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GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard

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Commander's corner

An episode of chivalry and kindness

Major General William H. Wade II

Informal truces have been a military tradition nearly as long as there has been armed conflict. The Civil War, for instance, is replete with stories of Yanks and Rebs trading commodities — newspapers, magazines, food, tobacco and coffee — during lulls between pitched battles. There is documentation that recounts stories of combatants fishing on opposite sides of rivers when not actively fighting, and even sharing blackberry bushes, with Federals and Confederates picking berries on opposites sides of the same bush.

However, no truce was as strange or memorable as the Christmas Truce of 1914, called "one human episode amid all the atrocities" by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who is best known as the author of the Sherlock Holmes stories. It was perhaps the most remarkable incident of World War I and — by many accounts — arguably the most remarkable in all military history. Although there are many accounts and hundreds of anecdotal stories regarding this most unusual happening, I have taken the most noteworthy accounting from a letter written by a British Soldier to his younger sister, which is synopsized below:

Christmas Day, 1914
My dear sister Janet,

It is 2:00 in the morning and most of our men are asleep in their dugouts. There has been little serious fighting of late. The first battles of the war left so many dead that both sides have held back until replacements could come from home. So we have mostly stayed in our trenches and waited. And the rain has fallen almost daily. It collects in our trenches and turns to mud. It splatters and cakes everything.

Through all this, we couldn't help feeling curious about the German soldiers across the way. They faced the same dangers and slogged in the same muck. Their first trench was only 50 yards from ours; close enough that we sometimes heard their voices. We joked about them and almost felt that we had something in common. Yesterday morning — Christmas Eve Day — we had our first good freeze. Everything was tinged white with frost. It was perfect Christmas weather.

As darkness fell on Christmas Eve, the shooting stopped entirely. I went to the dugout to rest and drifted off to sleep. All at once my friend John was shaking me awake, saying, "Come and see! See what the Germans are doing!" As I stepped out of the dugout, clusters of tiny lights were shining all along the German line as far as the eye could see. The Germans had placed Christmas trees in front of their trenches, lit by candle or lantern like beacons of good will.

And then we heard their voices raised in song, as they sang "Silent Night." When the song was finished, the men in our trenches applauded, and one of our men started singing "The First Noel," to which the Germans responded with enthusiastic applause. This continued back and forth until both sides were singing together and harmonizing across No Man's Land. More amazing is what came next. One German shouted, "English, come over! You no shoot, we no shoot." We agreed that there would be no shooting before midnight tomorrow. Across the way, groups of two or three Germans climbed out of their trenches and started towards us. Then some of us were climbing out and in minutes, we were all in No Man's Land shaking hands with men who had been trying to kill us just hours before.

Before long, a bonfire was built and around it everyone mingled. Those who could not converse could still exchange gifts — our cigarettes for their cigars, our tea for their coffee, and our corned beef for their sausage. Badges and buttons from uniforms changed owners. And then it dawned on all of us: These are not the "savage barbarians" we've read so much about. They are men with homes and families, hopes and fears, principles, and yes, love of country. In other words, men like us.

As it grew late, more songs were traded around the fire, and then all joined in for "Auld Lang Syne." Then, we parted with promises to meet again tomorrow. And so, dear sister, tell me what does it all mean, this impossible befriending of enemies? Of course, it means regrettably little. All nations say they want peace. Yet, on this Christmas morning, I wonder if we want it quite enough.

Your loving brother,
Tom

With this classic story of chivalry and kindness in mind, I wish everyone — friend and foe alike — a joyous holiday season, with my wish being that such peace and harmony lasts everyday throughout the year.

Be safe this holiday season

Command Sergeant Major William Clark Jr.

The holiday season will soon be upon us, and off-duty privately owned vehicle accidents continue to be the leading cause of fatalities within the joint services. We must be vigilant in ensuring that our Soldiers and Airmen are focused on safety. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, approximately 4,020 people in the United States die each year from car accidents between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day.

During this joyous time of the year, we all must ensure we spend quality time with our families. However, it is imperative that we remain focused on safety and plan accordingly as we travel to see our families and loved ones during the holiday season. I expect leaders at all levels to speak with their Soldiers and Airmen and remind them of the safety hazards in their homes and on the road when driving in poor weather conditions. Leaders should urge their Soldiers and Airmen to use risk assessment to identify hazards and mitigate possible risks.

Our Soldiers and Airmen who have recently returned home from abroad in support of the global war on terrorism will be going through a reintegration period with their families. I am always amazed by the outpouring of support from families during stressful periods of mobilization. We understand how important our families are, and we encourage our redeployed Soldiers and Airmen to take time to decompress and spend quality time with them.

Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Christmas and Kwanzaa are special holidays that bring families together. Please take the time to connect with your family and share this joyous season together. I am proud of your service to our great nation and your personal sacrifices while serving in our armed forces today. I look forward to what the future will bring for the California National Guard in the upcoming year.

Remember we are a Band of Brothers and Sisters, and it takes each and every one of us looking out for one another to protect our fighting force. Continue to place safety first in everything you do, and have a safe holiday.

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
- ★ Spell out acronyms, abbreviations and full unit designations on first reference
- ★ If there is a public affairs officer assigned to your unit, ensure he or she reviews it

Photographs:

- ★ Highest resolution possible
- ★ No retouched photos
- ★ Caption (what is happening, who is pictured and the date of the photo)
- ★ Credit (who took the photo)

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Cover Shot

Photo by Sgt. Kenneth Bince

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger gets a hug from Sgt. Deleal Gladney of the 49th Military Police Brigade during the governor's visit to Camp Victory, Iraq, on Nov. 17.

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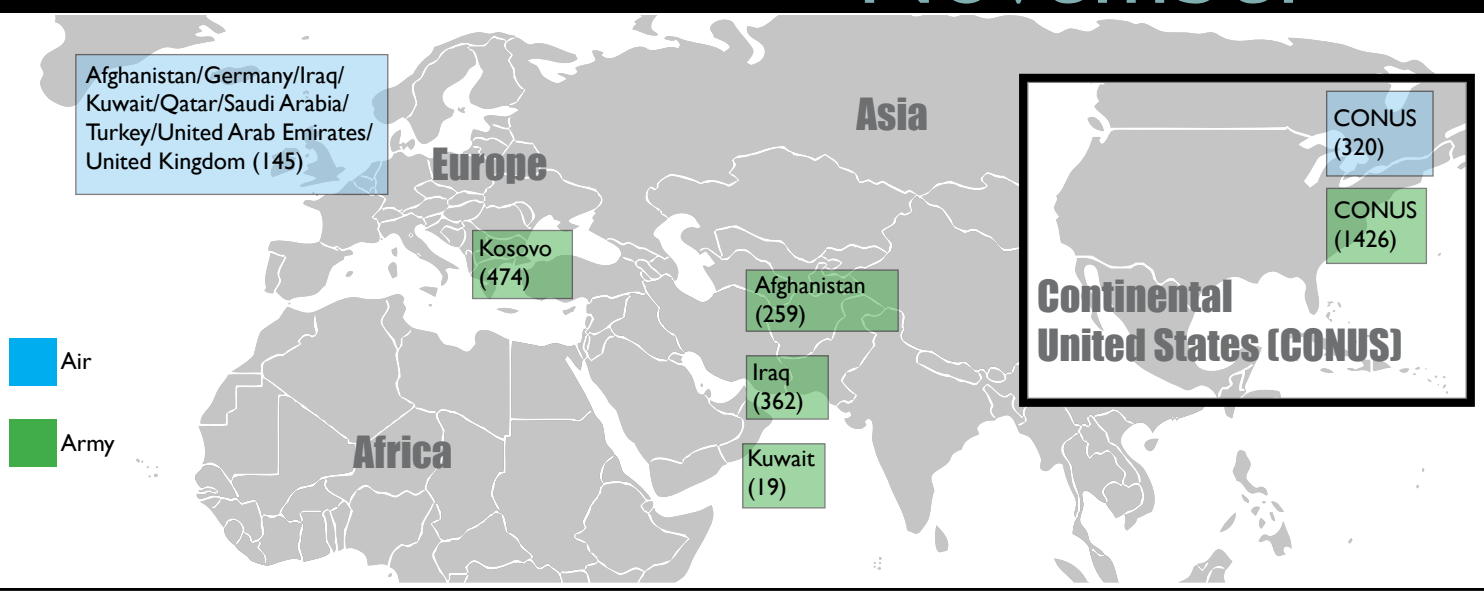


ABOVE: Students at Hillcrest Elementary School flock to an OH-58 helicopter landed by Chief Warrant Officer Michael Yarbrough during an anti-drug presentation in October by members of the Guard's Counterdrug Task Force Drug Demand Reduction Team. The team organized several visits to Los Angeles-area schools during Red Ribbon Week, an annual drug-awareness campaign. BELOW: A Hillcrest student tries on a crew member's helmet with the help of Sgt. Mayra Tovar, an OH-58 helicopter mechanic with Company A, 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment.

PHOTO BY SGT. JAN M. BENDER

Soldiers spread anti-drug message to children

By Sgt. Jan M. Bender
Los Angeles Regional Public Affairs

As Chief Warrant Officer Michael Yarbrough banks his OH-58 helicopter hard, circling above the campus of Hillcrest Elementary School, his ear-to-ear grin is mirrored by hundreds of frenzied grade-schoolers on the ground applauding his arrival. This, he says, is the best part of his job.

"Everybody knows somebody who had superstar potential," Yarbrough, a member of the Guard's Counterdrug Task Force, later told the students. "They could have been in the NBA or been a scholar, but now they look [much older than they are], they've got no teeth left or they're not even here anymore.

"[It's] all because they took that wrong turn, somehow they gave up on themselves. They stopped believing, lost focus, and drugs took over."

Yarbrough was one of several Soldiers working alongside the Task Force's Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) Team during Red Ribbon Week, an annual drug-awareness campaign held the last full week in October. The team builds relationships and ensures communities statewide have the resources they need to educate youths about the destruction that drugs can bring into their lives. During Red Ribbon Week, the team organized several visits to schools in the Los Angeles area, incorporating helicopters and humvees into their presentations.

On their own, the team's uniformed Soldiers had no problem maintaining the attention of the young audience, but once the helicopter set down in the middle of the playground, little else could compete. Rotors still spinning overhead, Yarbrough climbed out of his aircraft and was waved over to the podium in front of the mass of wide-eyed youths. He had not planned to make a speech, but Yarbrough's instant celebrity status with the children was magnetic, and the school's principal introduced him with the zeal of a talk-show host.

"There was just a rainbow of kids, all smiles, hanging on every word," Yarbrough laughed. "I just told them the truth and kept it positive. … I said nothing's impossible. Sober, you can be anything you want to be, anything you dream of, as long as you believe in yourself and stay focused. But most definitely, you've got to stay off of drugs. … It'll just take you nowhere."

Parents and teachers said they thought conveying this message in such a memorable way would pay dividends.

"We typically do what most schools do … offer flyers, posters, guest speakers or themed activities," said Joyce Pfrimmer, Hillcrest Elementary Parent Teacher Association president. "But when the opportunity arose to have a helicopter fly in and have the pilot and other officers speak, we knew this would be far more impactful."

In addition to learning about the importance of living drug-free, the students embraced the opportunity to take a close-up look at the helicopter.

"They will always remember the huge chopper they got to take a picture with, the pilot they got to talk to, the helmet they tried on, the buttons and knobs they saw on the dashboard," Pfrimmer said. "All those visuals will remind them of what that chopper stands for."

Yarbrough explained that the Counterdrug Task Force includes Guard members specializing in military intelligence, infantry, engineering and other skills, all with the goal of getting drugs off the street. But the mission does not end there.

"Once you take them [off the street], there's still the demand," he said. "So we're out here today trying to take away [drug dealers'] future customers."

Staff Sgt. Robert Randall, the DDR Team's prevention officer for Los Angeles County, said that if a positive role model does not make an impact on a child's life, that leaves the window open for the wrong person to make an impact.

"I want kids to know that no matter how bad their life is or their neighborhood is, they can make positive choices in their lives and be successful," he said.

PHOTO BY SGT. (CA) GENE ARIAS

As the day's events came to a close and the students ran about requesting autographs from the Soldiers, it was evident from the smiles on students' and Soldiers' faces that the exchange had been a success.

"Their principal told me that several of the kids had told him that this was the best day of their life," Yarbrough said with look of amusement. "They re-energized me and gave me a new vigor … to get out there and give the drug dealers another black eye."

Wings, Wheels & Rotors Expo attracts 28,000

By Laura Herzog
JFTB-Los Alamitos Public Affairs

More than 28,000 southern California residents gathered on the flight line at Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos for the 2009 Wings, Wheels & Rotors Expo on Oct. 25. This was the eighth year for the world class car and air show, which is sponsored by the Los Alamitos Area Chamber of Commerce and the California National Guard.

Those in attendance enjoyed a day of fun with classic cars, historic airplanes, live music, helicopter rides and special activities.

"It is a pleasure for the Joint Forces Training Base to work together with the Los Alamitos Chamber of Commerce," said Lt. Col. Timothy L. O'Reilly, commander of the training site on Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos. "Nowhere else in the Los Angeles/Orange County area can military and civilian organizations come together to host such a wonderful family oriented event."

The JFTB's airfield is the last remaining military airfield in the greater Los Angeles/Orange County area and it remains one of the most critical disaster support facilities for southern California. The Wings, Wheels & Rotors Expo helps support the morale, welfare and recreation funds for military personnel.

PHOTO BY SGT. (CA) GENE ARIAS

The 40th Infantry Division Band performs at the annual Wings, Wheels & Rotors Expo, a world class air show and car show, on Oct. 25 at Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos.

Among the attractions at the expo was "Executive Sweet," a World War II B-25 Mitchell medium bomber that attendees were able to ride. The B-25 was manufactured for the Army Air Corps by North American Aviation in 1944, has a wingspan of 68 feet and was used mostly for training Army bomber crews. Her long flying history includes a starring role in the movie "Catch 22."

When word got out that people could ride aboard a piece of flying history, they lined up and sold out every flight.

Cal Guardsman wins National Cavalry Competition

By Chief Warrant Officer Alan D. Alexander
Detachment 1, Joint Force Headquarters

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Wall of the Cal Guard's 223rd Infantry Regiment won the 8th Annual National Cavalry Competition this year, beating 54 riders from across the country.

The event, Sept. 24-26 on Fort Robinson, Neb., tested riding, weapons use and military knowledge in four individual competitions: military horsemanship, stadium jumping, mounted saber and mounted pistol. The top five finishers in each event moved to the finals, the Bolte Cup.

Wall finished fifth in two individual competitions — mounted pistol and mounted saber — and placed seventh in stadium jumping, which requires competitors to ride their horses over a series of fences.

Including Wall, 15 riders qualified for the Bolte Cup, a challenging and complex course of jumps, obstacles, saber targets and pistol targets. The course also requires the rider to dismount from their horse, fire a cavalry carbine at a target, and then remount and continue to engage the remaining targets.

"It is truly a test of military horsemanship unlike that of any other organized competition," said Frederick Klink, vice president and director of the U.S. Cavalry Association, a nonprofit dedicated to preserving the history of the U.S. cavalry, both horse-mounted and mechanized.

Klink said this year's Bolte Cup was the most competitive it had ever been, with the top five finishers separated by only a few points.

He added that in addition to winning the individual championship, Wall contributed in other ways, improving the competition for years to come. The National Cavalry Competition includes three team events, one of which was devised by Wall. He created a cross-country mobility test in which a team of riders, with a guide, negotiates an unmarked route over unfamiliar terrain to arrive at an enemy camp. The riders then must engage with a unit saber charge. This year's course was six miles long and included two creek crossings and a steep downhill section. Each team's score was based on their time and saber accuracy.

"This competition was conceived and developed by Jeff Wall and has added significantly to the National Cavalry Competition as an all-around test for a military horse-mounted unit," Klink said.

Wall noted that people often think horsemen no longer have a place in the armed forces, but that is not necessarily the case.

"It is easy to assume that the use of the horse in modern war is anachronistic, but while we in the United States routinely turn to technology to solve our military challenges, this has not been and is not the case in the rest of the world," he said.

PHOTO BY DORI LUZBETAK

Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Wall of the Cal Guard's 223rd Infantry Regiment competes in the 8th Annual National Cavalry Competition, Sept. 24-26 on Fort Robinson, Neb. Wall defeated 54 riders to win the individual championship, the Bolte Cup. Wall also developed a team event that is part of the annual competition.

During the war to drive the Taliban from Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002, for instance, Afghan Northern Alliance forces used horses to advance through the country. They also conducted successful mounted attacks supported by American airpower to drive the Taliban before them. In addition, the Taliban uses horses to transport weapons across the mountains on Afghanistan's eastern border.

Schwarzenegger visits Cal Guard troops in Iraq

By 1st Lt. William Marquez
49th Military Police Brigade

On Nov. 17, while visiting Camp Victory in Baghdad, Iraq, California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger shared breakfast with Soldiers from the 49th Military Police Brigade, based in Fairfield, Calif. Schwarzenegger visited the troops to show his support and bring attention to the California Guard's service to the nation.

Schwarzenegger previously visited troops on USO-sponsored tours to Bosnia in 2002 and Iraq in 2003.

"He's been wanting to visit the troops for the last few years but hasn't had the opportunity," said Matt David, the governor's communications director. "He thought now would be a good time to make a short trip over there."

The 49th is two months into its deployment to Iraq. Its mission is to oversee and direct more than 5,000 service members as they train and develop Iraqi police. During the deployment, the 49th will build on the training they provided Iraqi police during a previous deployment in 2005 and 2006.

"All of you are doing a tough job," Schwarzenegger told the troops. "You and your families are sacrificing a lot for our country. America is a great nation because men and women like you have defended America for hundreds of years."

Brig. Gen. Donald J. Currier, commander of the 49th Military Police Brigade, said the governor's visit will give a big boost to his troops' morale.

"Time is more important than money, and Governor Schwarzenegger is always very generous with his time when it comes to our troops," Currier said. "What he shared with our Soldiers this morning will go a long way."

Spc. Ferrell Mapp of Sacramento was one of many Soldiers who were excited to see the governor.

"This morning was fantastic," he said. "It's great that he came all the way out here to show us how much he supports us."

PHOTO BY SGT. KENNETH BINCE

ABOVE: California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger thanks Brig. Gen. Donald J. Currier, right, and the Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 49th Military Police Brigade, on Camp Victory, Iraq, during a November visit to boost morale. RIGHT: Schwarzenegger, a seven-time Mr. Olympia, works out with the Soldiers on Camp Victory.

PHOTO BY JUSTIN SHORT

Los Alamitos celebration marks Veterans Day

Story and photo by Sgt. Jan M. Bender
Los Angeles Regional Public Affairs

More than 1,700 people gathered aboard Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos on Veterans Day for "Hats Off To Our Veterans," a celebration organized by the Department of Veterans Affairs Long Beach Healthcare System and the California National Guard installation.

Dozens of veterans advocacy groups and service organizations set up booths to reach out and connect with the varied people in attendance. And between the free haircuts and free lunch for veterans and the pony rides and rock climbing for kids, there was a little something for everyone. Army Sgt. Rigoberto Saenz brought his wife and daughter to the event and said the atmosphere was just what they needed.

"I like it because I can bring my family out and let them see what it's all about … that we're being taken care of. It makes me feel appreciated," said the 25 year-old medically retired infantryman. Saenz survived an improvised explosive device blast during his second tour in Iraq with 2nd Battalion, 5th Regiment, 1st Calvary Division, and he now walks with a cane.

Bob Hatcher, who served as a Marine during the Vietnam War, was one of many vets who thundered up to the event on two wheels. His black leather vest with "LEATHERNECKS" embroidered across the shoulders identified him as a member of one of the many veterans motorcycle clubs that made it out for the day.

"It's just another coming together for vets of all branches," Hatcher said. "We get to shake one another's hand and say thank you."

Hatcher has always been proud of his service, but he pointed out that the way he and his fellow Marines were received in the 1970s was much different.

"It has not always been this way," he said. "I reflect back on a lot of good friends that aren't here. They never got to experience something like this. That's what saddens me most and makes it so meaningful.

"There is so much help for vets now. That's refreshing to see."

The day culminated with an official Veterans Day ceremony and a formal presentation of the Bronze Star to Army Cpl. Manuel Diaz. A World War II veteran, Diaz earned the award for exemplary conduct in ground combat against an armed enemy in the European Theatre with the 142nd Infantry Division, but he had never been presented the medal formally. Maj. Gen. John S. Harrel, commander of the California Army National Guard, had the honor of officially pinning Diaz with his long overdue recognition.

After receiving the award, Diaz took the microphone. His chest swollen with pride and voice strong with emotion, Diaz spoke of the heroics he witnessed in his unit during their fighting. He concluded by saying, "I was discharged in 1954, but I still remain attached to the Army," which was followed by enthusiastic applause from an audience heavy with veterans who seemed to echo his sentiments.

Veterans take advantage of the free haircuts being offered at "Hats Off To Our Veterans" on Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos on Veterans Day.

Regular Edition! 3:45 p. m. Third Edition!

THE BRAINERD DAILY DISPATCH

ARMISTICE IS SIGNED GERMANY SURRENDERS

Washington, Nov. 11, 2:30 a. m.—Government at Washington officially announced the signing of the armistice by Germany, which occurred at 5:00 a.m. Paris time. Hostilities ceased at 11 a. m. News from Washington flashed to St. Paul 30 seconds after announcement was made.

President Reads Armistice Terms

"America Gains All She Fought For."

PRES. CANCELS OUTSTANDING DRAFT CALLS

Kaiser Bill Flees to Holland

All Draft Calls are Cancelled

Big Parade at Brainerd

11TH Hour

11TH Day

11TH Month

Veterans Day draws its roots from World War I armistice

By 1st Lt. Michael Anthony Rodriquez
Command Historian, California National Guard

On November 11, Americans received a day off from the toil of work in recognition of Veterans Day. The origin of the holiday often seems to have been forgotten, and many believe it was created for all U.S. veterans as a day to thank service members for their sacrifice to our nation's defense. Actually, Veterans Day is fairly new and was started in honor of those who fought and died during World War I. It was later transformed into a day for all Soldiers, Marines, Sailors and Airmen of the United States.

The significance of the date November 11 comes from the armistice that was signed on that day between the countries that were engaged in combat in World War I. November 11, 1918, is generally regarded as the end of "the war to end all wars." Further, major hostilities of World War I were formally ended at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918. The war officially ended when the Treaty of Versailles was signed June 28, 1919, in the Palace of Versailles in France.

The following year on November 11, then-President Woodrow Wilson declared that Armistice Day would be celebrated every year for the U.S. veterans who served in World War I, including the more than 100,000 who died in what was then known as The Great War.

In 1938 Congress passed a resolution recognizing the end of WWI:

> *Whereas the 11th of November 1918, marked the cessation of the most destructive, sanguinary, and far reaching war in human annals and the resumption by the people of the United States of peaceful relations with other nations, which we hope may never again be severed, and*
>
> *Whereas it is fitting that the recurring anniversary of this date should be commemorated with thanksgiving and prayer and exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations; and*
>
> *Whereas the legislatures of twenty-seven of our States have already declared November 11 to be a legal holiday: Therefore be it Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), that the President of the United States is requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the officials to display the flag of the United States on all Government buildings on November 11 and inviting the people of the United States to observe the day in schools and churches, or other suitable places, with appropriate ceremonies of friendly relations with all other peoples.*

It was in 1954 that then-President Dwight D. Eisenhower, who was a veteran of World War I and World War II, signed into law an act that changed the holiday to Veterans Day in honor of all veterans who had served the United States.

Starting in 1971, Veterans Day was moved to a Monday each year for purely economic reasons. Many states and veterans groups were against the change and fought hard against it. In 1978 the policy was changed by then-President Gerald Ford back to November 11. He recognized the importance of that date for those who served and realized it should be celebrated no matter what day of the week it falls on.

World War I began with the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife, Sophie, by Gavrilo Princip, a member of the Black Hand, a Serbian-led group that sought separation of Slavic provinces from the Austro-Hungarian Empire. The empire declared war on Serbia after the assassination, and because of the complex alliance system in place in Europe, most European countries were drawn into the war.

"November 11, 1918" by C. Leroy Baldridge

"If you had listened, then I guess you'd heard a sort of sigh from everybody there. But all we did was stand and stare and stare. Just stare and stand and never say a word."

— Pvt. C. LeRoy Baldridge, regarding the announcement of the armistice ending hostilities in World War I

State Partnership Program builds national ties

For more than 15 years, the California National Guard has partnered with emerging countries through the National Guard Bureau's State Partnership Program. The Guard assists those nations in matters of security and economic development as well as in their engagement with the United States and other countries. The program partners one country with one state's National Guard to cultivate ongoing relationships.

At its most basic level, the purpose of the State Partnership Program is to leverage the skills of the National Guard to assist other nations. The program was established in 1993 to promote cooperation with countries emerging from the former Soviet Union by employing the National Guard to assist in military and security issues. In 2006 the program was expanded, as African countries began partnering with the National Guard. There are now 62 partnerships between the National Guard and countries all over the world, and that number continues to grow.

California is partnered with Ukraine in Eastern Europe and with Nigeria in Western Africa. California partnered with Ukraine in 1993 as it emerged from the Cold War, unsure about its relationship with the United States. The program has helped Ukraine develop its own military and civilian capacities for security, emergency management and organization.

California partnered with Nigeria in 2006 to assist that emerging democracy, and Guard programs focused on security and basic civilian government have had a great impact on Nigeria's growth.

In both Ukraine and Nigeria, emergency management has been a hot topic as the countries work to build civilian emergency-response and emergency-management capabilities as well as military support for those missions. Another important area for both Ukraine and Nigeria has been the security of national points of entry, particularly ocean ports and borders. Delegations from the Ukrainian Border Guard Service have frequently visited California border points of entry for insight into advanced practices, and Nigerian officials have expressed an desire to do the same.

Cal Guard leaders are now considering adding a third partner-country to California's State Partnership Program, providing a new opportunity for the Cal Guard to use its skills and capacities to further cooperation and engagement around the world.

PHOTO COURTESY OF INTERIOR TROOPS OF UKRAINE

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the adjutant general of the California National Guard, presents a plaque to General of the Army Kykhtenko, Chief of the Interior Troops of Ukraine, during a visit to Interior Troops Headquarters in Kyiv, Ukraine. Wade and his wife, Leslie, were invited to travel to Ukraine with the State Partnership Program delegation.

Ukraine visit highlights country's beauty, growth

By Leslie Wade
CNG Family Readiness Program

Earlier this year I was given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to explore, experience and learn about the amazing country of Ukraine. At the invitation of the Ministry of Emergencies of Ukraine, I was asked to travel with the California National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP) delegation to exchange information about our Family Readiness Programs.

The California SPP began with Ukraine more than 16 years ago. I remember back then when my husband made his first trip to Ukraine, he came home with stories of a country in disrepair and poverty, which lacked the simplest items that we take for granted. However, the country I visited has come a long way. Kyiv, our first stop, is a busy, booming city full of smiling, healthy, young people. Towering skyscrapers are mixed in with churches, castles and other structures many hundreds of years old.

I was able to sit in on all the briefings with the Ministry of Emergencies, Ministry of Defense, Ministry of Internal Affairs, State Border Guard and Interior Troops. I was also given the opportunity to accompany the Cal Guard delegation on cultural excursions in Yalta, in southern Ukraine on the Black Sea.

PHOTO BY DMYTRO MOSKALENKO

Young women in traditional Ukrainian dress present a loaf of bread to Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II and his wife, Leslie, at an airport in Crimea. Breaking and sharing the bread is a traditional welcoming custom in Ukraine.

In Kyiv, we were met by senior officers and a large group of sharp-looking Soldiers. I had the pleasure of meeting Minister Shandra of the Ministry of Emergencies, the governor of Crimea and several Army general officers. At this point, I was truly in awe of my experience; however, this was just the beginning.

During each of the briefings with the ministries and agencies, I would walk into the room holding my husband's hand very tightly, looking for my name card amongst a very large table with Ukrainian names on one side and California-delegation names on the other. After the first couple of meetings, I learned quickly that I sat to the left of my husband, who was seated in the center, directly across from the highest-ranking Ukrainian in attendance, with our interpreter, Oksana Honcharuk, sitting between us. At first the briefings were a bit intimidating, but I got more comfortable attending them as time went on.

At our second briefing with the State Border Guard, Gen. Zaritsky requested permission from my husband to direct a question to me, "Mrs. Leslie Wade," as they called me. He asked me to explain about our Family Readiness Programs. With a bit of nerves swimming about in my belly, I dove in and shared just the basics of our programs. Ukraine does not have any type of formal family support programs, so they were all very interested in hearing about what we have in California. Throughout our visit, I was given many opportunities to speak to ministry heads and military agencies about our Family Readiness Programs, both at formal and informal venues.

We made a particularly special visit to the Interior Troops in Kyiv. We were met by Col. Kukhar, who gave us a tour of the Interior Troops facilities. As we walked though the building, I immediately noticed photos on the walls of my husband and the California delegations from years past. As we went around the corner, I found a wall full of pictures that had been drawn by children of deployed Soldiers. We were also shown a video, which was prepared in English just for our visit, that highlighted the responsi-

bilities of the Internal Troops. It included a piece on their organic kindergarten class, which is offered only for Interior Troops children. This was a strong yet subtle example of their way of supporting families. Finally, we were given a tour of their museum, which culminated with a display case of items received from our California National Guard, including a photo of our adjutant general, Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, as well as one of me! They had actually taken the time to display a photo taken of me only a few days earlier.

At the end of our fourth day of briefings in Kyiv, I was exhausted yet very excited for what I was going to experience next. At every visit, the Ukrainian people showed a wealth of pride in their country and their individual contributions. It showed on their faces, in their attention to detail and in their enthusiasm for sharing their accomplishments with us. At the end of each visit, my husband presented awards and gifts and exchanged our thanks. In turn our Ukrainian friends reciprocated by giving us a bit of their culture and history. It was a wonderful exchange of warmth, camaraderie and friendship.

We then jumped on a plane for a short trip to Yalta; a beautiful city with tropical weather, it's a vacation spot many Europeans visit. We were welcomed at the airport by Maj. Gen. Nyshmor and two young girls in traditional Ukrainian garb. We were presented a beautiful loaf of bread, and we broke and shared bread, a welcoming custom of the Ukrainian people.

We boarded a bus and, accompanied by police escort, were taken to the State Border Guard Sanatorium, or "compound," as we were told it was called. We were surprised by what we found. We drove up a tree-lined road to a resort, not a compound. It boasted a beautiful villa, a wellness and healing clinic of which I have never seen such quality, and a hotel that could provide two-room suite lodging to 2,000 people. The most astonishing fact about the "compound" was that it was built for, and utilized only by, Soldiers of the State Board Guard and their families. This piece of heaven is one way they support Soldiers and their families.

Upon our arrival, my husband was invited to plant a palm tree in his honor. This honor and tradition had only been given to three other people who previously visited the compound. We planted the palm and then staked a sign in the ground with "In honor of Major General William Wade II" written in Ukrainian. This was just one more gesture from the Ukrainian people that showed how very successful our State Partnership has become.

The Wellness and Healing Clinic consisted of a full medical and dental exam room, rooms for brain scans and X-rays, and every type of homeopathic therapy you could imagine, from skin care electrolysis to water massage therapy to a salt therapy room. There was an acupuncture room and whirlpool baths of all sorts. There was a medical and dental doctor on staff as well as a host of practitioners, nurses and attendants. And their pharmacy held a vast selection of herbs and teas to cure what ails you. The families and Soldiers of the State Border Guard are placed on orders to attend the compound as a wellness vacation or they attend to heal from injuries sustained on duty. The sanatorium is a truly beautiful place to stay and visit. How very fortunate the Soldiers and their families are to have such a state-of-the-art clinic and recreational venue to enjoy.

Our cultural tour in Yalta took us to Livadia Palace, where the 1945 summit with President Franklin D. Roosevelt, Prime Minister Winston Churchill and General Secretary Joseph Stalin took place. Livadia Palace was the beautiful summer home of Czar Nicholas II, his wife and four children before their execution during the Russian Revolution. The palace has been restored to its former beauty and was a very special treat to explore.

Our visit also took us to the Crimean War diorama in Sevastopol, overlooking the Valley of the Shadow of Death, where the Battle of Balaclava was fought between the Russian Army and the British, French, Ottoman and Sardinian allies in 1854. We also visited the State Border Guard Service Maritime Base, toured their vessels and were treated to a cruise of the Bay of Balaclava. And we visited the Cold War Submarine Museum, where vast tunnels were built to hide Soviet nuclear submarines throughout the Cold War.

Our trip culminated with the Rough and Ready Exercise,

PHOTO BY DMYTRO MOSKALENKO

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II and his wife, Leslie, plant a palm tree at the State Border Guard Sanatorium in Livadiya, Crimea, during a trip to Ukraine.

an annual event that began many years ago to facilitate the exchange of information on how California and Ukraine handle emergencies such as fires, floods and earthquakes. This year, the exercise simulated an explosion of a rail tanker full of toxic chemicals. The danger was handled effectively and efficiently by all Ukrainian agencies. It must be very rewarding for our Guardsmen to know they have had a direct impact on the ability of the Ukrainian people to recover from natural disasters and other emergencies. Again, this is just another reflection of the success of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Ukrainian officers study operations on California visit

Story and photo by 1st Lt. Patrick Bagley
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

It was a brisk fall morning in Fresno, Calif., as four Ukrainian Air Force officers walked across the flight line to greet their American counterparts. In days gone by, this might have been a scene out of a Tom Clancy novel full of international intrigue. In this era, however, we have become a nation interested in building relationships and extending a helpful hand to former satellites of the Soviet Union.

The Ukrainian officers were visiting the Fresno-based 144th Fighter Wing in November as part of the State Partnership Program. California has relationships with Ukraine and Nigeria through the program.

Airmen of 144th Fighter Wing shared information and an F-16 training flight with the Ukrainian officers, who traveled more than 6,000 miles to receive expert instruction with an eye toward modernizing and streamlining Ukrainian Air Force operations. The F-16 fighters that the 144th flies are similar to Ukraine's Russian fighters.

"The Ukrainians use fourth-generation aircraft. They are very capable," said Lt. Gen. Serihy Onyschenko of Ukraine. He added that the November training mission focused solely on operations, not aerial combat. "The system [Ukrainian forces] use was established during the Soviet times, but this system has been changed."

The Ukrainian delegation also visited Sacramento to meet Guard leaders at Joint Force Headquarters and tour the recently renovated museum at McLellan Park. The Ukrainian service members shared their love of aviation and vintage military aircraft with their American counterparts, and a friendly debate ensued about which country possesses the better aircraft.

Lt. Gen. Serihy Onyschenko of Ukraine, center, speaks through an interpreter with Maj. Gen. Dennis J. Lucas, commander of the California Air National Guard, right, about the design of American aircraft at the museum in McClellan Park near Sacramento.

"Flying the MiG is like strapping yourself to a rocket," one of the Ukrainian officers said. "It is very fast."

In addition to the training opportunities and benefits of having a partner in Eastern Europe, Maj. Gen. Dennis G. Lucas, commander of the California Air National Guard, said there is a greater goal in mind for the State Partnership program with Ukraine.

"This exchange effort is aimed at getting the Ukrainians ready to integrate with the United States and European military forces so they can successfully and hopefully one day be a part of NATO," he said.

Bear flag brings touch of home to Iraq

Story and photo by Sgt. Kenneth Bince
49th Military Police Brigade

Col. Rudy Arruda, deputy commander of the 49th Military Police Brigade, stands proudly beneath a California flag that was presented to him by his co-workers at the California Department of Fish and Game office in Yreka. The flag now flies over Camp Liberty, Iraq.

When he learned in April about his upcoming deployment, then-Lieutenant Colonel Rudy Arruda started preparing, like most people, by informing his family, friends and co-workers about the news. The Yreka, Calif., native, who has since been promoted to colonel, has worked for the California Department of Fish and Game for more than 20 years.

"I'm part of a team of game wardens and officers called Squad 2100,"said Arruda, deputy commander of the 49th Military Police Brigade. "My team is responsible for the northern California region."

As the months went by and the deployment date got closer, the tight-knit group Squad 2100 came up with an original idea.

"In mid-June my friend Larry Harris surprised me with a California flag," Arruda said. Upon closer inspection Arruda saw the edge of the flag was signed by his fellow officers.

"A few members of the squad thought that it would be a great idea to fly the flag over Iraq and give the California Soldiers serving in Iraq a remembrance of home," Arruda said.

Not long after the transfer of authority from the 8th Military Police Brigade to the 49th MP Brigade on Oct. 12, the flag was raised over Camp Liberty, Iraq.

"It was great to see it go up over the compound," Arruda said. "Now anyone that comes and goes past our area, they will know … that we're from the great state of California."

Since the flag-raising, Arruda has received many positive responses.

"It's great to have a daily connection to home," said Staff Sgt. Tim Ramirez, a resident of Rio Vista, Calif. "It feels a lot like we are at home at the armory in Fairfield."

"When I see the flag here, I think of the last family vacation I went on with my husband and son to Disneyland right before I mobilized for Iraq," added Sgt. Deanna Gray of Sacramento.

Arruda already has plans for the flag after the brigade's mission concludes in August.

"What I would like to do is present the flag back to the Department of Fish and Game as a piece of history," he said. "Hopefully, the flag will end up being displayed at the Yreka office back home."

Soldiers find scuba training site for Iraq River Patrol

Story and photo by 1st Lt. William Marquez
49th Military Police Brigade

At a swimming pool that was once part of an exclusive club for Saddam Hussein's officers but later became a wartime oasis for U.S. service members, Soldiers from the 49th Military Police Brigade supervise Iraqi river patrolmen as they practice scuba diving.

The pool was once known as "Freedom Rest Pool" and teemed with Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines sunbathing, diving, splashing and swimming beneath a piercing Baghdad sun. Now, however, it is quietly tucked away within the International Zone, and the Iraqi scuba divers are rare visitors.

"It is good that the pool is getting used," said Sgt. 1st Class Sandra McIntosh, an American Soldier who advises and assists the Iraqi citizens who manage the pool. "They are getting training that they may not otherwise receive."

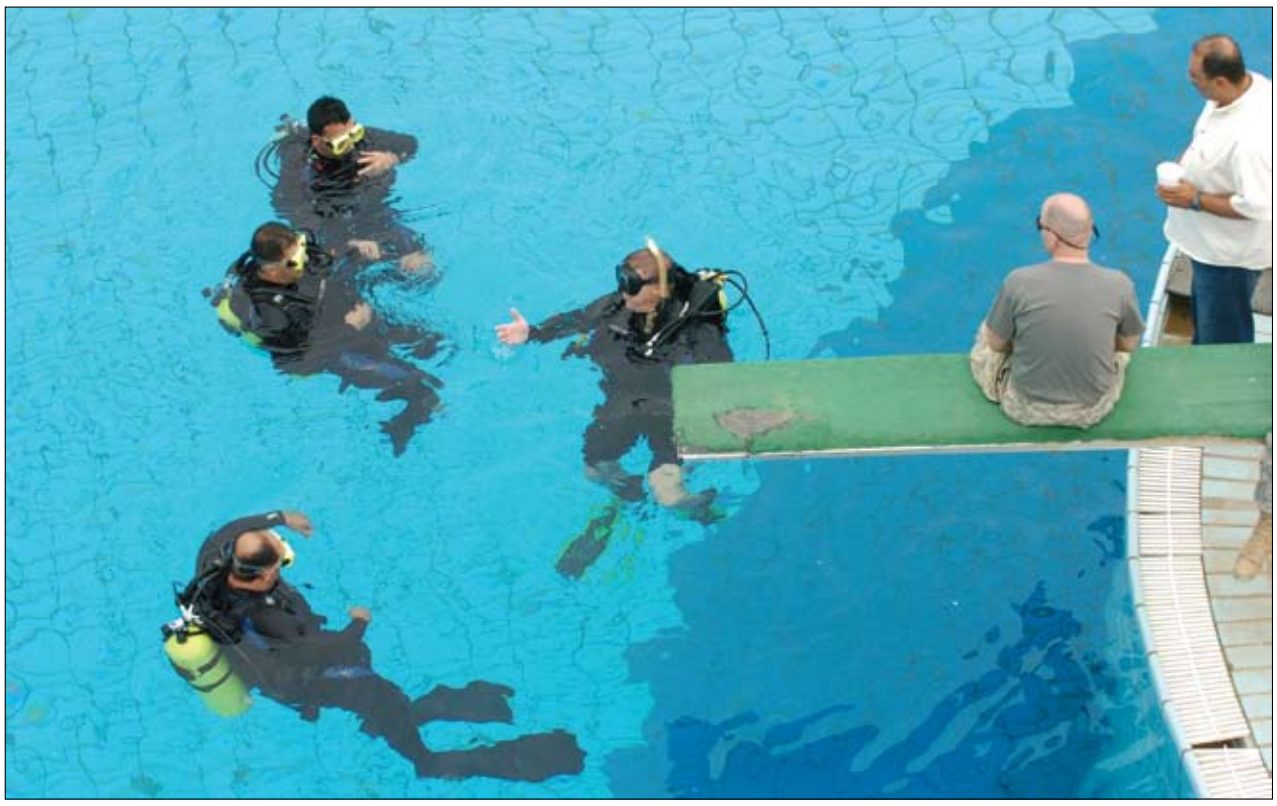
Maj. Dillon Haynes and Sgt. 1st Class Arne Eastlund of the 49th Military Police Brigade discovered during meetings with Iraqi River Patrol officials that its divers no longer had a place to train with the American divers employed by the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team. Haynes and Eastlund then began calling, e-mailing and visiting Iraqis and Americans who they thought might be able to help.

Eastlund, who remembered hearing about a pool in the International Zone during his deployment in 2005 and 2006, located the pool and asked McIntosh and the pool managers if the River Patrol divers could use their pool as a training site.

"Iraqis working at the pool and Sergeant McIntosh had no problem with our training plan," Eastlund said. "In fact, they were happy to help."

The Iraqi divers training at the pool are not new to diving. They are current members of the River Patrol who are sharpening their skills and preparing to instruct new divers on basic scuba diving techniques.

"This is a train-the-trainer program," Haynes said. "The Iraqi divers trained here will have the capacity to demonstrate what they learned to new divers joining River Patrol units."



At a pool in Baghdad, Iraq, scuba divers from Iraq's River Patrol train under the direction of instructor Tim Zeurcher of Cleveland. The pool, once part of an exclusive club for Saddam Hussein's officers, has hosted the River Patrol's instructor training since two Cal Guard members sought a solution to the River Patrol's lack of a training site.

Iraq's River Patrol monitors the banks and depths of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers to ensure people remain safe as they use and enjoy those great waterways. Among the divers' responsibilities is to recover bodies and sensitive equipment.

"They are good at body recovery," said Tim Zuercher, the lead instructor training the Iraqi divers. "When they find a missing person, it puts the family of the deceased at ease."

Zuercher, along with his colleague Mark Cushman of Oregon, are employees of the Civilian Police Assistance Training Team and worked closely with Haynes and Eastlund to set up the training at Freedom Rest Pool.

In the pool, Zuercher and Cushman take their time with the Iraqi divers, speaking clearly and slowly so the Arabic translator can ensure the Iraqi divers understand their instructions. The American instructors are patient with the Iraqi divers, and the Iraqis are very attentive. The Americans teach a lesson to the group as a whole, but they test them one at a time to ensure that each of the Iraqi divers understands the lesson without confusion.

"They are learning new techniques that will bring them closer to international scuba diving standards," Cushman said.

MG Wade visits Cal Guard units in Kosovo

PHOTO BY SGT. JILL A. FISCHER

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, adjutant general of the California National Guard, center, and Brig. Gen. Scott W. Johnson, commander of the 40th Infantry Division, right, meet with Soldiers for breakfast on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo.

By 116th Public Affairs Detachment

During a November trip, the commander of the California National Guard personally thanked his citizen-Soldiers in Kosovo, who had been helping maintain peace there for more than nine months, and encouraged a new group of Cal Guard members who recently arrived to continue the effort.

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the California National Guard adjutant general, spent two days in Kosovo visiting troops and attending meetings with NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) commanders and the U.S. Ambassador.

The general was an honored guest at a transfer-of-authority ceremony at Camp Bondsteel, where Brig. Gen. Keith D. Jones of the California National Guard handed responsibility for NATO's Multi-National Task Force-East sector to Brig. Gen. Alan S. Dohrmann, commander of the 141st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade of the North Dakota National Guard.

The ceremony marked the official departure of about 1,500 Soldiers, primarily from the Cal Guard's 40th Infantry Division. The 40th ID, based in Los Alamitos, Calif., also held responsibility for the eastern sector in 2005, when Wade was the division's commander.

"We've made great strides, and the state of California is extremely proud of all 1,500 Soldiers from the state of California and what they've done to continue the great work that was started back in 2005 with the first California rotation," Wade said.

The incoming task force has its own share of California National Guard members. The 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment, based in the Los Angeles area, is one of the new task force's largest subordinate units.

"There have been many friendships, many partnerships that have been built here, and things will only get better from here," Wade said. "I just told them to continue the great work that has been done by so many rotations before them."

During his stay in Kosovo, Wade held a town-hall-style meeting with 150 Soldiers from the 1-144th, who had an opportunity to ask the general questions and tell him what was on their minds. The next morning, he sat down for breakfast with Soldiers and met with 1-144th leadership.

"Kosovo is moving in the right direction," Wade said. "They're making great strides in order to attain a lasting peace, and [the Cal Guard] will be a part of making history here in this very important part of the world."

Former Army medic saves child

Airman earns Joint Service Achievement Medal for lifesaving actions

By Brandon Honig
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

For Staff Sgt. Kim Ramirez, the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., was an unfamiliar place to hear a familiar call.

"Medic!"

She instantly turned and ran, not knowing what emergency could be drawing a crowd on the other side of the memorial, where she was escorting World War II veterans who had been flown to Washington by the nonprofit Honor Flight Network.

"My first thought was that one of the gentlemen had fallen," she said. "Then I was running, and I saw my instructor holding a little girl."

The little girl was the 18-month-old great-granddaughter of one of the World War II veterans who was taking an Honor Flight tour. The Honor Flight Network flies veterans to Washington to tour memorials for wars in which they fought. Priority is given to senior veterans and those who are terminally ill.

"My instructor said he had tried something [to revive the girl]. … I saw she was completely green and purple," Ramirez remembered. "I've had to give CPR twice before, so I just pulled her out of his arms, and after that, it's like the movies: Everything got quiet and [I] just focused on the little girl."

Ramirez, who was an Army medic for nine years before joining the California Air National Guard in August of this year, administered CPR until paramedics arrived, then she gave them a report and quietly stepped away. The next day, Ramirez learned the young girl had experienced a febrile seizure due to an ear infection but would fully recover, largely because of the former medic's quick action.

> "I've had to give CPR twice before, so I just pulled her out of his arms, and after that, it's like the movies: Everything got quiet and [I] just focused on the little girl."

Ramirez, who was in the Washington area attending a Defense Information School course for her new military occupational specialty as a photographer, was bestowed the Joint Service Achievement Medal for providing emergency care that contributed to the child's recovery.

"Using her experience as a former Army medic, she expertly assumed control of the situation and administered rescue breathing after care provided by other service members failed to help the child," the citation states. "Her actions directly contributed to the stabilization and recovery of the child and fostered a positive image of Defense Information School and the military community in a high-profile environment.

"Through her distinctive actions, Staff Sergeant Ramirez reflected credit upon herself, the United States Air National Guard, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense."

PHOTO BY RITA F. KOSTOFF

PHOTO BY TECH SGT. RAY AQUINO

At the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C., Staff Sgt. Kim Ramirez came to the aid of an 18-month-old girl who experienced a seizure. The former Army medic's lifesaving actions earned her the Joint Service Achievement Medal.

The California Army National Guard Honor Guard performs the opening ceremony for the State Agency Recognition Awards in Sacramento on Nov. 4. The California State Military Department won an honorable mention for its best practices, creativity and outstanding achievements to advance the state's small business and Disabled Veterans Business Enterprise programs. Photo by Stewart L. MacKenzie II

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the adjutant general of the California National Guard, left, and Lt. Col. Joseph Righello, the inspector general of the California National Guard, center, receive decorations Oct. 26 at the Embassy of Ukraine in Washington, D.C., for their many years of work with Ukraine in the Partnership for Peace Program and the State Partnership Program. Ukrainian Ambassador Oleh Shamshur and defense attaché Andriy Yakovliev presented the awards, which included a proclamation from Ukraine President Viktor Yushchenko. California and Ukraine have partnered for more than 15 years (see page 8).
Photo by Master Sgt. Greg Rudl

New Iraqi police officers display their colors during a ceremony for more than 1,600 new graduates of the basic recruit training course Oct. 29 at the Al Furat Iraqi Police Training Center. Members of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD), 49th Military Police Brigade, which deployed to Iraq in October, were in attendance, having played an important role in the Iraqi police force's development. During its 2005-2006 tour, the 49th created the first police transition teams (PTT). The HHD is expected to complete the PTT mission during its current tour.
Photo by Sgt. Kenneth Bince

Chief Master Sgt. David Dunlap guides Sgt. Ricci Martin as he loads Thanksgiving meals onto a California Air National Guard AC-130P Combat Shadow at Mather Field near Sacramento. The California National Guard distributed more than 600 turkeys to needy Guard families across the state through the "Catch the Spirit" program run by the Rancho Cordova Elks Lodge. Turkeys were donated from the Elks Lodge and the Sacramento Food Bank, and some were purchased with donations from the Sergeants Major Association and the Warrant Officers Association.
Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Flagg

Sgt. 1st Class Scott Hegerle of 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, shows teens how to prepare a meal, ready-to-eat (MRE) Nov. 13 during an after-school program at the San Diego Center for Youth. Hegerle and members of the Cal Guard's 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team have been active in creating a mentoring program at the youth center. Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey

Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II (far left), the adjutant general of the California National Guard; retired Brig. Gen. (CA) Bill Hamilton, secretary of the California State Military Museum Foundation; and Brig. Gen. Kevin Ellsworth, director, Cal Guard Joint Staff; accept a check for $3,000 from California State Assembly member Mary Salas. The money was donated by the California Veterans Benefit Fund. Photo by 1st Lt. Patrick Bagley

Spc. David Derouen of the 40th Infantry Division Agribusiness Development Team walks along a road in Marawara, Afghanistan, on Nov. 23. Derouen conducted a patrol in the area while team members met with local farmers to discuss current crop outputs and gathered soil samples from nearby fields. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Brian Boisvert

Gen. David Petraeus, head of U.S. Central Command, left, meets with Maj. James Fabe, general dentist for the California National Guard Medical Detachment, at the Los Angeles World Affairs Council on Sept. 3. Photo courtesy of Maj. James Fabe

"We are the finest Army in the world today. Let's keep it that way. We got here because we have the finest noncommissioned officers. And we have never satisfied ourselves with being just a little bit better than the next guy. Every day, insist on being the best and on getting better. Every day, train your Soldiers and grow them into leaders. Every day, strengthen the ties that bind us together as warriors, officer and noncommissioned officer."

— Gen. Eric K. Shinseki, Army Chief of Staff, 1999-2003

The Army has designated 2009 "The Year of the NCO" to recognize its enlisted leaders at all levels of command. Grizzly will feature an exemplary noncommissioned officer each month in 2009 to commemorate The Year of the NCO.

Honor Guard exemplifies NCO values

Sgt. Maj. Daniel M. DeGeorge Sr.
Veteran Honors Program

PHOTO COURTESY OF VETERANS HONORS PROGRAM

The Veteran Honors Program ensures no veteran is laid to rest without proper, professional military honors.

It is my distinct honor and privilege to recognize — and serve in — the Noncommissioned Officer Corps. The traditions and values of this time-honored corps have shaped my life and enabled me to better serve my family, my community, my fellow warriors, and the core values that guide my life. An NCO once took the time and effort to be my leader, my trainer and my guardian of standards — in truth, more than one stepped up to the task. To those who mentored me throughout my career, I am eternally grateful.

However, this article is not about me. I wish to recognize a group of California National Guard Soldiers who directly reflect the competencies of an NCO. These Soldiers are the biggest ambassadors for the California National Guard on a daily basis. They are the members of the Veteran Honors Program (VHP), also known as the California Army National Guard Honor Guard. These Soldiers have answered the call to duty, to ensure that the veterans of our great state are laid to rest with dignity and respect. They embody the Tomb Guard motto: "Soldiers never die until they're forgotten. Tomb Guards never forget." These Soldiers work diligently, with an untiring drive, to ensure that those who paved the way for us are never forgotten.

This group of special Soldiers reflects that a quality NCO is not defined by their military occupational specialty, physical stature, race or gender. The VHP is a community-based organization dedicated to ensuring that no veteran, retiree or active-duty service member is laid to rest without proper, professional military honors. The VHP Soldiers are men and women with dozens of different military occupational specialties who are members of Guard units all over the state and who reflect the cultural and ethnic diversity of the Golden State.

> These Soldiers embody the Tomb Guard motto: "Soldiers never die until they're forgotten. Tomb Guards never forget."

Sixty full-time Cal Guard Soldiers — plus another 150 part-time Cal Guard volunteers — working from 12 locations throughout the state live our warrior ethos, which states, "I will always place the mission first, I will never accept defeat, I will never quit, and I will never leave a fallen comrade." The mission these individuals have accepted is ongoing, 365 days a year, anywhere in our state. They will not accept defeat in making honors happen. When members are contacted to provide military funeral honors, they will work as many hours — and travel as many miles — as necessary to make sure each veteran's uniformed service is properly and professionally recognized.

To do this with success they must perform three functions simultaneously. First, they must operate as a small unit leader. They need to understand the requirement for each mission and be able to communicate this clearly to the team, making sound and timely decisions. They must always set the example, for their every move is watched. And they must take responsibility for their team's performance. Military funeral honors must be rendered correctly the first time — every time.

Second, these NCOs are trainers, ready — and able — to teach Soldiers everything they must know. The proper wear and appearance of the uniform, the precise execution of the honors sequences and the knowledge of our military customs, courtesies and traditions must be trained and standards maintained to ensure all honors are rendered with appropriate dignity, respect and professionalism.

Finally, the Honor Guard NCO — like all quality NCOs — is the guardian of standards. These NCOs ensure that all team members are properly motivated and trained to perform their mission. They inspect and test the men and women of the California Honor Guard on a day-to-day basis. Attention to detail in every facet of the ceremony is what is needed to conduct a flawless ceremony. This is the goal for each of the 900-plus funeral honors rendered every month by the Soldiers of the VHP.

Throughout the history of the NCO Corps, these three functions have figured in the daily life of the NCO. Beyond the change of times, places and battle, these essential functions have endured. Bottom line, the NCO has remained the backbone of the Army.

A hero dies on Fort Hood

Capt. John Gaffaney gave his life to save others during shooting spree

By Maj. Kimberly Holman
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

It is difficult for anyone to understand the "twisted logic" that led to the Nov. 5 killings at Fort Hood, Texas, but survivors should know that those who fell leave a legacy of valor, President Barack Obama said during a memorial service Nov. 10 on Fort Hood. Army Reserve Capt. John Gaffaney, a 15-year veteran of the California National Guard, was one of those fallen and was a truly courageous and honorable man who will be missed by many.

"Your loved ones endure through the life of our nation," Obama told the families of Gaffaney and the other 12 victims who died on Fort Hood. Thirty people were also injured. "Their life's work is our security, and the freedom that we all too often take for granted. Every evening that the sun sets on a tranquil town; every dawn that a flag is unfurled; every moment that an American enjoys life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness — that is their legacy."

Gaffaney enlisted in the Cal Guard in 1984 and went on to earn his commission as an officer at Fort Benning, Ga., the following year. He served in various capacities as an armor officer in the 40th Infantry Division and was promoted to major in 1997. He served the 40th ID until 1999 when he decided to concentrate on his civilian career and spend more time with his family. Gaffaney had worked with the elderly in San Diego County for more than 20 years as a supervisor for Adult Protective Services.

After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Gaffaney was determined to serve his country again. He was older than 50, however, so to enter again as a regiment officer was not possible. He later regained his commission with the Army Reserve in 2006 because of his civilian job skills and medical degrees, and he was commissioned as a captain in the Medical Corps.

"John Gaffaney cared for society's most vulnerable during two decades as a psychiatric nurse," Obama said. "After retiring from the Army as a major … he spent three years trying to return to active duty in this time of war, and he was preparing to deploy to Iraq as a captain."

PHOTO COURTESY OF CHRISTINE GAFFANEY

Gaffaney's friends said he did not mind that he was no longer a major, because he was able to serve his fellow troops and our nation. One Soldier quoted him as saying, "I'll be promoted to colonel before I get out."

A colorful citizen-Soldier, Gaffaney was known to many as "the medical officer who wore tanker boots." Many spoke of his kindness and calm, gentle demeanor, which showed in his eyes. He was well-respected and dedicated to his unit's mission: to help those in need of his services as a mental health professional.

"In an age of selfishness, [those at Fort Hood] embody responsibility," Obama said. "In a time of cynicism, they remind us of who we are as Americans."

As the investigation of the Fort Hood incident continues to unfold, details from eyewitnesses indicate Gaffaney either threw a chair at Army psychiatrist Maj. Nidal Hasan, the accused killer, or physically rushed him from across the room, USA Today reported. Army Maj. Gen. Lie-Ping Chang, commander of Gaffaney's Reserve force, told USA Today that two witnesses said Gaffaney threw a folding chair and "tried to knock [Hasan] down or knock his gun down." USA Today also reported that Gaffaney's wife, Christine, said two Soldiers had told her that Capt. Gaffaney saved their lives, as Soldiers were able to escape when Gaffaney confronted Hasan.

Hasan has been charged with 13 specifications of premeditated murder.

Gaffaney was a loving husband to Christine, his wife of 33 years, and a devoted father to his son, Matthew. Born on July 21, 1953, in Williston, N.D., Gaffaney is also survived by a brother and two sisters. He was an avid fan and long-time season ticket holder for the San Diego Padres, he spent many hours restoring a 1965 Mustang, and he loved riding his Harley-Davidson on the weekends. Capt. Gaffaney and Christine also loved traveling together.

"He made me walk with him three miles in the rain to an authentic Harley shop in Ireland," Christine said, smiling, remembering a trip from this summer. "We got the t-shirt, and he got to pose for a picture sitting on an old vintage bike that was sitting in the window."

Those who knew Gaffaney will mourn his loss but take comfort in knowing that he died doing what he loved and what he believed in.

"John was a hero before he died," Christine said. "He was my hero, his son's hero, and we will always miss him."

Abner retires after 42 years supporting Cal Guard

By Erin Wetzelberger
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

In early September 1967, Linda Abner took a job with the California National Guard as a filing clerk and typist. She had no idea that 42 years later she would still proudly serve the state of California, touching the lives of thousands of officers and warrant officers through the Office of Personnel Management.

Her impact was clear as friends, family and co-workers gathered to wish her a tearful farewell at a retirement luncheon Nov. 2 in Rancho Cordova, Calif.

"From that September day in 1967 when you started as a junior clerk typist, to the years of transition, change and challenges, until now as you culminate your extraordinary career as an associate government program analyst, you have consistently given of yourself personally and professionally, making the California Military Department and state of California what it is today," Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the adjutant general of the California National Guard, said at the luncheon.

As an associate government program analyst, Abner was responsible for reviewing and analyzing the appointment application of every officer and warrant officer in the California National Guard, processing an average of more than 300 per year.

"Not one packet in 42 years got returned," said Col. Sylvia Crockett, director of operations, Joint Staff, California National Guard. "She never ever submitted one with an error."

At the luncheon, Abner was presented with the Order of California for her years of civil service to the state. A resolution from California Secretary of State Debra Bowen congratulated Abner on her retirement and commended her outstanding record of service.

"When I first tried to become a warrant officer, she steered me in the right direction," Chief Warrant Officer Lewis Johnson told the crowd after reading the resolution. "I have a lot here at stake, because I'm where I am today because of Linda Abner. I'm sure all the rest of us can say the same thing."

Col. Saul Rangel presented Abner with the Army Achievement Medal for Civilian Service. Rangel noted Abner's persistent dedication to getting the job done.

PHOTO BY TECH. SGT. DAVID J. LOEFFLER

Col. Lawrence Haskins presents the Order of California to Linda Abner at her retirement ceremony Nov. 2 in Rancho Cordova, Calif. Abner worked for the California National Guard for 42 years.

"I started a year and a half ago, and Linda would [often] come to me and say 'Did you sign it, did you sign it?'" Rangel said, referring to his paperwork.

"For all those years, she kept the Army strong," he added.

Abner said she doesn't have any plans for her retirement other than a long-awaited family trip to Hawaii. Though she'll no longer be in the office every day, she assured former co-workers that she would stay in touch.

"I like the people," Abner said. "I've always liked my job."

State commission approves CNG education benefit

Application process to begin in January

Story and photo by Brandon Honig
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

The California Student Aid Commission approved regulations governing a new educational benefit for California National Guard members Nov. 19, clearing the way for the program to begin processing applications next month.

The California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program (EAAP) will provide $1.8 million next year for up to 1,000 California service members to attend California colleges and universities. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger pushed to ensure the EAAP was part of the state budget, noting that California was the only state in the nation that did not offer an education incentive for National Guard members.

The 15-member California Student Aid Commission unanimously passed the regulations, which were developed jointly by the California National Guard and the commission staff.

The California Student Aid Commission on Nov. 19 hears from (from left) Catalina Mistler, chief of program administration and services for the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC); Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight, assistant adjutant general of the California National Guard; Col. John Crocker; Lt. Col. Thor Iljana; Clarita Cortez, associate financial aid specialist with CSAC; and Lt. Col. Andreas Garza. CSAC approved the regulations proposed for the new California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program, which will kick off in January.

"I want to publicly thank the California Student Aid Commission for helping us through this process," said Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight, assistant adjutant general of the California National Guard, during the commission's Nov. 19 meeting. "It [will be] a long-term partnership, and we have learned a lot, those of us who are working closely with the program and also our senior leadership."

Col. John Crocker, director of governmental and public affairs for the Cal Guard, said surveys of Soldiers and Airmen show education benefits are a top priority for service members.

"The California National Guard performs an essential safety role in the state of California," Crocker said Nov. 19. "To fulfill that objective, it's necessary for the California National Guard to retain its most valuable and experienced people. … We have an obligation to make sure that we keep the very, very best, and that's what this program is about."

The EAAP is still subject to a public review period and must be examined by the state Office of Administrative Law. The program, nonetheless, is expected to be initiated in January, and Crocker said it will be a win-win situation for the state and the California National Guard.

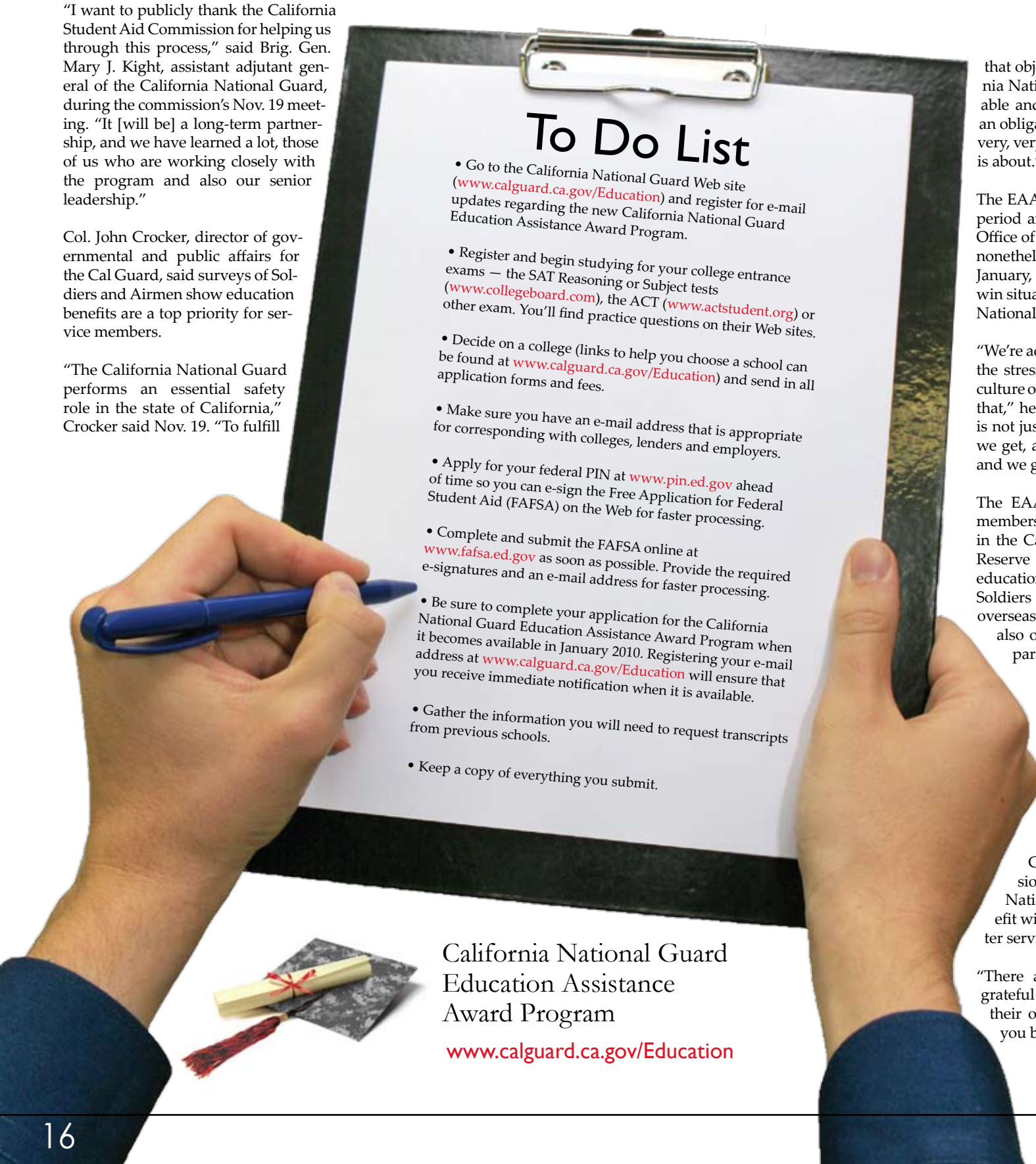
"We're acutely aware of the economy and all the stresses, and we [at the Guard] have a culture of service, and we want to perpetuate that," he said. "In other words, [the EAAP] is not just something we get. It's something we get, and then we take those capabilities and we give back to the state."

The EAAP is available to current Guard members who have served at least two years in the Cal Guard, California State Military Reserve or Naval Militia. Previously, state education benefits were available only to Soldiers and Airmen who had deployed overseas with the Guard, but the EAAP is also open to Guard members who have participated only in state missions.

For information on the program and application requirements, visit www.calguard.ca.gov/Education. Prospective applicants can also register for e-mail updates to ensure they don't miss any important program news or deadlines.

Crocker expressed to the commission the thanks of the entire California National Guard and said the new benefit will help the Guard provide even better service for the state and the nation.

"There are 22,000 people who are truly grateful for this opportunity to increase their own personal growth and to serve you better," Crocker said.



Maj. Gen. William J. Jefferds

Retired Maj. Gen. William John Jefferds died Nov. 7, 2009, at the age of 80. The one-time assistant adjutant general, California Army National Guard, is survived by his wife of 60 years, Patricia; son, Mark; daughters Jerilyn Campbell and Janelle Alarid; grandchildren Sarah and Adam; and great-grandchildren Tyler, Jacob and Eden.

"The loss of Bill Jefferds is manifold," said Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, adjutant general of the California National Guard. "Without a doubt, the world lost one fine Soldier, but I and many others lost a true officer and gentleman, a consummate leader, a role model and a mentor; but most of all, I lost a friend. My world and my heart — personally and professionally — has a large hole that will never heal."

Born Sept. 26, 1929, in Stockton, Calif., Jefferds enlisted in the California Army National Guard on June 17, 1948, while he was in college, and rose to the rank of master sergeant. On April 15, 1952, Jefferds received his commission as a second lieutenant and served as a gunnery officer in Heavy Mortar Company, 184th Infantry. In November 1952, Jefferds transferred to Company E, 159th Infantry, as a weapons platoon leader, and in September 1953 he was appointed executive officer. In July 1955, Jefferds was promoted to first lieutenant, and in November he became company commander.

In February 1959, Jefferds transferred to Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 159th Infantry, and in March he was promoted to captain. In December 1959, Jefferds was reassigned as assistant training and operations officer, Air, and in March 1963 he transferred to 2nd Brigade, 49th Infantry Division, as the assistant supply officer. On July 3, 1963, Jefferds was promoted to major. In January 1964 Jefferds was reassigned as the supply officer for 2nd Brigade, 49th Infantry Division, and in September 1966 he was transferred to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 49th Infantry Division, as the training and operations officer. On Aug. 10, 1967, Jefferds was promoted to lieutenant colonel and reassigned to the position of executive officer. In August 1968 he was transferred to 2nd Battalion, 159th Infantry, and appointed battalion commander. Jefferds commanded 2nd Battalion for four years, and in October 1972 he was transferred to the California Military Academy as commandant.

On July 28, 1973, Jefferds was promoted to colonel. In January 1974, Jefferds transferred to the 49th Infantry Brigade (Separate) as commander, and in August 1975 he transferred to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD), California Army National Guard (CA ARNG), as the provost marshal. Later that year he was transferred to the 79th Support Center RAO as task force commander. In February 1976, Jefferds transferred back to HHD, CA ARNG, as director of personnel and administration, and later that year he was reassigned to the position of commandant. On Aug. 1, 1977, Jefferds was appointed commander of the 49th Military Police Brigade. In July 1978, he was again transferred to HHD CA ARNG as the deputy chief of staff, logistics.

On April 1, 1978, Jefferds was assigned to the position of assistant adjutant general, California Army National Guard, and promoted to brigadier general. In September 1979, he transferred to the 40th Infantry Division as the assistant division commander. On January 24, 1984, Jefferds was promoted to major general and appointed commander, 40th Infantry Division. In August 1986, Jefferds, transferred to Headquarters-State Area Command (STARC) as deputy STARC commander and deputy adjutant general, Army. Jefferds also served as Chairman of the Army Reserve Forces Policy Committee. He retired Sept. 30, 1989.

After retiring, Jefferds served as special assistant to the chief, National Guard Bureau, and was appointed by California Gov. Gray Davis as his senior military adviser, director of the Office of Military and Aerospace Support, and director of the Office of Military Base Retention and Reuse. In 2003, Davis named Jefferds to head the California Department of General Services. Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger later named Jefferds to his Council on Military Base Support and Retention. At the time of his death, Jefferds was serving as executive director of the Southwest Defense Alliance, which works to preserve defense missions and assets in the southwestern United States.

Dedicated to a life of service, Jefferds was also an educator for 36 years before taking his first full-time position with the California National Guard, including serving as superintendent of Alum Rock Union School District in San Jose.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE JEFFERDS FAMILY

Pvt. William Jefferds, center, of the 184th Infantry, California National Guard, poses with his unit July 23, 1948.

Jefferds' military awards and decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal, Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (3rd award), Army Commendation Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal (3rd award), Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, Order of California, Adjutant General's Meritorious Unit Citation, California Medal of Merit, California Recruiting Achievement Ribbon, California Service Medal (5th award), California Medal of Merit, California Commendation Medal (2nd award), California State Service Ribbon (2nd award) and the California Drill Attendance Ribbon (11th Award).

Increased health care among 2010 Guard provisions

By Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke
National Guard Bureau

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2010, signed by President Barack Obama on Oct. 28, included many provisions for the National Guard.

"This authorization bill is a big deal for National Guard Soldiers and Airmen," said Air Force Brig. Gen. James Demeritt, director of the National Guard Bureau's office of Legislative Liaison. "Once again, the U.S. Congress has recognized the critical contributions the National Guard makes to national security both at home and abroad."

Demeritt said the doubling of pre-deployment health care is a "major reform." The new legislation doubles from 90 to 180 days the amount of time a member of the National Guard is eligible for TRICARE coverage prior to mobilization. The act also enhances the dental care provided to members of reserve components on active duty for more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation.

"This provision could potentially increase the medical readiness of the Army Guard," said Army Col. Rob Brown, chief surgeon of the Army National Guard.

The bill does not include the administration's requested increase in the Army National Guard's number of civilian, or non-dual-status, technicians. In rejecting the requested increase, the conferees instead directed the secretary of defense to submit a report on the duties, requirements, current and future demand, and recommended limits for non-dual-status technicians.

The Army National Guard now employs more than 3,000 non-dual-status technicians, despite a current 1,600-technician cap on permanent end strength.

"As such, the conferees feel it is prudent to wait for the result of the full-time support report [being conducted by the Army], as well as the report on non-dual-status technician requirements found elsewhere in this Act, before increasing the permanent cap," according to a Congressional report. "The permanent cap of 1,600 remains sufficient for fiscal year 2010."

There was no change in the number of personnel authorized for the Army National Guard, — 358,200 — or the Air National Guard — 106,700.

The act authorizes a 3.4 percent military pay increase. It also extends for another year several enlistment and re-enlistment bonuses for reserve component service members as well as special pay for enlisted members of certain high-priority reserve component units.

In addition, the act requires the secretary of defense to improve mental health care access for families of Guard and Reserve members deployed overseas.

The bill also requires that each service member deployed for contingency operations receive five personal mental health assessments: once 60 days before deployment, 90 to 180 days after redeployment, and no later than six, 12 and 24 months after redeployment. The act also establishes a program within the Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program to provide community healing and suicide prevention for members of the National Guard, Reserves and their families.

The act increases the Defense Department's contributions to the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program from 60 percent to 75 percent, which will enable states facing mounting budgetary pressures to continue and perhaps expand the youth mentoring program, said Army Col. Anthony Kissik, chief of youth development for the National Guard Bureau.

Congress also instructed the secretary of defense to set regulations regarding the use of funds appropriated for the National Guard State Partnership Program, which links states with foreign countries for relationship-building and training opportunities.

"The conferees believe that the security cooperation activities of the State Partnership Program of the National Guard have made a valuable contribution to global security through building relationships between state National Guard units and over 60 partner nations throughout the world," according to the congressional report.

Know where to go to receive benefits

By Jon Wilson
Manpower and Personnel Executive Officer

Information about available benefits

The Manpower and Personnel Directorate (J1) in the Joint Force Headquarters of the California National Guard has a team of experts who research and provide information on benefits for Guard members and veterans. They are veterans who work well together to assist with issues and provide informational briefings on benefits at pre- and post-deployment activities. These benefits include but are not limited to veterans benefits, financial assistance, employer support and issues related to substance abuse and sexual assault prevention and response. To find more information about these benefits and programs, please visit our Web site at www.calguard.ca.gov/j1/ or email J1@ng.army.mil or call 916-854-3409. The Department of Defense Guard and Reserve Benefits Guide is also available online.

Financial Assistance Grants

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger recently signed new legislation that expands access to the California Military Family Relief Fund, making it available to all members of reserve components in California.

To qualify for the Relief Fund, a service member must be a current member of the California National Guard or Reserves, be a California resident and have deployed for at least 60 consecutive days in Title 10 status. Additionally, the service member's military salary or their family's household income must have decreased by 10 percent since deployment.

Also, a service member is eligible for Relief Fund benefits if he or she was injured while serving on active duty, has been discharged from active duty and is actively seeking disability compensation or treatment assistance through the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. An application for this type of grant must be submitted within 18 months of release from active duty.

This grant program is funded by California taxpayer donations and has so far provided more than $237,000 to 27 families in California.

Sergeants Major Association of California

The Chaplains Fund established by the Sergeants Major Association of California enables California National Guard leaders to provide one-time, emergency financial assistance to Soldiers and Airmen on a limited basis. Small loans or grants may be given to help remedy most any hardship, such as a need for assistance paying for food, utility bills, car repairs or other unforeseen circumstances. These funds are normally paid directly to a vendor or company to reduce delays that can be harmful in emergency situations. Any California National Guard Soldier or Airman who has an emergency financial need may request assistance through his or her immediate noncommissioned officer (NCO) chain. The family of a National Guard Soldier or Airman may request assistance by contacting one of their unit's family support representatives. For more information, visit www.smaofcalifornia.org.

Military-friendly companies

There are many patriotic individuals and organizations that are willing to assist our California National Guard members, no matter what status or in what capacity they have served our country. Military-friendly banks offer discounted fees and other benefits not available to the public. Many restaurants offer discounts of up to 50 percent for diners who present valid military identification. Some national auto parts stores offer 10 to 15 percent discounts when a valid military ID is presented. Some cellular phone providers have military or government plans that offer significant discounts. Many independent companies, contractors and small businesses have also shown how much they appreciate the Guard's service to our country by offering discounted, and sometimes free, services and products to service members.

Do not be afraid to ask if a military discount is available; you may be pleasantly surprised. A simple Internet search may answer many of your questions about discounts in your area, and you can also find information at www.militaryonesource.com or by calling 800-342-9647. You can also contact your nearest Family Assistance Network (FAN) for specific companies that are military-friendly in your area.

Army, Air Guard reach end-strength goals

By Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith
National Guard Bureau

Both the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard reached their end-strength goals for fiscal year 2009.

The Army Guard closed its books for 2009 with 358,391 Soldiers, or 100.1 percent of its end-strength goal of 358,200 Soldiers. It also met its retention goal by keeping 36,672 Soldiers, or 106 percent of its goal of 34,593 Soldiers.

The Air Guard surpassed its 2009 end-strength goal with 109,196 Airmen, or 102.3 percent of its goal of 106,756 Airmen. The Air Guard also retained 17,904 Airmen, or 120.1 percent of its goal of 14,904 Airmen.

Success for the Army Guard meant reducing its end strength rather than gaining service members. The size of the Army Guard in March was 368,727 Soldiers, and officials aimed to reduce that to a congressionally mandated end strength of 358,200 Soldiers by September.

"Never before has the Army Guard been challenged to reduce its end strength by more than 11,000 Soldiers within six months," said Army Lt. Col. Ron Walls, chief of the Strength and Maintenance Division at the National Guard Bureau.

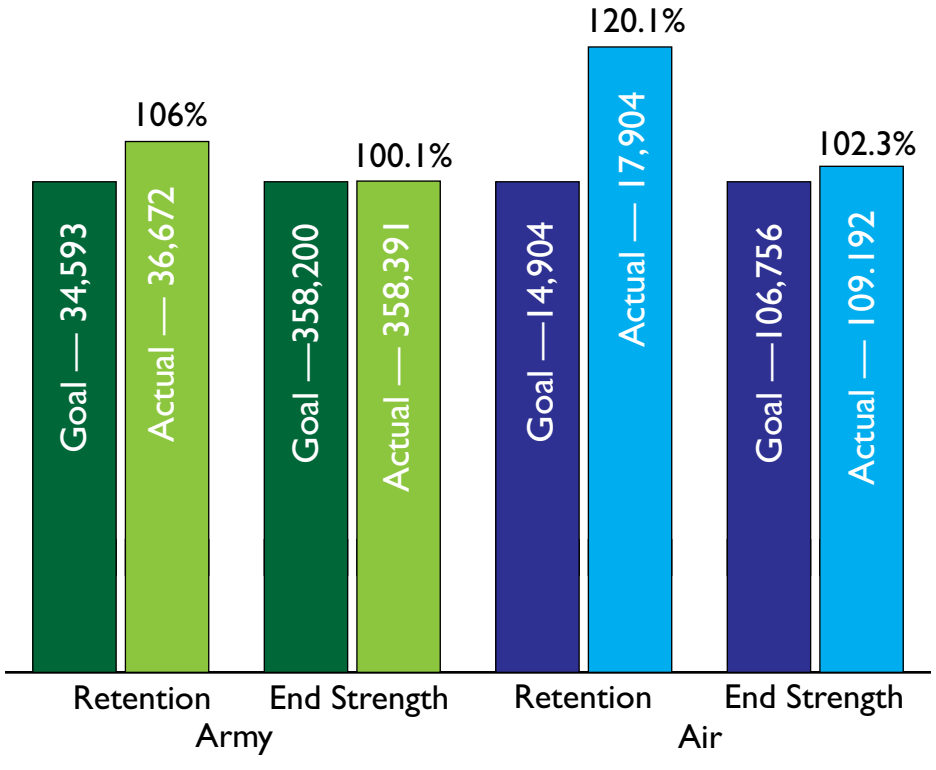
The Army Guard reduced end strength while meeting recruiting and retention goals. Its 56,000-Soldier recruitment mission was met with 56,071 Soldiers.

"We had to do a full-court press with the 54 states and territories in order to ensure we were successful," Walls said. "We ensured each state could reach their end strength while maintaining retention."

Walls said success came down to "driven, focused leadership and a committed recruiting and retention force." He added that a series of restrictions was placed on recruiting and retention before the summer, but the restrictions increased the Army Guard's quality marks to "unprecedented levels." The Army Guard also suspended many recruiting waivers or options and restricted incentive programs.

Air Force Col. Mary Salcido, director of recruiting and retention for the Air National Guard, said her recruiters made "target recruiting" for specific jobs their top goal in 2009. As a result, the Air Guard surpassed its end-strength goal, while adjusting manpower and reducing shortfalls in specific Airman skills.

Salcido said the Air Guard adjusted its synergy and efforts to put manpower "exactly where it was needed."



Adjutant General's Family Readiness Symposium

Our families play a vital role in the readiness and wellness of our California National Guard. Let us get together once again to strengthen our family ties and celebrate our accomplishments during the past year.

Target the month of April 2010 for the next Adjutant General's Family Readiness Symposium as well as the All-Service Military Ball in San Diego.

Nominate employer for ESGR Freedom Award

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is accepting nominations for the 2010 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award.

National Guard and Reserve members and their families are encouraged to nominate employers who have provided exceptional support of military employees above the federal law requirements. Nominations will be accepted through Jan. 18 at www.freedomaward.mil.

The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the highest recognition given by the U.S. government to employers for their outstanding support of their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserves.

Sergeants Major Association supporting Guard, NCOs

The Sergeants Major Association of California is a professional organization comprising the top three noncommissioned officer ranks in the California National Guard.

Membership is open to any service member at a rank of E-7 or above from any branch of service, including the California State Military Reserve and retirees. The goals of the association are to improve the status and image of the National Guard, promote the well-being, welfare and qualifications of all enlisted personnel, and provide a means of communication for senior NCOs.

The association also supports Guard members through the Chaplain's Fund, a foundation that provides financial assistance to qualified personnel in emergency situations. The association has provided upwards of $45,000 annually to ensure service members are cared for, regardless of rank or membership in the association.

For more information, visit www.smaofcalifornia.org. The next general membership meeting is scheduled for Feb. 19-21.

Correction: A story in the November issue incorrectly attributed photos from the Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy. The photographer was Chief Warrant Officer Robert Karleskint.

DID YOU KNOW...

... there is a maximum involuntary commuting distance for an M-day guard member?

The maximum involuntary commuting distance for an M-day guard member (enlisted) is 100 miles from the home of record to the Inactive Duty Training (IDT) site where meals and lodging are provided by the unit. Round-trip travel to IDT at the unit of assignment will be at the Soldier's expense.

A commander cannot assign a Soldier beyond the stated distance without the Soldier's consent. However, Soldiers may voluntarily accept assignments beyond the limit.

References: Army Regulation 135-91, Department of Defense Instruction 1215.18

IN MEMORIAM

Brig. Gen. Robert Samuel Ford

Retired Brig. Gen. Robert Samuel Ford died Oct. 26, 2009, at the age of 83. He is survived by his wife, Jan, sons Bob and Bill, daughters Lesley and Lin, sister Elizabeth and many nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Born Dec. 23, 1925, in Lansing, Mich., Ford enlisted in the Navy in 1943 and was discharged in 1946. In 1951, he enlisted in Service Company, 111th Armed Cavalry Regiment, California National Guard, and received his commission as a second lieutenant. In 1954, Ford transferred to the Quartermaster Branch, was appointed as commander for Company A, 40th Armed Quartermaster Battalion, and promoted to first lieutenant. In 1955, Ford was promoted to captain, and in 1957 he was assigned as the assistant operations and training officer. On July 1, 1959, Ford was promoted to major and assigned as the supply officer. He later served as executive officer of the 3rd Howitzer Battalion, 251st Artillery, and as executive officer, 4th Battalion, 160th Infantry.

In 1964, Ford was promoted to lieutenant colonel and appointed commander, 4th Battalion, 160th Infantry. He later served as director of logistics for the 40th Armored Division and executive officer of the 40th Infantry Brigade. In 1968 he was transferred to Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD), California Army National Guard (CA ARNG), as the inspector general.

In October 1969, Ford was promoted to colonel, and in 1976 he was promoted to brigadier general by the state of California. In the ensuing years, he served in HHD, CA ARNG, as post engineer, chief of staff, and assistant adjutant general. Ford was federally recognized as a colonel at the time of his honorable separation and transfer to the Retired Reserve-USAR Control Group on June 1, 1981.

Ford's awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, Meritorious Service Medal (2nd award), Armed forces Reserve Medal, Army Reserve Components Achievement Medal, California Medal of Merit, California Drill Attendance Ribbon and California State Service Ribbon.

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations be sent to Alzheimer's Service Research, www.ahaf.org, or 22512 Gateway Center Drive, Clarksburg, Md., 20871, in memory of General Robert S. Ford.

Brig. Gen. Gary Edwin Layton

Retired Brig. Gen. Gary Edwin Layton died Oct. 3, 2009, at the age of 76. He is survived by his wife, Chris; nine children; two sisters, Patricia Davis and Bonnie Barker; brother Darryl; and numerous nieces and nephews.

Born Feb. 13, 1933 in Chico, Calif., Layton enlisted in Company C, 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry, California Army National Guard, in 1949. Layton rose through the enlisted ranks, culminating in his promotion to sergeant first class. Layton accepted a commission in the California Army National Guard on Nov. 1, 1955.

Layton served in many assignments, including training and operations officer and executive officer for the 49th Support Battalion; logistics officer, 1401st Engineer Detachment; and training officer, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, California Army National Guard.

In 1986, at the time of his honorable separation from the Cal Guard and transfer to the Retired Reserve-USAR Control Group, Layton was federally recognized at the rank of colonel. He was placed on the Cal Guard Retired List in the grade of brigadier general soon after his retirement.

Layton's awards and decorations include the Bronze Star (with one Oak Leaf Cluster), Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Service Medal (with four Bronze Stars), Air Medal (with one Oak Leaf Cluster), Combat Infantry Badge, California Medal of Merit and California Service Medal (with one Silver Redwood Cluster).

Sgt. Maj. Dennis Robert Bannon

Retired Sgt. Maj. Dennis Robert Bannon died Oct. 30, 2009, from cancer. The 59-year-old retired Guardsman was in his home with family and friends at the time of his death. He is survived by his wife, Sharon, and sons Kevin and Patrick.

Born Jan. 28, 1950, Bannon enlisted in the Navy in 1969. After discharge in 1973, he enlisted in the California Army National Guard, where he stayed until his retirement in 2007. During his Guard career, Bannon served in many positions of increasing importance in the 40th Military Police Company, 40th Infantry Division (ID) Provost Marshal Office, Company B, 3rd Battalion, 185th Armor, and 1st Squadron, 18th Armored Cavalry. At the time of his retirement, Bannon was the provost marshal sergeant major for the 40th ID.

Bannon was a graduate of the Noncommissioned Officer Education System Basic and Advanced courses, the First Sergeants Course and the Army Sergeants Major Academy. He was a past Executive Board member of the California Enlisted Association of the United States and a longtime member of the California Sergeants Major Association.

His awards and decorations include the Army Commendation Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal (2nd award), Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal (5th award), Humanitarian Service Medal, California Service Medal (4th Award), California Enlisted Excellence Ribbon (3rd award), California Good Conduct Ribbon Bar (6th award) and California Drill Attendance Ribbon (10th award).

In lieu of flowers, the family has asked that donations be made in Sgt. Maj. Bannon's name to the California Sergeants Major Association Chaplain's Fund, www.smaofcalifornia.org, or the American Cancer Society.

Public Affairs Directorate, California National Guard 9800 Goethe Road, Sacramento, CA 95827-3561

PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS JESSE FLAGG

Family and friends gather at Stockton Metropolitan Airport in Stockton, Calif., on Nov. 19 to welcome home Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, after a yearlong deployment to Kosovo. More than 1,200 Cal Guard members returned from Kosovo in time for the holidays. "I am proud and honored to welcome home the Soldiers of our California National Guard, who for the last year successfully provided security and stabilization for the people of Kosovo," said Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, adjutant general of the California National Guard. "It is fitting that these Soldiers are home just in time for Thanksgiving so we can thank them and their families for their selfless service."

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