOURI



Photo by MSgt. Jerry Bratten

## Macadonia Make Over

PFC Timothy Sliator, a member of the Show-me State's 235th Engineer Detachment nails siding onto a shed at a United Nations' observation post in the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. The unit spent six months there supporting Task Force Able Sentry. See related story on this unit's return home on pages 6-7.

## DELAWARE

More than 100 members of the Delaware Army Guard assisted local authorities recently after a Nor'easter caused the worst damage and flooding since the Nor'easter of March 1962.

Guardmembers from various units, including the 280th Signal Battalion, 945th Maintenance Company, 153rd Military Police Company and the 262nd Maintenance Company were called out to assist people in Sussex County.

Using 2-1/2 ton trucks, they evacuated hundreds of people from Long Neck, Slaughter Beach, Dewey Beach, Rehoboth, Bethany and South Bethany and took them to shelters.

"Thank God for the National Guard," said Rehoboth Beach Mayor Sam Cooper.

## KANSAS

Approximately 35 Army and Air Guardmembers manned roadblocks, transported medical personnel and helped local law enforcers after a late winter snow storm forced Gov. Bill Graves to declare a state of emergency.

Enduring windchills of 23 degrees-below-zero and 12-hour shifts, Jayhawk state Guardsmen and women also assisted accident victims and others left stranded by snow drifts and dangerous road conditions.

## MINNESOTA

The Gopher state and Norway honored a long-standing tradition recently when their National Guard and the Norwegian Home Guard continued their exchange program.

More than 100 citizen-soldiers left for Norway Feb. 17, and a similar number of Norwegian Home Guard troops arrived at Camp Ripley Feb. 20.

The program, which has occurred each winter since 1974, sends Minnesota soldiers to Norway and brings Norwegian troops to Minnesota. Each group trains with weapons and in tactics from the other nation. That training includes learning how to use winter survival equipment, weapons training, land navigation, winter survival and military operations such as patrolling.

In Minnesota, the Norwegians spend much of their time at Ripley, the National Guard training site near Little Falls. In Norway, the soldiers train at

Camp Torpo, which is in mountains northwest of Oslo, Norway.

The Norwegian Home Guard is very similar to the National Guard in that most of its members train on a part-time basis. They have civilian careers and provide a ready military reserve for their country in times of national emergency.

The Minnesota/Norway exchange is the longest running military exchange program between a U.S. military force and a NATO ally, according to National Guard officials. Its primary purpose is to familiarize the soldiers with another country's military operations.

As an added benefit, the soldiers also visit historic and cultural sites in the host nation. And, as a way to learn about the culture of that nation on a personal level, a member of each group spent a weekend with a family from a host nation.



Photo by MSgt. Charles Farrow

**EXCHANGE PROGRAM** - Members of the Norwegian Home Guard secure a crossing area on a road march at Camp Ripley.





## HISTORY

• The Guard and the Spanish-American War

# Volunteering in DROVES

When the American battle cruiser U.S.S. Maine exploded and sank in Cuba's Havana Harbor on the evening of Feb. 15, 1898, it was the final spark that ignited the long simmering conflict between the Spanish government and the American people over the issue of Cuban independence.

The explosion, at the time blamed on Spanish sabotage, killed 266 sailors and outraged the nation. The calls for war were heard everywhere, from city streets and town meetings to the halls of Congress.

But why would the U.S. become involved in helping the Cubans to gain their freedom from colonial rule?

Spain maintained a sizable army in Cuba and used this force in an attempt to quell the freedom movement. Some of their actions were brutal and were termed "atrocities" by the "yellow press" (the tabloids of the day). Their reports were often embellished and even fabricated to outrage the American public. Publishers like William Randolph Hearst and Joseph Pulitzer fed the country a flood of misinformation and half-truths designed to compel U.S. intervention to aid the Cuban insurgents.

Finally, at the request of President William McKinley, Congress declared war against Spain April 22, 1898 with the goal of winning Cuban independence. Within days word arrived from halfway around the world of Commodore George Dewey's quick and decisive naval victory over the Spanish fleet in Manila Harbor, the Philippines (also a Spanish colony).

The word of Dewey's victory added more energy to the great wave of excitement already running through the country about the war. When America entered the war the U.S. Army numbered only 28,000 men, most of whom were scattered in forts and camps in the West. There were so many volunteers that the Army quickly filled the ranks of the existing regiments to about 34,000, still too few men to invade Cuba and Puerto Rico (another Spanish colony), secure the Philippine Islands and protect the U.S. from a possible invasion.

On April 22, President McKinley called upon the state governors to raise 125,000 men for overseas service. These units consisted of infantry regiments, artillery batteries and cavalry troops. They were designated as "volunteer" units to distinguish them from regular Army regiments. All of the regimental officers were appointed by the governor, while all general officers were appointed by the president. Subsequent calls by the president raised an additional 58,000 men bringing the entire number of volunteers to 182,687, most of them serving in state-raised units.

The majority of the men filling these ranks were drawn from existing National Guard units in the several states. Unlike today, Guardsmen could not be mobilized for overseas duty, they were only state soldiers and had to volunteer for service out of the country. With the popularity of this war, whole regiments of enthusiastic Guards-

men mustered into the Army for two years. A total of 194 National Guard units served in this period. All except one, the 1st U.S. Volunteer Cavalry (commonly known as the "Rough Riders"), bore their state name in their designation.

In the U.S. Army of 1898 units were segregated by race, with African-Americans serving in one of four regiments. With one exception, the states followed this pattern with their National Guard units. In 1898, 16 states had separate black commands, ranging from single companies to complete regiments commanded by black officers. Eight states accepted black soldiers for federal service, they were: Alabama, Maryland, Indiana, Kansas, Massachusetts, North Carolina, Ohio and Virginia. Of these, only Massachusetts incorporated white and black soldiers in a single organization — Company L of the 6th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry.

By early May the troops were moving to their armories and preparing to leave for active duty. After a unit was mustered into federal service, usually at a make-shift camp in the state capital, it was moved to one of the training camps located in south. These camps allowed quicker deployment by sea for operations in Cuba and Puerto Rico. A camp was also established in San Francisco from which troops deployed to the Philippines. Many of these camps were set up at quickly arranged sites with railroad accessibility being one of the deter-



Photo courtesy National Archives

**OFF TO WAR** - Troops with Company K, 9th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry leave for a training camp from Clinton, Mass., in 1898 for service in the Spanish-American War.

mining factors for location. Because few structures existed, troops were housed in tents.

As the troops began serious training in preparation for combat, a number of problems became apparent. Many of the Guard officers, all appointed by the state governors, lacked sufficient qualifications and experience to properly train the men under their command. This was true from lieutenants to colonels. With a lot of help from their regular Army advisors most were able to gain an acceptable level of competence, though some were so bad that their advisors recommended they be replaced



## GUARD HISTORY

By CW02 John Listman  
Army Guard Historian

with more qualified officers.

The biggest problem facing the enlisted ranks was the poor condition of their uniforms and equipment, much of which was worn out or obsolete. Most states had adopted the Army field uniform prior to the war, but with the rapid influx of new men filling each company to wartime strength, these items soon ran out. This left some of the men arriving at their training camps without uniforms. Within days, however, the new men usually received their clothing issue. Obsolete and broken equipment was replaced as quickly as possible, with manufacturers working around the clock to produce the goods and ship them to the camps.

Life in the camps was what it has always been — troops spending almost all of their time drilling, marching, learning the proper handling and care of their weapons and equipment and other soldier tasks. Target practice and bayonet drills became regular activities.

To toughen up the troops, units conducted distance route-step marches and cross-country field exercises. Within weeks men from all walks of life were becoming soldiers in the true sense of the word, gaining confidence in themselves and their comrades.

In 1898, the regular Army was just starting the process of acquiring its first magazine-fed, bolt-action rifle, called the Krag-Jorgensen. However, almost all of the Guard units coming on active duty were still armed with outdated 45 calibre, single shot, breech-loading Springfield rifles, commonly known as a "trapdoor" (because the breech flips up to allow a new round to be chambered). Some Guard units were issued the newer weapons prior to their deployment overseas. All American arms still fired bullets using black powder, which created clouds of gray smoke revealing the firer's position. The Spanish Army, by contrast, used smoke-less powder.

Guard artillery also was obsolete. Almost all of the guns dated from the Civil War, with some still smoothbore, muzzle loaders. Like the rifles, they also fired black powder rounds, leaving large clouds of thick smoke after each discharge. Some states had added Gatling guns to their inventory, though many of these were poorly maintained. Those Guard artillery units deploying overseas were issued modern rifled 3.2-inch, breechloading field pieces firing brass encased shells.

While the troops underwent their first days of Army training, they began to fall prey to the greatest threat they faced in the war; not Spanish bullets, but water and insect-borne diseases such as malaria, typhoid and typhus. Far more men died from illness than in combat. For example, New York had 436 men die in service, only 15 of whom were killed in action.

By early June many of the regiments in the East coast camps were completely equipped, trained and ready to go to Cuba. At the same time, Guard units were preparing to sail from San Francisco for the Philippines. The men were eager to get into the action. For some the "great adventure" was about to begin.





# TRAINING

New York engineers help Honduras build a future

## Waging PEACE

By Sgt. Len Butler  
Texas National Guard

Children in the remote Honduran mountain village of San Pablo had reason to smile after members of the New York Army Guard's 204th Engineer Battalion worked through stifling heat to complete a new school and clinic.

The humanitarian mission also served as the unit's annual training, and was part of the annual New Horizons exercise intended to improve the quality of life in one of the poorest countries in the Western Hemisphere.

Honduras, a mountainous nation slightly larger than the state of Tennessee, has long depended on the United States as its largest trading partner -- they export mainly bananas and coffee to the U.S. With the arrival of New York's citizen-soldiers, Hondurans have come to depend on America for more than just trade.

The deployment to San Pablo also took many soldiers from one extreme to another. Many of the Empire state engineers were coming off state active duty where they were called upon to deal with the aftermath of ice storms that ravaged their state and much of the east coast in January.

Both missions, however, shared a similar goal -- caring for and helping people in need.

"I wish we could do more concerning the poverty and the hunger of the children here," said Spc. Paul Hodgins. "But what we are doing here is very worthwhile. It's the best AT (annual training) I've ever been on."

To be sure, life here in the village was somewhat of a culture shock to the Guardmembers. Most of the small homes don't have bathrooms inside them. Village women were seen washing their clothes in a nearby stream.

Lt. Col. Mark Heffner, 204th battalion commander, said the work on the construction work began from scratch.



Photos by Spc. Aaron Reed

"These buildings were constructed from the ground up," he reported. "We laid the foundation, as well as all the concrete blocks and ironwork."

Heffner said the entire battalion was involved in the project, one company at a time.

"When our first company deployed here," he added, "our other two companies were still clearing roads and downed trees left over from the ice storm back in New York."

While construction of the school was underway, the children attended open-air classes at the home of San Pablo's mayor. Since the project was underway during the dry season, it was common for the students to have class under the shade of large mango trees in the mayor's yard.

In addition to the clinic and school, the village's only road received a major improvement. About 1,400 cubic yards of gravel from a quarry several miles away was trucked in to fill potholes and widen the road.

Heffner said the villagers were very friendly and cooperative with the Guard's revitalization of the village.

"The villagers are always around our building efforts, watching us as we do our work," Heffner said. "It's easy to see how excited they are about how we were doing their village some good."

Heffner said it was not uncommon for his engineers to work 16 to 18 hour days, seven days a week.

"It is hard work, but I think all of them



PAVING A FUTURE - New York engineers spread gravel on San Pablo's only road.

feel good about what they are doing," he said.

With a keen eye on safety, Heffner said no serious accidents were reported, despite the intense heat.

Camaraderie and goodwill was evident, however, as Empire State Guardmembers and Honduran troops played several games of soccer with the villagers who lived across the road from their construction site.

The only obstacle the 204th encountered was the language barrier. It, too, was quickly breached.

"We learned bits and pieces of Spanish as we went along," said PFC Margaret Sanford. "But the locals here are very willing to help us out, and we exchange broken phrases in both English and Spanish. It doesn't take long for each of us to figure out what the other means."

Heffner held periodic town meetings with villagers from the municipality of Jesus de Otoro, reporting the progress that was being made on construction.

**BUILDING BLOCKS** - Sgt. Bob Wildoner trims a window section of a future medical clinic.

Parents and their children from Jesus de Otoro would often visit the construction sites, to see for themselves the work being done to improve their village.

"Many of the people from Jesus de Otoro have been asking me if they would be next on our list of improvements in their area," Heffner said. "I wish I could tell them we would, but that is the responsibility of the Honduran government."

"We have so much we could do in this country," he added.

The village mayor, Marco Antonio Palacio, said all of the residents were very grateful to have the National Guard soldiers.

"It's as if the troops have fallen out of heaven and into our village," the Mayor said. "We have heard of the aid being given to our people from the United States. But we didn't think it would come here."

Sgt. Ken Carr told the story of one orphan who will benefit from the village improvements.

"We started calling him Willie," Carr said. "His mother died after giving birth to him, and his father abandoned him shortly thereafter. But the people of the village here took him in, keeping him fed and clothed as best they could."

At 16, Willie is just three feet tall, mentally challenged and has physical problems, Carr noted.

"Still, he remains an energetic and happy kid," Carr said. "We have watched over him, given him clothes and food and become close friends with him."

"But, you know," he added thoughtfully, "the villagers were doing that long before we got here."

Willie wasn't the only child to receive clothing from the New Yorkers. With each company rotation more donated school supplies, clothing and toys for the children, came courtesy of the people of Binghamton, N.Y.

"I hope we can continue with a program like this," Sgt. Mike Mastronardina, a Binghamton resident. "Many of us are new to this type of operation, working in a poor country, where the people have next to nothing."

Heffner said by performing a real world mission, his engineers were doing more than just sharpening their skills.

"I'm very proud of the accomplishments of these soldiers," he said. "We are not at war with anyone. Right now, we are waging peace."