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GRIZZLY

Official Newsletter of the California National Guard

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Commander's corner

I am the Guard

Major General William H. Wade II

Once again, this Veterans Day finds our country at war, and Americans from all walks of life are answering their nation's call to step forward, bear arms and defend our way of life and all that we hold dear. Like so many times before, that call is being answered by the National Guard – because when you call out the Guard, you call out America.

Citizens in peace and Soldiers in war, the National Guard has answered America's call for 372 years. Predating the first Continental Army, the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Marine Corps - all born in 1775 - the National Guard dates from Dec. 13, 1636, as the first organized militia of our great nation. The Coast Guard followed in 1790, and the Air Force emerged from the Army Air Corps in 1947.

However, the fact remains that America and its military were founded with the National Guard as its defender of freedom and guardian of democracy. Civilian in peace and Soldiers in war, the National Guard has been America's custodian of security and honor – the first and last line of defense for America. As we continue with America's latest challenge – the war against terrorism – we are once again making history with a new generation of veterans. Yet, more than ever, these veterans aren't coming from our small standing military forces. Rather, they are being drawn in ever greater numbers from those Citizen Soldiers – the National Guard; your National Guard.

I am part of that National Guard and have been a member for 38 years – representing all who have gone before me in defense of the American way of life: I am the Guard. At Concord's Bridge I fired the fateful shot heard round, I bled at Bunker Hill, and I was with Washington in the dim forest and cold snow of Valley Forge. As I pulled a muffled oar crossing the Delaware, I watched the dark night bow to morning, dawning a new day of hope for freedom. Later, I stood with Washington on the sun-drenched heights of Yorktown and saw the sword surrendered. A citizen in peace and a Soldier in war – I am the Guard.

I pulled the trigger that loosed the long rifle's havoc at New Orleans in 1815 with 'Ol Stonewall Jackson, and stood on the Mexican border as America's new generation answered the call to "go West, young man." I saw both sides of the War Between the States. San Juan Hill felt the fury of my charge, while the plains and mountains of the Philippines echoed my shout. After driving Poncho Villa from New Mexico, the dark forest of the Argonne blazed with my barrage, while Chateau Thierry crumbled under my cannonade. A citizen in peace and a Soldier in war – I am the Guard.

My hard-won peace was soon shattered when I fought the enemy to a standstill on Corregidor and then seared under the deadly sun of Bataan. From the jungles of Okinawa to the beaches of Normandy, I pushed back the tide of Fascism and once again heard freedom ring. Miss Liberty called on me again to cross the 38th parallel, fly MIG alley, and negotiate the frozen-Chosen to defend freedom. A citizen in peace and a Soldier in war – I am the Guard.

From the jungles of the Iron Triangle to the Tet Offensive, and from My Lai to Agent Orange, Vietnam tested the very core and mettle of my patriotism. I defended the rule of law in Grenada and Panama, weathered the storm in Kuwait, and helped the hungry and oppressed of Somalia and Haiti. And now, in the bright sunlight that shines where once was the cooling shade of the World Trade Centers, I stand ready to defend freedom at America's door, answering Uncle Sam's call to once again be a citizen in peace and a Soldier in war. Before, now, and always – I am the Guard.

To all the veterans: enjoy this special day as tribute to your patriotic service and sacrifice.

Honoring sacrifice through service

Command Sergeant Major William Clark Jr.

As we celebrate Veterans Day we must never forget the sacrifices of our Soldiers and Airmen during this time of war. But we must also remember that we honor their sacrifices best through concrete acts of gratitude and service, rather than mere sentiment.

In particular, we must ensure that our Wounded Warriors' physical and mental care are addressed while on active duty and during their recovery after deployment. A number of programs are already in place to allow us all to participate in our wounded veterans' wellness and recovery.

The California Army National Guard has injured Soldiers recovering at Fort Lewis, Fort Benning, Fort Gordon, Fort Bliss, Fort Hood, Walter Reed and Fort Knox. In addition, the community-based Warrior Transition Unit in Sacramento continues to do a great job of managing our warriors who have injuries that can be addressed through local civilian medical facilities.

It is a testament to the caliber of the men and women in the California National Guard that they continue to volunteer for military service during such volatile times in our country's history. To enlist – or reenlist – with the Cal Guard is to welcome the sacrifice that comes with deployment overseas, as California boasts the nation's most frequently deployed National Guard force.

In light of this fact, we must never forget the sacrifices made by the families of our Soldiers and Airmen as they continue to mobilize in support of the Global War on Terrorism. To honor such heroism, please consider taking the time on Veterans Day to attend civic events throughout your communities, visit our veterans in hospitals and veterans homes and tell them how much you appreciate their sacrifices that helped forge and protect this great nation.

I would personally like to take this opportunity to thank all our Soldiers and Airmen and their families for their continued service to the California National Guard.

Grizzly

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Articles:

- ★ 250 – 300 words for a half-page story, 600 - 800 words for a full-page article.
- ★ Include first and last names, and *verify spelling*
- ★ If there is a Public Affairs officer assigned to your unit ensure he/she reviews it.

Photographs:

- ★ Highest resolution possible, minimum 300 dpi
- ★ Credits (who took photograph)
- ★ Cutline (what action is taking place in the photograph and identify individuals in photograph)

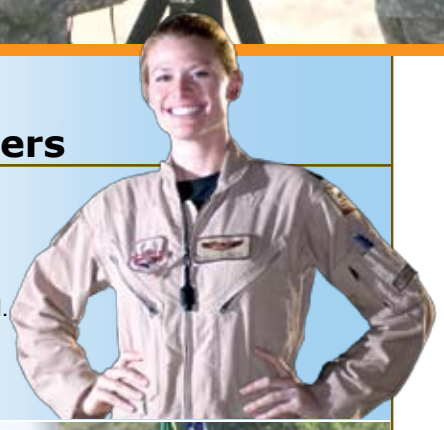
Email story submissions by the 15th of every month to:
william.lee.martin@us.army.mil

Cover Shot

Photo by Val Gempis

Master Sgt. Fred Roberts, front, an instructor assigned to the California Air National Guard's 163d Maintenance Group, and Staff Sgt. Alex Bush, back, inspect an MQ-1 Predator Unmanned Aerial Vehicle at March Air Reserve Base, Oct. 15.

9 Smith Sisters
For 146th Airlift Wing C-130 pilot Capt. Kelley Smith and her two sisters, flying military aircraft is a familial bond.



14 A Civil Affair
Cal Guardsmen pursue their love of military history onto the Civil War battlefield.

A Real Pro 19
Army Guard officer and LPGA pro Lt. Col. Renee MacDonald finds purpose, peace through her passion for golf.

From the editor

There is a maxim among public affairs professionals – if we don't tell our story, someone else will be glad to tell it for us – that rings particularly true for military PAOs. As Guardsmen, it is not enough that we simply train to answer our state's and nation's call to arms, but we must also convey to the public the significance and humanity in what we do.

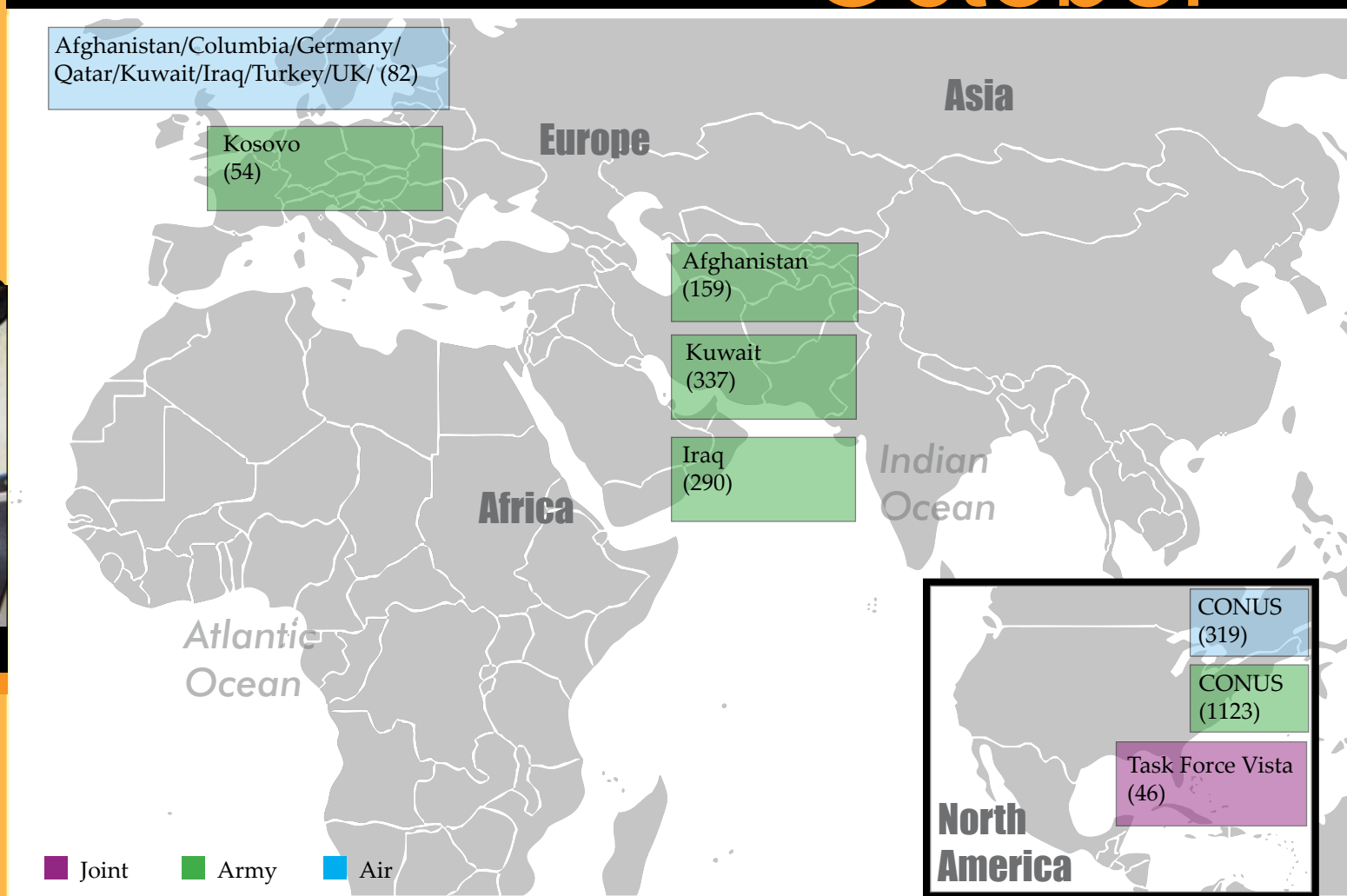
"Public affairs doesn't just happen when a Soldier talks with a reporter," said Maj. Bob Stern, JFHQ public affairs officer. "It is an all-encompassing effort which has its principal goal of ensuring a unit is well-accepted and supported in the community."

On Dec. 6-7, public affairs teams from the JFHQ and the 69th Public Affairs Detachment will be conducting 12 hours of Unit Public Affairs Representative training at the Fairfield Armory. Topics of instruction will include media and community relations, news writing skills, on-camera interview techniques, photography and providing stories for internal publications, such as unit newsletters or the Grizzly.

Each command of company level or higher is invited to send at least one representative - either officer or enlisted - to this weekend of training. Another UPAR course will be scheduled after the first of the year in order to accommodate Soldiers located in Southern California.

Contact Maj. Bob Stern for registration by Nov. 21 at **(510) 648-0221** or **robert.stern@us.army.mil.**

The California National Guard as of October 2008



Medevac unit deploys for Afghanistan

By 2nd Lt. Will Martin

Top Left: Soldiers from the Charlie Company, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, stand in formation during their Oct. 1, 2008, deployment ceremony in Sacramento. The medevac Black Hawk unit mobilized in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and will arrive in Afghanistan later this year.

Top Right: Twenty-month-old Samantha Lovett, left, takes in her surroundings with her mother, Jerica, during Samantha's father Capt. David Lovett's deployment ceremony.

Bottom right: First Lt. Marco Acevedo, Charlie Company Black Hawk pilot, holds his niece Jade Torres after the Oct. 1 ceremony.

Below: Major Daniel Anderson, Charlie Company commander, stands in front of his troops during the ceremony.

Sergeant 1st Class Al Smoot knows something about deployments. After all, his most recent was his fourth.

Smoot, who first mobilized as part of Operation Desert Storm, is strikingly candid about his recent deployment to Afghanistan with the 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion's Charlie Company.

"Honestly, I should have retired," quipped the medevac unit's flight platoon sergeant at their Oct. 1, 2008, deployment ceremony at the Mather Flight Facility in Sacramento. "It's just really hard to leave the kids."

Still, as difficult as Smoot might find his duty, it's one he and the 70 Soldiers with whom he deployed embrace.

"None of us like war or to see the wounded," said Maj. Daniel Anderson, company commander and Black Hawk pilot. "But we all believe in the mission."

A challenging mission

On the same day the Charlie Company Soldiers were exchanging farewells, Gen. David D. McKiernan, top military commander in Afghanistan, was in Washington imploring Pentagon and White House policymakers to shift their focus to Afghanistan.

"We're in a very tough fight," said McKiernan during an Oct. 1 press conference. "The idea that it might get worse before it gets better is certainly a possibility."

Foreign policy analysts generally view Afghanistan as a nation at a crossroads. Freedom of expression and political empowerment – particularly among women – have consistently increased since coalition forces overthrew the Taliban in October 2001, but a spike in violence over the past several months indicates that plenty of work remains.

"Almost surely, we will not find a silver bullet strategy as we did in Iraq," opined a Washington Post columnist recently. "The first goal will be to arrest the deterioration of the situation, and only thereafter to turn the momentum in favor of the Afghan people and government."

Enter Charlie Company. The unit will serve as the "air ambulance" for much of Afghanistan, stationing its Black Hawk helicopters at several sites.

"We'll be at up to nine locations, and we're designed to cover five," said Anderson. "We'll be extremely strained. We're not manned to do that, so we'll have to get resourceful and creative."

Anderson said the mission will prove particularly troublesome for his pilots, as Afghanistan's terrain presents a number of aeronautical challenges.

"Afghanistan is the worst environment (for helicopter pilots)," Anderson said. "The high altitudes, mountainous terrain, blowing dust … all create (unique) local weather. It will be clear on one side of the mountains and snowing on the other side. … The enemy is really embedded in the mountains."

The commander's solution to such obstacles? "We pray a lot more, and train a lot harder."

A capable unit

Afghanistan won't be Charlie Company's first fight.

As a 34-year-old "dustoff" unit, Charlie Company has provided medevac coverage for everything from the "Green Thunder" anti-marijuana campaign of the 1970s to major sporting events and military conflicts, such as Desert Storm.

"This mission carries its own culture, its own way of life, embodied in the dustoff association," said Anderson. "(The dustoff tradition) causes Soldiers to make sacrifices above and beyond in order for us to go do the mission. … I've got guys who quit their job two weeks early and are going without pay to prepare the equipment and ready their sections for deployment."

Many of Charlie Company's troops have mobilized before, either with this unit or another deploying to Iraq or Afghanistan. With such experience, Anderson can't help but express confidence in his Soldiers during this yearlong mobilization.

"About half the guys have deployed before," said Anderson. "We'll lean heavily on the guys with experience, they'll mentor the other Soldiers."

Anderson's troops only echo their commander's faith.

"I'm really excited," said 1st Lt. Marco Acevedo, a Black Hawk pilot with the unit. "I feel like we're well-trained and prepared. … This is what we signed up for."

The 1-168th also boasts a wealth of medical expertise, leaving little doubt about their preparation for what lies ahead.

"It's not like you have a bunch of Subway crews, who make sandwiches all month, and then two days a month they apply band-aids. These are highly qualified personnel," said Capt. Douglas Chase of the 3-140th Security and Support Battalion, under which the 1-168th and Charlie Company fall. "This is a highly focused unit. When someone gets wounded and they put in their nine-line medevac, Charlie 168 will be turning blades to come get them."

Making the grade

Cal Guard's CERFP program passes NGB's test

Photos and story by Spc. Darriel Swatts

Once again, the California National Guard was tested – and found ready.

Members of three Army National Guard units and four Air National Guard wings sat mid-October in Mountain View anticipating a Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear, and Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) training mission at an abandoned Hewlett-Packard facility with the help of civilian actors who played the role of causalities.

The exercise scenario - a large earthquake had hit the San Francisco area, causing chemical tanks under the facility to rupture and contaminate the people within the building – provided both realism and a challenge to exercise participants.

"It's kind of scary to think that something like this could happen," said San Francisco's Cedra Neely, a civilian roleplayer.

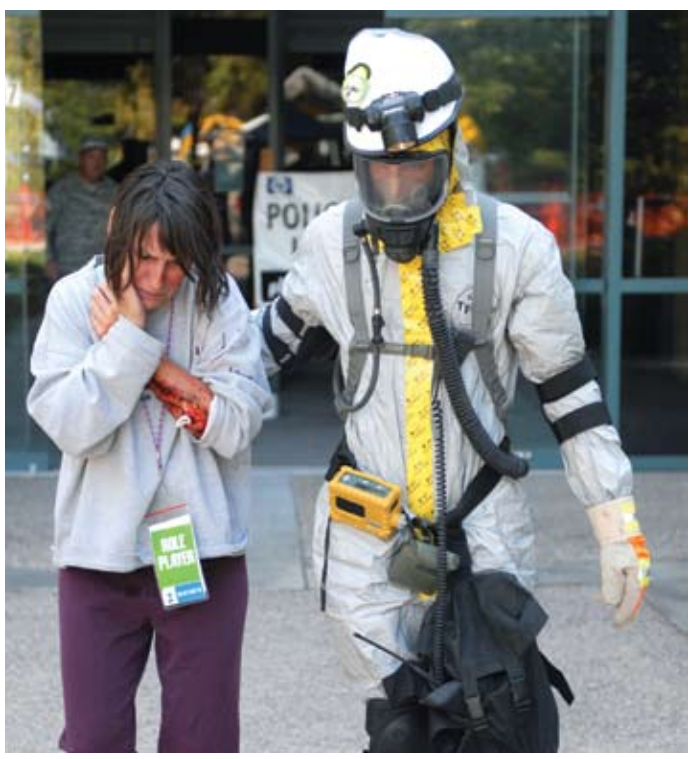
Cal Guard Soldiers were in charge of the search, extraction and decontamination of the victims, while the Air Guard handled the medical treatment of casualties.

The casualties in this exercise were civilians from across the San Francisco Bay area. Many heard about the exercise through the Craigslist Web site or through a local casting company. Most gained a new esteem for all that the Guard does for the community.

"I'm grateful to get to do this; I've gained a new respect for what you guys do," said Tina Leday, an actress who volunteered for the exercise.

This exercise was not only a solid training event, but it was also a test. The National Guard Bureau, which supervised the event, was also on site to validate the CERFP program so that if such an event should actually take place, these Cal Guard units would be able to respond effectively.

"I feel good sleeping at night with the knowledge that this program is available for my state should anything ever really happen," said Capt. Christopher Angle, 579th Engineer Battalion, CERFP operations officer.



Specialist Jason Twitchell, 132nd Bridge Engineering Company, escorts civilian volunteer Shannon Smith out of the building to the decontamination tent during a CERFP training exercise held at Mountain View Calif., on Oct. 17, 2008.

Warfighter

Guardsmen prepare for the future of battle

By Spc. Donald Mason

In August, members of the California National Guard's 185th Military Police Battalion and 40th Infantry Division joined Marine Corps and Air Force elements in a joint Warfighter exercise at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.

Although most of the activities and equipment used during Warfighter exercises are classified, what can be disclosed is the process that allows Marines, Soldiers and Airmen to practice interacting in realistic scenarios.

During Warfighter, computers and satellites are utilized to track the progress of personnel and equipment. During this process, all elements of a military's readiness and strength are incorporated, to include engineering and infantry elements, air support, military police, logistics, staff judge advocate, as well as civil and public affairs.

Each element regularly reports changes to the command operations center, and end-of-shift briefings allow each contingent to be informed of the others' activities and how they impact the operational aspect of the fight.

When dealing with government officials, such as town mayors, exercise participants made tactical decisions regarding troop movement, displaced civilians and enemy prisoners of war based on how well civil affairs elements performed often overlooked tasks.

Civil affairs interaction involving contractual negotiations and whether or not contractors could continue operating the facilities that maintain the life of a city, such as a railway system, were essential.

In the end, Warfighter offered a number of valuable lessons to participants, and furthered their ability to carry out multi-service missions, a key skill in the expanding Global War on Terrorism.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF SPC. DONALD MASON

A labyrinth of tents make up the setting for the Warfighter exercise at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., in August.

California Army National Guardsmen enjoy some downtime during the Warfighter exercise at Fort Leavenworth, Kan., in August.

Learning to train the trainer

40th MPs gain necessary cultural lessons in Iraq

By Staff Sgt. Jairo Romero

Soldiers from the California National Guard's 40th Military Police Company have been regularly training Iraq's future police force as part of their current Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment.

More recently, however, the 40th MP Soldiers gained some knowledge of their own, taking courses on the cultural background and Arabic language of the Iraqi people, in the hope of developing a good rapport with the Iraqi police. In the end, they hope such knowledge will lead to their ultimate goal: training the Iraqi Police on how best to instruct their own recruits.

Key points emphasized by the training include reinforcement of individual and team skills, Iraqi NCO development, utilizing After Action Reviews to gain immediate feedback and instilling respect for the Iraqi religions, traditions and, of course, local food.

The U.S. Soldiers have also learned the principle that while they currently occupy Iraq, they are not in their host nation to undermine or change the local religion or traditions. Instead, they're seeking to reduce the effects of dysfunctional social practices that affect the ability to conduct effective security operations.

In their training the Iraqi Police, 40th MP Soldiers use a type of instruction designed to prepare Iraqi Police to ultimately train themselves, a style that requires a high level of junior leadership. Training includes subjective topics – such as loyalty to the government - and more objective, fundamental lessons – as in achieving competence in military tasks.

Experienced Iraqi Police NCO trainers, graduate instructors and Iraqi Police advisors are essential to the development of Iraqi Police recruits. The training they receive is aimed at restoring order and the rule of law, supporting community policing and bolstering the support of the Iraqi population.

PHOTO COURTESY OF SPC. DANICA CHO

An Iraqi Police trainer uses an unarmed armhold maneuver on a recruit. The California National Guard's 40th Military Police Company is currently in Iraq instructing Iraqi Police leadership on how to best train their own recruits.

Historic UH-1 flight simulator makes its last journey

By Sgt. Tara Reppert

PHOTO COURTESY OF 2ND LT. HEATHER HAGAN

Neil Miller, staff member at the UH-1 Iriquois helicopter simulator facility at the Joint Force Training Base, comments on his more than 10 years of training pilots during a Sept. 29 farewell ceremony in Los Alamitos.

The California National Guard closed the doors forever on the historic 2B24 Synthetic Flight Training System, or SFTS, for the UH-1 Iroquois helicopter during a Sept. 29 farewell ceremony at the Joint Force Training Base in Los Alamitos.

Originally in service with the Navy in Pensacola, Fla., the flight simulator was dedicated on Sept. 3, 1992, to the Los Alamitos Army Airfield. As a UH-1 helicopter training icon in the Southwestern United States, the simulator was utilized by pilots from across California, as well as Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Hawaii and the Kwajalein Islands.

The simulator played a key role in training not only Army pilots, but also a number of civilian emergency response professionals. The Federal Aviation Administration, California Highway Patrol, sheriffs' and police departments, Border Patrol, Customs, Drug Enforcement Agency and Civil Air Patrol pilots also utilized the facility for training. In all, the simulators' two cockpits logged a total of 27,644 training hours.

Lt. Col. Myles Williams, Commander of Los Alamitos Army Airfield, presented simulator instructor Neil Miller with a plaque in appreciation for all his hard work in keeping aviators trained and ready for more than 10 years.

Los Alamitos Mayor Kenneth Parker and Ronnie Guyer, a representative from Assemblyman Van Tran's district, also handed out certificates of appreciation during the ceremony, while California Army National Guard Col. Daniel Nelan offered remarks about the long history and importance of the simulator and the UH-1 aircraft itself.

Closing the doors to the simulator is synonymous with the closing of a significant chapter in the Army's history - the phasing out of the UH-1 helicopter itself. A huge asset in the Army's arsenal for years, the "Huey" provided Soldiers with many memories, some of which they shared at the ceremony.

"The UH-1 helicopter will always hold a special place in my heart due to the important role it played in the Vietnam War," said retired Brig. Gen. James P. Comb, commander of the Joint Force Training Base.

Lt. Col. Williams gave Guyer, a Vietnam veteran, the honor of the final flight on the simulator. Guyer recalled being flown out of combat in Vietnam on a Huey after suffering an injury: "This brings back a lot of memories, and I am proud to be a part of this historic moment."

Leaning forward

1-18th Cav gears up for Kosovo deployment

By Capt. William Foss

"Leaning forward in the saddle" is a phrase often heard in the military. For the 1st Squadron of the 18th Cavalry, it's a way of life.

The 1-18th Cav leaned forward by training with Ukrainian soldiers during Rapid Trident in preparation for their upcoming 12-month deployment to Kosovo. Since Sept. 11, 2001, the 1-18th Cav Troopers have maintained a high operations tempo, much like the one they experienced during Operation Noble Eagle III, where they performed site security for the nation's biological and chemical weapons facilities, and recently at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where they were responsible for providing site security for the detainee facility.

Upon their return from Guantanamo Bay, the 1-18th Cav reset from a heavy division cavalry to a light brigade reconnaissance surveillance target acquisition squadron. They learned new tactics and training, spending their IDTs learning the Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System, gun truck emplacement, and light scout Tactics Techniques and Procedures. During the fall of 2007, the 1-18th Cav provided effective security and support to those who lost their homes during the fires that gripped San Diego County.

Recently, under the command of Lt. Col. Lars K. Staack, the 1-18th CAV received New Equipment Training on the Blue Force tracker, mine detector, and SINCGARS radio systems, while concurrently training and certifying on the Army Warrior Tasks and battle drills required prior to mobilization.

Whatever the challenge, the 1-18th Cav will always ride hard, and lean forward. Ask any Cav Trooper, and they will tell you, they're "swift and deadly."

Top : Ukrainian and U.S. soldiers from the California Army National Guard's 1st Squadron of the 18th Cavalry post the colors during the Rapid Trident exercise in mid-September. The 1-18th is preparing for a yearlong deployment to Kosovo in support of KFOR 11.

Middle left : Ukrainian and U.S. Soldiers participate in coursework during Rapid Trident.

Bottom left : Captain William Foss, commander of the 1-18th Cavalry, poses with a sniper rifle during their recent Rapid Trident exercise.

Road to Recovery

Cal Guardsmen cycle 420 miles in support of injured vets

By 2nd Lt. Will Martin

California Army National Guardsmen, from left, Command Sgt. Major William Clark, Sgt. Darryl Moxley, Capt. Robert Horvath and Capt. Danjel Bout stand at Pismo Beach during the Road to Recovery cycling challenge.

For most, the idea of cycling more than 400 miles down the mountainous California coast might conjure up images of agony. For California Army National Guardsman Sgt. Darryl Moxley, however, deciding to join the seven-day Road to Recovery California Challenge was a "no-brainer."

"Many Soldiers who are missing limbs are unable to run or walk for extended periods of time. Cycling allows these Soldiers to enjoy the outdoors while benefiting from exercise," said Moxley of the fundraiser on behalf of injured veterans. "I truly believe the VA's cycling program helps Soldiers move on and adapt to their new bodies."

Joining Moxley on the Sept. 28 – Oct. 4 trip were fellow Cal Guardsmen Capt. Danjel Bout, Capt. Robert Horvath and California National Guard Command Sgt. Major William Clark, as well as more than 100 avid cyclists, to include dozens of injured veterans.

The route began at the San Francisco Veteran's Administration building and ended at the VA facilities in Los Angeles. What lie between were enough challenges to thoroughly test the four Guardsmen's mettle.

"I was amazed at just how gnarled the terrain along Highway 1 could be," said Bout. "Somewhere between Big Sur and San Simeon, I realized the only experience I could liken it to was the mountain phase of Ranger school."

Bout, who confessed to spending "most of the first night trying to unknot my quadriceps," said the route's scenic beauty more than compensated for the difficulty of the ride.

"It could have been a lack of oxygen getting to my brain on some of those long climbs, but there were times where the coast took on an almost surreal quality," said Bout. "It was like riding through a postcard."

More inspiring than the scenery for Bout and the others, however, was the effort made by the Wounded Warriors, those veterans who despite severe injuries cycled alongside their more "able-bodied" comrades-in-arms.

"The highlight of the ride for me was seeing our injured veterans get up every morning and climb in the saddle and ride," said Clark. "They did not give up, and we never left any veterans behind. There were injured veterans who lost their legs but with the new prosthesis completed this event. They are the true heroes."

"I learned that wounded or not, our Soldiers are tough," said Moxley.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF CAPT. DANJEL BOUT

Two Wounded Warriors take a rest and talk during the Road to Recovery cycling challenge. Cyclists covered 420 miles of the California coast in seven days, starting in San Francisco and ending in Los Angeles.

California Guard assists in Fossett recovery

By Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy

When the wreckage of multi-millionaire Steve Fossett's plane was found near Mammoth Lakes, Calif., it ended the year-long search for the missing adventurer.

In the meantime, there were still many unanswered questions, and the California Army National Guard assisted with finding answers to them on Oct. 2.

Using a single UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter, pilots of the California ARNG completed several missions in support of the Madera County sheriff's office. They flew in supplies, search dogs and personnel, said Jonathan Guibord, a spokesperson for the California National Guard.

This isn't a mission the California ARNG would normally take part in, but they were requested for assistance with the recovery operations.

"Due to the dangerous terrain and high altitude (the Office of Emergency Services) has determined that the California National Guard's specialized aircrew and aircraft were required," said Guibord.

The pilots supported insertion and extraction missions into the area on Oct. 2, but snowfall ended the search in the Sierra Nevadas on Oct. 3.

California officials told the Associated Press that recovery efforts around the site may not resume until next summer.

Authorities say they completed most of what they needed to do on Oct. 3, when they found three more bone fragments, which will be sent to a lab to determine whether they are human and a match for Fossett.

PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN RUSSELL TOM

Major Jon Schulstad and Capt. Jeffrey Bellato of the Nevada Air National Guard's 152nd Airlift Wing participate in the search for Hall of Fame Aviator Steve Fossett. The Nevada National Guard joined the California National Guard in the search for Fossett's plane throughout the month of September.

Jalalabad family REUNION

Cal Guard pilot meets up with sister in Afghanistan

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. SAMUEL MORSE

California Air National Guard Capt. Kelly Smith, a pilot with the 146th Airlift Wing, Channel Islands, Calif., stands in front of a C-130 Hercules aircraft on the flight line at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, July 17, 2008. Smith deployed to Afghanistan and served alongside her younger sister, U.S. Army Chief Warrant Officer Amber Smith, an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter pilot with Task Force Shadow, 101st Combat Aviation Brigade.

By Staff Sgt. Rachel M. Martinez
National Guard Bureau

They never planned on being pilots and Afghanistan was the last place they expected to see each other, but that's just what happened for two sisters from White Salmon, Wash.

Captain Kelly Smith, a pilot with the California Air National Guard, and Army Chief Warrant Officer Amber Smith grew up in a family rich with aviation ties. Their grandfather flew in the Army Air Corps as a lieutenant colonel during World War II and after that as a commercial pilot. Their grandmother and mother were flight attendants. Multiple others in the family became commercial pilots, including their father, uncle and a few cousins.

"Just growing up around it so much, I think we all loved airplanes," Capt. Smith said. "We loved being around airplanes, going up in airplanes, hearing about them."

However, both went off to college with no intention of going into aviation. Capt. Smith studied English and journalism at the University of Arizona and Chief Smith became a cheerleader at the University of Washington.

Things quickly changed. During her freshman year, Capt. Smith began to notice the A-10s and C-130s flying into Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz. She transferred to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University and became a flight instructor after graduating. Chief Smith turned to aviation after two years of college.

Their father had encouraged them to look into the military for flying opportunities. Capt. Smith jumped first, enlisting in the California Air National Guard shortly after the terrorist attacks on Sept. 11.

"[Sept. 11] hit me pretty hard because I had been planning on going to the airlines and interviewing that December," she said. "I'll never forget looking up with all my friends and seeing all our flights cancelled. It was almost like seeing my career go up in smoke."

After graduating from basic military training at Lackland AFB, Texas, Capt. Smith was selected for the pilot board, got her commission and became a C-130 pilot for the 146th Airlift Wing in Channel Islands, Calif.

In 2003, Chief Smith enlisted in the Army. After training to pilot the OH-58 Kiowa, Chief Smith was stationed with the 101st Airborne Division out of Fort Campbell, Ky.

In late 2007, her unit deployed to Forward Operating Base Jalalabad, Afghanistan. Not long after deploying, Chief Smith began to receive e-mails from her sister, whose unit would be deploying to Bagram Air Field. They would be in different services, different locations, assigned to different units, but they found a commonality in their mission in Afghanistan – aiding troops on the ground.

"We have two completely different missions, but we both take care of the ground troops," said Capt. Smith. "The C-130s do a lot of airdrops and it's fulfilling because you are getting the beans and bullets to the guys on the ground."

Although not at the same base, the two sisters got the opportunity to see each other in May when Chief Smith's commander allowed her to fly to Bagram for a two-day visit.

"I loved the day that Amber came to visit," Capt. Smith said. "She came and got me up in the morning, we walked to the PX [post exchange] and got coffee, pizza, and massages. When you're back home, you can have girls' day – it was kind of like that, but Bagram style."

Capt. Smith also got the chance to see Chief Smith when she flew C-130s down to Jalalabad. Their favorite moment came out of one of these trips.

"We were taking off out of Jalalabad, Amber was on approach and we heard each other on the tower radio," Capt. Smith recalled with enthusiasm. "That was the coolest thing."

Good news came for the two when Chief Smith's unit relocated to Bagram. Although Capt. Smith redeployed back to California in mid-July, the sisters spent a few weeks together.

"The past two weeks that I've been here we have probably seen each other more than we have in the past five years," explained Chief Smith. "We are hardly ever together – it seems like somebody is always gone."

Captain and Chief Smith aren't alone in their love for flying. Their younger sister Lacey, 25, is an Army Chief Warrant Officer and flies the UH-60 Black Hawk. Her unit, A Company, 101st Aviation, replaces Chief Amber Smith's unit this winter.

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. RACHEL MARTINEZ

Capt. Kelly Smith and Army Chief Warrant Officer Amber Smith, sisters from White Salmon, Wash., pose for a picture at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, July 15, 2008. Capt. Smith, a C-130 pilot, and Warrant Officer Smith, an OH-58 Kiowa pilot, both deployed to Afghanistan and spent a few weeks together at Bagram.

Preparing to take off

Air Guard program trains non-prior service enlistees

By Staff Sgt. Jill Jamgochian

PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. ANDREW HUGHAN

The dew-blanketed grass and cool breeze provided little relief to the small Student Flight group as they work out the tiring flutter kicks under Tech. Sgt. Rachel Taylor's watchful gaze.

"Thirty seconds! Halfway there," Taylor shouted to the group of young men performing physical training on the softball field at Moffett Federal Airfield on Sept. 6.

Following jumping jacks, stretching, sit-ups and push-ups, Taylor assembled the group of sweaty, but motivated trainees to begin running laps in pairs around the field.

Student Flight, a program for all non-prior service members, is designed to help enlistees become better prepared for basic training, making the transition from civilians into military troops easier, said Taylor, the Student Flight non-commissioned officer for the 129th Rescue Wing.

Taylor and Capt. Tanya Lee, the Student Flight officer, supervise the pre-basic training enlistees throughout drill weekends with physical fitness, drill and ceremony exercises, class lessons about military history, customs and courtesies, and rank structure.

"They're little sponges and they soak up everything we teach them," Taylor said. "They'll be a huge asset to their shops."

Uniformly dressed in black t-shirts, the Student Flight trainees have already participated in many wing events, including change of command ceremonies, and the wing's family day. In addition to classes and physical training, wing activities help the new people stay motivated about the military while waiting up to a year or more on securing basic training and school dates, Taylor said.

"Student Flight always feels as if they're already part of wing command. Everyone's giving them positive feedback," she said. Especially the Security Forces Squadron. "The cops love seeing their Airmen out here."

Four out of six of the newly enlisted will be joining the 129th Security Forces Squadron.

Airman First Class Jason Pak, the Student Flight's 20-year-old student leader, plans on attending basic training this November at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. The Fremont-based native has a brother in the Army Reserve and has always wanted to pursue a career in law enforcement. Airman Pak is slated to join the 129th SFS following graduation from SF school.

"I think it's great," Pak said. "Sgt. Taylor and Capt. Lee are preparing us mentally and physically before basic training. It's an intense workout."

Student Flight is a new program for the wing and stems from the experience of its NCOs.

The program is still in its infancy stage, said Chief Master Sgt. Teresa Blanchard, the Mission Support Flight superintendant, who began a similar enlistee program in 2005 while she was stationed at the 190th Air Refueling Wing in Kansas.

Members of the 129th Rescue Wing's student flight exercise on the Sunday morning of drill. These new Airmen not only PT but have academic, military history, customs and courtesy classes during drill weekend. This program prepares new, non-prior service Airmen for the Basic Training and Technical Schools by acclimating them to Air Force life well before attending training.

"There wasn't anything here at the 129th," said Blanchard. "I saw how the unit had benefitted in Kansas, and we wanted to have that in place here."

When Blanchard made the move to the 129th Rescue Wing in 2007, she began collaborating with Taylor, who had also managed a Student Flight program at her New York unit.

Blanchard noted the program has the ability to produce leaders in basic training and technical school honor graduates.

"This program is for all of our unit members who are going to be viable assets to the wing," Blanchard said.

The program hopes to inform and train the troops coming into the wing, in turn improving their individual shops.

Student Flight is looking for knowledgeable volunteers from the wing to assist in grooming these future Airmen, and make the program even better with new ideas and extra hands.

"Student Flight is looking for individuals who are tech school qualified, motivated, and are interested in facilitating work and classes along with Capt. Lee and Sgt. Taylor," Blanchard said.

Volunteers can expect a fulfilling experience. The Student Flight supervisors are proud of the chance to mold new troops and give them a boost before basic training and tech school.

Taylor added, "Sending troops to basic training with knowledge, and seeing them come back as Airmen, it's the most rewarding thing I've ever done in my career."

Guard unit provides 'one-stop shop' for Predator maintenance training

By Capt. Al Bosco

As the Air Force's unmanned aerial system mission continues to grow, the California Air National Guard's 163d Maintenance Group, located at March Air Reserve Base, is stepping up to the plate.

Initially operating under the 372nd Training Squadron's Detachment 13 assigned to Nellis Air Force Base, Nev., the unit spent its infancy getting its staff trained and completing its state-of-the-art facilities, while also providing limited training and augmenting active duty elements.

Fast forward a little more than a year and the unit no longer operates under Nellis' training umbrella, but as a standalone training facility – Detachment 26 - assigned under Air Education and Training Command. In addition, the training operation has grown fivefold and has transformed into a 'one-stop shop' for active duty and Guard units seeking Predator maintenance training.

What began in April 2008 as an introductory course has since expanded to include specialized courses such as ground control station/communications maintenance, Rotax engine maintenance, tactical aircraft maintenance and avionics. In addition, the unit has provided training to more than 150 maintainers from active-duty units, as well as personnel from Guard units across the nation.

According to Senior Master Sgt. Ron Egan, chief of Detachment 26, the growth of the unit has been a boon, not only for the maintenance group, but for the Predator mission and the Air Force as a whole.

"By providing instruction across the spectrum of Predator maintenance, and continuing to expand to meet the mission's training needs, we are bridging the gap providing the kinds of capabilities that were once only available at active duty training locations," Egan said. "That has made us an important part of the UAS mission and has certainly made this an exciting time to be involved with the Predator."

In fact, according to Master Sgt. Michael Adams, a Predator communications instructor who spent two years teaching at Nellis, the unit has nearly a dozen instructors and owns all of its own equipment, detached and separated from the 163d Reconnaissance Wing's operational Predator mission, allowing training to be provided regardless of operational demands elsewhere.

"Having instructors and equipment available to teach the courses here is great for us and for the students," Adams said. "We can provide the training students need when they need it and we can tailor our instruction to meet their needs. The impact is huge because it allows the students to see and understand how processes work a step at a time and prepares them to apply the skills they'll need in an operational environment as soon as they get there."

Soon, the unit will be able to take its training to a new level as the 163d RW opens a flying training unit and begins flying the Predator locally at Southern California Logistics Airport near Victorville.

"When the wing starts its flying training mission, that will open up a lot of doors for us," Adams said. "We'll be able to provide hands-on training and let the students interact with flying aircraft so they can learn and practice what they will be doing in a realistic environment."

Egan said plans are in the works to expand the unit's training capabilities, to include offering a KU-band (satellite communications) class, as well as adding maintenance courses for the Predator's big brother, the MQ-9 Reaper. In addition, the unit may even provide training for Department of Homeland Security personnel.

"It's really a shot in the arm for the Predator program," Egan said. "Everyone is happy that we're up and running and we've received a lot of positive feedback on our operations."

PHOTO BY CAPT. AL BOSCO

ABOVE: Staff Sgt. Carolyn Smette, a Ground Control Station maintenance technician, troubleshoots some of the MQ-1 Predator's systems. Guardsmen and active duty Airmen are able to get nearly all of their Predator maintenance training at the 163d Maintenance Group's schoolhouse, located at March Air Reserve Base.

BELOW: Tech. Sgt. Rebecca Hatfield, left, an instructor assigned to the 163d Maintenance Group, shows the components of the engine of an MQ-1 Predator to Staff Sgt. Carlos Barrera, a 163d RW crew chief.

PHOTO BY SENIOR AIRMAN MATT SMITH

Top Left: Members of the 1-185th enjoy time with their families and friends before deploying for Iraq. More than 850 members of the California National Guard's 1st Battalion 185th Armor Regiment mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of the largest California National Guard deployment since the Korean War.

Top Right: Private First Class Luis Ahumada, 22, of Norwalk, plays with son Johnny, 2. The deployment will be Ahumada's second tour in Iraq. "We love what we do," said Ahumada, who will be serving with his brother.

Bottom Left : Private First Class Walter Romero, 21, of Rialto, walks with his wife, Lillian, at the National Orange Show Fairgrounds in San Bernardino on Aug. 22.

Photos by Gabriel Luis Acosta/The San Bernardino County Sun

Sergeant First Class Bradley Merrill, of the California National Guard's 217th Ordnance Company, prepares to detonate unusable ammunition at Udairi Range Complex, Kuwait, as part of their Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment on Sept. 19. Photo by 1st Sgt. Timothy Shields

Staff Sgt. Darren Pon, right, pararescueman from the 131st Rescue Squadron, accompanies a Shasta-based firefighting crew carrying an injured firefighter to an awaiting HH-60G Pave Hawk northwest of Redding on July 31. While battling the Iron Complex Wildland fire, the firefighter fell and suffered a concussion. The 129th Rescue Wing aircrew and pararescuemen landed in rugged terrain at about 6,000 feet above sea level to rescue the firefighter and medevaced him to the nearby Mercy Medical Center. Photo by Tech Sgt. Brock Woodward

Members of the California National Guard participate in the filming of the "The Day the Earth Stood Still" earlier this year. The film is set to hit theaters Dec. 12.
Photo courtesy of Col. Terry Knight

With scores of California National Guardsmen in attendance, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger presents Angela and Mike Anderson with a commemorative copy of the Gold Star Family License Plate bill on the Capitol grounds on Oct. 8, 2008. The Andersons' son, Cpl. Mike Anderson Jr., was killed in combat while deployed as a Marine in Fallujah, Iraq, in 2004. Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, adjutant general of the California National Guard, and several other prominent Cal Guardsmen have spoken out publicly on behalf of the bill over the past several years. The legislation paves the way for families who have lost loved ones in current and prior wars to obtain license plates honoring the sacrifices their families have endured.
Photo by Joe McHugh, Office of the Governor

Brigadier Gen. Louis J. Antonetti, commander of the California Army National Guard, passes the colors for the 100th Troop Command to incoming commander Col. Barbara Nuismer on Oct. 4 at the Arden Armory in Sacramento, as outgoing commander Col. William Snow, looks on.
Photo by Sergeant 1st Class Stephen Payer

Dawn's Early Light

Guardsmen participate as Civil War reenactors

Story and photos by Spc. Eddie Siguenza

Union soldiers protect "Old Glory" by firing down range at Confederates during a Civil War reenactment in Antelope, Calif., recently.

Staff Sergeant Jeff Wall has a big mission before him: lead close to 10,000 pounds of leather into a firefight as overhead bombs burst in the air, with only seconds to command a precise counterattack on a charging enemy.

No problem. This is something the 54-year-old Guardsman has done eight previous times.

This is a scaled reenactment of a Civil War battle. The scene is re-created by amateurs, historians and aficionados from various California clubs, as well as veterans and Citizen Soldiers, such as Wall and Master Sgt. Thomas Stein.

Stein, a Guard recruiter based in Lodi, is a regular reenactor. He travels up and down the state donning either Union or Confederate garb with the 7th Michigan Volunteer Cavalry, a 25-member club.

It's become a hobby for Wall and Stein, this Civil War show. Each owns 1860s-era items such as weapons, clothes, and even bridles and saddles for the horses. Just about every participant bares the same responsibility: authenticity.

"The (Confederate) commander kicked out one of his soldiers because he didn't have the right shoelaces," said Stewart Howe, president of the National Civil War Association. "Oh yeah, they get right down to the specifics. Everything you see here is based upon the Civil War era. Everyone sleeps on the ground, food is cooked with burning wood, no barbecue pits. Nobody orders pizza or Chinese food."

"We turn our cellphones off and leave them in the truck," Stein added.

"It's so realistic, some of us don't even brush our teeth," replied ex-Master Sgt. Stephen Freyman, a retired California Guardsman. "They didn't have toothbrushes back in the 1860s. At least that's what they told us."

There are exceptions. Severe injuries are handled with up-to-date medical procedures. All shooting weapons are loaded with special gunpowder to provide safer results. Rules are also applied to keep each participant away from harm.

Staff Sgt. Jeff Wall, right, an instructor with the 223rd Infantry Regiment at Camp San Luis Obispo, participates regularly in Civil War reenactments throughout California as a cavalry first sergeant.

"We have very strict rules of engagement. Nobody shoots if the next guy is 10 feet away," said Howe. "We allow them to use earplugs if that'll help. We also have certain words we use to stop shooting and end the battles. We keep this safe not just for the participants, but for the people in attendance."

Wall, an instructor with the Guard's 223rd Infantry Regiment at Camp San Luis Obispo, connects the Civil War with his Guardsman duties. During the brother-against-brother battles in the 1860s, most units were formed out of militia, or volunteer soldiers. The National Guard evolved from many of the same militias.

"Being out (in Civil War battles) helps me think tactically. This is where I can practice my decision-making process," said Wall, who returned in January from Afghanistan. "There's also a lot of camaraderie, the same as when you're on deployment. This really helps keep me in a tactical mindset."

Civil War participants get an actual "feel" of what happened in that era. They wake up to a bugler's reveille; they march to a battlefield under fife and drums. Outside the soldiers' camps, vendors offer 1860s services, such as apple bobbing, sewing, quilting and foot-washing.

Howe explained that California played a significant role during the Civil War era. More than 15,000 volunteers from the Golden State participated in various roles, serving in infantry units to transportation sectors. Some famous Civil War-era residents with California ties include Joseph Hooker, John C. Fremont, William T. Sherman, Thaddeus S.C. Lowe and Ulysses S. Grant.

"When we get National Guardsmen and veterans out here, their experiences add to the realism of war," said Howe. "Their military knowledge and fighting experiences carry on to the other hobbyists out here. It's like all of a sudden everyone wants to fight. That's pretty much how it was during the Civil War."

The battleground is where Wall and Stein contribute. At close combat, they draw sabres against Confederate horsemen. These are real sabres, but the action is 75 to 80 percent effort. Engagement rules prohibit the "stabbing" of another participant.

"It's dangerous enough that we're on thousand-pound horses riding full speed at each other," Wall added. "So there's still that safety factor we follow. Sometimes it gets out of hand. But for the most part, we're safe. We follow the rules."

Just as they volunteered to protect the United States as National Guardsmen, Wall and Stein freely participate in roles honoring America's history.

"The fact that there's skill of arms aspect to this makes it interesting," said Wall, capping an 1860 Colt Navy revolver. "The key is to play it safe. We don't want to hurt anyone, especially those infantry guys."

Staff Sgt. Jeff Wall, center, on white horse, a California National Guard instructor with the 223rd Infantry Regiment, engages in a sabre fight with Confederate horsemen during a Civil War reenactment.

Looking into our past allows us to focus on our future

Story by 2nd Lt. Michael Anthony Rodriquez

Patrick Sarsfield (1660 – 1693) was the first Earl of Lucan and was a famed Irish soldier who fought in campaigns in Ireland, England and the European mainland. The Sarsfield Grenadier Guards, military ancestors to the California National Guard's Charlie Company, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion medevac unit in Sacramento, took their name from the Irish earl.

As the new historian for the California National Guard, I look forward to sharing our rich history with the Grizzly's readers. Each month I hope to spark your curiosity by bringing out a story from the California National Guard's history which will in turn lead to renewed excitement and interest in our past.

California's militia has been involved in a number of conflicts, from the Mexican-American War through the World Wars to the current Global War on Terrorism. Each of these struggles offer military lessons for today's Soldiers and Airmen, as do the intermittent years when peace and domestic issues topped the Cal Guard's list of concerns.

In addition, I will soon begin offering unit historian training to enable Cal Guardsmen to collect and arrange their respective units' lineages and histories, as well as assist in the compiling of the California National Guard's contribution to the Global War on Terrorism. If you are interested in becoming a historian for your unit or simply want to provide feedback, please e-mail me at michael.a.rodriquez@us.army.mil or call me at the Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Office at 916-854-3145.

This month, I would like to share a chapter from our state's military aviation history. In 2002, Charlie Company, 1-168th Aviation Regiment, took their place in history as being the first Army unit to deploy the HH-60 helicopter to a combat environment, etching the unit's place in aviation history and the history of the California Army National Guard. Soon, Charlie Company will again leave, this time for Afghanistan, continuing their rich tradition of aviation deployments. The unit's lineage, however, dates back to the 1870s as the Sarsfield Grenadier Guard in Sacramento.

The Sarsfield Grenadier Guard was formed in Sacramento on July 29, 1870. The unit served with distinction out of Sacramento, as its members participated in many events, among which was paying homage to President James A. Garfield at his death Sept. 19, 1881, and at the death of Vice President Thomas A. Hendricks in December 1885.

The Sarsfield Granadier Guard was also an escort for President Benjamin Harrison's visit to Sacramento in 1891. The company derived the name of Sarsfield from the famed soldier Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Luncan, Ireland, who was a commanding officer in the English Army during the reign of kings Charles II and James II.

"It is not the object of war to annihilate those who have given provocation for it, but to cause them to mend their ways; not to ruin the innocent and guilty alike, but to save both."

–Polybius, Histories

The Sarsfield Grenadier Guards were organized in Sacramento in 1870 consisting mostly of members who were Irish by birth or descent. The heavy battle axes were used entirely for ceremonial purposes and are on display at Joint Force Headquarters, Sacramento.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE MILITARY MUSEUM

Charlie Company, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, descendants of the Sarsfield Grenadier Guards, will soon deploy overseas to use UH-60 helicopters, like the one pictured, during medevac missions across Afghanistan.

By the numbers

41 The number of members in California's first militia company, formed in July 1849 in San Francisco under the name of the First California Guard. The unit was an artillery company but was also proficient in infantry tactics.

Fun Fact

It was not until the close of the Civil War in 1866 that the state legislature enacted Chapter DXLI, Statues of 1866, and for the first time officially named California's uniformed militia force as the National Guard of California.

Soldier of the Year

On Oct. 18, 2008, the Cal Guard leadership honored their Soldier and Non-Commissioned Officer of the Year for the California Army National Guard and the California State Military Reserve. Each honoree earned their award by passing a battery of tests and winning several competitions throughout the year. In addition, each Soldier proved their mettle through remarkable service to their units and the California Army National Guard, as detailed in their biographies below. On behalf of the Cal Guard, the Grizzly would like to congratulate the 2008 Soldiers and NCOs of the Year.

Sergeant Christopher D. Tait was born in San Diego on April 2, 1984. During Tait's senior year he enrolled in the Army's delayed entry program before graduating from Poway High School in 2002. Upon graduation, he was sent to Fort Leonardwood, Mo. for basic training, and later enrolled in the Defense Language Institute in Monterey, Calif., where he completed the Korean Basic Language Training Course.

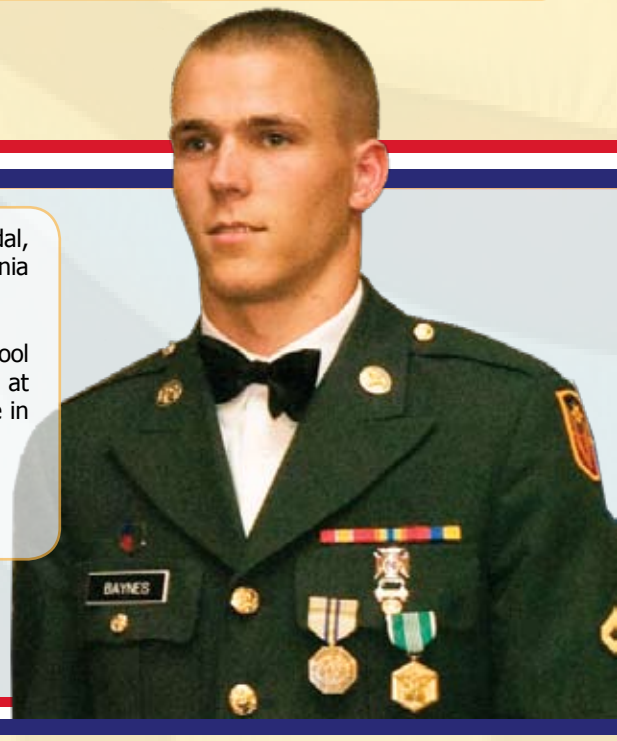
Following his graduation from DLI, Tait was assigned to Goodfellow Air Force Base in San Angelo, Texas, for his Signal Intelligence Analyst Course. During the course Tait earned an Army Achievement Award for excellence and achieving the highest test scores in four years.

Tait was soon after stationed in Yongsan, Korea, working with the 8th Army Combined Joint Group 3 Shop, Operations, Fires and Effects Coordination Cell, Information Operations. Among Tait's awards are the Army Achievement Award and the Army Commendation Medal. Most recently, Tait served as a squad leader during Operation Fall Blaze in October and November 2007.

Tait is certified as a Tang Soo Do martial arts instructor and received a 3rd Dan (Degree Black Belt) in March 2007. Tait attends Cal State University San Marcos where he studies business and plans to graduate in 2009.

Sergeant Christopher Tait

California National Guard NCO of the Year



Private First Class David M. Baynes enlisted in the California Army National Guard on Nov. 22, 2006. He attended basic training at Fort Knox, Ky., and then graduated Advanced Individual Training at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, where he was trained to be a 68W Combat Medic. Baynes received his National Emergency Medical Technician certification in conjunction with his Advance Individual Training.

Baynes is assigned to the HHB, 1-143rd Field Artillery Combat Medic Section as a Trauma Specialist. He was activated by the California Army National Guard in support of Operation Lightning Strike in August 2008.

Baynes's awards include the Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Army Service Ribbon, California Commendation Medal and the California State Service Ribbon.

In June 2006, he graduated high school from Livermore High School where he was active in school athletics. Baynes attends college at Las Positas Community College in pursuit of an associates degree in law enforcement.

Baynes resides in Livermore with his parents Mark and Kim Casey.

Private First Class David M. Baynes

California National Guard Soldier of the Year

Sergeant Ian E. Abbott was born March 18, 1965, in Arlington, Va. He graduated from Leland High School in San Jose in 1983.

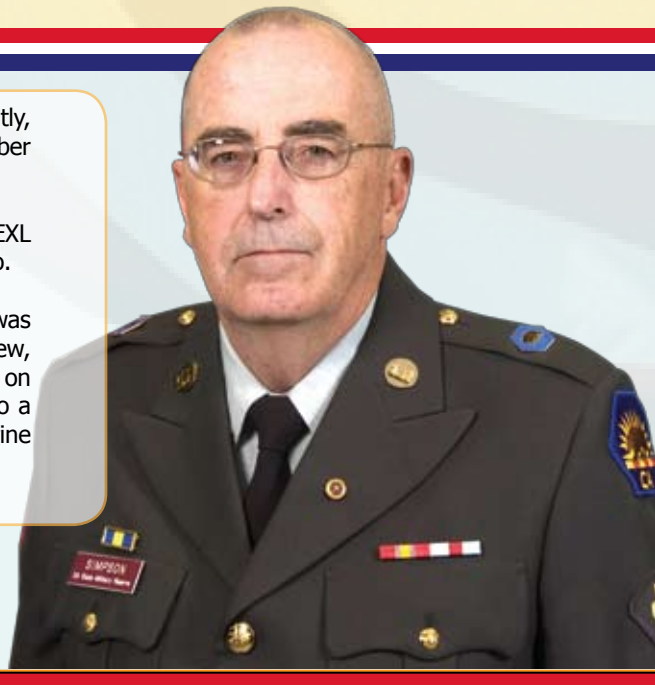
Abbott studied chemistry at both San Diego State University and San Jose State University. In 1986, he began working in the biotechnology field with Genentech Inc., where he is currently a senior engineer and is responsible for managing a research facility.

In 2006, the Army National Guard increased its maximum age for enlistment to 42. Unfortunately, Abbott did not learn of this change until six weeks before his 42nd birthday, which did not allow enough time for enlistment. It was at this time that Abbott became aware of the California State Military Reserve.

Abbott enlisted on May 2, 2007, and reported to the the 100th Troop Command Support Brigade, where he serves as a radio operator. He has completed a variety of military courses and is qualified to operate several military equipment systems. This past year Abbott participated in four field exercises, served at the Joint Force Headquarters during Operation Fall Blaze, worked as an observer and controller during Golden Guardian and deployed with an IC4U team in support of Operation Lightning Strike.

Sergeant Ian E. Abbott

CSMR NCO of the Year 2008



Specialist James T. Simpson was born in Vancouver, Canada, on Dec. 14, 1953. In November 1962, he became a citizen of the United States.

Simpson is a veteran of the U.S. Navy, and from 1974 to 1978 he attended Mount San Antonio Junior College before transferring to California State Polytechnic University Pomona and graduating in 1980 with a bachelor's degree in civil engineering.

"The reason I wanted to join the SMR was so that I could do more than just observe during this War on Terror," said Simpson. "I know I won't be sent to Iraq; however, if I can serve here at home in a way that makes our nation safer and our Armed Forces stronger, then I'll feel like I am doing my part."

Simpson enlisted into the SMR on March 6, 2007. Most recently, Simpson worked during Operation Lightning Strike as a member of the State Emergency Procurement Team.

In his civilian career, Simpson is president and owner of EXL Structural Engineers. He and his wife and family reside in Chino.

Simpson's oldest son, Marine Lance Cpl. Abraham Simpson, was killed in action on Nov. 9, 2004, in Fallujah, Iraq. His nephew, Marine Sgt. Jonathan J. Simpson, was also killed In action on Oct. 14, 2006, in Habbaniyah. Simpson's youngest son is also a Marine and is serving proudly with the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment.

Specialist James T. Simpson

CSMR Soldier of the Year 2008

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. SHAUN WITHERS

Senior Master Sgt. Donna Goodno walks along the Air Force Memorial in Arlington, Va., June 18 during the Air National Guard's Outstanding Airmen of the Year week. Goodno was recently announced as one of 12 Air Force Outstanding Airmen for 2008.

Air Force names Cal Guard member

Outstanding Airman

By Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith
National Guard Bureau

A California Air National Guard member was among 12 Airmen announced by the Air Force Personnel Center July 8 as an Air Force Outstanding Airmen for 2008.

Air Force officials said Senior Master Sgt. Donna Goodno was selected from a group of 33 nominees that represented all Air Force major commands, direct reporting units, field operating agencies and Air Staff agencies.

Goodno is the highest ranking Airman in the honored group, which include three senior airmen, one staff sergeant, five technical sergeants and two master sergeants.

Goodno distinguished herself as a supervisor for the 147th Combat Communications Squadron in San Diego. She was nominated after earning Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year for the Air Guard.

"We are all very proud of her," said Chief Master Sgt. Richard Smith, command chief of the Air Guard, in a July 9 e-mail. "She will represent the Air National Guard and the Air Force very well in the next year."

As an Outstanding Airmen, Goodno will be honored by the Air Force Association in Washington, D.C., this September; although, it will not be her first trip to the nation's capital.

In May, Goodno traveled to Washington to serve as a representative of Air Guard service members during a Senate subcommittee meeting. There, she wore her dress-blue uniform and was introduced to the senators by Smith as an exceptional Airman. Then she sat through Senate testimony by the National Guard Bureau's senior leadership.

"It was quite an honor and very interesting to see," said Goodno, but added she had little time to sightsee.

Lucky for Goodno, she returned to Washington a few weeks later for the Outstanding Airmen ceremonies. That time, she toured the monuments during morning jogs before joining the other Outstanding Airmen at more than a half dozen ceremonies June 15-19.

"I kind of want to ask them the same thing: 'what did you do to get here,' because it's so interesting," said Goodno of her contemporaries during the visit. "I mean, what does an Airman have to do to get to this point?"

Goodno credited her accomplishments to her leadership, her deployment to Iraq, her volunteerism in the community and her continuing education.

Last year, she earned three associate degrees after working them piecemeal through many years and between deployments for Operations Desert Storm, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

"I finally finished," she said with a smile.

Goodno joined the National Guard in 1992 after serving on active duty and admitted she knew nothing about the Guard at that time – she first learned of the Air Guard and its combat communication positions through a recruiter.

It was a total surprise, said Goodno, that she received so high a recognition.

"To me, I think I just did my job, that's the personality that I have: I just made it happen," said Goodno.

But officials said Goodno volunteered for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2002, and served as a communications manager in Kuwait. Then, she volunteered for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2007 and deployed to Bagdad International Airport as a maintenance superintendent for the 447th Air Expeditionary Squadron (AES).

There, Goodno said she had a great commander who had the foresight to deploy all the necessary communications equipment with her.

"He saw that I could do it and saw some leadership in me and that I could get the job done and let me go do things that I would normally have not done," she said.

Squadron officials there called her work outstanding and recognized her successful supervision of 27 deployed personnel by awarding her AES SNCO of the month. Goodno also volunteered her time as a notary for deployed members and supported morale events during deployed holidays.

"I'm the kind of person that if I see a lot of stuff that's not getting done, I'll just jump in, it doesn't really matter what career field it is," she said.

Speaking of her contemporaries again, Goodno stressed the importance of recognizing superior performance, especially for supervisors to manage time to submit awards and to get Airmen involved in their communities.

"I look at other people that may not have the same type of outgoing personality as me, and that person might never get recognized," she said. "I think that programs like this make it viable to get them recognition, and I do think that there are people who stand out. It might not be for their military work, but it might be [for] something they did in their community or getting their degree."

184th Rifle company presents governor with wartime honor

By Capt. Matthew J. McCarthy

On Aug. 25, 2008, current and former leadership of Charlie Company, First Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, presented Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger with a California flag and a certificate stating the flag was carried on a combat patrol while the unit was deployed to Iraq.

Charlie Company, based out of Auburn, deployed to southern Baghdad in 2005 and suffered one KIA and more than 20 wounded. Several of the unit's Soldiers received valor awards, as well.

During their combat patrols, unit members carried U.S. and California flags in their vehicles with the intention of presenting them to family, friends and other supporters back home. The California flag designated for Gov. Schwarzenegger was carried on patrol on Dec. 15, 2005, the day of elections for the Iraqi Council of Representatives.

Upon returning to California, the commander and first sergeant framed the flag and certificate, and for more than two years attempted to present the governor with the gift, their efforts reaching fruition in August 2008. The unit's leadership presented the flag to Gov. Schwarzenegger in recognition of his outspoken support of the California National Guard.

Charlie Company's rich heritage dates back to the formation of the Auburn Greys in 1861. In addition to their 2005 deployment to Iraq, the company has provided Soldiers to neighboring units for repeated deployments, including sending more than 50 troops with First Battalion, 185th Armor Regiment, as part of their mobilization to Iraq in August 2008. At present, the unit has more than 50 Soldiers in pre-mobilization training for the upcoming KFOR 11 rotation to Kosovo.

PHOTO BY SGT. MAJOR LARRY ELLSWORTH

Captain Matthew J. McCarthy, left, 1st Lt. James J. Waters, center, and Master Sgt. Robert A. Matey present a framed California flag to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger. Charlie Company, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, carried the flag on combat patrols during a 2005 deployment to Baghdad, Iraq. Waters served as the company's commander and Matey as first sergeant, while McCarthy deployed as a platoon leader and now serves as company commander.

Legacy of a Soldier

670th MP Furillo's service spanned four decades

By Spc. Donald Mason

On April 19, 1952, Gen. Douglas MacArthur addressed a joint session of Congress and delivered an emotional speech that left a single line embedded in American history and Army lore: "Old soldiers never die, they just fade away."

For the 670th Military Police Company, this now-famous quote by MacArthur could not be truer than with the Sept. 7, 2008, retirement ceremony of Master Sgt. Anthony Furillo, whose career spanned more than four decades, twenty-seven years of service, and two wars.

In January 1968 a young Furillo first swore an oath of allegiance to his country and joined the Army. Furillo subsequently attended basic training at Fort Ord, Calif., which was the first of seven bases at which he would serve during his eight voluntary enlistments.

In 1969, Furillo voluntarily signed a request for service in Viet Nam. The decision to enlist was rare during the Viet Nam era, and is indicative of Furillo's commitment to the Warrior Ethos to "always placing the mission first." Furillo would spend 13 months at Da Nang before being discharged from the Army.

A few years after his discharge, Furillo would meet his future wife of 37 years, Patricia, while attending college. Soon after marriage, Furillo and Patricia adopted the four children they had originally sponsored as foster parents – Duncan, Kristine, Lucy and Anthony Jr.

In October 1982, Furillo once again felt the desire to serve his country and reenlisted with the California Army National Guard. In October 2000, Furillo was selected to serve as the Los Angeles team leader for the Veterans Honors Program. Furillo conveyed that of all the special-duty positions he has had the honor to hold, the VHP was the most satisfying.

In January 2003, while serving with the 670th MPs, Furillo once again received orders to serve in a combat zone, and subsequently served at Camp Bucca and Abu Ghraib prison. During this deployment Furillo states he lost not only a good Soldier, but a special friend when Spc. Eric Ramirez was killed during an attack on his convoy.

After 27 years of service to his country, Furillo made one thing clear: Both the Soldiers and their spouses are "dedicated" Soldiers.

"It was not easy with me being away so much," said Furillo, " but my wife is a strong-willed woman and she did a great job raising them (their children) while I was gone overseas."

PHOTO BY SPC. SHAMEKIA DILLARD

Members of the 670th Military Police Company present Master Sgt. Anthony Furillo, center, with a plaque at his retirement ceremony Sept. 7, 2008. Furillo's career spanned more than four decades, 27 years of service and two wars.

PHOTOS BY STEPHANIE WEST

Linked to the community

For Cal Guard officer, golf a spiritual, charitable pursuit

By 2nd Lt. Will Martin

Lieutenant Colonel Renee MacDonald's love for golf borders on the spiritual. To hear her describe it, golf holds an almost zen-like quality for the California Army National Guard's 49th Personnel Service Battalion commander.

"It's the most peaceful place," said MacDonald of her times on the links. "More than a sport, more than mechanics," golf is an "experience."

MacDonald began playing golf at age 10, and her talent was apparent. Enough so that she later accepted an athletic scholarship to Brigham Young University. After college, she enlisted with the Army, serving in the enlisted ranks before earning her commission and completing more than eight years on active duty.

It was while stationed in Germany during Army tournaments that MacDonald recaptured the love for golf that defined her youth. Good enough was MacDonald that in 1996 she entered the ranks of the LPGA, the premier professional golf association for women.

And while MacDonald tries "to play in one tournament a year," her focus now is on teaching, using her game as a vehicle for helping others.

"I try and find ways through my golf to give back to the community," she said. "That's a priority of mine."

Giving back

MacDonald's volunteerism is as impressive as her golf swing. The Military Youth Connection, California Minority Youth Association, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, Ronald McDonald's Children's Deaf Camp, LPGA Girls Club and Feed the Hungry have all benefited from her pro bono instructing and fundraising.

Golf, MacDonald said, can instill life skills. While many golfers focus on "succeeding" – and grow frustrated when they fail – MacDonald embraces her sport as a medium for growth, something she tries to pass on to her students.

"I use techniques that focus on their awareness," said MacDonald. "That's different than a lot of teachers who just teach techniques. (For me), it's the whole experience."

While MacDonald confesses that her students don't always grasp her esoteric style, many do. Among her fondest memories are her time spent with the deaf students at the Ronald McDonald Camp. While there, she learned some sign language to connect with the students, who while lacking the ability to hear, seemed capable, like MacDonald, of enjoying the game's intangible qualities.

"They just *feel* hitting the golf ball," said MacDonald. "That was a really joyous experience."

MacDonald's charitable work has also led to environments where golf is a curious rarity. Through the Inner City Youth Golf Program, she offers lessons to urban, minority youth, who, she said, find the sport "very rewarding."

"I am grateful to have been in a position to donate a scholarship for one of the youth," MacDonald said.

While the demands of work and life prevent MacDonald from golfing as often as she would like, she still takes time to participate in fundraising tournaments, often with her military colleagues.

How does the LPGA pro fare against her peers?

"I can hold my own," she laughs.

When asked how many of her coworkers at the Joint Force Headquarters, where she serves as chief of the Medical Services Branch, know she's a pro, MacDonald admits she prefers to deflect attention.

"I keep it very quiet. I've never been one to flash my accomplishments," said MacDonald. "My focus is on sharing my passion for golf with as many people as I can."

Lieutenant Colonel Renee MacDonald, commander for the California Army National Guard's 49th Personnel Service Battalion, follows through after a swing on Aug. 24 at Turkey Creek Golf Course in Lincoln.

Lieutenant Colonel MacDonald's golf bag rests outside a waterway on Turkey Creek Golf Course in Lincoln. The bag, labeled with the "These Girls Rock" slogan, identifies MacDonald as an LPGA teaching pro.

DIMHRS to streamline military systems

By 2nd Lt. Will Martin

The U.S. military is about to get a lot simpler. And if you can embrace the change, say its proponents, your life might get a lot easier.

Beginning with the Army next March, about 160 outdated personnel and pay systems will be incorporated under one umbrella: The Defense Integrated Military Human Resources System, or simply DIMHRS (pronounced "dime-ers"). The Air Force is scheduled to implement DIMHRS shortly after the Army, with the Navy and Marine Corps to follow.

More than 10 years in the making, DIMHRS was born out of a task force convened in 1995 and will become the world's largest human resources planning program.

As a fully streamlined system, DIMHRS will automatically update any changes to a servicemember's personnel and payroll data across the board. To a California Guardsman, this means avoiding the hurdles of pushing through paperwork during monthly drills and, more importantly, a greater likelihood of getting paid correctly and on time.

DIMHRS will provide every Soldier access to about 150 self-service items, will be Web-based and available 24 hours a day, seven days a week from anywhere there is an internet connection.

"Soldiers will be able to see where they are in the process at any time," said Wayne Gregson, California Army National Guard DIMHRS program manager at the Joint Force Headquarters in Sacramento. "It'll be available 24/7 from anywhere in world."

Soldiers will not only be able to view their records, said Gregson, but they'll also be able to update personal information, all without the aid of unit human resource specialists.

If a Soldier should change branches or status, her records will automatically follow her under the integrated all-service, all-component DIMHRS program, a feature particularly important to the frequently mobilized California Guardsmen. With a mere change of status in the system, the servicemember should begin receiving her new pay and benefits.

In addition, Gregson said, active duty commanders will be able to track the real-time information of Guardsmen placed under their command.

"Whatever unit you're attached to, they will be able to see you," said Gregson. "A commander will have visualization of personnel and pay records when authorized."

DIMHRS will be a brand new face on the pay and personnel process, and the learning curve won't be without its challenges, said Gregson: "The hardest part will be convincing Soldiers that this change is a good one."

In an effort to combat any resistance to change, Gregson said the California Army National Guard will educate and train every Soldier before DIMHRS implementation.

More information about DIMHRS can be found at **www.dimhrs.mil, www.armydimhrs.army.mil** and the CAARNG DIMHRS Integration Office at **(916) 854-3370.**

PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. TABITHA KUYKENDALL

An Airman uses a computer to update information at Manas Air Base, Kyrgyzstan, May 8, 2008. With the introduction of DIMHRS next year, all military personnel should have a much easier time tracking and updating their pay and personnel records online.

McClellan 'safety man' keeps people, environment safe

By Sgt. 1st Class Lori A. Simmons
National Guard Bureau

During the most recent bout of wildfires, the California National Guard turned to talented Airmen at McClellan Airfield to keep the operations running smoothly on the ground.

Senior Master Sgt. Aaron "Stoney" Smith of the Wyoming Air National Guard is the safety officer for the 302nd Air Expeditionary Group which worked out of McClellan. He said his job is not just about enforcing rules; it's about preventing accidents before they can happen.

"[The 302nd operating from McClellan is made up of] three different units [and] some of them are not normally around aircraft," Smith said. "So, the main issue is to educate everyone on doing what's safe." According to Smith, just like any other mission, complacency can set in. He says the first day people are very cautious, but after a while they get comfortable and have a tendency to relax their personal safety standards.

"This is really the time to do a lot of education and remind [the crews] don't do this or don't do that," Smith explained. "What I've done is go around and watch what people are doing…If I see something [unsafe], I let them know so we can fix it."

Smith's job is to not only keep people safe; environmental safety is just as important. During the fire fighting operations, one major concern is the run-off from the retardant reloading operations.

"[The fire retardant] is environmentally friendly, but when you put a lot of anything down the drain, you still want to let the water treatment plant know what's going on," Smith emphasized. "So, if [the water treatment plant] gets a high flux of something, they can be prepared for it."

To help prevent a large amount of fire retardant from getting into the water system, crews have built a holding area for the run-off.

"We pump the run-off [from the holding area] into a tank, test the water [for toxic chemicals] and dispose of it properly," Smith said.

So far, under Smith's careful watch, the 302nd AEG hasn't had any major spills or reportable accidents.

The 302nd AEG is a part of a unified military effort of U.S. Northern Command to provide assistance to the U.S. Forest Service, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the National Interagency Fire Center.

PHOTO BY PETTY OFFICER 1st CLASS STEVEN J. WEBER

Senior Master Sgt. Aaron "Stoney" Smith, assigned to the 153rd Airlift Wing of the Wyoming Air National Guard, watches for safety issues as an Airman washes fire retardant off the cargo doors of a C-130 Hercules equipped with the modular airborne fire fighting system at McClellan Airfield July 8.

Los Al training base to fire up hydrogen-powered energy system

By Lt. Col. Reuben Sendejas

PHOTO BY TROY HARDIN

The Los Alamitos Joint Forces Training Base is partnering with another federal agency to develop a hydrogen-powered project to supply backup power to the installation.

In partnership with the Department of Energy, the JFTB is developing a low-maintenance, zero-emission backup power system for use by the base's fire department. The DOE is providing 90 percent of the funding for the nearly $700,000 project.

The backup power system will be used to maintain constant power for the site's fire department, building 34, which supports their 24/7 Crash, Fire, Rescue response mission. The "green" system is the first of several applications of renewable energy resources JFTB is planning for future projects in order to reduce operating costs, environmental impact and continue the California National Guard's leadership role in sustainability.

The DOE is also funding a Hydrogen/Renewable Energy Feasibility Study for the installation. When completed, the feasibility of developing similar beneficial projects at other Cal Guard installations will be actively pursued.

Reliable power is a necessity for critical infrastructure systems. While grid power under normal conditions is reliable, critical and emergency services require completely uninterruptible power supply systems. To ensure uninterrupted power, backup systems are installed.

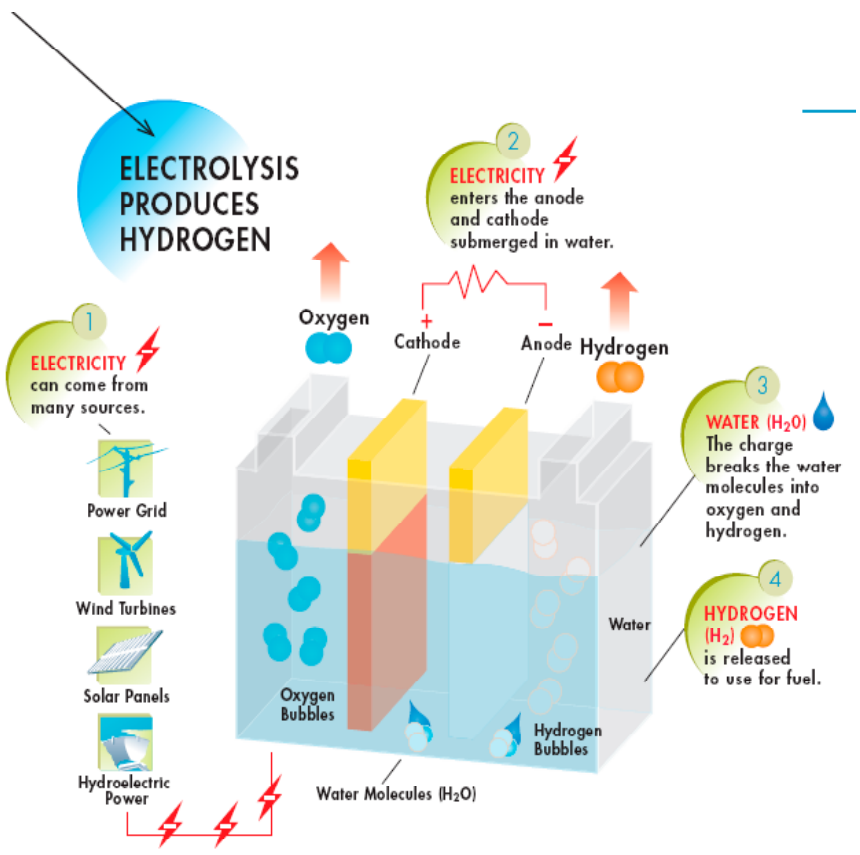
Uninterruptible systems are usually powered by diesel generators to provide electricity during periods when the power grid is down. However, diesel systems are not environmentally friendly. Diesel systems produce greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, and also require the expenditure of a non-renewable resource, diesel fuel, to keep them running.

The Cal Guard's desire to enhance its sustainability mission dictates that solutions be found which utilize clean, zero-emission, renewable-energy sources to provide backup power.

Solar energy is commonly employed to generate electrical power; however, solar power fluctuates depending on the time of day and weather conditions. The system JFTB is planning to install produces energy from a solar-array system by the electrolysis of water to generate hydrogen.

The hydrogen can be used on demand by hydrogen fuel-cell systems to generate electrical power. Hydrogen fuel cells are much cleaner than diesel generators, producing water as their only byproduct. The excess hydrogen produced by the system will be stored in a tank to be used during bad weather so that its use will not be interrupted.

In addition, once enough energy is stored from the solar array to meet backup power demands, additional energy generated by the solar array can be sent to the grid for energy credits and to reduce the demand on non-renewable resources.



Electrolysis uses electricity from many sources to pass a current through water, splitting the water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen. The electrolyzer contains a thin membrane coated with a catalyst to speed the reaction. The hydrogen is stored for fuel and the oxygen is released into the atmosphere.

When hydrogen is produced by renewable energy and used in a fuel cell vehicle, it is nearly pollution-free and has almost no impact on the environment. Researchers are exploring even more renewable sources of hydrogen, including biomass and algae.

A FIT FORCE

Staying healthy at home, work and war

By Lt. Col. Susan Pangelinan
Joint Staff Medical Advisor

We all know it's the right thing to do, and most of us grudgingly do it—staying fit keeps us "fighting" more effectively and helps us live longer lives. But not everyone realizes that staying fit and keeping a regular routine of eating right, exercising, and balancing the many demands of home, civilian work, and Guard duties is not just for sports enthusiasts or health nuts, it's for everyone one of us needing to meet the nearly impossible daily tasks expected of a Citizen Solider or Airman.

At Home and Work

Many of us face daunting schedules: Five full days of work each week, our children's soccer games or school concerts, Guard "homework" due at the upcoming drill, and then foregoing two badly needed days off in order to report as a leader at our Cal Guard unit on the weekend.

How do we keep ourselves going at this pace month after month, for a 20-year (or more) Cal Guard career? Fitness plays a big part in being able to keep our batteries charged and ready for all the demands thrown at us. When we are healthy, that is, within recommended weight and fitness standards, we can work long hours and handle the unexpected as if it were routine — being called to wildfire duty, hurricane relief or being deployed to the Balkans.

The connection between being fit and being successful in juggling family and the two-career demands of a Guardsman has been affirmed in study after study. Fewer sick days, injuries and accidents occur on the job when workers are healthy, well-rested and fit. And honestly, if you are not the supervisor, manager or employee that regularly calls in sick, has accidents or is delayed in projects or meetings because of illness, you are more likely to progress further in your career.

Being healthy and fit has a psychological advantage in the workplace, as well. Think of when you were at your most healthy — you likely exuded confidence and enthusiasm; now recall when you felt least fit, when you were sick — weren't you tired and irritable? As Americans, we increasingly spend more hours physically at work than in past decades; so consider whom you would rather be around for a 10 or 12-hour shift: someone who has staying power and a good attitude, or someone barely making it through duty and dragging themselves though the day.

Air Force Staff Sgt. Jessica Schwien, fitness instructor, leads a group into a cool down session after an hourlong workout at the Dragon Fitness Center at Aviano Air Base, Italy, April 14.

PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ASHLEY WOOD

At War

The military medical community has made great strides in the area of the "human weapons system." We, as Soldiers and Airmen are the most expensive and highly trained weapon in the Department of Defense's arsenal. Yet our critical talents and vital contributions to the mission can be sidelined by the common cold, frequent aliments and avoidable illness and injury. Historically, one of the top reasons for reduction of mission capability was not through combat injuries, but was instead due to disease and non-battle injuries. We can fight longer and more effectively when we are healthy and fit. In addition to good hygiene, we need to sleep when mission and safety permit, observe standard work/rest cycles and water consumption tables, and avoid over-the-counter medications and health products and alcohol/tobacco products which may cause health problems and increase susceptibility to dehydration.

Maintaining physical fitness is also a factor in reducing the common operational stressors of jet lag, longer work hours, carrying heavy gear, changes in food/fluid intake, high operations tempo and psychological stress.

Summary

We must keep ourselves fit for our families, our nation and ourselves. Commenting on the recently released "Report on Physical Activity and Health" the acting surgeon general, Dr. Audrey Manley emphasized that "because physical activity is so directly related to preventing disease and premature death and to maintaining a high quality of life, we must accord it the same level of attention that we give other important public health practices that affect the entire nation. Physical activity thus joins the front ranks of essential health objectives, such as sound nutrition, the use of seat belts and the prevention of adverse health effects of tobacco."

Increasing physical activity to promote fitness is not just for passing the military fitness test or qualifying for a tour of duty; it helps us meet the challenges of home and work, and even war. As busy as our lives are, we should make time for a walk around the neighborhood, a bike ride with our children, or even a round of golf with friends while on TDY. Fitness can help us meet the demands of modern life, and it can also be a way to spend time with friends and family while on promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Calories Used per Hour in Common Physical Activities

Physical Activities	Approximate Calories / 30 Minutes for 154 lb Person[1]	Approximate Calories / Hr for 154 lb Person[1]
Light Gardening / yard work	165	330
Dancing	165	330
Golf (walking & carry clubs)	165	330
Walking (3.5 mph)	140	280
Running / Jogging (5 mph)	295	590
Bicycling (< 10 mph)	295	590
Aerobics	240	480
Basketball (vigorous)	220	440

Buy goods, help injured veterans

The AbilityOne program seeks to secure jobs for wounded veterans and other persons with severe disabilities. According to their Web site, "the AbilityOne Program creates jobs and training opportunities for people who are blind or who have other severe disabilities, empowering them to lead more productive and independent lives. Its primary means of doing so is by requiring Government agencies to purchase selected products and services from nonprofit organizations employing such individuals."

Of the 43,000 workers involved in the program, 1,300 are wounded veterans from the U.S. Armed Forces. The Department of Defense is also the program's No. 1 customer, purchasing a number of goods and services through AbilityOne. To learn more, log on to **www.abilityone.com.**

Military coupons online

Military.com's classified section offers a wealth of coupons for servicemembers, offering everything from discounted pizzas to free sporting events. The links to online coupons are submitted by servicemembers and can be accessed by:

1. logging on to **www.military.com**
2. Clicking the "Benefits" tab at the top of the Web page.
3. Scrolling down to the "Resources" section and clicking the "Classifieds" link
4. Scrolling down to the "Services" section and clicking the "Coupons" link

Free camping during GWOT leave

Servicemembers on mid- or post-deployment leave from Global War on Terrorism duty in a hostile fire zone can enjoy free day use and waived camping fees at U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recreation sites. Servicemembers will be required to show identification and leave forms to enter the sites and earn the benefits, which are also good for accompanying immediate family members. The waivers are only good on a space-available and walk-up basis. For more information on the program, log on to the Corps' Lakes Gateway Web site at **www.corpslakes.us.**

Financial wisdom via the Web

The Department of Defense offers a Web site containing financial news and information, as well as links to organizations specializing in servicemembers' financial issues and tips for troops from popular financial guru Suzie Orman. To access the site go to **www.defenselink.mil/home/features/2008/0808_finance/.**

DID YOU KNOW?

If you are an Army enlisted Soldier in rank of E-4 through E-8, you should be working on updating your promotion worksheets right now?

The promotion cutoff for the next Enlisted Promotion System has been moved up; the new timeframe for units to submit administrative points for promotion packets is now Jan. 31, 2009. This means your packet should be submitted to your unit much earlier than last year for timely processing. The proactive Soldier would plan to have their packet in during the November 2008 Inactive Duty Training drill. Soldiers completing NCOES or MOSQ between Feb. 1, 2009, and March 31, 2009, will submit their DA Form 1059 for coding through MILPO. This action will ensure you are placed on the appropriate promotion list.

Lastly, in order to get promotion points for civilian education, ensure that you request a sealed transcript from your learning institution and have it sent directly to: Joint Force Headquarters, 9800 Goethe Road, Box 26, ATTN: Civilian Education, Sacramento Ca 95826.

Below are suspense dates for the FY09 promotion cycle:
Jan. 31, 2009: Cutoff date to enter administrative points.
Feb. 2, 2009: EPS packets due to JFHQ-G-1.
March 31, 2009: Input all NCOES completion and MOS changes into the system to ensure proper Order of Merit Listing .

Contact your unit Readiness NCO for additional information.

Union Soldiers (foreground) exchange vollies with Confederates during a Civil War reenactment at Gibson Ranch, Antelope, Calif., hosted by the National Civil War Association.

Photo by Spc. Eddie Siguenza

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