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THE ON GUARD

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August 1997

Air Guard commits to families

'It will now have command emphasis instead of being a command option'

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

The Air National Guard took two giant steps forward on the second Saturday in July in its commitment to families in the Magic Kingdom city where families play.

Brig. Gen. Paul Weaver took one of those steps. Brig. Gen. Martha Rainville took the other. The nation's two newest Air Guard leaders made it as clear as a sonic boom over Orlando, Fla., that they will give the National Guard's Family Program their complete support.

"You will see a totally renewed emphasis on the Family Program," promised Weaver who has been tapped to become the Air Guard's next national director this fall. "I believe we already have a strong Family Program," he added. "We're just going to make it a lot stronger."

Cathylee Weaver, his wife of two years, will become a Family Program advocate, the general added.

"I believe that strong functioning families form the foundation for a strong functioning National Guard," said Rainville who on March 1 became the first woman state adjutant general in the Guard's 360-year history. She comes from Vermont. "I need to begin retaining families, not just individual Guardsmen," she explained.

The Weavers have seven children between them. Rainville and her husband

Norman have three.

The generals made their commitments to 500 coordinators and volunteers from across the country during the final full day of the largest national workshop in the Family Program's 13-year history.

Their words were music to the ears of Dorothy Ogilvy-Lee, the tireless director of the National Guard Bureau's Family Program whose main mission is to help families deal with bank accounts and babysitters and carry on when Guard men and women are deployed for active duty a long way from home.

The program that she has nurtured since 1984 came into its own during Desert Storm, she has explained. Now it

has received the kind of command emphasis from the Air Guard as well as the Army Guard



"You will see a totally renewed emphasis on the Family Program"

Brig. Gen. Paul A. Weaver Jr.

that she has been looking for.

"Some units have done very well. Some units have done nothing," said Ogilvy-Lee. "What I'm hearing now is that the Air National Guard is going to make a strong organizational commitment to Family Programs. It will now have command emphasis instead of being a command option."

The endorsements from Air Guard headquarters and Vermont gave "Dorothy's Division" — as coined by Lt. Gen. Edward Baca, chief of the National Guard — a significant boost. That force includes 18,000 volunteers and 3,000 Guard recruiters.



Photo by SSgt. Bob Jordan

**ARMED
ARMS**

Sgt. Ora Staton, a member of the North Carolina Army Guard's Company C, 1st Battalion, 119th Infantry, carries 25mm rounds to his Bradley Fighting Vehicle while training recently at Camp Shelby, Miss. The battalion spent two weeks at Shelby qualifying with their Bradleys.

See FAMILIES, Page 13



COMMENTARY

• Bataan Balk • Defending the Sector • Safe Issue

ABOUT the PAPER

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Mailing Address:

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

Express Mail Address:

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

Phone/FAX Numbers:

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

E-Mail:

jmalthan@ngb-cmh2.army.mil

NGB Home Page:

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

STAFF



Chief, National Guard Bureau
Lt. Gen. Edward D. Baca
Chief, Public Affairs
Daniel Donohue
Chief, Command Information
Maj. Andrew Smith Sr.
Editor
MSgt. John Malthaner
Senior Correspondent
MSgt. Bob Haskell

GUARD MAIL

Feeling Blistered

My comrades-in-blister and I greatly appreciate the Sports Shorts piece on the Bataan Memorial Death March. We are greatly honored to have been the first NGB team to compete, let alone take honors, in this event. Moreover, it is fitting that the two premier National Guard long-distance events (Bataan and the Lincoln Marathon) were featured side-by-side.

At the same time, however, we feel somewhat slighted. While the Lincoln Marathon is a fully supported, centrally funded competitive event, Bataan is not. As such, the more than 1,500 competitors from across the world are required to find their own resources, or pay out of their own pockets. In addition, the training requirements are at least as arduous as for a marathon. In reality, Bataan is really a marathon run in boots with rucksack.

The central focus of our complaint is the team picture included with the piece. It is smaller than the negative from which it was made. The team



BATAAN BATTLERS - 1st Lt. Darrin Dorn (above, left), Leonard, Capts. Mike Jones, Mark Boll, Lisa Saunders and 1st Lt. Bill Zana.

members are indistinguishable. On a page where three columns were dedicated to the marathon, we feel that a little more effort could have been made to find space for a respectably-sized picture of our team.

By Capt. Tom Leonard
National Guard Bureau

Not so "AWE"-some

You guys get a "no-go" for identifying combat vehicles (Page 4, June). I would recommend the procurement of a copy of *Jane's Armor* to sharpen those skills. Continue the (mostly) excellent work.

Sgt. Gary Lain
South Carolina
National Guard

Scoping an Error

Great job on the June issue, however, there is one error. In your "News Makers" section on Page 12, it said "...a determined group of air defenders from Florida's Western Air Defense Sector, took home "Top Scope 97."

Actually, SrA Amy Whittemore and SSgt. Edward Rojo are members of the Florida Air Guard's "Southeast Air Defense Sector."

SSgt. Andy Partap
Florida National Guard

All the News that's Safe to Print

I just finished reading the June issue and discovered that besides being full of interesting and informative stories about the Guard, it is now becoming a good training aid. It contains two pictures that illustrate the safe and wrong way to load equipment.

I am talking about the picture on page 16 of a loadmaster standing to the side to marshal the howitzer off the aircraft — the right way. However, the picture on Page 4 of the Guardsman standing between the M-113 and the fixed bulkhead, or item on the front of the transporter, is wrong. You should never stand between a moving and a fixed object during loading or unloading of equipment. It may not always be easy to safely position yourself where the driver can see you and you can see to direct the driver, but it could save your life or prevent an injury. Brakes can fail; equipment parts can break; drivers can make errors; etc.

SMSgt. Paul Bell
Kentucky National Guard

LETTERS POLICY:

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

GUARD TOONS

By Lyle Farquhar

Comments or ideas: Farquhar@ngb.af.mil



"It appears that all the research we did on force structure and the budget won't be needed."



IN THE NEWS

• Operation Care • 911 Lesson • Drug Board Selection

Alabama medics provide 'Care'

More than 2,000 people receive free medical, dental treatment

By Spc. Taylor Barbaree
Alabama National Guard

Michael D. DeBoer's eyes glistened as he recalled watching a young boy, his shoes caked with mud, make his way to the shoe tent.

As president and chief executive officer of Baptist Health, DeBoer has given his life to ensuring those economically-disadvantaged people who call Alabama home have their basic needs satisfied.

"I saw several people take off their old shoes, put them in trash cans, put on the new shoes they had just received, and wear them home," he said.

With the help of Camellia State Army Guard doctors, dentists and nurses, DeBoer helped launch "Operation Care," a two-day operation at Abston Air National Guard Station in Montgomery where free medical and dental care was rendered to more than 2,000 people.

More than 25 military tents were erected to shelter those seeking assistance. Each was manned by volunteers providing a specific medical, dental or social service. Some of those services included general health screen-

ings, to include vision, hearing and blood pressure checks, dental exams and immunizations.

Col. Wilson Wright, a professor at the University of Alabama at Birmingham's School of Dentistry in his civilian life, welcomed the change of pace.

"With younger children, you have to reassure them that you're a person underneath that mask," he said. "They're scared about someone poking around their mouth."

Montgomery Mayor Emory Folmar's mouth seemed to form a permanent smile after seeing the operation.

"I am elated that so many people from various organizations have come together to help people that need it."

Brig. Gen. Dalton Diamond, the Alabama Army Guard's medical director and a Guntersville doctor, said nearly 100 Guard men and women volunteered to help.

"This was a team effort and the largest domestic exercise that we have participated in," he said.

Aside from health care, organizers also distributed a pair of shoes, a bag of groceries and bags of personal hygiene items to those seeking assistance.

Montgomery area businesses, agencies and churches donated goods and services for the program. The Alabama Baptist State Convention Disaster Relief van was set up and served hot meals to all who wanted one. Hundreds of volunteers, including an officer training school class from Max-

well AFB, joined the effort.

"We came to help other people," DeBoer observed, "but we're the ones who got the blessing."



Photo by SFC Lindy Earley

PROVIDING CARE - Col. Flora Blackledge (above) attaches a bracelet to an Alabaman woman seeking care.

Hoosiers show kids how to handle emergencies

By Capt. Jenny Lynn Gruehr
Indiana National Guard

Students in Jennie McCoy's first grade class at South Elementary School in Pendleton, Ind., know how to write their name, address and telephone number.

They also have learned what to do during an emergency, thanks to the Indiana Army Guard.

McCoy asked SSgt. Madonna Birdwell, an administrative supervisor with the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 138th Signal Battalion, to give the children a lesson on the 911 telephone system. Birdwell, whose daughter Kaitlyn is in McCoy's class, happily obliged.

"I just wanted to tell the kids that if the town of Pendleton ever did

have a natural disaster that we (the 138th Signal Battalion) could pick up or tap into the Emergency Medical Service (EMS) communication system," Birdwell said. "Since the students are learning about the 911 system, this was the perfect time to show them what our soldiers are capable of doing."

Students learned to use three different kinds of telephones, ranging from the newest versions -- called the Digital Non-Secure -- to the World War II-era types that needed to be wound up.

Placing the students at tables 200 feet apart, Birdwell setup five dial/ring stations, where children practiced their new communication skills.

While many successfully made 911 calls, more than a few students



Photo by Capt. Jenny Lynn Gruehr

DIALED - Kaitlyn Birdwell (center) gets a lesson from Spc. Larry Hammers and her mom, SSgt. Madonna Birdwell.

pretended to call out for pizza -- it was around lunch time. Proving, perhaps, that Army phones are not just for disasters.

NATIONAL BRIEFS

Human resources board to host ANG diversity workshop

The Human Resources Quality Board, who chartered the "People Potential 2000 and Beyond" project team to analyze and recommend policies to improve the diversity of the Air Guard's workforce, will host an interactive workforce in St. Louis, Mo., Aug. 22-24.

The theme of the workshop is "Gateway to the Future ... the Changing of the Guard." Each state is expected to send representatives empowered to manage their state's diversity challenges.

Direct your questions to Lt. Col. Robert Glitz at (301) 836-8629 or 2nd Lt. Merry Wiley at (301) 836-8692.

New York's Fenimore to chair Counterdrug Advisory Board

New York Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. John H. Fenimore V, has been named the chairman of the National Guard Bureau's Counterdrug Advisory Board.

"General Fenimore will bring a New York perspective to this crucial issue," said Gov. George Pataki. "His record of support for New York's counterdrug and drug demand reduction efforts means he is singularly well qualified to assist in making national policy."

As chairman, Fenimore will oversee and advise the committee on counterdrug policies and priorities for the nation's anti-addiction efforts. Currently, there are 4,000 National Guardmembers from 50 states and four U.S. territories working together with local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies to educate, train or otherwise reduce drug abuse among our youth.

For the past two years, the Adjutant General served as the vice chairman for the 10 member advisory board, distinguishing himself "as a senior military leader, advisor and as a great supporter of the counterdrug program," said Col. David E. Friestad, the director Bureau's Counterdrug Directorate.



Maj. Gen.
John Fenimore

IN THE NEWS



Photo by SFC Frank Staples

LOADED - Arkansas soldiers (above) fill a truck with debris from a tornado.

Arkansas Guard weathers tornados

After tornados roared across Arkansas, striking 24 communities and killing 25 people, the Razorback state was in a state of bewilderment and despair.

Enter the Arkansas National Guard.

Within one hour after the first tornado struck, Gov. Mike Huckabee activated Guardmembers to help restore normalcy. The disaster was the worst the state had seen since 1968 when tornados killed 34 people in Jonesboro.

Nearly 450 citizen-soldiers from Little Rock's 39th Infantry Brigade set up operations in the communities of Watershed, Little Rock, Arkadelphia and Jackson City.

They were joined by 88 troops from that brigade's Headquarters and Headquarters Company, and four medics from the Hazen-based 39th Support Battalion.

To prevent looting and protect property, security patrols in Arkadelphia were boosted by the arrival of 228 soldiers from 1st Battalion, 153rd Infantry.

Troops from the 2-153rd Infantry also drove trucks and a water trailer into Jackson County. Tents and a generator were set up by 74 members of 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery.

Air Guard volunteers from the 188th Fighter Wing in Fort Smith logged more than 4,000 man-hours cleaning up more than 100 city blocks of debris from the Fort Smith and Van Buren areas.

All totaled, Army and Air Guardmembers worked more than 6,000 mandays.

Washington rains bring flood of volunteers

By TSgt. Sue Conard
Washington National Guard

Long before the Pend Oreille River ever spilled forth, leaving many residents homeless, SSgt. Dorothea Hendershott could be found knee-deep in sandbags.

Then the floods came.

With them followed a torrent of Washington Army and Air Guard volunteers, tasked to man six checkpoints across a 105-mile stretch of waterlogged real estate along the river.

"This is my backyard," explained Hendershott, a Pend Oreille County resident and member of the Spokane-based 141st Air Refueling Wing of her efforts.

Working 12-hour shifts, Evergreen State citizen-aimen and soldiers -- responding to a plea from county emergency management and sheriffs department -- supported "Floodgate '97" by keeping anxious residents and looters at bay until officials deemed that the dangerous water levels, the highest since 1974, had subsided.

It wasn't the first time Army Guard 1st Lt. Craig Larson has been called upon to help restore order. He was part of the Guard effort to battle an ice storm that left more than 100,000 Spokane residents without power last year.

"I feel for these people," he said, softly.

Standing a post, as some of the Guard volunteers confessed, could be downright boring. Spc. Mike Patten combatted the dullness by acquainting himself with wildlife. Working a night shift on the Davis Road checkpoint (CP), he and his partner SrA. Katie Lofink took to naming some of the inhabitants. Somewhere near Davis Road a mother duck and her duckling go by Rocette and Rocelle, thanks to Lofink.

Troops at the Outpost CP dubbed two



Photos by TSgt. Sue Conard

abandoned dogs "three" and "four" -- their sequence in rescued dogs. Grateful, perhaps, for the donated biscuits and left-over lunches Guardmembers had fed them, the canine duo stayed at the CP for the remainder of the operation.

The dog world was not alone in its appreciation for the Guard. According to SMSgt. Larry Shoemaker, local residents brought Guard men and women goodies.

"When it was hot they took the troops iced tea; when it was cold, they took them



ON GUARD - Washington Army Guard's 1st Lt. Craig Larson (left) mans a post, while A1C Paul Kinslow (above) talks with a local Pend Oreille County resident.

coffee," he said. "Homeowners have been wonderful."

Pend Oreille resident Wes Olsen said the Guard presence was necessary given the fact the county has only 12 deputies on their payroll.

"There would probably be a lot of mischief going on, otherwise," he said. "The Guard is doing a great job."

After manning the same checkpoint for days, SSgt. Dale Tronsen had made his Sandy Shores post look cozy. Using driftwood to support a tarp that extended from a heavy-duty military truck, Tronsen created shade and shelter from the rain. With chairs lent by area residents, a cot and hand-picked wildflowers arranged neatly under the tarp, he fashioned an enviable ambiance.

To stay warm, CP dwellers made fires from the driftwood. However, wood wasn't the only thing burning. SrA. Clarence Holt also lit citronella candles to keep away "the abundant mosquitoes."

Cooperation between Army and Air Guard volunteers was also in abundance, reported Lt. Col. Nicolyn Thiot, commander of Floodgate '97 operations at Fairchild AFB.

"It's a true purple suit operation," he said. "The interaction between the two services is fantastic."

DRILL Weekend

Alabama Army Guard's SSgt. Howard Hughes (left) and Spc. David Ogden, members of the Sulligent-based 877th Engineer Battalion, use a rock drill to create 20-foot-deep holes into the top of a mountain. The holes were used by demolition experts tasked with blasting the mountain for rock. The rock is then crushed for use on surface roads and parking lots.



Photo by Sgt. John R. Wood



PEOPLE

• Cooking at Disney • Bosnia Perspective

SFC Ronald Copley stirs things up for a Florida battalion and visitors to Disney's Epcot Center

Working at Walts'

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Most of us know a little bit about Morocco thanks to Humphrey Bogart and Ingrid Bergman and the 1943 movie classic *Casablanca*. A veteran noncommissioned officer in the Florida Army Guard knows a great deal about that north African nation's culture because he cooks there every day -- sort of.

SFC Ronald Copley is a master chef who has spent the past 14 years preparing culinary masterpieces from lamb, chicken and veal at the Restaurant Marrakesh in the Moroccan village that is part of the Epcot Center's international community at Disney World.

He also is the mess sergeant at the 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry, based in Orlando.

And his family tree, that Copley claims can be traced back to the Mayflower, is crowded

with generations of military people who have served their country in war and peace. One branch belongs to a great-grandfather, James Reger, who was a sergeant major in the German army during World War I.

All of those factors gained Copley, 42, a few minutes of fame recently when 500 people from across the country gathered for the National Guard Bureau's Annual Family Support Workshop.

Copley commanded the color guard that posted the state and national flags during the morning's opening ceremonies before going to work. That evening, he hosted Lt. Gen. Edward Baca, Chief of the National Guard Bureau, wife Rita Baca and Dorothy Ogilvy-Lee, the Family Program's national director, at the Moroccan restaurant.

His performance drew an enthusiastic two thumbs up.

"Look at the professional



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

skills he brings to the National Guard," marveled Baca. "He is typical of so many of our Guardmembers. We are more than a professional military organization. We are a military organization of professionals."

Copley was back on the job early the next morning preparing decorative and delicious dishes for a Disney commercial that was being filmed to promote Epcot's food festival.

It was no big deal. He handled

SERVING SUCCESS - SFC Ronald Copley (left) cooks for the Florida Army Guard and Walt Disney.

it all as easily as most people mow their lawn. But what else would you expect from a man who has seen such notables as First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton, singer Billy Joel and actor Robert De Niro being served authentic tagine dishes prepared by himself and his staff?

As the "sous chef," the second chef, for the restaurant that can seat 260 patrons and that he helped open in August 1984, Copley supervises 21 other chefs, including 16 Moroccans.

"This is not your average restaurant in Morocco," assured Abdou Essaydi, assistant manager. "This would be an upscale restaurant in a palace setting."

You also could call Copley an upscale NCO. Some reasons:

He joined the Florida Army Guard in 1977, he explained, after being drafted in 1974 and then told he was not needed because the Vietnam War was winding down.

Although he supervises 23 cooks in his battalion's consolidated mess and although his crew has won a coveted Connelly Award for the best Army Guard

mess in Florida, Copley considers himself an infantryman first. The former defensive tackle stays proficient in the basic infantry weapons -- from the M-16 rifle to the light antitank rocket -- even though a knee injury knocked him out of football during his freshman season at the University of Florida.

His deployment credits include a three-month tour for Hurricane Andrew that devastated southern Florida in August 1992, two riots and a truckers' strike.

Military blood flows through the family. The headcount includes: his father, Donald Gene, a World War II medic; two uncles who survived when their Navy ships were sunk at Pearl Harbor and Guadalcanal; older brother, Donald Joe, a Vietnam veteran and Army Guard physician in South Carolina; younger brother David, a cook and mechanic in Copley's outfit; stepson Wade Dupree, an air defense artillery corporal in the Florida Guard; two cousins in the West Virginia Army Guard; and an uncle, Clarence Ellison, a retired Air Force one-star.

For the time being, however, this committed soldier and chef is content to prepare food for his battalion, and Disney-goers pining for Moroccan cuisine.

34-year-old Maine Army Guard private returns to uniform, serves in Bosnia

A second CHANCE

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Matthew Bixby had recently gotten married, and he needed money to go to college. He wanted to study nursing. The National Guard, with its prospects of financial aid from the Montgomery GI Bill, sounded like a pretty good deal. So he enlisted for six years last August.

Sound familiar? Here's the twist.

Matthew Bixby is a private in the Maine Army Guard at the not-so-tender age of 34. It is his second time in uniform. Joining the 133rd Engineer Battalion has quite unexpectedly landed the man from the Maine coastal community of Belfast in northern Bosnia.

Bixby belongs to a platoon of 39 combat engineers out of Skowhegan, Maine, who are building a lot of new guard towers and new stairs for older towers. They're



Pvt. Matthew Bixby

also running electrical wire and installing plumbing and building a lot of other things from the ground up. "Vertical construction" is the Maine unit's broad-based mission.

"Force protection stuff keeps us pretty busy," said Bixby about the Joint Guard peacekeeping mission that the Maine people began in March when they moved into a base camp called Bedrock. As in the Flintstones. The motor pool is called Pebbles.

It is the Army's only vertical construction platoon in the American sector, and the Maine Guard engineers have found plenty to do in eight or nine different base camps scattered around Tuzla, said operations Sgt. Beth Mazzaro.

Ethnic tensions between the Bosnia Serbs, Croats and Muslims still run high during the peacekeeping mission's second year, said Mazzaro. She told of other American soldiers being mistakenly hit by rocks near Brcko (pronounced Birch-Ko), a hot spot on the northern border near Croatia.

"I always thought I'd wind up back in the Army. I just didn't know if they'd take me," explained Bixby. "Then,

within a few months of being back in, boom, I was deployed."

He is seeing a different side of the Army the second time around. He was 18 when he first enlisted in 1981. He spent nearly a year in Germany with an artillery outfit after basic training at Fort Sill, Okla. The hitch lasted less than 13 months.

"I was extremely immature and I got out," he explained.

He has done a lot of growing up since. "I kicked around and let the world knock some sense into me," said Bixby about working for a year on a ranch near Santa Fe, N.M., and about becoming an electrician. That trade, he indicated, helped pave his way into the Guard.

Bixby said he is amazed at the commitment the U.S. has made toward keeping the peace in the Balkans.

"Everywhere that I've been over here, there is either a convoy or a base," he noted. "We're occupying their country. You can't get around us."

He also believes the common people want peace.

"The country is beginning to grow. There's a lot of construction. The Bosnians I have talked to aren't that interested in fighting," he said. "We're giving them a opportunity for a better life."

"What they decide to do with it is up to them."

Making the most of a second chance is something Bixby knows all about.



South Carolina maintainers are keeping the peace from a factory in Croatia

Duties as ASSIGNED

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Additional duties as assigned. Everyone in uniform has rolled their eyes upon hearing that expression at least once during their career. It's the military's way around the notion of not volunteering for anything. It means do what you're told, even if it's not part of your job. It means suck it up.

It has become the unofficial slogan for 25 Army National Guard maintenance soldiers from South Carolina while they are pulling Operation Joint Guard peacekeeping duty at a factory in Croatia where Russian army tanks were built and repaired not so long ago.

The 742nd Maintenance Company's mechanics, welders and jacks-of-all-trade from Columbia, S.C., have been tasked to do some unusual things. They have repaired or rebuilt everything the Army has rolled and floated their way -- including aluminum bridge boats -- since last April at the factory town named Slavonski Brod just across the historic Sava River from battle-battered Bosnia.

"So far we haven't had anybody crack up or go crazy, and I don't think we will," said 1st Lt. Herman Crosson, the "Slav-Brod" maintenance detachment's commander. "The men really trust their senior leaders."

There has, however, been a lot more to the job than repairing military vehicles at the 76-year-old Duro Dakovic factory where some 3,000 Croatian workers still



Photos by MSgt. Bob Haskell

UNDER THE HOOD - PFC Corey Bookman (above) makes a repair to a Humvee engine. Members of South Carolina's 742nd Maintenance Company (top photo) had something to smile about during a rare break in Slavonski Brod.



BUSY HANDS - SFC Brian Evangelista (above) had a lot-full of work awaiting him.

build bridges and boilers and refurbish railroad cars. Most of the Russian tanks left behind are rusting relics of the Cold War, said American service people.

The detachment's laundry list of projects has included:

- Repairing four fire trucks during the week that eight men spent at the Eagle Base in Tuzla, a 2 1/2-hour drive to the south.

- Hauling tanks out of the Russian part of the American sector in northern Bosnia to ensure the country's ethnic factions would abide by the 18-month-old Dayton Peace Accord.

- And welding cracks and breaks on aluminum twin-engine boats and sections for the floating bridge on which the U.S. Implementation Force first crossed the Sava into Bosnia early into the peacekeeping operation.

By late June, the mechanics had completed 175 job orders in a little more than two months, reported SFC Joe Thomasson, the top enlisted man. The five-man welding team had handled another 50 jobs,

added SFC Brian Evangelista.

"The boats were a surprise. We didn't know we were going to be working on boats before we came over here," said Evangelista of the equipment now dry-docked in a large parking lot within a half-mile of the river. "But we scrounged around for the technical manuals we needed, and we've been able to do the job."

The detachment is part of the 189-member company from South Carolina that is included in the approximately 1,000 Guardmembers from 34 units that have been part of the third peacekeeping rotation.

The company, commanded by Capt. Michael Hildreth, is on its first overseas deployment. They are based at the Intermediate Staging Base in Taszar, Hungary, four hours to the north along a narrow road that twists through expansive farm lands and over a couple of mountain ranges.

The Palmetto State's citizen-soldiers replaced an active Army battalion of more than 400 soldiers when they arrived in late January.

"When they pulled out, we spread out," Hildreth said.

Spreading out included sending the 25 men to Slavonski Brod in April to join U.S. Task Force Pershing of 450 active and reserve component troops commanded by Oregon Army Guard Col. Dennis Merrill. He is assisted by 50 other members of that state's 82nd Rear Tactical Operations Center.

"This force is doing a superb job of

melding together," said Merrill, a 25-year Guard veteran. "There is a lot of pride and ownership in being part of this mission."

The task force includes an element of the Army's 10th Mountain Division who are in Slavonski Brod to secure a bridge that has been repaired and reopened for military traffic across the Sava. That bridge is a vital link for hauling supplies and troops between Hungary and Bosnia.

The Croats destroyed the southern end of the bridge to keep the Serbs from attacking their country while the fighting was going on. Hungarian engineers repaired the span that was reopened last September. American troops have been guarding it since then. A company from the Virginia Army Guard's 116th Infantry out of Leesburg, Va., is expected to take over that mission this fall.

Meanwhile, the maintenance people from South Carolina are constantly reminded that their very presence is helping preserve a tenuous peace that soldiers and civilians agree could quickly dissolve should the peacekeeping force pull out next summer as planned.

"I don't hate anyone. I live with a Muslim. She is my good friend," said a young Croatian woman. "But I believe there would be fighting again if the Americans leave."



All soldiers carry weapons everywhere and wear "battle-rattle" -- flak vests and Kevlar helmets -- when they leave their compound. They travel in force-protection convoys of at least two vehicles. Land mines remain a constant concern.

"There is a lot of pride and ownership in being part of this mission"

Col. Dennis Merrill

Morale, however, remains reasonably high for the 742nd's maintenance crew because they know they have been hand-picked for the Slav Brod duty. They also expect to return to their homes and families in mid-August.

It's a crew of varied backgrounds.

Sgt. Donnie Evans is a part-time crew chief for a stock car team that enters seven NASCAR sportsman division races most seasons. This season will be considerably shorter, Evans related, because his brother James is also on the team, and has been serving with the 742nd in Taszar.

SSgt. John Dunaway is a master welder with 27 years experience who is right at home with the wire-fed Mig welders used to repair the aluminum boats.

"It's not exactly state-of-the-art, but it's the most effective way of welding aluminum available over here," he said.

Other members of the unit, such as PFC William Beck, 22, are still learning how to maintain military vehicles. This is Beck's second year in the Guard and the idea of pulling duty in Croatia was kind of scary, acknowledged the part-time landscaper and technical college student.

"The people are pretty friendly," said Spc. Donny Crain, 24, as he hosed the mud off a heavy truck. "Especially the younger ones, in their 30s. They come around, trying to learn some English and trying to teach us some Croatian. The older people keep their distance."

"It's not as bad as I thought it would be," observed PFC Corey Bookman. "I was expecting a few shots to be fired. It's been pretty quiet, and I'm not disappointed about that."

The duty has not been especially hazardous because all U.S. troops are reminded to stay on their toes. But incidents do occur, such as when U.S. soldiers forcibly confiscated a pistol from a Serb policeman at an illegal checkpoint in nearby Brcko in late June.

Such incidents remind the Army Guardmembers and other peacekeepers that getting shot at and having to return fire are additional duties they would just as soon avoid.

INSIDE JOINT GUARD

The Guard-run Taszar Life Support Area is a vacation spot for troops coming, going

Gateway to BOSNIA

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Burger King is there. So is Taco Bell and other fast-food eateries. There's a sewing shop and an exchange crammed with enough merchandise for Christmas in July. There's a small chapel with drums and a piano, a movie theater, and an exercise room that would impress the patrons of any Gold's Gym. And ice cream. Lots of ice cream.

It's a half-mile of asphalt road nicknamed "Main Street USA." But Mickey Mouse and Snow White do not walk this road. Corporals and colonels do.

So do Department of Defense civilians and Red Cross workers.

It is situated on a former MiG fighter base outside Taszar, Hungary. For all of the U.S. military members and civilians pulling Operation Joint Guard duties, it is the gateway into and out of Bosnia and Croatia -- generically called "the box."

Welcome to the Taszar Life Support Area (LSA), a 300-acre section of the Intermediate Staging Base, where people are reunited with their equipment from home before proceeding "down range" to earn their stripes as peacekeepers.

It also is where they unwind for a few days before they go home again. It is an oasis for folks who have earned some time away from the confined and remote camps where they spend most of their tours.

The Army National Guard is in charge.

Symbols of active Army commands, including the 1st Armored and 1st Infantry divisions, may decorate the gateway's arch, but the Guard has run the show since last February.

"This is a small town," said Maj. Michael Wilds, the Life Support Area's governor since last February and until next October. "We do everything we can to take care of the people who are going to and coming out of the box."

That's right, he's the governor. Wilds, ordinarily a physical education teacher at a vocational-technical school, is one of 49 members of the Pennsylvania Army Guard's 213th Area Support Group from Allentown who are operating the LSA.

There is also a mayor -- SGM Austin Masters -- for the town of tents that operates around the clock to give active duty and reserve component troops, who are part of the largest peacetime military initiative in Europe since the 1948-49 Berlin Airlift, a sense of community.

Want your clothes washed? How about a midnight snack? Need some spiritual counseling? It's all there for as many as 3,100 people who can pass through at one

time and for up to another 1,600 members of the permanent staff.

This year's permanent party includes many other Army Guardmembers -- more than 100 from South Carolina's 742nd Maintenance Company, and 10 of the 22 firefighters from Michigan's 1439th Engineer Detachment, who are on call in Hungary.

The 1439th has dedicated this deployment to the late Richard Lapan, a veteran of Vietnam, Panama and the Persian Gulf. Lapan died in April 1993, explained 1st Sgt. Paul Smith.

The Texas Army Guard's 111th Area Support Group from Austin is scheduled to take charge in October.

They can expect to be busy.

By late June, according to Wilds, 47,164 peacekeeping soldiers had been processed in Taszar since last August. Twice that number, he estimated, had gone through the area since the operation began in December 1995.

The Brown and Root Services Corporation, the service contractor from Houston, Texas, has served 1.3 million meals and hauled in 5 million gallons of water and 2 million gallons of fuel during the first 17 months of the entire Hungarian operation.

The Taszar operation's concept of deploying and redeploying troops through the same area is new, said Wilds, a maintenance officer with nearly 20 years Guard and active Army experience.

"You don't need two facilities a hundred miles apart," he observed.

There's another new twist. Decompressing is one of the major concerns. It takes four days to prepare most soldiers to go on to the box. It takes seven to get them

ready to go home when their tour is through. Part of that process includes giving the soldiers a little time to unwind and a little counseling about what they should, and should not, expect when they're reunited with their families and friends.

"We show the soldiers a film. We tell them to go slowly for the first day or so when they go home because, like it or not, people change," said Army Reserve Chaplain (Capt.) B. David Hodge, a Methodist minister from Knoxville, Tenn. "They're going to find, in many cases,

that their spouses and their children have learned to get along without them.

"We don't want divorces. We don't want battered spouses. We don't want children wondering what is going on," he added. "I'm glad the Army is being sensitive to the soldiers' needs. The difference now from the way troops were sent home after Desert Storm is like day and night."

Overall, the military town in Taszar looks almost as good to Stabilization Force soldiers after a few months down range as Dodge City once looked to cattle drovers.

"It has a great gym -- one of the best anywhere," said Army PFC Allen Ogden, from the 141st Infantry's fire support team, while on leave after three months at Camp Dobol in Bosnia. "It's kind of nice to come here and relax and sleep in if you want to."

"The chow is great. They have all of the services here," noted Texas Army Guard Sgt. José Escobar who was headed home after seven months as a target acquisition radar operator at McGovern Base near Brcko.

"This place," he added, "is like a vacation spot."



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

THE GATEWAY - Maj. Michael Wilds (above, left) and SGM Austin Masters see that soldiers unwind.

INFANTRY TRAILBLAZERS

Robert Smolar knows about the racial tensions between the Croats and Serbians

Peacekeeper with a PAST

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Robert Smolar encountered the ethnic tensions between the Croats and the Serbs when he played ice hockey as a youngster growing up in his Chicago neighborhood.

"I would team up with a couple of the Croats," the 35-year-old Virginia Army National Guard infantryman explained in late July at Fort Benning, Ga. "Some Serbian kids were on the other team. Even in hockey, we squared off then."

Come October, SSgt. Robert Smolar will be part of the NATO force in Bosnia that has kept the uneasy peace between those unfriendly factions for nearly two years.

He is a squad leader in Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry. Guarding the rebuilt bridge across the Sava River — it links northern Bosnia with Croatia — will be that company of citizen-soldiers' mission this winter.

In one way, the accomplished civil engineer for the U.S. State Department will be going home again.

Smolar's great-grandparents moved to America from Slovakia, north of Bosnia, around the turn of the century, he explained. His great-grandfather grew up in the capital city of Bratislava. His great-grandmother came from the northern Tatra Mountains. Members of his extended family and a few friends still live there.

"Preventing outright aggression against a defenseless people" is the satisfaction that the intense but soft-spoken Smolar will get from serving in Bosnia.

He has certainly benefited from the American dream that his great-grandparents embraced about a century ago.

Smolar graduated from the Virginia Military Institute in 1984. Ironically, famed Confederate general Thomas "Stonewall" Jackson taught there before the Civil War. The 116th Infantry

to which Smolar belongs is called the "Stonewall Brigade" because of its famous stand in July 1861 during the First Battle of Bull Run.

Smolar has worked for the State Department's Office of Foreign Buildings for four years, planning facilities for U.S. embassies around the world.

He has also worked for the Army Corps of Engineers. He designed the obstacle course at Fort Myer, Va., beside Arlington Cemetery, Smolar explained. He got to try out that course first-hand during the fall of 1990 when he attended the Military District of Washington's air assault course.

"I wished I had made it a little easier," Smolar said smiling.

Despite his VMI background, he has remained an enlisted Guardsman to stay close to the troops, he explained.

He has also learned much about the ethnic history of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the conflict that has divided that country. Now he is in the unique position of sharing that substantial knowledge with



Photo courtesy Robert Smolar

BOSNIA BOUND - Virginia Army Guard's SSgt. Robert Smolar (above), a member of Co. C., 3-116th Infantry, is scheduled to serve in Bosnia this fall, can trace his roots to the former Yugoslavia.

the citizen-soldiers from Virginia who will take their turn helping to keep the peace.

Not since Vietnam has an Guard infantry unit been alerted for overseas duty

Marching into HISTORY

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

In another time, Sgt. Richard Fischer would have been called a "damned Yankee." He'd have been about as welcome in a Virginia military outfit as someone with advanced leprosy.

But Fischer, who hails from Pennsylvania, was not about to let a little thing like geography and the possibility of regional bias stand in the way of his next military adventure.

That's why the 34-year-old man from Willow Grove, Pa., has made himself right at home in the Army National Guard infantry company from Leesburg, Va., that expects to report for a winter of Joint Guard peacekeeping duty on the Sava River in Bosnia by late October.

Fact is, within two weeks of joining the company on July 11, the new chief of the communications section had practically adopted the 153 others in the outfit that has become the first reserve component infantry unit alerted for overseas duty since an Indiana Ranger company was called up for Vietnam in 1968.

"Everybody has a sense of calling. Not everybody has the chance to go with an infantry unit," said Fischer at Fort Benning, Ga.

He has brought a bit of Yankee blue to Charlie Company of the 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry that is part of Virginia's storied 29th "Blue and Gray" Infantry Division who led the D-Day assault on Normandy.

"This unit is tight. There's a lot of people here who want to do something, and they're getting the opportunity to do it," said Fischer who is as much a salesman as he is a citizen-soldier. He intends to become a National Guard recruiter after he returns next year. He hopes to someday earn a master's degree and teach history.

Meanwhile, the solidly-built sergeant was busy at venerable Benning, the Army's Home of the Infantry, becoming one of the



"hooah" boys with billiard-ball haircuts from Virginia.

He was hardly alone. Many other men, including four artillerymen from Missouri, brought their skills to the company that spent two weeks of annual training at Fort A.P. Hill in Virginia and at Benning preparing for the mission.

"Only about 70 of these people are Charlie pure," said 1st Sgt. Bennie Dancy, a Special Forces infantryman seasoned in Vietnam.

They are scheduled for up to 51 days of additional training and bonding at Fort Polk, La. The predeployment training begins in early September, a pivotal time for the peacekeeping mission in Bosnia. NATO has started cracking down on indicted war criminals and President Clinton has indicated Americans may stay beyond next summer.

It was hard, however, to imagine what lay ahead as the men commanded by Capt. Michael Peterson, a Virginia probation and parole officer, drew winter boots, Gortex parkas and long underwear at an oven of a supply depot on baking Fort Benning.

Sweat streamed down their faces as they crammed their new cold-weather gear into duffel bags that will be shipped with them to Eastern Europe where the winter can be much harsher than it is in Virginia.



Photos by MSgt. Bob Haskell

Lighter side of Infantry

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Two Dannys made their presence known during the last half of July.

Hurricane Danny trashed parts of Alabama, and more than 275 Guard folks from that state were called out to help.

The other Danny, 1st Lt. Dan Allen, the 1st Platoon leader in Charlie Company, 3rd Battalion, 116th Infantry, provided leadership and comic relief for the Virginia Army Guard.

He and 153 other troops with the Leesburg-based unit recently trained at Fort A.P. Hill, Va., and Fort Benning, Ga., preparing for their nine month deployment to Bosnia in support of Joint Guard.

At 30, Allen is an 11-year Guard veteran who possesses a biting, but unoffensive, wit.

He also has a knack for finding the lighter side to the serious business of soldiering.

Taking a page from David Letterman, here are Allen's "Top 10 reasons: You know you're undergoing high profile infantry training."

10. Some of the road signs were missing, and all the lieutenants got lost.

9. You threw a hand grenade and you weren't sitting at a computer.

8. To conserve ammo, MREs were used against the enemy.

7. There were three colonels for every private.

6. You wondered why, if the new gas masks were so great, you couldn't use them for pillows like you had the old ones.

5. The new M16-A2 rifles looked like they were made by Mattel.

4. Mosquitoes were commonly mistaken for the state bird.

3. You're PT Card looked like the Dead Sea Scrolls.

2. You spotted so many ground hogs that you expected six years of winter.

1. Your gear was inventoried so many times, your duffel bag developed stretch marks.



ON THE MOVE - Members of Virginia's Co. C, 3-116th Infantry (top photo) march at Fort Benning, Ga. 1st Lt. Dan Allen (above, see story) had a bag full of geer and witty observations.

Virginia infantry company. That unit was headed for Taszar, Hungary.

The predeployment training included mine awareness, what to say to the media, and the proper way to search people and vehicles.

"These are the most Guard units we've had on the ground this summer," Depp said. "We're expecting a steady flow of Guard and Reserve people through October."

A surge of 500 Guard soldiers July 20 stretched his unit's 23 people pretty thin, Depp acknowledged.

"But," he added, "we'll manage."

They will be guarding the bridge that links Slavonki Brod in Croatia with northern Bosnia that is still grim with the scars and rubble of 3-1/2 years of conflict. That bridge, open only to military traffic, is still vital for hauling troops and supplies from Hungary into Bosnia.

"We have a high profile job over there," said Fischer, whose section is responsible for working and maintaining the company's two-way radios. "It's a very important area to guard. It has the possibility of being a dangerous mission."

He's faced those dangers before -- during the Persian Gulf War with the active Army's 1st Signal Battalion; when he spent five months at Log Base Echo in Saudi Arabia, near the Iraqi border. He shot information back and forth to other units off communications satellites.

Being willing to go into harm's way is one thing. Having to go is something else.

"We stayed right there," said Fischer. "Thank God on that."

After a year as a Stinger missile team chief with a Pennsylvania Army Guard air defense artillery battalion, Fischer decided to leave his 3-year-old daughter and 11-year-old stepdaughter at home with his wife Beth and put his 12 years of active duty commo experience on the line again.

"Sure, there's a sense of excite-

ment," he acknowledged. "Sometimes it's a little scary. The people who say they're not scared are only fooling themselves."

"This is a chance to use my commo skills to a much greater degree than they were being used elsewhere," he added. "This will be my last hurrah before I get into recruiting."

The Virginia infantrymen may have captured the lion's share of attention, but they were not the only National Guardmembers being processed through Fort Benning's mobilization station for Joint Guard duty in Europe.

You could have called it National Guard season in Georgia as citizen-soldiers got set to assume a more significant share of the peace-keeping chores.

In all, 539 people from 11 different units -- including 245 from three Texas outfits -- were getting ready to deploy. The total headcount, including Army Reservists, was 613, said Maj. Dennis Depp, personnel officer for a Reserve garrison support unit from Tennessee.

The 130 members of the 111th Area Support Group from Austin, Texas, was the largest Guard unit besides the



SPORTS

• Indiana cyclist • All-Guard Marksmen

SPORTS SHORTS



Photo by Capt. Jenny Lynn Gruehr
MOVIN' OUT - Hoosier troops bike the Little 500.

Hoosiers bikers pedal for dollars

By Capt. Jenny Lynn Gruehr
Indiana National Guard

For 47 years, Indiana University's Little 500 Bike Race has been more than peddling around a 200-lap, quarter-mile cinder track, it has been a way to raise money for scholarships.

Last year, the Indiana University Student Foundation awarded \$33,000 in scholarships from the race.

This year Indiana Guard-member and former IU ROTC cadet, 2nd Lt. Mervin Brott, decided to put his legs to the test. Brott, recently commissioned an aviation officer, will go to Fort Rucker, Ala., this fall for pilot training.

Brott organized a four-man bike team. One of those riders was fellow Hoosier citizen-soldier, SFC Kenneth J. Johnson, a member of Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 150th Field Artillery.

The Little 500, considered the premier intramural collegiate cycling event in the nation, was founded by Howard S. Wilcox, then executive director of the Indiana University Foundation, in 1950. Wilcox patterned the bicycle race after the Indianapolis 500, a race his father won in 1919.

Brott's team placed 26th out of 33.

Guard pistol team on target for Australia meet

Taking aim down under

By Sgt. David Smith
Arkansas National Guard

The All-Guard international combat team took first place at the International Service Pistol Teams Championship during the Australian Army Skill-at-Arms Meeting recently.

The team was awarded the 'DEFECREDIT' Trophy by the Australian Army Pistol Association. The pistol squad included Arizona's Sgt. Derrick Martin, Vermont's Sgt. Ralph Young, Michigan's MSgt. Glenn Bowles, Oklahoma's Capt. Shannon Jordan, Pennsylvania's SFC Gregory Neiderhiser, Arkansas' 2nd Lt. Victor Marcelle, Pennsylvania's Spc. Scott Manhart and Nebraska's 1st Lt. Todd Wolford. All are members of the Army Guard.

This year's competition saw a record number of attendees with over 650 competitors and 150 support staff. Among those were 12 international teams representing 10 countries. International teams included U.S. Army, Army Reserve and National Guard, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Indonesia, and a first time visit from South Africa.

The Aussie meet has been growing for 14 years since its move to the Belmont



Photos by Sgt. David A. Smith

AIMING FOR GOLD - Vermont's Sgt. Ralph Young (above and left) was a member of the winning pistol team.

dallion during the target pistol service championship.

The Guard biathlon team placed second with a time of 72:02. Team members were Wolford, who placed second overall, and Wisconsin's Capt. J.R. Treharne, who received a medallion for his fourth place finish.

Other notable finishes included Young's second place finish in the 300-meter service rifle. Martin placed second in the 200-meter service rifle competition and third in two other rifle categories.

In close-quarters-battle, the All-Guard team settled for third place. That team included Young, Martin, Jordan and Neiderhiser. Neiderhiser also placed third in the aggregate of the service rifle championship.

According to Australia's Maj. Wally Jensen, the goal of the meet is to promote interest in small arms shooting and raise military marksmanship standards.

"By providing rigorous competition at the individual, unit, service and international level, we're emphasizing the marksmanship skills required on the battlefield," he said.

Shooters, like Indiana's SSgt. Mark Richard, said the marksmanship program benefits all soldiers.

"It's always different," he said. "Being able to talk to (international) teams, watch their shooting styles ... I always come away having learned something."

Range Complex in 1989.

"It is one of the best military shooting competitions being conducted in the world at present," said Australia's Lt. Col. Rex Wigney, competition director. The Belmont complex will be the site of the Olympics in the year 2000.

In addition to the pistol win, Guard shooters won or placed in several other categories.

Martin won gold in the service pistol rapid realignment competition, recording an unprecedented score of 167.

Bowles earned a first place finish in the night pistol championship, while Young took home the Association's Silver Me-

The Right

New Mexico's 150th Fighter Wing has the LANTIRN and more STUFF

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Blame it on Tom Wolfe. The author of *The Right Stuff* has landed every jet fighter pilot in the limelight of curiosity.

People who do not know an F-16 airplane from an M-16 rifle want to know. Do they have what it takes? The right stuff. It has been a recurring question because of Wolfe's 1979 best-selling novel, and the movie that followed, about Chuck Yeager -- the man who first broke the sound barrier in 1947 -- and the first seven Mercury astronauts.

The New Mexico Air National Guard's F-16 jet fighter wing, nicknamed the "Tacos," has the right stuff -- all of it. The 150th Fighter Wing has 41 pilots who, typically, believe they are the best and most deadly people who fly. It also has LANTIRN.

The Tacos, commanded by Col. William "Knuckles" White, are the only one of the Air Guard's 30 F-16 wings with the same sophisticated weapons system owned and operated by similar units in the Air Force.

They also have at least one pilot, Capt. Allan Gabel, who knows that this stuff really, really works. He used it over Bosnia in 1995, while the shooting was still going on.

So what's the big deal? LANTIRN lights up the night -- just like it sounds. It gives the jets, originally designed to be day fighters, the ability to fly at any altitude and bomb small, distant targets with uncanny accuracy long after the sun has set.

It significantly decreases the possibility that the bombs will hit where they shouldn't and kill innocent civilians.

It also means that the people who fly the fighters, and who keep them flying, in and out of Albuquerque, can take on an active unit's missions right now.

"We can go into a theater on any given day and be flying that

night in the same planes the Air Force uses," said Capt. Tom Wheeler, chief of weapons and tactics for the Guard wing based at Kirtland AFB.

The 1,154-member wing's 34 Fighting Falcons include 19 models built in the late 1980s that feature the LANTIRN technology.

LANTIRN is the Low Altitude Night Targeting Infra Red Navigational system. It consists of two pods that, from a distance, look like World War II torpedoes. They are attached to the bottom of the fighter. The added 1,000 pounds does reduce a fighter's range, but the pods do not take the place of bombs or missiles the fighters are intended to carry, Wheeler said.

The navigation pod is the pilot's eyes at night. The images of what lie ahead are collected through a small amber window on the nose of the pod and transferred to a screen in the cockpit.

It's a little more restricted than the way most people see because there is no peripheral vision. But Wheeler said he can see every hill and house in front of him and is perfectly comfortable streaking at 500 or 600 mph a couple of hundred feet over the desert floor while many other people are watching Leno or Letterman.

The targeting pod has an infrared sight on a ball turret that sweeps the countryside for targets and directs laser-guided bombs weighing up to 2,000 pounds.

The technique -- called "pickle and roll" -- involves locking onto the target from three or four miles away; pickling, or releasing, the "smart" bombs; and rolling to the right or left so the laser can direct the bombs to their destination.

The Tacos also fly their F-16s with LANTIRN as killercousins. They can lock on targets and then direct laser guided bombs dropped by other aircraft to those

targets. Wheeler said it makes it possible for other aircraft to bomb targets at night with precision.

Smoke or dust that suddenly obstructs a target can make a bomb "go stupid" and miss, pi-



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

RIGHT STUFF - New Mexico's Capt. Allan Gabel (above) poses with his jet.

lots explained. But if the night and the targets are clear, they added, LANTIRN will put the bombs on the money. Aerial warfare has come a long way from the Norden bombsights and planeloads of iron bombs used to pound Germany and Japan

more than 50 years ago.

How accurate is LANTIRN? "That's classified," shrugged Wheeler, "but 'pinpoint accuracy' will cover it."

The system is said to be so good it can hit the silo beside the barn.

Wheeler is a believer. He flew Air Force F-16s for eight years before joining the Tacos a couple of years ago. He was also among more than 600 members of the 150th who spent two months in Aviano, Italy, flying Deliberate Guard peacekeeping missions over Bosnia.

The Tacos logged 280 sorties without a single abort.

Night flying is nothing new to the Tacos. They used to do it with A-7 Corsairs equipped with the Low Altitude Night Attack system before getting their F-16s with LANTIRN earlier this decade.

Neither is the idea of going in harm's way. Two pilots were killed while flying close air support for ground troops during the Korean War. Two more were credited with shooting down three enemy MiG-15s apiece.

Vietnam? New Mexico Air Guardsmen flew more than 6,000 combat sorties in F-100 Super Sabres.

Bosnia has also opened a few eyes -- especially Capt. Allan "Doc" Gabel's. He holds a doctorate in optical sciences. He hopes to become an astronaut. He has been a New Mexico Guardmember since 1986.

Nine years later, he explained, he found himself flying combat missions against Bosnian Serb military installations.

He flew seven or eight missions during those decisive 10 days in September 1995. He flew into night skies filled with anti-aircraft artillery. Clouds covered the targets most of the time so he could not make his runs. Twice he pickled his bombs. One nailed a bridge that had already been hit. One blew a big hole in a small building in a storage area.

All of the bombs dropped during those raids, he is convinced, helped persuade the warring parties to stop the fighting in early October. Gabel's recollections are as clear as if he had flown those missions last month.

- He paid a lot more attention to what he was doing than he did on most training flights. It was not a time to be complacent.

- He hoped his bombs would hit their targets so innocent people would not be hurt.

- He discovered beyond any shadow of a doubt just how well LANTIRN works for people with the right stuff.

Flying targets

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

On a typical day, the seven fighter pilots who work for Air Guard Lt. Col. William "Robby" Robinson know they may get shot at -- somewhere in the friendly skies over New Mexico.

Combat duty? Not exactly. Hazardous duty? That depends on your definition.

This small unit within the New Mexico Air Guard's 150th Fighter Wing flies F-16s so that research and development people at the Army's White Sands Missile Range can find out how well new air defense weapons work.

"Yes, we are moving targets," acknowledged Robinson of his outfit at AFB called Defense Systems Evaluation. It is one of the few units in the Air Force to be funded by the Army.

Robinson's team is helping the Army improve the Patriot missile that made its name as an Iraqi SCUD hunter during Desert Storm.



Lt. Col. 'Robby' Robinson

Since assuming the job from the Air Force in 1970, the unit's F-100 and A-7 and F-16 aircraft have towed targets, on three or four miles of cable, that have been fired at by missiles like the Stinger and artillery rounds from the ill-fated Sergeant York.

The fighters have been tracked on new radar systems. The pilots have been asked to use tactics employed by enemy aircraft to test equipment they know little or nothing about because it is all classified.

"We do whatever they think they need us to do," said Robinson who has flown Air Force and Air Guard jets since 1972, including F-4 Phantoms in Vietnam. He also has been part of the Defense Systems Evaluation team for 13 years.

It is not a job for rookies. "The Army expects fully qualified fighter pilots," Robinson said.

Once they're selected, they stay around for awhile. The eight pilots have been on the team an average of 8.5 years.

The most important part of the job, he said, is flying at the exact speed and heading and doing just what the people running the tests want done.

"It has to be precise," Robinson said. "You get to where you fly pretty good."

NEWS

MAKERS

Compiled by MSgt. John Malthaner
National Guard Bureau

Lt. Col. Terry L. Scherling has been appointed as the United States Property and Fiscal Officer (USPFO) for the North Dakota National Guard in Bismarck. She is the first woman USPFO in the National Guard.

Scherling, who grew up in Davenport, N.D., will be accountable and responsible for federal funds and property provided to the North Dakota National Guard.

The Indiana Army Guard's 76th Infantry Brigade recently hosted a VIP Day at Camp Atterbury where Hoosier air power and infantry skills were put on display.

Distinguished guests included present and retired military personnel and their spouses, police chiefs, congressmen, town council presidents, firefighters and a judge.

Whisked off to a training site, the group was treated to a 30 minute air show complete with several F-16 jet sorties. The event also featured a live infantry exercise that included troops being flown in by a UH-60 Blackhawk, supported by thick purple smoke and machine-gun fire.

The VIPs also experienced first-hand artillery fire from howitzers, a particular treat for those vets on hands who serve during World War II and Vietnam, and a rappelling demonstration.

Several members of the Minnesota Air Guard's 133rd Security Police Squadron won national-level Air National Guard Security Police Awards. The following were recognized:

- Outstanding SP Officer -- 1st Lt. James Murphy, 130th SP Squadron, W. Vir.
- Outstanding SP Senior NCO -- MSgt. Richard Doblar, 133rd SP Squadron, Minn.
- Outstanding SP Airman (security) -- TSgt. Charles Frederickson, 131st SP Squadron, Mo.
- Outstanding SP Airman (law enforcement) -- SrA. Brian Schofield, 133rd SP Squadron, Minn.
- Outstanding SP Civilian Employee -- Chet Haatvedt, 133rd SP Squadron, Minn.
- Outstanding Reserve Component Combat Arms Training and Maintenance Airman -- TSgt. Troy Karow, 133rd SP Squadron, Minn.

The following have received Air Guard Manpower and Quality Management Awards for professional excellence:

- Manpower and Quality Management Officer -- Maj. Joanna Shumaker, Md.
- Manpower and Quality Management Civilian -- William Brackett, Md.

The Maryland Army Guard recently promoted Edward H. Ballard to the rank of full colonel at a ceremony at the State Area Command Headquarters in Baltimore. Ballard, the commander of the Division Support Command, 29th Infantry Division, is one of a few African-Americans in the state to reach this rank.

Ballard was commissioned through the Maryland Army Guard's Officer Candidate School (Honor Graduate) in May 1976. He and his wife, Sarah, reside in Anne Arundel County with their three children, Tonya, Alexander and Edward II.



The Guard's first woman USPFO, Lt. Col. Terry Scherling.



Indiana Infantrymen put on a show for VIPs.



Maryland's Col. Edward Ballard and family.



Iowa teens learn survival skills from 185th Fighter Wing's SSgt. Al Rowse (above, right).

The Iowa Air Guard's 185th Fighter Wing in Sioux City is continuing its long tradition of involvement with the community through a partnership with Sioux City's East High School.

For the last two years, that partnership has included an overnight visit for about a dozen East High School students to the 185th base for training in survival skills. The 185th, partnered with the school since 1991, has also hosted trips to Offutt AFB, Neb., and helped with the March of Dimes program.

This year 11 East High students, five girls and six boys, took on the survival challenge. The students spent their weekend with the 185th's TSgt. Al Mast, a recruiter who has worked most of his career in life support where he taught survival skills to pilots. He was joined by SSgt. Al Rowse, a 185th security policeman who specializes in combat training.

Activities included map reading and land navigation using a compass, water purification and fire starting techniques.

"We gave them 'camo' face paint," Mast said, "and let them borrow uniforms, sleeping bags, compasses and maps."

Jill Baxter, 17, who also took part in last year's survival outing, enjoyed the training ... sort of.

"It's lot of fun," she insisted, "but there were more bugs this year."

Two units and one individual at Tennessee's McGhee Tyson Air National Guard Base have received national honors.

The 134th Security Police Squadron was selected as the 1996 Outstanding Security Police unit for the Air Mobility Command of the U.S. Air Force. The 134th Security Police Squadron earned the award as a result of its work on numerous missions in the United States and overseas.

The Volunteer State's 119th Air Control Squadron was named to receive the Distinguished Mission Support Plaque for outstanding performance in 1996 from the National Guard Association of the United States. Only six of the more than 250 units eligible for the award are chosen each year. This is the third time the 119th ACS has been selected.

CMSgt. Brank B. Wade, a member of the of the 134th Air Refueling Wing, earned the Chief Master Sergeant Dick Red Award. He was selected from a group of his peers nationwide as having made the most significant contributions to aerospace maintenance.

Twelve members of the Wisconsin Air Guard's 128th Air Refueling Wing continued their push to encourage students to launch careers in the space program by providing valuable support to "Rockets for Schools."

An estimated crowd of 2,500 people attended the two day event that kicked off with a speech and by NASA astronaut Joe Edwards.

The Rockets for Schools program showcased 30 total rockets, including two 70-pound, 11-foot-long Super Loki rockets.

FAMILIES

From Page 1

Baca presented the social worker and matriarch who has led her division into its adolescence with the Army's Meritorious Civil Service Award.

Weaver stressed it is high time the Air Guard became a full partner.

"When you're 40 percent of the combat capability of the total Air Force, you are very much a part of the total force," he observed.

"Our families give us strength. And let us never forget that our business is about sending our young kids, our young boys and girls, off to war," added Weaver whose New York Air Guard 105th Airlift Group was twice mobilized for duty during Desert Storm.

"The least we can do is take care of their families back home," he added.

This past year is an example of how that is becoming almost a full-time job.

South Carolina has sent hundreds of Army and Air Guard troops to 20 different countries and states since June of 1996.

said Maj. Jim Culp, the full-time Family Program coordinator.

The tours have run from nine months in Hungary and Croatia to six weeks in Qatar to two weeks in Costa Rica.

"A two-week rotation is as complicated as a two-month deployment. You have to do the same things," Culp added.

Seven or eight people from two different Air Guard units had to be brought back home from Qatar and Costa Rica last March because of family emergencies, including the deaths of two fathers on the same day, said Natalie Poepping, South Carolina's Air Guard volunteer coordinator.

There is no sign the load will lighten in the immediate future. Army Guard units are still being mobilized for Bosnian peace-keeping duties. Air Guard

people are still patrolling the no-fly zone over northern Iraq.

"At any one time, more Air Guard people are deployed than Army Guard people," said Ogilvy-Lee. "The Army Guard goes for long times. The Air Guard goes frequently."

That frequent disruption to family life makes Family Sup-

port increasingly critical to the Air Guard, pointed out Poepping who has been a volunteer since early 1992.

The blue-suited Air Guard has steadily been making inroads into what was essentially a green-suited Army Guard operation, she observed.

"I see a big difference since

the workshop in Louisville, Ky., in 1994. We are making this organization much more purple," Poepping said.

Endorsements from general officers such as Weaver and Rainville should certainly hasten the process.

"The work you do is vital to the well-being of our Guard men

and women, and also to the readiness of the Guard as a whole," Rainville told the audience.

That was one more reason for Dorothy Ogilvy-Lee to smile in Orlando on July 12.

"I am looking forward," she said, "to the next four years of working with the Air Guard's leadership."

INSIDE FAMILY PROGRAMS

Florida's family program coordinator had to put on a national conference while dealing with her father's death

Empowered to COPE

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

Professionally, Bobbi Hall has been learning about family support for the last half-dozen years. That's how long the Army National Guard warrant officer has been the full-time Family Support coordinator for the Florida National Guard.

Personally, she discovered just how much her state's organization meant to her during a difficult time in June when her own father, Charles Ortagus, faded away from his family and then died at his home in St. Augustine early on the Tuesday morning after Father's Day.

It was a critical time in CWO3 Bobbi Hall's 47 years because, ironically, she was orchestrating the largest national workshop in the National Guard Bureau Family Program's 13-year history.

That the workshop for 500 family supporters came off without a major hitch in the family vacation city of Orlando on July 9-13 says much about the lady's organizational talents and her faith in the 25 people who helped her put it on.

"They took an awful lot of the load off me so I could take care of my family," she remarked July 10 as the visitors from across the country settled into their first full afternoon of seminars just across an eight-lane highway from Universal Studios.

"I had a strong support system," added Hall of the help she received from her husband, Rick, a retired Florida Guard warrant officer, her grown son Rick Jr., and her National Guard and Family Support families during her emotionally trying time.

Sylvia Swindull, her volunteer ad-



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

FAMILY TALK - Florida's CWO3 Bobbi Hall (above, left), chatting with Dorothy Ogilvy-Lee, put on a conference that would make her dad proud.

ministrative assistant, and Judi Suddeth, secretary to the Florida Guard's director of military personnel, assumed a large share of the load, Hall said.

That she still kept her eye on the ball did not surprise Dorothy Ogilvy-Lee, the National Guard Bureau's Family Support Program director.

"She is one of the people you use to define incredible," said Ogilvy-Lee. "She knows how to get things done. When her father passed away in June, she never missed a step in making this happen."

Her father was 89, Hall explained, when he died from an enlarged heart.

"My dad had a living will," Hall explained. "His last coherent words to me were, 'I don't want to go back to the hospital.'"

So Hall, who also lives in St. August-

ine, spent nights caring for her father with her mother, her brother and a cousin during the final week of his life.

Meanwhile, she was still responsible for the Family Support workshop that had been booked into Orlando, a 90-minute drive away, the previous August. And she remained the critical family support contact for members of the Florida Army Guard's 53rd Infantry Brigade during their two weeks of annual training at Camp Blanding.

"Even though they were only 50 miles away, the family support concerns were just the same in case of an emergency as if they had been sent overseas," she explained.

Hall joined the Florida Guard 13 years ago and completed warrant officers candidate school at Fort McCoy, Wis., in 1989. She received her Family Support baptism of fire as the state's new coordinator when 1,600 Florida Guard members were mobilized for Desert Storm.

The idea that she could help families deal with the absence of a breadwinner who had suddenly been sent far from home drew her into the Family Support arena, she explained.

"The people that left generally took care of their families' finances," she explained. "A lot of the spouses who were left behind didn't have a clue. We had to help those people."

But her ties to Florida, and its Guard people, run a lot deeper. Her family came to this country from the Spanish island of Minorca in 1768 and settled in St. Augustine nine years later, early into the American Revolution. That makes her part of one of the oldest families in the oldest permanent city in the United States.

Families, she believes, should be able to take care of themselves.

"I don't think Family Support is here to take care of families," she explained. "We're here to educate and empower families to take care of themselves when the service member is gone."

In June the tables were turned on Bobbi Hall. Although she had not been away, she still needed to spend time at home with her dying father. Her National Guard and Family Support families empowered her to do that.



STATES

• Texas Hero • Virginia Honor • Iowa Painters

TEXAS

Medal of Honor winner Sgt. James M. Logan recently had a National Guard armory -- home to Company D, 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry -- named for him in his hometown of Kilgore.

It was almost 54 years ago when Logan waded ashore in Salerno, Italy. He had advanced about 800 yards inland when a German machine gun behind a rock fence opened fire. Ignoring land mines, Logan raced across an open field, stormed the fence, killed three machine gun crew and then turned the machine gun on the Germans.

Nine months later, Logan received the Distinguished Service Cross, the nation's second highest award for valor. He singlehandedly charged a heavily armed German company of nearly 200 men, killing 25 and capturing 15.

WISCONSIN

The 128th Air Refueling Wing recently opened a one-of-a-kind CFM56-2B engine training facility in Milwaukee.

The facility allows engine shop workers to improve the way they remove and reinstall a KC-135R CFM56 engine. It will also provide them a training tool for bore-scope work, needed to determine when an engine needs replacement. The Air Force donated \$5.9 million of equipment to the facility.

PENNSYLVANIA

RESTORING THUNDER

SSgt. Thomas Herster (right), a member of the Keystone State Air Guard's 271st Combat Communications Squadron, adjust the signal strength on a tropospheric satellite support radio atop the state capitol dome in Harrisburg during Operation Restore Thunder, a mock exercise that tested the unit's ability to restore communications after a disaster.



Photo by SFC Dan Miller

VIRGINIA

A World War I hero received long-overdue recognition at a recent ceremony in Chase City when a highway marker was unveiled to honor Sgt. Earle D. Gregory, one of only two Old Dominion state Medal of Honor recipients.

Gregory, who was raised in Chase City, was eulogized as "a man of courage and integrity" by Maj. Gen. Carroll D. Childers, 29th Infantry Division commander.

On Oct. 18, 1918 -- his first day in combat with the 29th Division -- Gregory, then platoon sergeant of the trench mortar platoon of 116th Infantry Regiment's Headquarters Company, led a small group of soldiers dispatched to quell an attack. Carrying a rifle and mortar bomb, which he used as a grenade, Gregory destroyed a machine-gun position and forced the surrender of its crew. Sending the prisoners to the rear under guard, he continued his attack, singlehandedly capturing a 75-mm. field gun and 22 prisoners.

In addition to his country's highest decoration for valor, he was awarded the French Croix de Guerre and Medaille Militaire, as well as the Italian War Cross. He later attended Virginia Polytechnic Institute. In his honor, the VPI Cadet Corps named their drill platoon the "Gregory Guard."

IOWA

By **MSgt. Terry L. Turner**
Iowa National Guard

One of the U.S. Air Force's Thunderbird red, white and blue jets, used for aerial acrobatic displays around the country, stopped by the 185th Fighter Wing in Sioux City for a new coat of paint at the unit's state-of-the-art paint facility.

The plane was the first non-Air Guard plane to be painted at the facility. A total of 149 F-16s and F-15s from Guard bases across the country have been painted in the booth since it opened in 1994.

According to TSgt. James Dye, NCO-in-charge of the seven-member Thunderbird team that accompanied the F-16D two-seater to Sioux City, the team's crew chiefs had heard about the Guard facility, and made arrangements to use it.

Dick Flannery, paint facility project manager,

said the booth is usually booked solid through the year with Guard aircraft. The 185th made room in their schedule for the Thunderbirds as a way to generate "good PR" in the community, he said.

The Thunderbird team was very impressed. "It's a great facility," said Dye, "and everyone has bent over backward to help us."

"The 185th Quality Services people did the weight and balance check here," he added, "It sure saved us a lot of time."

Every airplane must go through a weight and balance check after being painted according to MSgt Keith Hettwer, a member of the 185th's Quality Services team. "The weight and balance can change after a paint job. We actually weigh it three times to ensure it's accurate."

Those who saw the Thunderbird aircraft when it arrived thought the plane didn't need a paint job.



Photo by MSgt. Don Keeler

PAINT JOB - Iowa Air Guard painters go to work on a Thunderbird F-16D.

"We wipe the planes down several times every day with Windex," explained Dye of one of the extreme measures taken to keep the jet looking new. "We're constantly touching up the paint."



HISTORY

• Celebrating the Air Guard's 50th Anniversary

Mississippi pilot recounts his unit's unaccepting transition to the C-141, and an important lesson learned

Among the CHOSEN

All in favor put up your hand," Lt. Col. Shelley Bailey, our group commander, uttered dispassionately from his podium.

The idea sounded interesting. My hand went up half way and paused timidly. A chorus of boos rang out around me. I looked across the room full of crew dogs, seeing only a couple of other hands up. One 'yea' voter was being flogged about the head and shoulders with flight caps. His arm immediately fell to a defensive position. Another guy dropped his arm. My hand sheepishly transitioned to a head scratching operation.

"All against." A hullabaloo erupted with cries of rejection and hosts of hands waving vigorously.

"All right," Bailey conceded, "I'll pass your feelings along, but no promises, ya'll understand?"

The straw vote was done. Clearly, the Mississippi Air Guard's 183rd Tactical Airlift Squadron wanted to continue its long-running love affair with the C-130 Hercules. And who would blame us?

Only a couple of years before, we had traded in our old "E" models for brand new "H" models. They were faster, longer-ranged and better equipped. We loved our Hercs beyond measure. The C-130 was the "fighter" of the airlift business and we indulged in it to our hearts' content. Between adrenalin-surgeing skirmishes with the aggressors at Red Flag, and relaxing missions servicing embassies in Latin America, we squeezed in weekly airdrop missions across the Mississippi delta regions after work and on weekends. There, motorists on Interstate 20 could clearly view our three-ship formations giving birth to billowing parachutes as our bundles plummeted onto the Bull Run drop zone.

Flying the Herc was sheer joy, and the song of the props mesmerized us and lingered long after the flying was done.

But that was all coming to an end.

Political powers far above our heads were drawing their plans and we knew the "nay" vote was a pipe dream. Sitting there, that UTA weekend in 1985, it was tough for us to see into the future. Our resistance to the coming change would have been even stiffer had we been able to envision the trials, tribulations and sacrifices to come, and especially the war lying five years hence.

None of us even remotely imagined that 1990 would find us with green ID cards, B-4 bags that would not be put away for almost a year, and flying through skyscapes

laced with contrails and missile plumes.

We could see little that was good about the coming transition to the C-141 Starlifter. They were beautiful jets that sported a modern streamlined appearance, but they were as old as some who would fly them. And we suspected we would get the most notorious hangar queens the U.S. Air Force could scrounge up for us. The old jets would also present a supreme challenge for our maintenance troops. But what bothered us aircrews the most was the limitations of our new mission.

We loathed the loss of the wide variety of flying operations the C-130 offered and dreaded the monotony of the 141's long heavy-haul trips to the Defense Department's drab overseas logistical terminals. We also knew that along with that seemingly uninspiring mission would come profound adjustments in our training and flight scheduling requirements. The transition school at Altus AFB, Okla., was six weeks. The strategic



Photo by MSgt. Robert Mason

CREW DOGS - Cockrell (above, 3rd from right) and his fellow Mississippi Air Guard fliers learned a lot about the C-141 mission.

airlift missions that we would fly after training would usually last four, five and six days.

Those with inflexible, hard core 8-to-5 jobs were in for trouble. We knew that many familiar faces would be disappearing from our ranks.

Despite our reluctance to accept the Starlifter, it inevitably arrived, rolling out on the runway spewing a torrent of thunder from its reversed engines. It turned smartly onto our ramp, swung its bullet nose toward us and glided to a nose-bobbing stop. We politely clapped as John Phillip Sousa's *Stars and Stripes Forever* bellowed from loudspeakers. Then, the Military Airlift Commander, descended from the flight deck and ceremoniously presented us the logbook of our first jet.

Preceding him, rumor had reached us that the Air Force didn't think we could hack it. After all, we were the first Air Guard unit to get '141s. A test case; that's what we were.

But the rumor planted some resolve in us. We went to work.



GUARD HISTORY

By Lt. Col. Alan Cockrell
GUEST AUTHOR

Those who left the unit, did so with honor. There was no disgrace in saying: "my family and job must come first." We thanked them for their service and commitment and bade them well. Then we swallowed hard and fell to the task of perpetuating the tradition of excellence that our unit had established a generation ago.

But an odd thing happened along the way.

Although our hearts fluttered a bit when we saw a Herc, we began to cotton-up to the 'Starlizzard.' The missions were indeed rather dull, but the plane had a pleasing personality of its own. Soon we saw that the C-141 was maturing us. We were learning to think faster, plan more thoroughly and handle greater responsibility. The constant flow of problems from the old jets and our new mission generated streams of innovation, creativity and diversification in our mechanics and aircrews. We not only learned the widely acclaimed "Crew Resource Management" principles that were beginning to sweep through military, we put them to good use.

We even discovered flying skills and leadership qualities develop in airmen who were previously considered mediocre performers.

And, more people than ever were depending on us. The grunts and ammunition we delivered in Just Cause, the liberation of Panama, were crucial. The food and medicine we flew into earthquake ravaged Armenia and the hurricane-swept Caribbean regions saved lives. And often, the stars and stripes on our tails were the only banner of the American dream that some of our overseas hosts saw. Suddenly, we were ambassadors.

Make no mistake, we complained, whined and belly-ached at every every opportunity ... it's a genetical disorder common in crew dogs. But, without thinking much about it, we were living up to the challenge of transition and change. We were 'hacking it' beyond anyone's expectations.

Then came Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

With a flourish of President George Bush's pen we found ourselves starting the longest drill weekend in our history. Some even snarled at the C-141s for getting us into that melee. Yet we strapped on our Starlizzards and jetted into the fray.

It was time to pay the price for our careers of discovery and adventure ... and we did.

When the curtain finally fell on the Persian Gulf War, many of us were bone tired and burnt out, but we headed home with a distinguished legacy in tow.

By the time we touched down at our base in Jackson, most of us had come to realize that our yearning for our old C-130 days were out of sync with our duty. We were Guardsmen and women, responsible to American citizens, not to our own passions. And with that revelation came an uncommon sense of purpose ... of belonging. We were indeed among the chosen.

The rewards? For me they were worth it, but that's for each individual to decide. Would we do it again?

I think I hear the song of distant turboprops ...

All in favor, say "I."

Editor's Note: Lt. Col. Alan Cockrell, author of the critically-acclaimed "Tail of the Storm" (published by the University of Alabama Press in 1995) -- a candid, amusing and telling first hand account of his unit's involvement in Operation Desert Storm -- has served more than 23 years in the U.S. Air Force, Guard and Reserve. He has piloted A-7s, C-7s, C-130s and C-141s. When he's not writing, Cockrell flies for United Airlines.



TRAINING

Guard radar operators serving in Bosnia are rewriting military history

By MSgt. Bob Haskell
National Guard Bureau

History abounds with examples of successful military surprises; examples of effective warning are difficult to find.

-- *Encyclopedia Britannica*

Members of an exclusive Army Guard fraternity have been rewriting some military history while watching over Sarajevo and other parts of Bosnia.

They are Firefinder radar operators, field artillerymen without guns, who have established a solid reputation for providing effective warning -- and force protection -- among allied soldiers who are diligently upholding the Dayton Peace Accord that ended the killing in that war-torn land in November 1995.

The basic job involves using early-1970s radar and computer technology to plot the source of enemy ground fire so that friendly artillery could return the fire quickly and with deadly force, hopefully before the enemy rounds land.

"Force protection makes us more proficient and credible as a warfighting force," Maj. Gen. William Nash, former commander of all NATO ground troops in Bosnia, told the artillery publication *FA Journal*.

Meanwhile, hundreds of high-tech citizen-soldiers from such places as Kansas, Minnesota, Indiana, Texas, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania are discovering some things about their target acquisition equipment that could carry over into the next generation of electronic surveillance.

Members of all eight Army Guard target acquisition batteries will be deployed to Bosnia by next June, when the peacekeeping operation is scheduled to end, said Col. John Slonina, the Army National Guard's Chief of Readiness.

They are learning lessons that could expand their horizons of detecting and responding to incoming enemy fire in the same way that the computer Deep Blue has expanded the perceptions of playing chess.

The lessons include:

- The two types of mobile radar units being used to spot incoming enemy mortar and artillery rounds and rockets, and plot where they come from and where they will land, are equally adept at detecting fire from smaller caliber rifles and machine guns. They can also find the people who are pulling the triggers.

- Although designed to operate for brief periods from different locations on a modern battlefield, the units developed by Hughes Aircraft have exceeded their specifications by operating almost continuously in fixed locations, provided maintenance programs are followed religiously.

- If spare parts are immediately available, the radar units can be quickly repaired and brought back on line without having to leave the field.

Furthermore, a more thorough understanding of what those units can do has whetted the operators' appetites for how the next generation of equipment will do it better -- on fields far more perilous than a chess board.

Those points were emphasized by Capt. John Campbell, E Battery commander from the Kansas Army Guard's 161st Field Artillery that deployed to Bosnia for seven months in February 1996. SFC Patrick Cosgrove, the platoon sergeant for the detachment from the Minnesota Army Guard's 151st Field Artillery, that replaced the Kansas unit, had similar views.

Those 30-person cells manned two Q-36 counter-mortar radar units set up in an ancient Turkish fort and at the airport on the outskirts of Sarajevo.

"The ability to help control small arms fire is not what the equipment was designed to do," Campbell said.

"We now think of it as a side benefit," he added. "It allowed us to be proactive against people shooting at airplanes. We could pinpoint the snipers so that other troops could confiscate their weapons."

Stressing maintenance is nothing new in military circles. Campbell and Cosgrove, however, maintained it is especially important for the target acquisition radar units because much more of the sensitive equipment is exposed to the

elements than, say, the computers in an Abrams tank. But if properly maintained, the radar units will run for a long time.

"The equipment was not designed to run 24 hours a day, so you have to develop a maintenance procedure that really pays attention to detail," Campbell related. "And you have to methodically perform the maintenance because if you get behind it will create big problems."

An hour each day for basic maintenance and a half-dozen hours a week for a more thorough examination kept each unit running smoothly most of the time, said Campbell.

So did such tricks as shielding the antenna mechanisms with aluminum covers, removing exhaust filters on

the stationary equipment to improve the flow through air filters and checking voltage and hertz settings on the generators every hour, wrote Kansas Army Guard CWO2 Bruce Bryant in the January-February *FA Journal*.

"I learned the equipment really does work," Cosgrove said, "as long as it is properly maintained."

In seven months of nearly nonstop operations, just one unit was shut down for 48 hours because of the time it took to get a new component from Tuzla.

"We knew what was wrong. We just had to wait for the part," Cosgrove explained.

Learning about the Q-36 and larger Q-37 units' limitations have given operators insight into what the future holds.

"Right now the radar is kind of stupid as to who should get the information," such as an intelligence section or a fire support element, said Cosgrove.

Yes, a single Q-36 unit can track multiple hostile rounds at the same time and store 99 locations in its memory, according to the technical manual. But the human element of processing and then pass-

ing that information along to the proper people creates a bottleneck, experts say.

"The best operators I know can process only 10 acquisitions a minute," said CWO3 David Gilley at Fort Sill.

And, Gilley added, today's radar units can be linked with current tactical data systems so that friendly artillery can be promptly fired at pre-plotted positions, requiring people only to load the guns and pull the lanyards.

"It can be done, but you don't want to do that in an environment like Bosnia," cautioned Gilley, the artillery school's deputy proponent officer. "You want a decision-maker in the middle."

But the times are changing quickly, added Gilley. What's in the works may make today's equipment seem as obsolete as the flash-and-sound detection devices used during World War I.

The next generation of radar systems, Gilley indicated, will be even smarter -- in the way that Deep Blue was programmed to calculate 200 million moves per second before embarrassing world chess champion Garry Kasparov.

"The current systems are still the very best in the world. We're still ahead of everybody else. But we've just about reached the limits of what the hardware can handle," Gilley said.

A new Firefinder II system, scheduled to be developed over the next five years, will feature software that will process between 50 and 200 targets a minute and identify the 30 or so that need to be taken out first, Gilley said.

"That's when the computer will start to think for itself," he added. "You dream it; you can do it."

Employing 1990s technology will increase the larger units' range from 50 kilometers to 150 kilometers so it can search for SCUDs and other long-range rockets and be incorporated into a theater missile defense program that includes Patriot missiles.

New developments will give operators the flexibility of using two computers at once -- one for firefinding operations, perhaps from a remote location, and one for selecting future detection sites.

And the next generation that will be prompted by point-and-click computer technology "will need a whole lot less operator interface for the system to perform its functions," Gilley noted.

With those assets, the warning systems of the future should reduce the risks of military surprises against U.S. and allied troops even more.

REWRITING HISTORY - Radar operators like SFC Stanley Hunt (above, left), SSgt. Antonio Garza, Sgt. Jerry Karn, Sgt. Jose Escobar and Sgt. Marty Geer learned from their peacekeeping duties.

RADAR



Photo by MSgt. Bob Haskell

LESSONS