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THE ON GUARD

Volume XXVIII, No. 2

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November 1998

Bayou bust nets half-billion

Pure 'Coke': Guard, customs agents uncover 4,500 pounds of cocaine

By SSgt. Suzanne Chaillot
Louisiana National Guard

There was something a little different, and vaguely familiar, about the transformers that sat aboard a Liberian ship in the Port of New Orleans, Oct. 2. Not only did they differ in size from the rest of the shipment, but they were not on the ship's load plan.

This didn't escape Sgt. Jerry Young's trained eye.

As a Louisiana National Guardmember assigned to the U.S. Customs Service's Contraband Enforcement Team (CET), he and other customs inspectors had seen similar transformers a few years ago. They had contained cocaine.

This time, their suspicions turned up 4,500 pounds of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$500 million. It was the third largest cocaine seizure at the Port of New Orleans.

"We search so much cargo at the port," said MSgt. C.W. Wilson, National Guard CET site supervisor. "It took team effort to come up with a enormous amount of cocaine like this, considering the fact that it was a cold hit."

"We had no prior information about this shipment," he added, "which makes me proud of the work and effort our Guardmembers put forth."

When the shipment arrived at the port, customs agents and National Guardmembers — as part of a weekly routine —

targeted a sampling of containers for what is called an "intensive review."

A senior inspector had noticed problems with the ship's paperwork and decided that a closer inspection was necessary. It seems a particular container was not on the load plan, but was on the manifest.

The container was removed from the vessel and brought to a local warehouse, where extensive testing was done. After a local expert determined that the transformers were not energized and posed no danger, Louisiana Guard and customs teams began the long, tedious and often dirty job of getting a closer look.

In all, Guardmembers and agents dismantled nine transformers, each fitted with a metal box, about three-feet-wide and two-feet-deep. Inside each box was between 500 and 700 pounds of cocaine.

"We drilled through the steel and came up with white powder," recalled SMSgt. Ron Alexis, the district supervisor for all Guardmembers who support U.S. Customs. "We knew then we had a good hit... I can't tell you how good that feels."

"Of all the counterdrug missions we support, cargo inspection has to be one of the least glamorous," reported Lt. Col. Larry DeBlieux, the Pelican State National Guard's counterdrug task

force coordinator. "Day after day, our Guardsmen inspect cargo hoping one day to discover something big. This sort of payoff makes this mission essential."

The Customs' CET is supported by MSgt. Clarence Wilson, SSgt. Pat Tyrrell, Sgts. Emmitt Brown, Simmie Brown, Paul Dey and Jerry Young, Spc. John Carter and SrA. Jason Home.



COKE COUNT — A Louisiana Air Guardmember inventories packages of pure cocaine.



Photo by SSgt. Ed Holt

MISSILE MEN

Cpl. Gary Leshovsky (left), a Stinger gunner, and Cpl. Randy Kennedy, a crew chief, both members of the Minnesota Army Guard's Battery C, 1st Battalion, 216th Air Defense Artillery, prepare to launch a Stinger missile while training at Fort Bliss, Texas.



COMMENTARY

• Minnesotan Mentioned • Dominican Deeds • Tauting Tuition

ABOUT the PAPER

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GUARD MAIL

Great Gopher

I applaud your selection of the article entitled "The Next Best Thing," about Minnesota Army Guard CWO4 Don Abrams, a Huey instructor pilot with Company A, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation.

I have served with CWO4 Abrams, and he is probably the finest aviator with whom I have had the pleasure of flying. Mr. Abrams has continually tried to impart his knowledge of combat operations to young aviators, as well as crew members.

He is a great soldier. Thanks for giving him the attention he richly deserves.

MSgt. David B. Berrisford
Minnesota National Guard

Mission Nearly Impossible

Have you ever had one of those days? Then imagine a week of it.

You are one of 15 Maryland Army Guardsmen and women -- members of Company C, 729th Support Battalion in Catonsville -- headed to the Dominican Republic to teach cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and airway management.

Everything was going fine. You didn't get sick from the altitude or airline food, and were blessed enough upon your arrival to have the U.S. Navy provide sleeping quarters, meals and some genuine hospitality.

Then it happened. The supplies that were to arrive before we did, got stuck in customs -- three hours away.

We then learned that there was a mix up and the classes would start late.

The transportation, promised by our Dominican hosts, was a no show. Did I mention we were left to sleep in a tent on a beach with the Atlantic Ocean knocking outside our door.

This near disaster was turned into a triumph, thanks to the leadership and resourcefulness of 1st Lt. Elisse Brown and SSgt. Jeffrey Tebay.

Although things didn't go according to plan, the goal to pass on critical lifesaving skills was met. Also, kind-hearted soldiers like Spc. Mina Craig and Spc. Gabriella Smith volunteered to go to a local fire department to teach CPR.

The Guardmembers who taught in the Dominican Republic are proof that defeat, or the illusion of failure, is only temporary. These medics -- some of the same who deployed to Ecuador last year -- ignored their own plight, but not the suffering of a country less fortunate.

I've seen pain and have witnessed the hurt behind the eyes of so many people. But there is no sight as beautiful, or so humbling, as a person who sheds tears for others.

The men and women, mothers and fathers, husbands and wives that make-up Company C are not great because they possess lifesaving skills, they are heroes and heroines because they have the heart to bear the pain that comes with it.

Spc. C. Holton
Maryland National Guard

Jersey 'Bennie'

I enjoy reading your newspaper. It has some very interesting articles. There was an article in the September issue, referencing Delaware National Guard's free tuition program. It mentioned that Delaware was the first state to offer this program to out-of-state members.

Just to clarify, New Jersey has offered free tuition since 1991, and has never had a residency requirement.

MSgt. Sharyne Albertson
New Jersey National Guard

Commanding Correction

The Army National Guard's 37th Armor Brigade, commanded by Col. Tod Carmony, was incorrectly identified in the September article, "Training as Nations," as being from Minnesota. The unit actually is headquartered in North Canton, Ohio.

In his civilian occupation, Carmony is president-treasurer of Wayne Mutual Insurance Company.

Spc. Steve Toth
Ohio National Guard

LETTERS POLICY:

You may FAX your 'Letters to the Editor' to DSN 761-0732 or (703) 681-0732. Letters can be mailed to: NGB-PAI-C, Park Center IV - Suite 450, 4501 Ford Ave., Alexandria VA 22302. Our e-mail: malthanerj@ngb.ang.af.mil

GUARD TOONS

By Lyle Farquhar

Comments or ideas: lfquhar@tostj.ang.af.mil



"Our survival training has suffered a temporary setback since the last budget cut."



IN THE NEWS

• WMD Doers • McTague Milestone • Honduras Helpers

Terrorism response tested

■ Keystone Crisis: Major exercise introduces Pennsylvania Guard to Weapons of Mass Destruction

By Spc. Steve Henshaw
Pennsylvania National Guard

The Pennsylvania National Guard has participated in one of the first major exercises to test the level of coordination between civilian and military agencies in responding to a terrorist attack involving chemical, biological and other weapons of mass destruction (WMD).

The September 15-17 exercise in Philadelphia was just the second of 120 to be held in the largest U.S. cities as a requirement of 1997 legislation to enhance the capability of federal, state and local emergency responders, according to Col. Richard Matason, the Pennsylvania Guard's WMD program coordinator.

A year in planning, the full-scale exercise was designed to assess the city's response capability and improve familiarity and cooperation between the city and state and federal agencies. It also reinforced special training recently provided through the Department of Defense Domestic Preparedness Program.

"The solid working relationship we're building between the military and civilian sectors will help ensure a coordinated response to any chemical or biological incident that might arise," Matason said.

The Philadelphia scenario culminated in and around

Memorial Hall in the city's Fairmount Park. Two mock chemical devices were activated during a simulated fundraising brunch, prompting emergency calls and triggering the initial response by specially trained city fire personnel. Role players feigned death or illness, forcing quick action from firefighters and police to contain them and prevent the spread of contamination.

About 15 soldiers from the Guard's 128th Chemical Company in Philadelphia rolled onto the scene in full protective gear. Their job was to help identify agents, recommend counteractions, and provide decontamination equipment.

Other soldiers from Pennsylvania's 56th Brigade, 28th Infantry Division, manned the Guard desk at the city's emergency operations center, and the Guard's own EOC was simulated at Memorial Hall.

Planning began in September for a similar exercise to be held in Pittsburgh in 1999, according to Matason. In addition, as part of the larger strategy to improve the nation's ability to respond to terrorist attack, special National Guard units are now being formed for each of the ten Federal Emergency Management Agency regions.

Each unit will consist of 22 full-time Guard personnel with

advanced training in communication, reconnaissance and medical assessment. They will be able to deploy quickly, assist local first responders in determining the nature of an attack, provide technical advice, and expedite requests for follow-up state and federal military support.

The units will designate military support detachments (Rapid Assessment and Initial Detection or RAID). When fully operational in the year 2000, Pennsylvania's RAID team "will give us the capability of responding anywhere in the Commonwealth within four hours," Matason said.



Photo by Lt. Col. John Maietta

CHEMICAL CHECK — A member of Pennsylvania's 128th Chemical Company tests the effectiveness of a decontamination point.

D.C. woman pilot soars into history

By Lt. Col. Phyllis Phipps-Barnes
District of Columbia National Guard

Col. Linda K. McTague doesn't like to dwell on "female firsts." But when the pilot who has logged nearly 4,200 hours in six aircraft had "eagles" slipped onto her epaulets recently, she became the first Air National Guard woman aviator to do so.

Achieving the rank of colonel is all very nice, says the District of Columbia's 201st Airlift Squadron commander, but being considered a good pilot is just as important.

McTague recalled the days in the early 1980s when she and other female lieutenants would sit around pondering their futures; many concluding contentedly that there would be no shame in retiring as a major.

But the 1975 graduate of Battle Creek Central High School who went on to receive a masters degree from Florida International University, acknowledges that she has come a long way; with a long way to go.

Addressing a filled auditorium of wellwishers and history watchers at Andrews AFB, Md. — a crowd that included her parents and several

members of the internationally-renowned Women Military Aviators — McTague noted the importance of maximum effort and punching military education tickets. The 41-year-old also believes in varying your career track.

"Take the jobs you think you might not like," she said. "It will help you stretch your abilities."

It's advice the colonel took to heart when she commanded D.C.'s 113th Logistics Squadron. There, she led the group to a superior rating

■ See McTAGUE, Page 4

NATIONAL BRIEFS

Guard flies relief to Honduras

West Virginia and Alaska Air Guard C-130 air crews, based at Howard AB in Panama, flew their cargo aircraft to deliver much-needed relief to Honduras, a country devastated by a hurricane.

The Air Guard C-130s were in Panama supporting Operation Cornet Oak, where Air Guard crews provide the U.S. Southern Command theater airlift throughout Central and South America.

"We had been alerted prior to arriving in Panama that a large portion of our flying would be in support of the relief operations," said West Virginia's Lt. Col. Chester Seaman, 130th Airlift Wing mission commander.

Air Guard crews delivered their supplies to Honduras's Soto Cano AB, one of the staging points for the relief operation.

"We had 23 planes yesterday, we hit the ground running and have been working non-stop," said SrA. Neal Ocampo, on temporary duty in Honduras.

Reported by the West Virginia National Guard's Maj. Michael K. Pitzer.

Audit Agency fired-up over Guard ordnance

The Army National Guard keeps close tabs on its rifles and pistols and small arms ordnance, according to a recent U.S. Army Audit Agency report.

The agency, based in Alexandria, Va., reported that a review of 83 Army Guard units revealed they "accounted for all small arms, ammunition and explosives," it was explained in October.

The report further stated that the National Guard Bureau had implemented sufficient controls, at the 83 units reviewed, to maintain a 96.5 percent rate of accuracy for serial numbers recorded in the Department of the Army's Central Registry at Fort McPherson, Ga.

"This is truly good news," said Lt. Gen. Russell Davis, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, who knows that accounting for weapons ranks high among every unit commander's concerns.

The audit agency made its report after focusing on Army reserve components' procedures and controls to make sure small arms, ammunition and explosives are accounted for and physically secure.

Reported by MSgt. Bob Haskell, National Guard Bureau.

IN THE NEWS



Col. Linda McTague

McTAGUE

From Page 3

during last year's operational readiness inspection. Her quick thinking and decisive actions in recovering a C-22 aircraft with an onboard fire, also earning her the William R. McCall Flying Safety Award.

McTague was commissioned through the Officers Training School and received her wings at Columbus AFB, Miss. In 1982, she completed training in the CT-39 aircraft and was assigned to Detachment 2, 1400th Military Airlift Squadron at Randolph AFB, Texas. In 1984 she accepted a special assignment to the 94th Airmanship Training Squadron at the U.S. Air Force Academy as a TG-7 instructor pilot.

Two years later, McTague transferred to the Detachment 1, 94th Air Transport Squadron, to become a pilot for the Wings of Blue, the Air Force's parachute team. She also served as the operations officer and flight examiner in the UV-18 aircraft.

In 1988, McTague joined the D.C. Air Guard as a C-21 pilot. In 1991, she attended Aircraft Munitions and Maintenance Officer School and served as the 201st's chief of maintenance.

McTague returned to flying status in 1993. In 1994, she became commander of the 113th Logistics Squadron, and subsequently served as the 113th Wing's full-time logistics group commander.

McTague is a command pilot with more than 4,200 hours in the C-21, C-22, CT-39, UV-18, TG-7 and T-38 aircraft.

In 1996, the Air Force Association honored McTague and several other women of distinction for their outstanding achievements in the defense of our skies.

Guard inks division integration pact

■ Aligned: Six infantry brigades make new homes at Forts Riley, Carson

By Sgt. Jack Siemieniec
Army News Service

Two new integrated divisions were formed recently after a memorandum of agreement between the active-Army and National Guard was signed.

The new divisions will have full active-duty headquarters staffs and three enhanced Army National Guard brigades in each.

A mechanized infantry division will be based at Fort Riley, Kan., with a forward element at Fort Jackson, S.C. Its units will be North Carolina's 30th Infantry Brigade, South Carolina's 218th Infantry Brigade and Georgia's 48th Infantry Brigade.

Fort Carson, Colo., will be home to a light infantry division. Its units will be Arkansas's 39th Infantry Brigade, Oregon's 41st Infantry Brigade and Oklahoma's 45th Infantry Brigade.

The divisions are described as a new concept and will be additional to the already existing 10 active-duty and eight National Guard divisions. With the new units, the Total Army will have 20 divisions. The brigades chosen to comprise the new divisions are six of the 15 current Guard "Enhanced Brigades."

The agreement creating the divisions was signed during a breakfast at the annual meeting of the Association of the United States Army, Oct. 12. Inking their



Photo by MSgt. Phillip H. Jones

FUTURE COURSE -- Members of South Carolina's 218th Infantry Brigade, headquartered in Newberry, will now get its orders from Fort Riley, Kan.

names were Gen. Thomas Schwartz, commander of U.S. Army Forces Command; Maj. Gen. Roger Schultz, director of the Army National Guard; and the adjutant generals of the six states involved.

The memorandum sets basic operational procedures for the units. It provides for command and control, personnel, funding, training and other issues as well as mobilization and deployment details.

Schwartz emphasized the importance of "One team, one fight, one future."

"We don't want to talk about 480,000 soldiers, we want to talk about 1.1 million soldiers represented in this room," he said. "We don't want to talk about 10 divisions, we want to talk about 18 divisions represented here."

"This is the future of our country and our Army," the general added. "I'm about as high on this as I've ever been on anything. There's so many possibilities for what we're doing, because of the resources and people and mission."

The agreement is the final product of a process begun in 1995 when the Commis-

sion on Roles and Missions recommended a greater integration and cooperation between the Army's active and Reserve components, according to a Forces Command official.

The new divisions are expected to be fully operational by next October.

Schwartz was emphatic to his audience of senior active and Guard Army leadership about working as a team.

"Our togetherness, our oneness, is non-negotiable."

The debate's over. We are together; we're going to work this thing.

"One team, one fight, one future": It's not just a bumper sticker," he insisted. "It's our battle cry."

One of the two new division commanders, Maj. Gen. John Riggs, Fort Carson's commanding general, said the new agreement is a "win-win" situation.

"Right now my principal focus is on the training of the active component soldiers at Fort Carson," he noted. "In the future, I would say at least 50 percent, if not more, will go into the training of the Army National Guard forces."

"This is a unique opportunity, a great opportunity."

Speaking for the Guard, Schultz envisioned more than just a mere marriage of forces.

"We are not just outlining new relationships with the active force, we are outlining new responsibilities between the Guard and our active Army," stated the Army Guard director. "This is evidence of one team in action, working together for one future."

Buckeye CARE

Ohio Army Guard 2nd Lt. Kathy Honeycutt, a member of Detachment 6, State Area Command, draws blood from Garrett Oliver during a recent GuardCare effort in Hardin county. Over two weekends, Buckeye medical professionals provided free dental, vision, hearing, prostate and cervical exams, and blood and cholesterol screenings to more than 400 medically underserved residents in Ada and Kenton.



Photo by SSgt. Diane L. Farrow



PEOPLE

• Disabled Employees Honored • Remembering Veterans

Stephanie Richardson
honored by DoD

Focused on ABILITY

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Her mother made her do it. Minnie Richardson, was a single parent, making ends meet as a food service technician at the local hospital and then as a self-employed hairdresser when Stephanie, her younger of two daughters, was growing up on Potomac Avenue in Washington, D.C.

Stephanie had a degenerative hip disease because of a birth defect. Arthritis and scoliosis, a curvature of the spine, compounded her disability. Her mother, however, had no time to coddle her daughter. So Stephanie got on with her life by taking tap dancing lessons and by riding her bicycle and roller skating with her friends after undergoing experimental hip surgery by her eighth year.

On Oct. 19, more than four decades later, Stephanie Richardson was recognized as one of 17 exemplary civilian employees with disabilities by the Department of Defense. October was National Disability Employment Awareness Month.

The mild-mannered woman of 50 is a personnel assistant in the District of Columbia National Guard's Directorate of Human Resources. She has worked for the past 4-1/2 years at the District of Columbia Armory that is within walking distance of where she grew up.

Yes, she walks with a limp. But she carries herself as proudly as any New York Yankee who won the recent World Series.

"I didn't see myself as handicapped," Richardson recalled. "My mother had no time for nonsense. She always did the best she could, and she expected

the same from us. She made me find things that took me beyond my complacency."

Now, Richardson is considered a technical expert on employee relations for the more than 700 D.C. Guard military technicians and civilian staff she serves.

She is responsible for processing new employees, and she is the primary specialist for technician benefits and payroll problems.

She earned a degree in business administration from the University of the District of Columbia in 1991. She is also a volunteer worker for political campaigns.

Stephanie Richardson is among 8,262 Defense employees, 1.2 percent of the civilian force, with targeted disabilities, according to the Defense Manpower Data Center.

"I share President Clinton's belief that America must not waste the talents of a single individual," stated Defense Secretary William Cohen. "In particular, we have established a

and terrorism expert Christie Childers of the Defense Intelligence Agency, an amputee who relies on a wheelchair. They were among the 17 DoD honorees.

"You have to expend more

we don't want special treatment," Richardson insisted. "It's important to put more focus on our ability, and less focus on our disability."

That is why Capt. Lanae Johnson, the D.C. Guard's equal employment manager, recommended her for the award.

"She was doing the work of three people earlier this year. She put the job ahead of herself," Johnson explained. "She was even coming in on our drill weekends."

Richardson was the first person with a disability hired by the D.C. Guard, said Col. James Overmier, the D.C. Guard's human resources officer. Two others have since been hired.

"She is an inspiration to all employees," he said. "She has brought a great deal of dedication to this office and to the District of Columbia National Guard."



"It's important to put more focus on our ability, and less focus on our disability"

STEPHANIE RICHARDSON, DOD honoree

DoD-wide goal to increase our employment of people with disabilities to 2 percent."

The role models include mathematician Alfred Maneki, Ph.D., of the National Security Agency, with a degenerative eye disease,

energy than most people," said Richardson of her efforts to remain productive. "You have to give yourself a good kick in the backside to get yourself back out there."

"We may need assistance, but

103-year-old Henry Mills recalls days with
Guard's 'Rainbow Division' during WWI

Day of the DOUGHBOY

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Hundreds of American doughboys lying dead on rows of stretchers in a French field; a German airplane brought down by the fire from a few rifles including his own; a corporal named O'Brien who he was told to follow into his first action but who hit the ground and did not get up.

Those, according to his son, are Henry Mills' memories of brutal warfare that have endured for eight decades since the Great War, World War I, ended with the armistice on Nov. 11, 1918.

Mills was a private and his squad's rifle grenade man in the 42nd Division, the famed "Rainbow Division" of National Guard units whose nickname was inspired by Douglas MacArthur, during the final few months of muddy and bloody trench warfare on the Western Front.

For that, 103-year-old Henry Mills of Wayne, W. Va., was presented the Legion of Honor, France's highest national order, as was James Dunton, 99, of Falls Church, Va., during a moving Veterans Day tribute at the French Embassy in Washington, D.C.

Dunton signed up when he was 18 after leaving his Ohio home and earned his sergeants stripes with the Army Ambulance Service.

"The French have not forgotten the bravery of these young

soldiers nor their decisive actions," said French Ambassador Francois Bujon de l'Etang before pinning the gleaming white medals on red ribbons to their lapels on the evening of the 80th anniversary of the end of "the war to end all wars."

"The commemoration of Nov. 11 is about remembering," de l'Etang added. "Remembering our past so we can shape a different future. Remembering the sacrifices of those who gave their lives to defend our common ideals. Remembering also that today's reconciled Europe was built on the ruins of war."



WWI veteran,
Henry Mills

France this year is bestowing the medal on every living allied veteran it can find, the ambassador explained. More than 300 U.S. veterans who fought with the American Expeditionary Forces or in other Allied armies on French soil have been identified so far, he added.

At an average age of 99, they are this country's oldest group of veterans from a major conflict. Mills, whose grandfather died in 1864 as a

Confederate cavalryman, and Dunton were the first two Americans to be honored.

"It's pretty nice," said Mills, looking very much the soldier in his campaign hat, new green uniform and leather boot tops. "I was very surprised about all of this."

He considered joining the Marines but waited to do his bit until he was drafted in May 1918 so he could help plant that spring's crops on his family's West Virginia farm, explained Mills' son Patrick, an assistant principal at a middle school.

He was 23 when he landed in France, assigned to the Iowa National Guard's 168th Infantry, one of four infantry regi-

See VETERAN, Page 13



Photo by SFC Lek Mateo

With the fate of their own homes unknown, Texas Army Guard soldiers answer flood victims call for assistance

STORM Troopers

By Spc. Aaron Reed
Texas National Guard

1st Sgt. Jeff Meurer was about to dismiss his battery when the word came down to stand fast.

Five minutes later, he and soldiers with the Texas Army Guard's Battery E, 132nd Field Artillery were making plans to deploy to flood-ravaged New Braunfels.

They joined more than 420 Lone Star State Army Guard soldiers ordered to state active duty to help local law enforcement and emergency response officials deal with massive flooding in a 25-county area stretching from the state capital in Austin to the Gulf of Mexico.

Water rose as high as 30 feet above flood stage along four central Texas rivers in a matter of hours. In some places the Colorado River, usually a tranquil stream no wider than a football field, stretched to more than six miles wide.

Twenty-eight Texans lost their lives in floodwaters between Oct. 18-21, and damage in the area is estimated at more than \$400 million. National Guard aviators from Austin rescued 72 people and Guard helicopter crews from Dallas and San Antonio rescued an additional 60 during the first three days of the disaster.

Torrential rains spawned the flooding when a Pacific cold front stalled over the



Photo by Spc. Aaron Reed



Photo by SFC Lek Mateo

ON PATROL — Texas Army Guard Pvt. Jaime Renteria (rear of vehicle) patrols flooded areas for curfew violators with local law enforcers.

area and began drawing tropical moisture from two hurricanes off the west coast of Mexico. San Antonio recorded the heaviest 24-hour rainfall that city has seen since 1885, when such records were first kept.

San Marcos, a college town about mid-

way between Austin and the Alamo City, received more than 22 inches of precipitation in just a few days.

"Del Rio was devastating in a concentrated area," said Texas Gov. George W. Bush during an Oct. 21 visit to New Braunfels, where several neighborhoods had been leveled by the raging water. "The big thing that makes this daunting is this is along major rivers. I think the thing that stands out are the empty slabs."

But the governor, who received the fourth federal disaster declaration for the state this year, said Texans are used to adversity.

"The rains have stopped, the water is receding, and help is on the way," he

GIVING GOVERNOR — Texas Gov. George W. Bush (right) comforts New Braunfels resident Sherry Kasberg after her home was ruined by flooding. A Texas Army Guard Black Hawk (opposite) helps deliver a dialysis patient to a medical facility.

said. "Help will come in the form of dollars, but also in the form of neighbor helping neighbor."

Meurer's battery, on weekend drill in San Antonio, were among the first to rush to help their neighbors when it became clear that a major disaster was imminent.

The widespread devastation also put some members of his unit in the difficult position as victim and savior.

"We've had a couple of soldiers whose homes in San Antonio were flooded," he said. "It's tough on these guys, and it's tough on their families, too. But their attitudes have been terrific. They're just champing at the bit for more missions."

"Some of these guys will come in off a 12- or 14-hour shift just dog-tired," Meurer continued. "Another mission will come down, and they'll say, 'Send me.'"

In all, Battery E soldiers and more than 90 members of Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 49th Division Artillery, also based in San Antonio, evacuated more than 300 residents the first night of the floods, Oct. 18. They stayed on to help search for missing people and to help deter looting.

"We had guys up to their chests in water. We were stretching the vehicles to their limits, and that makes you feel good," said 1st Sgt. Ron McCool, HHB, 49th DivArty. "Then, when it's all over and you see the destruction, you just feel sad."

As the water surged downstream, additional Guard units were activated in Bastrop, Cuero, Victoria, and Wharton, where the flood crested early Oct. 23, covering almost half the town. By mid-week, 423 soldiers from 18 units, eight UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters and more than 170 trucks and Humvees were involved in rescue and relief operations.

It was the fourth major mobilization of Texas Army National Guard soldiers since May.

"The Guard has been right at the tip of the spear," said Tom Milwee, the Texas Division of Emergency Management state coordinator. "They've been involved in everything from putting out fires to rescuing people from floods."

Milwee added that he believes making the Guard available early is important.

"I think that this event has shown that the Guard is sometimes the only solution."

Lt. Col. Grady Haddox, the Texas Na-

INSIDE the DAKOTA DISASTER

South Dakota volunteers help Spencer
pick up the pieces after tornado strikes

TWISTER ASSISTERS

By Randy Dockendorf
Yankton Press and Dakotan

They've received combat training, but they've never met an enemy like this. As many South Dakota's National Guard units prepared for weekend drill some found themselves re-routed to assist the tornado-ravaged town of Spencer. Their mission: Patrol the shell of a town remaining after a recent storm.

The site resembled a war zone. The storm killed six, injured 150 of the 320 residents and wiped out the town and its infrastructure.

SSgt. Brian Fejfar of Yankton's Battery C, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery stood where a house had existed. Even after several days, Fejfar and other unit members found the scene hard to believe.

"We are taking this day by day. We arrive at the home gate each morning and go from there," he said. "I can't believe only six people were killed. That more people weren't killed is unreal."

"It's like King Kong twisted everything and threw it to the ground."

Sgt. Loren Johnson, also of the 147th, surveyed the damage.

"Everybody has pulled together, and the people are handling it well. If a resident needs help, we give them a hand. But it takes time because it's such a mess."

Johnson said the experience is part of the job.

"It's something you should never have to go through, but we have. You just go with the flow," he said.

Unlike many emergency situations, the 147th was not activated as a unit.

"They didn't want the whole unit, just 15 volunteers, but we got 30 right away," Johnson said. "All of this (duty) is extra, we still have our regular drills."

Some Guardmembers hit the ground running — literally. Soldiers with Company A, 153rd Engineer Battalion in Wagner had just returned from a two-week annual training stint in Germany when they were called to Spencer.

"They came right to Spencer, but after a couple of days they were allowed home to see their families," said MSgt. Erv Huber.

Guard units from Salem and Mitchell responded immediately to the emergency call and were at the scene within an hour, helping search through the darkness for victims.

Although the Yankton artillerymen didn't uncover any dead bodies, one of their battery mates was on leave visited his parents in Spencer when the tornado hit.

Fejfar said he saw signs of both great destruction and incredible courage.

"This has to be the worst, most devastating tornado. It ripped and tore everything to shreds," he began. "With a blizzard, you could scoop and everything will still be there. And floods cause damage, but they're not as devastating as this."

The elderly provided some of the bravest actions, Fejfar added.

"There was a gentleman, 70 to 80 years old, who was in his kitchen and just rode out the storm on the main floor. Another place, a picture window blew out on the main floor while an elderly lady was in the kitchen."

Another family, huddled in the basement, was stunned to find a Grand Am land upside down next to them, Fejfar said.

Once the tornado passed, Spencer residents sought to take care of everyday needs. The bank was destroyed — except for the vault which remained intact — and operations were run out of a house. The post office was gone, so mail service was moved to Salem. The only gas station was destroyed, and no groceries were available.

Guardmembers commuted to Spencer each day, routinely logging 14 hour shifts. Their daily tasks also were hampered by pouring rain and even sleet.

"We were searching for personal effects so the people can go in and rebuild," Fejfar said. "We found a ripped-

off cover of a '66 high school annual. You can't replace things like that."

Johnson credited the Red Cross for its concern for the Guard's welfare.

"You couldn't walk past them without being offered food and drink," he said. "It makes that kind of deal (with tornado cleanup) easier."

Fejfar said he has served in Europe and the Persian Gulf, but the Spencer tornado is different because it hits so close to home.

"You see something like this, and it makes you realize how trivial a lot of things are," he said.

After working the James River floods and blizzard removal, Huber said he is becoming used to disaster.

"I was never activated once (for a disaster) in the first 20 years," he said. "Now, we've been called up for the third time in two years."

The National Guard was not the only volunteers helping in the Prairie State. Officials estimated that nearly 8,000 residents pitched-in.

"Nothing can replace what these (victims) have gone through," Johnson observed, "but (volunteer help) shows that people do care. It helps the residents see they aren't by themselves."

While efforts to rebuild will take time, Fejfar said he is looking forward to the future.

"It will be interesting to see this place in a year," he said. "This is part of South Dakota history."

"Our nation won't remember this, but South Dakota will remember it forever."



Photo by Spc. Aaron Reed



Photo by SFC Lek Mateo

BRINGING RELIEF — Sgt. Tom Rios (above, with box), a Black Hawk crew chief from San Antonio, helps Red Cross volunteers unload relief supplies. New Braunfels residents (top photo) sort through the flood damage for salvageable possessions.

tional Guard's Plans, Operations, and Military Support officer, said that prior to the floods, Texas citizen-soldiers had logged 7,250 man-days and almost 1,000 flight hours responding to emergencies.

"This year has been unprecedented in the number of state active duty missions," Haddox said. "We've done about five times as much as we usually do."

Haddox added that even though state active duty mobilizations take Guardmembers away from their families and their civilian jobs, most of the part-time soldiers are eager to help.

"These men and women know that when the state needs them they can be called-up any time," he said. "They work hard, 20-hour days are the rule, and they'll do anything we ask."

Milwee, the state official responsible for coordinating assistance from 31 agencies, said the Guard brings unique capabilities to any emergency.

"Without a doubt, the Guard brings much in the way of manpower and mobility, in high-profile vehicles and helicopters, and the command and control that is inherent in any military organization," he said. "Plus, there are the multiple skills — the Guard has people from a lot of different backgrounds, and they bring a lot of functionality."



Photo by SFC Don Matthews

DAKOTA DEBRIS — South Dakota National Guardmembers help a Spencer resident sift through the rubble of what was once her apartment.



Photos by SrA. Tommy Downs

BLUEGRASS BUILDERS — SrA. Damon Hobbs (left) pours mortar on concrete blocks used to build a school. SSgt. Tony Long (above) digs out tree roots.

cence, while their hard-working parents express a reserved but unmistakable optimism.

Still, crushing poverty is a fact of life. Disease and poor sanitation mean most Ecuadorian men never live past the age of 45, and the cash-strapped government is ill-equipped to help its more needy citizens.

Necessities that Americans take for granted, like good schools and clinics, are considered luxuries in this remote village, and sanitary sewers are unheard of. The rutted mudpatch that serves as the town's main road smells disturbingly more like an outhouse than its chief thoroughfare.

However, more than 1,300 members of the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard have done much to improve the living conditions in Las Penas.

The soldiers and airmen who participated in Operation Nuevos Horizontes, Spanish for "new horizons," constructed five schools, three medical clinics and four latrines in towns throughout coastal Ecuador.

The Air Guard contingent, working with 25 active duty civil engineers from Eglin AFB, Fla., was charged with building a school, clinic and latrine in Las Penas during its phase of the operation, which began in late April.

More than 120 Blue Grass State Air Guard civil engineers, medics, security police, communications specialists and support personnel deployed for the project, with most serving two-week rotations.

However, planning for the effort,



BUILDING BLOCKS — Kentucky engineers work to complete a school in Las Penas, Ecuador. Overall, troops participating in *Nuevos Horizontes* constructed 14 buildings.

began nearly two years ago.

"This is a humongous logistical exercise," assured Maj. Phil Howard, the 123rd Civil Engineering Squadron's (CES) operations officer.

"We're talking about the largest mobilization for the state of Kentucky since the Gulf War."

Hundreds of tons of heavy equipment and more than 100 pieces of rolling stock were shipped to Ecuador by barge, while other military gear was airlifted by military transports.

After establishing a base camp from scratch, the Kentucky troops began construction.

However, the engineers encountered problems getting materials from local contractors who were supplying gravel and concrete blocks.

"The contractors had it set up so we were supposed to go over and get the gravel from them, but the road was washed out (from mud slides created by El Nino) and we had to go across two rivers to get it," Howard said.

"We had to barter, beg and plead," Howard recalled, "do whatever we could to get across the rivers."

Howard said convoys also began driving along the beach to bypass the blocked roadways, but that option had perils of its own since the movements had to be timed to coincide with low tide. More than one vehicle got stuck in the wet sand.

These kinds of hardships, however, are what made Nuevos Horizontes such a valuable training experience, said Lt. Col. Tom Marks, the 123rd CES commander.

"You could not afford, nor could you ever devise, this kind of training," Marks said. "Not only do they have to design and build the base camp, they also have to live in what they design. They have to deal with the elements and they have to improvise to get the project done, because there's no hardware store to go to and purchase needed items."

"These kinds of things that our people have to overcome are the same kinds of things you face in war," he added. "It just doesn't get any more real-world than this."

Brig. Gen. John R. Groves, Kentucky's adjutant general, agreed, noting that an operation like Nuevos Horizontes is "everything but going to war."

"We have to bring our equipment, our soldiers, our infrastructure," he noted. "We bring everything that's necessary to conduct a military operation."

The operation also has its emotionally rewarding aspects, said MSgt. Pat Fields, a 123rd engineer.

"The school they have now is not much more than a shack, so this new one's really going to help them out immensely," he said. Edgar Quinones agreed.

The 43-year-old father of three, who lives across the street from the new school, said he is excited for his village.

"Now that we have a good school and a good clinic," he said through an interpreter, "we can work to improve our village some more. Then maybe more people will want to come here."

SrA. Christopher Jackson, meanwhile, found satisfaction in something less tangible.

"We're leaving a lasting impact as far as relations go," said the 123rd heating and air conditioning specialist. "Maybe these people will come to respect us a little bit more as we come to respect them a lot more."

"You can already see that in their faces, the way they smile and wave at you," he added. "And the kids are very curious. They're getting a lot out of this, and that's good because the children are the future."

"This school is for them."

In aircraft named for 'Derby' winners, Kentucky air crews have flown across the globe

Birdeye's view to HISTORY

By MSgt. Bettina Puckett
Maryland National Guard

The name "Secretariat" graces both, but one was a champion racehorse and the other is just a plain old workhorse.

The workhorse is a 43-ton military airplane that one crew member jokingly says looks more like an old cartoon character than the sleek Triple Crown winner.

"It's the ugliest airplane," said SSgt. Michael Cook, crew chief of the C-130 "Hercules" transport aircraft dubbed Secretariat. Cook flies with the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing in Louisville.

The aircraft and its crew recently flew seven hours to Howard AB, Panama for two weeks of annual training. While flying from their temporary base in Panama, the crew participated in a long-running exercise called Coronet Oak in which C-130 air crews provide air transportation and logistical support for various ongoing U.S. military exercises and U.S. embassies throughout Central and South America and the Caribbean.

"It's a great way to see the world, a great way to serve," said SSgt. Brian Miller, a 123rd flight engineer. "There's not a better bunch of people I'd rather go to combat with than the ones I'm with."

The crew's first mission in Panama involved hauling a load of supplies, used tires and several U.S. troops to Ilopango AB, El Salvador, to re-supply an ongoing military humanitarian exercise there.

With the flight scheduled to leave Howard at 7 a.m., the crew was up far before dawn to make pre-flight checks to ensure their C-130 was ready for the two-and-a-half hour flight.

Back in 1991, the wing received the aircraft fresh from the Lockheed-Martin factory in Marietta, Ga. The Blue Grass Air Guard unit has 12 such cargo carriers in its fleet. They are each named for a Kentucky Derby winner.

One of the biggest challenges for Secretariat and her crew was Panama's sweltering 90-plus-degree temperatures.

"The heat really affects these airplanes' performance," said Miller, a full-time Guard flight engineer. "The colder it

is, the better these airplanes can run." Not being familiar with the geography in El Salvador, where a civil war raged only a few short years ago, also compounds matters. "You have to be on your toes," Miller assured.

Maj. Mark Sutherland, aircraft commander and a civilian pilot for United Parcel Service, is fond of the C-130.

"I've flown a lot of different airplanes, but this is the one that is the workhorse," he said.

The C-130 also is renowned for its ability to climb quickly off short runways and to land on less-than-perfect strips.

The plane's motto is "anything, any place, any time," related SrA. Timothy Gagnon, a loadmaster. "We'll go anywhere from a 12,000-foot concrete strip to a 3,000-foot dirt strip on the top of a mountain."

In civilian life, Gagnon works as an administrative assistant at Bowman Field, a civilian airport in Louisville.

"I usually fly 10 days out of the month with the Guard," he said. Last year, he flew to 26 countries.

As the loadmaster, Gagnon is responsible for making sure the aircraft is loaded correctly and that the weight is evenly distributed. He also is accountable for



Photo by MSgt. Bettina Puckett

TIRELESS — SrA. Timothy Gagnon, a Kentucky 123rd Airlift Wing loadmaster, helps push a load of tires in El Salvador.

any air drops.

"We haul everything from food to bombs to toilet paper — you name it," Gagnon said. "If it will fit, we haul it."

On the flight back from El Salvador, the C-130 hauled a large load of tires on their way to be retreaded. They had been used on military trucks primarily used by Guardmembers there building schools, roads and medical clinics.

Gagnon said more than 2,400 C-130s have been built, of which the U.S. operates fewer than 1,000. Several other countries use the Hercules workhorses, including Egypt and many Central and South American countries, he said.

"It's not the most comfortable airplane to fly in the world, but it does the job

really well," Gagnon added.

The C-130 features web seating in which makeshift seats are configured facing each other, with rows stretching length-wise down the fuselage. The middle floor is where supplies are carried on rolling pallets.

Still, the C-130 crew members swear by it.

"It'll get you home safe," Miller added. "And you can take it anywhere."

Miller figures he has one of the best jobs in the military.

"Most people my age, I'm 27, they never get to see this," he said. "They probably couldn't even point to El Salvador on a map."

"I get to work with some of the best airplanes in the inventory and I have great crews to fly with," he added. "What more could you ask for?"

Kentucky Air Guard crews have flown to dozens of countries all over the world. In 1992, they flew missions over Bosnia-Herzegovina during the raging civil war.

"There were several airplanes that took small arms rounds over there," Miller recalled. "This airplane was designed for combat; that's why it's here. But (someone) would have to tear a pretty large chunk out of it to do any type of damage."

The plane also affords crewmembers a striking view. Gagnon recalled flying over northern Kuwait during the Gulf War and seeing the damage left behind by Iraqis.

"You could still see the scorching of the earth from the oil fires," he said.

He also remembers the devastation exacted on Sarajevo's Olympic village.

"I'm sure it was a beautiful city at one time," Gagnon said. "On the ground, there was a lot of patchwork on the runways and the ramp area from where a lot of mortars and artillery rounds had hit."

On the flight back to Panama from El Salvador, nothing but beauty surrounded the aircraft as it lumbered above Central America. From the cockpit, Sutherland pointed out an active volcano off the coast of Nicaragua, smoking beneath the left side of the aircraft.

"I love this job," Gagnon said. "I can't imagine doing anything else."

NUEVOS HORIZONTES

By 2nd Lt. Dale Greer
Kentucky National Guard

BUILDING a FUTURE

Kentucky Guardmembers overcome many obstacles to help Ecuador

The simple pleasures and quiet dignity of Las Penas, a small fishing village in Ecuador, are as constant as the Pacific tides that roll gently to its shore.

A tsunami of technological progress may have swept over the Northern half of this hemisphere, but little has changed in this Central American country for nearly 100 years.

The residents still draw their sustenance and livelihood from the sea, rowing into the surf aboard wooden canoes to cast their nets for the fish and shrimp that will put food on their tables and a little money in their pockets.

No one goes hungry, and everyone has a roof over his head, even if it's attached to a ramshackle shanty without electricity or plumbing. The town's children greet visitors with carefree smiles and wide-eyed inno-



SPORTS

• Red, White and Blue Race in a Red, White and Blue Town

SPORTS SHORTS

Allen, pistol team capture world title

SSgt. Charles Allen unloaded on the best military marksmen in the world, taking the combat pistol title at the recent Armed Forces Skill at Arms Meeting in North Little Rock, Ark.

Allen, a member of the Connecticut Army Guard, doesn't believe in "natural shooters."

"With good coaching and desire, anyone can shoot well," Allen said.

Allen also led the team of Maj. Michael Michie, CWO2 Lawrence Grace and MSgt. James Schulte to the overall team combat pistol title.

Air Guard crowns softball champs

For a week in late August more than 104 softball teams from units across the country competed for titles in five divisions at the 33rd Annual Air National Guard Softball Tournament in Dayton, Ohio.

The top three teams in each division were:

Men's Open

- 1st: 108th Air Refueling Wing, N.J.
- 2nd: 166th Airlift Wing, Del.
- 3rd: 165th Airlift Wing, Ga.

Men's 35 and over

- 1st: 171st Air Refueling Wing, Pa.
- 2nd: 193rd Special Operations Wing, Pa.
- 3rd: 166th Airlift Wing, Del.

Co-Ed

- 1st: 186th Air Refueling Wing, Miss.
- 2nd: 189th Airlift Wing, Ark.
- 3rd: 177th Fighter Wing, N.J.

Women's

- 1st: Ohio
- 2nd: North Carolina
- 3rd: 175th Wing, Md.

Men's 45 and over

- 1st: 193rd SOW, Pa.
- 2nd: 171st ARW, Pa.
- 3rd: Ohio

Guard runners go distance at Marine Corps Marathon

■ Kansas's Curt Rogers, Indiana's Curt Carey pace male runners

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Two traditional National Guard runners more than matched America's full-time military men during the 23rd Marine Corps Marathon on October's final Sunday morning around sparkling, warm Washington, D.C.

Seasoned Curt Rogers, 32, an Air National Guard staff sergeant from Kansas, finished the 26-mile, 385-yard run in fifth place, beating Marine Capt. Alex Hetherington by three places and 62 seconds. Hetherington was declared the first U.S. military finisher.

Indiana Army Guard Spc. Curt Carey finished ninth, 22 seconds behind Hetherington. Carey punched in three places ahead of Steven Schmid, the second Marine and active duty U.S. serviceman to run under the red and yellow finish arch beside the Marines' Iwo Jima Monument in Arlington, Va.

Both Guard runners also beat Jon Schoenberg who finished 15th and led the Air Force to an unexpected triumph over the favored Army team in the first U.S. Armed Forces team competition.

Two British Royal Marines, who finished second and third behind civilian victor Weldon Johnson, were the only military runners to beat Rogers in what is hailed as "The People's Marathon."

The active duty people were given the American military's accolades during a mid-day awards ceremony.

"The Marines do a good job of putting this marathon on," said Rogers who finished sixth last year. "But they never mention the Guard. I just like to make a



Photos by MSgt. Bob Haskell

CURT POWER — Kansas Air Guard SSgt. Curt Rogers (above) finished the Marine Corps Marathon as the fastest military runner. Indiana Spc. Curt Carey (left), between drills and razors, sported a medal and goatee at the 'red, white and blue race in a red, white and blue town.'



point while I'm out there."

Army Guard Capt. Ross Shales from Louisiana took 39th as the National Guard team's third finisher. Guard masters runners Mike Ziegler from Wisconsin and Victor Cuevas from Puerto Rico finished 41st and 51st.

Oregon Army Guard Sgt. Tim Vandervlugt, who won the National Guard Bureau's Marathon Trials last May in Lincoln, Neb., sat out the Marine marathon after racing in September's Air Force Marathon and in the Oct. 11 Army Ten-Miler, it was explained.

Florida Army Guard Sgt. Kelly Wild led the Guard women. She finished 18th, 269th overall, in the women's field dominated by the Air Force's Kimberly Markland.

Satisfaction was the primary reward for most of the 13,248 marathoners and casual runners who completed the route that begins and ends in northern Virginia and loops around the Washington Mall. There is no prize money.

Secretary of Defense William Cohen

was the official starter.

"This is a red, white and blue race in a red, white and blue town," said Air Guard MSgt. Rob Thomas II who finished 90th and who has run 30 marathons, from Paris, France, to Las Vegas, Nev., over the past five years.

"This one is different because the Marines make it a command and control event and because you run by the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials," he added. "Running by the Tidal Basin with Thomas Jefferson looking at you is a special feeling."

Rogers got his kicks during the final mile while out-kicking three competitors. He charged into a stiff breeze and up a long hill that curved past the Iwo Jima memorial and led to the finish line.

"I don't get to run on hills in Kansas," observed the Derby resident who is a full-time sheet metal mechanic for Boeing and an Air Guard telephone technician for the 184th Bomb Wing at McConnell Air Force Base.

"Those guys weren't handling the wind too well," added Rogers after completing his 33rd marathon. "In Kansas we get a lot of wind."

The shadow of a goatee made it easy to mistake Rogers for a civilian.

"I'm a part-timer," he laughed. "I can grow this between drills if I want to."

There is no mistaking his contributions as one of the Guard's premier distance runners. He has finished first among National Guard runners

in five marathons, two half-marathons and two Army Ten-Milers since joining the Guard team in 1990.

His Marine marathon time of 2 hours, 33 minutes, 31 seconds was well off his personal best of 2:27:58 and the 2:31:12 he recorded during the 1997 Marine run through pouring rain.

"I just run good in wet, nasty weather," he explained.

He ran smart enough in this year's sunshine, however, to stake a legitimate claim as one of America's fastest military runners.

"I started a little fast," he explained. "But I backed off to 19th at 10 miles."

He began making his move at the 15-mile mark, near the Lincoln Memorial along Independence Avenue. He had moved into eighth place by mile 25, spectators lining the route told him.

That put him in position to reel in three more men during the final mile.

"Backing off after my fast start," Rogers reflected, "paid off at the end."

Michigan, Maryland and Pennsylvania
go to Lithuania for 11-nation exercise

BONDING in the BALTICS

By SFC Tom Springer
Michigan National Guard

Like a Cold War apparition, a BTR-60 armored personnel carrier rumbles down a gravel road in this former Soviet republic. Overhead, a Russian-made, Mi-8 Hip transport helicopter roars through the blue Baltic sky.

To the American military, such vestiges of the old Warsaw Pact are a familiar sight. For decades, U.S. forces have studied tanks and aircraft like these to locate their weak points.

Yet on this summer day, the BTR-60s and Mi-8s carry not adversaries but friends: Lithuanian soldiers, along with Army Guard infantrymen from places like Altoona, Penn., Grand Rapids, Mich., and Baltimore, Md. And at nearby Klaipeda airport, paratroopers from the Pennsylvania Army Guard are boarding a Russian-made AN-26 transport to make an historic jump with airborne comrades from Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. Meanwhile, at Siauliai airport, about 120 miles away, Maryland Air National Guard crews with the 175th Wing have parked their C-130s near bomb-proof bunkers that once concealed squadrons of Soviet MIGs.

"I was in the regular Army, raised as a (former President Ronald) Reagan soldier," related Pennsylvania's SSgt. Stephen Kelley. "It is amazing to see the troops and the equipment we were trained to recognize as the enemy. Now, we're working together, sharing tactics and experiences."

What reads like the plot from a Tom Clancy novel gone awry was in fact business as usual during Baltic Challenge 98, a two-week humanitarian and peacekeeping exercise held in Klaipeda, Lithuania that involved more than 5,000 air, naval and ground forces from 11 countries. It was the largest exercise of its kind ever held in the former Soviet republic.

"We are here for a common purpose," said Maj. Gen. Jonas Andriskevicius, Lithuanian Defense Forces commander. "To train hard and well in peacekeeping."

Baltic Challenge 98 was the last, and largest, in a series of three annual exercises. Baltic Challenge 96 was held in Latvia and drew 800 participants from four countries. Baltic Challenge 97 took place in Estonia and attracted more than 2,800 troops from eight countries.

In addition to the United States, participating nations this year included Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Poland and Sweden.

This year's training scenario was based on a fictional earthquake that struck the country of "Westland." Stabilizing this Baltic nation required coordination between air, land and naval forces. Troops were sent to restore order and secure roadways. Planes and helicopters ferried military personnel and simulated casualties. Off-shore, minesweepers from Poland, Germany and Estonia cleared the harbor. The U.S.N.S. hospital ship *Comfort*, the world's largest hospital ship, lay at anchor in Klaipeda harbor to treat "injured" civilians and military who were airlifted aboard during medical evacuation training.

For ground forces, the training centered around the 7th Dragoon Battalion Compound in Klaipeda. Here, the soldiers and U.S. Marines were housed and spent their first week conducting hands-on train training. The courses, guided by instructors from different nations, taught skills such as land mine awareness, counter-sniper techniques, riot control and checkpoint operations.

For hard-charging soldiers, training for a peacekeeping mission does require an attitude adjustment.

"It's difficult to go from the mindset of shooting at people to putting your

of paramilitary thugs who had set up their own roadblock on a public highway. Dressed in Battle Dress Uniforms and old sweatshirts, they harassed the Swedish soldiers who came to disperse them.

"The U.N.'s here to make war, not peace," shouted an American hoodlum. Why don't you go home? We don't want you here."

The Swedes tried to use negotiation tactics. But tensions escalated, and mock sniper fire erupted from the woods nearby. The Swedes returned fire, aiming low as to not inflict fatal wounds, and "injured" two Americans. Playing their role to the hilt, the wounded soldiers screamed and writhed as they were dragged away.

"The checkpoints provide realistic training for the troops," said Maj. Ketil Stokkan, a Norwegian Army observer. "It's important to rotate the troops through all the stations so they can get the full experience."

For the U.S. troops the presence of civilians in and around the training area enhanced realism. All the activity also attracted a steady stream of inquisitive local children.

"(The youngsters) got in the way a little bit," reported Pennsylvania Spc. George Taylor, "but it would be the same way in a real situation."

Michigan's SFC Earl Jenkins agreed.

"One of the roadblocks we set up was on a public side street. We were holding up traffic, but I didn't see any motorists get angry. Try getting away with that in downtown Grand Rapids."

Language barriers also can be a source of frustration, unless, of course, you're Spc. William Andersen, a Maryland Army Guard infantryman who speaks four languages. While other citizen-soldiers relied on voice inflections and hand signals, Andersen, who is working on a Ph.D. in compute science at the University of Maryland, engaged his foreign comrades.

"The Lithuanian soldiers understand me," he said. "I guess that's what counts."

Although Baltic Challenge brought new training experiences, the National Guard's role in the exercise has expanded beyond military maneuvers. Michigan's Maj. James McCrone escorted a 30-member delegation from his state that included business, military and legislative leaders.

Dave O'Leary, owner of a Lansing paint company, is now working with a manufacturer from Latvia to provide assistance in setting up a paint company. O'Leary's Latvian counterpart visited Lansing in mid-August to learn more about the paint business.

In addition, a captain from the Michigan State Police was sent overseas to help Latvia develop a national emergency operations center.

"The Guardmembers reflect everything in society: the business, religious and governmental aspects," McCrone said. "Our purpose is not only to build military relationships, but promote the kind of strong society and economy that supports democracy."

Maryland (Estonia), Michigan (Latvia) and Pennsylvania (Lithuania) are among 24 National Guard organizations that maintain State partnerships with the fledgling democracies of Eastern Europe and Eurasia.

Pennsylvania's Spc. Jeff Smith and Maryland's Capt. Michele Murray and Sgt. Cesar G. Soriano contributed to this article.

BALTIC WARRIORS — Pennsylvania Army Guard soldiers patrol the woods in Lithuania during Baltic Challenge 98.

Photo by Spc. Jeff Smith



Photos by TSgt. Ed Bard

FREE STATE FLIERS — A Maryland Air Guard C-130 (above) flies over the Baltics. Maryland Air Guard Maj. William Schneider (inset, right), surrounded by U.S. and foreign crewmembers, jots down some notes before a mission.



arm around someone and caring for them," said SFC Earl Jenkins, NCO-in-charge of the 30-member Michigan Army Guard contingent who deployed for Baltic Challenge.

"You might come on a minefield and have to deal with scared people, crazy people, wounded people," Jenkins related. "And you still have to worry about security because there's mines in the area. Peacekeeping can really be a sophisticated type of warfighting."

"Diplomacy over firepower," added Maryland Army Guard Spc. Joseph Garcia. "The training has been really beneficial in stretching us to our limits."

In week two, the troops traveled to a several-thousand-acre area near Klaipeda for a field training exercise. During simulated encounters, they practiced the peacekeeping skills they learned during the previous week.

A squad of Michigan Guardmembers played the role

NEWS

MAKERS

Compiled by MSgt. John Malthaner
National Guard Bureau

California Air Guard MSgt. Mike Dunn, a KC-135 stratotanker boom operator, flew his final flight Sept. 12. A member of the 163rd Air Refueling Wing based at March Air Reserve Base, Dunn was doused with a ceremonial bucket of water upon exiting the aircraft by fellow wing member SMSgt. John Walund.

At the armory named for him, Retired Maj. Gen. Maurice "Dana" Tawes presented a scholarship, also named for him, to Maryland Army Guard Spc. Ken Christian, a member the 1229th Transportation Company.

Christian, who transferred from the Virgin Islands National Guard to Maryland in 1992, received \$1,000 to continue his studies at the University of Maryland. He is entering his senior year as a business management major.

The Tawes Scholarship was established as a higher education incentive.

"This scholarship is my way of saying thank you," Tawes said. "It is also an act of solid support for the citizen-soldier who is always ready to serve his country at a moment's notice."

Tawes began his long career in the Maryland National Guard in 1931 as a 17-year-old private. He was commissioned in August 1940, and inducted into federal service along with the entire 29th Infantry Division on Feb. 3, 1941.

After the war, Tawes rejoined the Maryland Army Guard as a major. In 1963 he became the commander of the 29th Infantry Division's 1st Brigade. A year later he was promoted to brigadier general. He retired in 1973.

The Maryland National Guard Armory on Main Street in Crisfield is named in his honor.

SSgt. Gary Poncia, a member of the Idaho Air Guard's 124th Wing, earned the Idaho Cross for helping save the life of an elderly man.

In March, while stopped at an intersection in southwest Boise, Poncia saw a car crash through a wire fence and come to a stop in a field. He ran to the car to find the driver, a man in his late 70s, unconscious and not breathing. With the help of two other men, he removed the victim from his car and placed him on the ground. Once his head was moved, the man started to breathe and regained consciousness.

Poncia credited the emergency medical training he's received in the Air Guard for helping.

"The Self-Aid and Buddy Care class really paid off," he said.

The Idaho Air Guard's 189th Airlift Squadron, a C-130 unit since September 1996, has earned its Governor's Outstanding Unit Award.

Less than two months after the 189th received its first aircraft, crews flew disaster relief missions in state, carrying 700 passengers and 46 tons of equipment in and out of flooded and snow-bound Idaho communities.

Outside Idaho, 189th crews ferried 25 tons of hay to starving cattle isolated by record snow falls in New Mexico. They also delivered several California Condors, an endangered species, to the World Center for Birds of Prey in Boise.



MSgt. Mike Dunn (left) gets wetdown from SMSgt. John Walund.



Retired Maj. Gen. Tawes awards scholarship to Spc. Ken Christian.



Ohio's Veterans Plaza gets memorial.



Hanna and her handler, SrA. Craig Moody.

A group of Guardmembers from the Connecticut Air Guard's 103rd Fighter Wing built an access ramp for retired SMSgt. Bill Zybur.

"You can't believe how great it is to be able to get out and around again," said Zybur, who retired from the 103rd's Life Support shop after 30 years of service. "This is the greatest thing that's happened to me in a long time."

Recent health problems had left Zybur confined to a wheelchair and limited his access to the outside world.

Informed of Zybur's plight, retired Maj. Fred Miclon gathered donations from unit members and the Enfield, Conn., Home Depot.

Volunteers CMSgt. Tim Seitz, SMSgt. Karen Havens, SMSgt. Ron Simons, TSgt. Jim Ranney, TSgt. Russ Wheeler, TSgt. Greg Ederly, SSgt. Mike Gagnon, SSgt. Alex Kajlik and SSgt. Sharon Horan built the ramp.

Oct. 17 was a big night for the Maine National Guard. That made it a big night for the Maine State Select Honor Guard.

Honor Guard members spent seven weeks practicing for a 12-1/2 minute presentation for nearly 300 people attending the grand reopening of the remodeled Augusta State Armory.

Eighteen men and two women volunteers make up the Maine Army Guard's honor guard team who studied dozens of moves by the Army's 3rd Infantry Regiment in Washington, D.C. Those "Old Guard" soldiers guard the Tomb of the Unknowns at Arlington National Cemetery.

"We study video tapes of them guarding the tomb and inspecting arms and marching at funerals," said SFC Frank Norwood, who has led the team for the last six years. "We try to do everything to their standard."

A place to honor those who served in war, and those "who are prepared to go" was dedicated at the Ohio Veterans Plaza located on the grounds of the State Capitol in Columbus.

The memorial is comprised of large stone walls in a semi-circle fashion on each end of the east side of the Statehouse. The walls are inscribed with a collection of 70 actual letters sent home to loved ones by soldiers serving overseas during wartime. A rectangle between the stones recognizes each county in the state of Ohio.

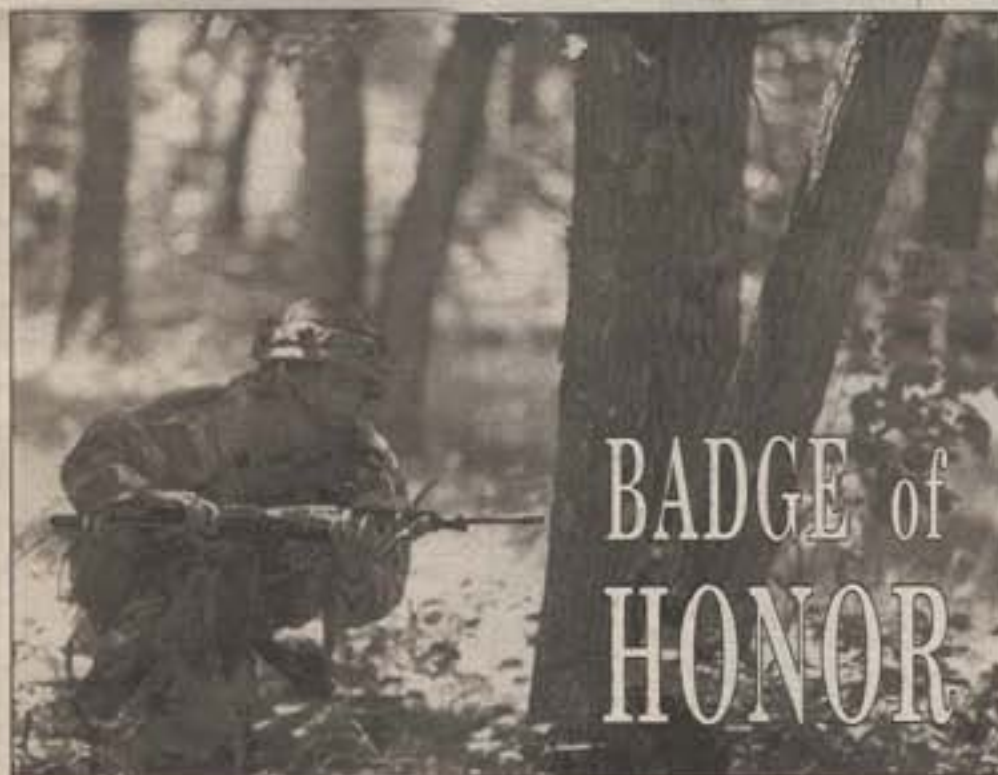
New Hampshire Air Guard SrA. Craig Moody and a German shepherd, named Hanna, are making history.

A member of 157th Air Refueling Wing's security forces squadron, Moody was selected to handle the state's first police K-9.

Hanna and her handler have recovered more than \$80,000 in illegal drugs and made between 20-25 drug-related seizures since February.

Moody said that Hanna has been used at U.S.-Canada border, along highways, at airports, in schools and prisons to look for drugs.

"Hanna came to the Guard with little cost and she stays with me at my home" said Moody. "In her short time with the Air Guard she has more than quadrupled her investment."



EYEING BADGE --
Minnesota PFC Troy
Tretter uses a compass
to locate a target.

Minnesota soldiers test for Expert Infantry Badge

By Maj. Pauline Geraci
Minnesota National Guard

Some soldiers who have earned a Combat Infantry Badge have taken to calling it a "Learner's Permit." The Expert Infantry Badge, or EIB, is a different story altogether. Only one in 10 infantrymen and special forces troops selected to compete for it, ever pass the grueling test.

Despite these odds, for the first time in nearly a decade, the Minnesota Army National Guard tested hardened soldiers for the EIB at Camp Ripley.

It also marked the first time that the 1st

qualify expert with the M-16 rifle.

Normally, EIB testing is conducted over five days, noted Capt. Ken Stocco, the 1st Brigade's assistant S-3. But to accommodate Guard soldiers, the test was spread over three drills.

Beginning in July, 42 Minnesota soldiers tested at 33 separate stations. Candidates are allowed to retest at only two stations.

The July weekend saw infantrymen take an Army fitness test, conduct day and night land navigation, locate a target by shifting from a known point, adjusting indirect fire, apply camouflage, move while under direct fire, use visual signaling techniques, challenge persons entering an area and estimate range.

The following month, candidates were required to prove their efficiency at mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, applying



Photos by Spc. Clinton Wood

Brigade 34th Infantry Division, headquartered Stillwater, has conducted the test. Infantrymen from the Gopher State's 2nd Battalion, 136th Infantry, 1-194th Infantry, 2-135th Infantry and 1-94th Armor participated.

EIB BOUND -- 1st Lt. Jason Griffith (far left) charges an objective while under fire. Spc. Terrill Schmidt (left) applies camouflage at an EIB test station.

a pressure dressing, wearing the M-17 or M-40 mask and hood, administering a nerve agent antidote, using the M-258 or M-291 decontamination kits, operating an

AN/PRC-77 radio set, identifying and throwing hand grenades, employing and recovering a claymore mine, installing and removing an M-21 antitank mine, reporting information of potential intelligence value, loading, unloading and maintaining a M-60 machine gun and preparing a range card for the machine gun.

In September, candidates were tested on their abilities to identify terrain features on a map, determine target locations using grid coordinates, perform M-16A1 and M-16A2 rifle function checks, load and unload a .50 caliber machine gun, prepare the dragon for firing, operate night vision goggles and finish a 12-mile tactical march in three hours.

Standards for the EIB test are set at the U.S. Army's infantry school at Fort Benning, Ga.

"I went through the EIB testing in 1984. Some things have changed since then, but it is generally the same," said SGM Steve Rannenberg, the current president of the EIB board tasked with ensuring standards are met. "The equipment being used has changed since then."

The equipment may have changed, but the standards are still tough. Despite this, soldiers like Minnesota's PFC Joe Anderson said the struggle to obtain the Expert Infantry Badge is worthwhile.

"It's such an honor to wear it," he said.

VETERAN

From Page 5

ments in the 42nd Division. He was sent to the front at St. Mihiel and fought in the Meuse-Argonne offensive during the war's final month.

The 42nd was formed in August 1917 from National Guard units from 26 states and the District of Columbia. It became one of the First World War's legendary outfits. It lives on today as an Army National Guard mechanized infantry division in New York, New Jersey, Vermont and Massachusetts.

"In 1917 and 1918 these two gentlemen, Mr. Mills and Mr. Dunton, went out and did their country a great service," observed Lt. Gen. Russell Davis, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, who attended the Veterans Day ceremony with 200 others.

"It's important that we be here today to recog-

nize and thank them and their families," Davis added. "This is what America is all about, Americans who are willing to make this sacrifice."

"His experiences ranged from the sublime to the terrible," said Patrick Mills whose father was discharged in May 1919 and who settled into farming a couple of hundred acres near Huntington, W. Va., and the Kentucky border.

He married a schoolteacher, Willa Jackson, on Christmas Eve 1941, 17 days after the attack on Pearl Harbor that ushered his country into World War II.

There was no doubt his dad would serve in 1918, Patrick Mills related, because his grandfather, Oliver Mills, had fought with the 16th Virginia Cavalry at Gettysburg. He was captured the following winter and died of dysentery at Fort Delaware, a Union prison camp on Pea Patch Island off the Delaware coast.

Henry and his older brother Crit were both eligible for the World War I draft, Patrick explained, and debated which one should seek a deferment to

stay on the family farm. Both wanted to go.

"Their mother told them to shut up and serve," Patrick explained. "She said she would rather bury one or both of them than have them take a deferment."

No one, however, could imagine the horror of the war in Europe.

James Dunton witnessed it while aiding the wounded as a member of the Ambulance Service. He later published a collection of short stories entitled "C'est la Guerre" ("That's War"), and he was a Pentagon public information officer for 11 years under Presidents Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy before retiring in 1961.

He turned 19 the day before the armistice.

"People have told me how wonderful it was that I served in World War I," Dunton said 80 years later, as the United States girded for another armed confrontation with Iraq.

"The world needs to remember how important it is to emphasize friendship and unity; to avoid all of this hatred and violence," he observed. "I didn't think of it as all that wonderful."



STATES

• Blackhorse Backers • Volunteers in Bulgaria • Free State Fliers

OHIO

Members of the 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment were welcomed home Sept. 11 at Rickenbacker International Airport after an eight-month tour in Bosnia.

The nine-member PAD and its nine-member sister unit in West Virginia deployed to Bosnia as part of the NATO-led Stabilization Force in support of Operation Joint Forge peacekeeping mission.

The detachment provided communications support for nearly 7,000 Task Force Eagle soldiers.

MONTANA

Troop E, 163rd Armored Cavalry Regiment, based in Helena, was activated Oct. 3.

Troop E will roundout the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, one of the U.S. Army's most famous cavalry units.

The 11th ACR provides opposing force doctrine to units training at the National Training Center (NTC), Fort Irwin, Calif.

Capt. Michael Yaeger will command the 170-person troop.

The 11th ACR "Black Horse" has a long history. Activated by Congress in February of 1901, the organization served in the Philippine Insurrection, in Cuba, against Pancho Villa in Mexico, during WWII, in Vietnam, and in the Persian Gulf.

MINNESOTA

CONCRETE CAUSE

Minnesota Army Guard Spc. Riki Sweno, a carpentry and masonry specialist with Company C, 142nd Engineer Battalion in Little Falls, was in Honduras helping to build a medical clinic. The recent Hurricane Mitch reportedly did a lot of damage to many of the structures built by U.S. troops as part of humanitarian efforts in the Central American country.



Photo by MSgt. Valerie L. Minor

TENNESSEE

Three civil engineering squadrons (CES) deployed to Bulgaria to help renovate a hospital in the remote town of Tran.

Civil engineers from Knoxville's 134th Air Refueling Wing, Nashville's 118th Airlift Wing and Memphis's 164th Airlift Wing spent two weeks in the former Soviet block nation.

MARYLAND

Eight 175th Wing A-10s and 134 airmen joined more than 12,000 multi-national armed forces troops in Alaska to participate in the largest air combat exercise in the Pacific -- Cooperative Cope Thunder.

The 10-day exercise simulated the same wartime conditions pilots would face in real combat.

"It's born out of our air combat experience," said Lt. Col. Jimmy Carter, 353rd Combat Training Squadron commander. "The mission is to expose aircrews to 10 realistic combat sorties."

"The vast majority of losses in combat come in the first ten sorties," he added. "This exercise is part of a national strategy of military engagement."

Carter said such international exercises are important.

"As we continue to transition to a multi-polar world," he said, "friendly contact with all our neighbors becomes more critical."

OKLAHOMA

More than 1,500 citizen-soldiers from the Sooner State and several U.S. Army Reserve engineer units completed a monumental construction project at the McAlester Army Ammunition Plant during an exercise called, "Golden Kastle 98."

The training, which included building a surge support base camp and rehabilitating primary plant roads at the installation, involved National Guard and Reserve soldiers from Oklahoma, Iowa, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Illinois, Tennessee and Texas. The McAlester plant is required to ship ammunition quickly and safely to a military conflict within the first 30 days.

Golden Kastle consisted of two phases. During the first phase, Guardmembers with Oklahoma's 120th Engineer Battalion laid 54 concrete tent pads for the base camp. They, along with Navy Seabees, completed 16 pads over four drill weekends and a two week annual training.

During the second phase, three Reserve battalions prepared 8.4 miles of roads to be paved, paved 4.5 miles, built concrete truck stop pads at 19 railroad crossings and extended the drive-through slabs at 30 ammunition storage magazines.

Although the work was hard and soldiers had to endure one of the worst heat waves in recent history, as well as heavy rains, most of the soldiers agreed the training was beneficial.

"Golden Kastle has been a complete win-win situation for everyone," said Col. David Hafele, plant commander of the \$5.4 million project.

"The bottom line," he added, "is we executed a total-Army operation, trained soldiers in their military tasks and accomplished the planned work."



Photo by Jerri Mabray

PAVING THE WAY -- Members of Oklahoma's Company B, 120th Engineer Battalion use rakes to smooth concrete while building a tent pad during Golden Kastle.



HISTORY

• Remembering New York's 'Fighting 69th'

New York's 27th Division was wrongly accused of causing deaths during war

A new take on MAKIN

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, New York's 27th Division became the first National Guard division to deploy to the Pacific, tasked with guarding the Hawaiian islands from future Japanese assaults.

It would take nearly two years (Nov. 20, 1943) before they would see combat on the tiny coral atoll in the Gilbert Island chain called Makin. It was a small operation, employing only a reinforced regiment, and overshadowed both then and now by the simultaneous and far bloodier assault by the 2nd Marine Division at Tarawa. But the seizure of Makin, a minor Japanese seaplane base, caused a large amount of inter-service finger-pointing between the Army, Navy and Marine Corps.

The capture of the Gilbert Islands, codenamed Operation Galvanic, was the first step in the Navy's island-hopping campaign across the central Pacific to Japan.

By the fall of 1943, U.S. forces in the south and southwestern Pacific were already engaging the Japanese at Bougainville and New Guinea, while hammering the major Japanese base of Rabaul from the air. The attack against the Gilberts, the Chiefs of Staff believed, would bring additional pressure on Japan from another direction, and would be easier to capture, at that point in the war, than the Marshall Islands.

The unit chosen to do the job was the 27th Division's 165th RCT (Regimental Combat Team) — the famous "Fighting 69th" from New York City — who earned their nickname from Robert E. Lee during the Civil War. The 165th was reinforced by a generous slice of divisional troops, including an infantry battalion from another historic New York regiment, the 105th "Appleknockers."

In training for the assault, the 27th fell under the control of V Amphibious Corps, commanded by Maj. Gen. Holland "Howlin' Mad" Smith, an ill-tempered and unabashedly outspoken Marine officer who had pioneered the development of amphibious landing craft in the 1930s.

Smith was suspicious of Navy and Army officers whom he felt were trying to marginalize the role of the Marine Corps in the war. He had a particular dislike for the 27th Division, which he acerbically suggested suffered from "militia-itis," a military disease springing from "the entangled roots of hometown loyalties, ambitions and intrigues." This, despite the fact, that it had experienced numerous personnel changes since being mobilized in 1940.

Smith also was critical of the progress the 27th made at Makin, calling it "infuriatingly slow." It was an unfair criticism, given that the operation went off according to schedule and along a timeline approved by his staff.

Other things, undoubtedly, infuriated Smith. He was taken along on the operation not as a commander, but as an observer and liaison for Adm. R. K. "Terrible" Turner, who commanded Operation Galvanic. He also was forced to remain with Turner off of Makin, while 105 miles to the south, fellow Marines were fighting a desperate battle on Tarawa.

The assault on Makin began Nov. 20, 1943 with a heavy naval and air bombardment that failed to do much damage to the roughly 600 Japanese defending the island. The attack was made on the main island of the atoll, Butaritari, which resembles a crutch lying on its side with the armrest facing west. The island is 11 miles long — and except at the western arm rest — about 400 yards wide; too narrow for the attackers to deploy more than two companies abreast.

As the first waves of infantrymen approached the western shore of Butaritari in their new LVTs (Landing Vehicle, Tracked) they faced only light fire because the Japanese had concentrated their limited manpower in a central "citadel" area studded with fortifications. The rest of the island was lightly defended by snipers. This was fortunate, because the beaches on the western end of Butaritari were practically unusable. Similarly, the second landing along the northern shore of Butaritari, forced most of the infantry to wade ashore from 200-yards out. Many fell into shell holes created by pre-invasion bombs.



Photo courtesy of the National Archives

TAKIN' MAKIN - U.S. troops wade ashore the Gilbert Island of Makin during World War II.

Again, the Guardsmen were lucky. Far luckier than the Marines on Tarawa, because the previous waves were able to cross the reef in their LVTs and eliminate those Japanese covering the lagoon approaches.

Adm. Turner later wrote that the Makin beaches were just "stinko profundo," the worst he experienced in the entire war. Coupled with the Marine experience on the reef at Tarawa, those beaches were the primary reason why Turner became a strong advocate for the development of Underwater Demolition Teams — the predecessor to today's SEALs — to scout out beaches prior to future amphibious landings.

While the beach conditions did not lead to great losses among the attacking Guardsmen, they completely upset the timetable for unloading supplies. This problem would later come back to haunt the Navy in a terrible way.

Meanwhile, the attack proceeded on schedule. By the end of D-day the men of the 165th had control of the



GUARD HISTORY

By Capt. Les Melnyk
Army Guard Historian

western portion of the island and part of the central "citadel" region. They also had withdrawn one battalion from the island in preparation for an enveloping landing at the eastern end of the island.

However, the battalion was not allowed to land. Due to the critical situation at Tarawa, Turner thought it necessary to maintain a floating reserve in case the Marines required reinforcement.

On D+1 (the day following the attack), with grenades, satchel charges and flamethrowers, the 165th cleared out the palm log bunkers and slit trenches of the central citadel. On D+2, facing only disorganized remnants, they advanced east to within two miles of the island's eastern tip. The entire force,

less the 3rd Battalion and assorted garrison troops, prepared to embark for Hawaii the following morning.

That night, the dog-tired men of the 3rd battalion, faced a suicide attack by the Japanese garrison's drunken remnants, an event ever-after referred to as "Saki Night." Daybreak found more than 50 Japanese dead in and around the battalion's perimeter, at the cost of three American lives.

The 3rd Battalion then crossed the last two miles to the eastern tip of Butaritari, and reported "Makin taken" to Turner. The cost for the Army was moderate — 66 dead. The Navy lost 50 men, mostly from a turret fire aboard the *Mississippi* during the pre-invasion bombardment.

The worst was yet to come. Early on the morning of D+4, the escort carrier *Liscome Bay* exploded when a Japanese torpedo struck her magazine (ammunition storage room). The Navy, following "Howlin' Mad's" lead, blamed the 27th for taking their time in securing the island, thus forcing the carrier to loiter in dangerous waters. Every history written since then, including the Army's official history, has repeated this accusation.

But a closer look demands that this view be re-evaluated. The horrible beach conditions at Makin, coupled with the Navy's refusal to off-load supplies at night, had thrown the Navy's timetable completely off. The troops who were to return to Hawaii were forced to stand around on the morning of D+3 while the ships finished unloading. They were not able to begin re-embarking until that afternoon, a critical loss of time that probably proved to be the *Liscome Bay's* undoing.

"Howlin' Mad" Smith remained dissatisfied with the 27th Division's performance for as long as it remained under his command. On Saipan he finally took action, relieving the 27th's commander, Maj. Gen. Ralph Smith. His questionable action led to the notorious "Smith vs. Smith" controversy. But that's another story.

Every year since they returned from the war, on the first Friday in November, the veterans of the 165th RCT, along with their successors in the 1st Battalion, 69th Infantry, commemorate the battle of Makin and their service in World War II with a hearty beefsteak dinner. It is a regimental tradition filled with laughter, nostalgia and plenty of food and beer.

Editor's Note: Capt. Melnyk is a newly assigned historian with the National Guard Bureau. He is a 10-year veteran of the Fighting 69th and wrote his master's thesis on the battle at Makin.



TRAINING



MIRED IN MUCK — The view from a Maryland C-130 of Bangladesh's record flooding left many seasoned crewmembers speechless.

An exercise to sell merits of the C-130 turns into real-world relief mission

OLD in BANGLADESH

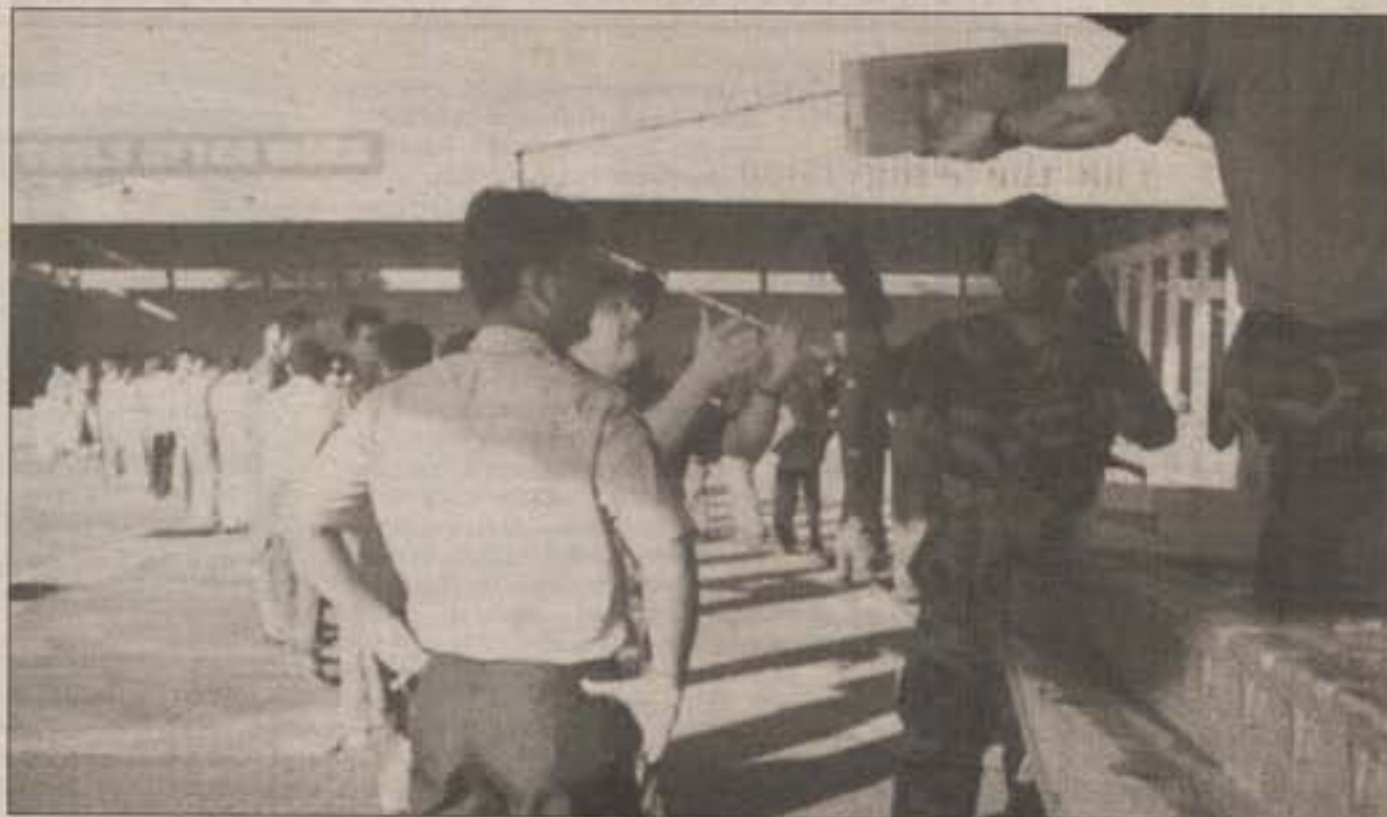
By SSgt. Thomas W. Young
Maryland National Guard

Try to picture just under half the population of the U.S. crowded into an area the size of Wisconsin. Now flood two-thirds of it.

Welcome to Bangladesh.

A routine exercise between the Maryland Air Guard's 175th Wing and the Bangladesh Air Force (BAF) happened to coincide with that country's worst flooding on record. So, the week-long Cope South '98 mission to demonstrate the humanitarian airlift capabilities of the C-130 Hercules — the country is buying four of them from the United States — turned into an actual road test.

News footage of the flooding did not do it justice. From above Bangladesh, Maryland aircrews were greeted by the stained-brown with silt, Bay of Bengal. Even from the cockpit of an aircraft moving at 300 mph, murky floodwaters the color of coffee with cream stretched as far as the eye could see. River channels vanished with the rising flood as the Brahmaputra, Ganges and Megna rivers and their tributaries swelled and joined each other to form a hideous soup of water, mud and villages.



Photos courtesy of the Maryland National Guard



FLOOD OF SUPPORT — Maryland's SSgt. Nelson Saunders (above, right) reaches for a box of medical supplies as Americans and Bangladeshis worked together to off load a C-130. A Maryland crewmember (left) gives troops from the Bangladesh Air Force a closer look at the aircraft their country intends to purchase.

craft flew 25,000 pounds of medical supplies from Dhaka to the port city of Chittagong. That mission made the front page of the next day's *Dhaka Independent* with a headline that crowed:

"U.S. Airmen Join Relief Work, Plane with Medicine Arrives."

Later in the week, both Maryland aircraft flew emergency rations to Rajshajhi, a town near Bangladesh's western border with India. After landing, the American crew and their Bangladeshi comrades formed a fire line to offload 18,000 pounds of "relief biscuits," a sort of high-energy cracker.

All this took place amid some of the thickest humidity many in the crew had ever experienced. Forty-five minutes of a preflight inspection was enough to soak a flight suit. Flying in Bangladesh was like placing an aircraft simulator in a sauna.

Despite their dire circumstances, BAF troops welcomed their Maryland counterparts, treating them to curried chicken with rice and a very sweet, hot tea.

Conversation also was plentiful.

Given the family orientation of Bangladeshi society, those crews who responded affirmatively to "Are you married?" — usually the first non-technical question their hosts asked — received approving nods.

The horrific sight prompted many in the well-travelled, seasoned crew to simply shake their heads in silence.

But there was plenty to do once the wing's two aircraft landed at Tejgaon field in the capital city of Dhaka. Even before the engines cooled, Bangladeshi officers and enlisted men peppered the Free State aircrew with pointed questions about the cargo carriers their Air Force intends to purchase:

"What is your cruising speed?"

"How much fuel do you carry?"

Such technical specifications translate into matters of life and death in Bangladesh, where flooding is frequent. The four-engine Hercules, they learned, can hold more cargo and take it farther than the BAF's current transport aircraft, the Russian-built, twin-engine AN-32.

"Natural disaster is something we face every year," said Air Commodore Luftur Rahman, commander of the BAF base at Jessore. "C-130s will increase our airlift capability to deal with these problems."

Dealing with the flood's aftermath took precedence over flight demonstrations in mid-September, as one of the wing's air-

But the status of the country's welfare ebbed and flowed like the flood waters that engulfed it. When waters were peaking, the government assured people that food stocks were large enough to prevent famine, prompting Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to warn against hoarding.

Meanwhile, tent communities built from blue tarps by flood refugees had appeared in various spots. Tragically, some of the tents were eventually overtaken by water. Public health officials reported that in relief centers, flood-related illnesses, such as dysentery, were spreading. The flooding even lapped at the gates of the hotel where the Maryland crews stayed.

Despite mother nature's intrusion, the motorized rickshaws and other vehicles that usually choke the streets of Dhaka, waded through the waters unabated.

All the while, the Bangladeshis seemed to respond with common-sense pragmatism. Many in the crew marvelled over the Bangladeshi's resolve and lack of self-pity.

With the exercise behind them, the Maryland aircrew lifted off for Martin State Airport, their home near Baltimore. The view from their C-130 revealed that Dhaka — the City of Rivers — was beginning to dry out.

Cope South had revealed that an aircraft could sell itself, and its' crew.