

GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard

Marching into **8** the future

California Cadet Corps
prepares youths
to succeed



Army, Air Guard fire response **10&11**

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Articles:

- ★ 300-450 words for a half-page story; 700-1,000 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: MB files, not KB
- ★ 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 Staff Sgt. (CA) Robert Davison

Members of the California Cadet Corps compete in the Corps' annual State Drill Competition on April 9, 2011, at the Los Alamitos Army Airfield on Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos.

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California National Guard mobilizations as of July 2012



163rd CES returns from Afghanistan tour

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

Babies were born, kids grew taller and seasons passed while Airmen from the 163rd Civil Engineering Squadron (CES) were deployed to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan, for six months. Overjoyed at their return, family members, friends and fellow Airmen greeted the Guardsmen with hugs and kisses as at Ontario International Airport in Southern California on Jun. 20.

"We are so proud of our Airmen and thankful for their sacrifices to keep America safe," said Roseanne Lazoya, mother of Staff Sgt. Marcello Lazoya, as tears ran down her face after hugging her son. "We are ecstatic to have them home safe."

A total of 58 Airmen from the 163rd CES deployed for six months to Bagram, 24 of whom reunited with their families Jun. 20 in Ontario. Homecomings will continue throughout the summer for the 163rd.

In Afghanistan the unit established a high-altitude blimp surveillance system for troops beyond the Bagram perimeter.

"Our unit was able to establish the first Aerostat site in our area of responsibility and the first on a major airfield," Senior Master Sgt. Bob Campos of the 163rd said. "This [provides] 30,000 troops as well as civilians a 360-degree eye in the sky for an increased level of security."

"The surveillance mission is safeguarding forward operating bases and improving surveillance in the day and night in response to evolving threats," he added.



Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey

Maj. Philip Winchester of the 163rd Civil Engineering Squadron reunites with his daughter on June 20 at Ontario International Airport in Southern California after a six-month deployment to Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.

The unit accomplished several engineering projects on Bagram, completing more than 1,000 work orders ranging from concrete jobs to air-conditioning repairs and maintaining the emergency arresting system that catches distressed aircraft.

"We caught eight aircraft with the arresting system and completed numerous Airfield repairs, including one emergency repair on the centerline of the active runway, which was accomplished without delaying any flights," Campos said.

In addition Maj. Heidi Gibson said her con-

tracting and engineering team worked with local nationals to manage a total of \$13.8 million in construction projects. The Airmen also fulfilled requests from forward operating bases (FOB).

"During one of the projects, three of our Airmen led Army personnel and accomplished [Federal Aviation Administration] certification requirements at a FOB airfield," Campos said. "I am proud of our Airmen for their achievements and for always being equipped for short-notice requests."

During the six-month deployment, the

163rd was the lead unit working with fellow Airmen from Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Mississippi, Oregon, Tennessee and Washington, D.C.

"I remember working every day for a month because as 'dirt boys' we were responsible for keeping the taxiways and ramps for the F-15s and F-16s cleared of snow," Tech. Sgt. Daniel Lowe said. "It seems like it snowed every Sunday for a good month, keeping us employed."

The dirt boys were also first responders along with security forces at the entry control point where locals enter Bagram Airfield for work. "At one point during the deployment, the citizens of Bagram were upset with our government and were throwing stones over the walls by the entry control point," Lowe said. "Some of us were struck on the arms, legs or Kevlar helmet, but fortunately nothing serious."

"We used fire trucks and water trucks to spray water to defend the wall."

The heavy equipment shop supported 15 types of aircraft and installed more than 100 mooring points to secure the aircraft during wind storms. "We were [also] involved in emergency ... repairs on the active runway, allowing aircraft to safely land and take off in a timely manner," Senior Airman Patrick Enrich said. "We also completed multiple concrete projects over the deployment."

After the deployment was over, Betty Lowe held on tight to her husband, Daniel, and didn't want to let go. "I can't believe he is really home," she said.

Mom's K-9 foundation honors fallen MP

By **1ST LT. WILL MARTIN**
49th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs



Cheryl Walsh

Cheryl Walsh experienced the unthinkable last November when she learned of her son's death from indirect fire in Afghanistan. A single mother with only one child, her bond with Sean M. Walsh was deep and seemed unbreakable.

To ensure that bond remained, Cheryl transformed her grief into service to her community in an effort to honor the memory of her son, a specialist with the CNG's 870th Military Police Company. While in high school, Sean volunteered as an "explorer" with the Santa Clara Police Department and, as an animal lover, was especially drawn to its K-9 program. He hoped to one day don a police uniform, protecting and serving his community, hopefully with a dog by his side.

It seemed fitting, then, that Cheryl would pour herself into a cause with which Sean so strongly identified. She established the Sean M. Walsh K-9 Memorial Foundation, and at a June 26 City Council meeting, presented a \$10,000 donation to the Santa Clara Police Department's K-9 program.



Photo courtesy of Cheryl Walsh

Spc. Sean M. Walsh, who was killed by indirect fire in Afghanistan in November, had planned to become a police officer and work with police dogs. In his honor, Walsh's mother, Cheryl, created the Sean M. Walsh K-9 Memorial Foundation, which donated \$10,000 to the Santa Clara Police Department's K-9 program in June.

"Thank you for honoring Sean and me," Cheryl told the City Council. "It is our honor and privilege to donate to Santa Clara first."

According to a Department statement, the Foundation, "through the tireless efforts of Ms. Walsh, raises money to be used for the purchase, training, and equipment required for new police canines." The Foundation's first donation will prove timely: One of the Department's dogs, Ciro, will soon retire, and the Foundation's gift will enable the program to welcome Argo, a Belgian Malinois, to fill that void.

"Sean is remembered for his leadership and commitment to public service," the statement reads. "Keeping the canine unit at full strength is a significant benefit to the Department and community."

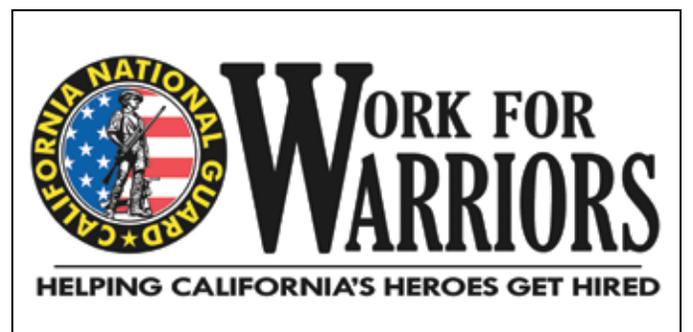
Work for Warriors lives up to its name

The California National Guard's Work for Warriors program found employment for more than 90 Guard members between its March 29 launch and the latest release of statistics on July 18 — more than one placement per business day.

"Work for Warriors is a rapid yet simple process that makes finding military-friendly employment a success," said 1st Lt. Joseph Rosa, who was hired by LB Construction on July 5. "The highly trained staff assist you every step of the way from resume creation to gaining employment."

The Work for Warriors team remains hard at work, looking to find jobs for the 1,200 Guard members who have contacted the program for job-placement assistance.

More than 70 current job openings at businesses that favor CNG members can be viewed on the Work For Warriors "Hot Jobs" page at www.calguard.ca.gov. From the homepage, click the "Jobs" tab to reach the Work for Warriors page or go directly to www.calguard.ca.gov/EIP. Then click "California National Guard Members" and "Hot Jobs" for the listings.



18 agencies, Guard units drill hazmat response

The CNG's 9th Civil Support Team (CST) hosted other CNG units, civilian responders, and Arizona- and Utah-based CSTs for a weeklong multi-site hazardous materials exercise

By **STAFF SGT. JESSICA INIGO**, L.A. Regional Public Affairs; and **SGT. GLEN BAKER**, 224th Sustainment Brigade PA

The United Harbors 2012 exercise brought law enforcement agencies, civilian entities and Guard units together to fly, climb, haul, protect and decontaminate Southern California's airways, waterways, hospitals and even a Hollywood movie set.

The 9th Civil Support Team, based at Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB), Los Alamitos, hosted the weeklong mass casualty and hazardous material exercise June 23-29. One of two California-based CSTs, the 22-member unit of Soldiers and Airmen is prepared to respond to chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive incidents.

In a sort of dress rehearsal, members of the 9th CST and their counterparts from Utah's 85th CST and Arizona's 91st CST began the week by training on sling-load operations on JFTB before heading out to the Port of Long Beach to conduct an actual lift and carry. Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, from JFTB brought out their UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters to assist in the training, which required the troops to hook a 500-gallon, 4,800-pound water tank to the bottom of the Black Hawk and later unhook it.

"The rotor wash generated from those blades — it's a little bit stronger than you'd anticipate," said Sgt. Robert Houston of the 85th CST, one of nearly 100 CST members who had a rare opportunity to work with Black Hawks during the exercise. "It's not just a forward wind that hits you straight on; it's a shifting motion. You've got to keep your balance — not just front and back, but left and right also."

The Guardsmen then drove to the Port of Long Beach for anchor-board training. The training segment, known as "Jacob's Ladder," required CST members to climb a rope and a plastic ladder to enter a door on the side of a Merchant Marine vessel. The troops wore more than 30 pounds of personal protective equipment (PPE) for the climb.

"The Jacob's Ladder is pretty difficult — especially since our boots are about two sizes too large for us ... to accom-



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo

modate our PPE," said Staff Sgt. Carl Satterwaite of the 91st CST. "All of this is pretty unfamiliar to us, but I'm sure after a couple of days we'll be top-notch."

At an alternate location, St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach, civilian agencies and hospitals were conducting live victim decontamination efforts. Scott Minikus, a patrol sergeant with the Long Beach Police Department, said he saw marked improvement as compared to past drills.

"There was a lot less chaos," the 21-year police officer said. "There were more defined roles and responsibilities for the people. As with every training evolution, people become more in-tuned to what their job is and also learning other people's jobs. That process helps the drills or a real-time event run much more smoothly."

Later in the week, service members traveled to Cedars Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles for medical evacuation training with Black Hawks and crews from the 1-140th.

The weeklong exercise culminated at the "War of the Worlds" movie set at Universal Studios, where the 2005 movie was filmed and where CST members used radiation-detection instruments to find hazardous materials at the site of a simulated jet crash. Two-man teams donned protective suits in 85-degree heat to look for radiation sources. Adding a twist, controllers instructed some teammates to act injured and remain down throughout the process of locating, evacuating and decontaminating the wounded.

"This type of training is very realistic," said Army Sgt. Kris Quinones of the 9th CST, whose teammate incurred a mock injury. "For the man-down exercise, for instance, there's debris everywhere, so you really kind of lose the whole aspect of training and start to really think real-world and start throwing things out of the way to get that guy out of there."

He added that the weeklong exercise not only helped pre-



TOP: A member the Utah National Guard's 85th Civil Support Team (CST) boards a Merchant Marine vessel wearing a protective chemical mask during the United Harbors exercise hosted by the CNG's 9th CST in June. **ABOVE:** Staff Sgt. Euilizes Montalvo of the 9th CST loads a role-player with mock injuries into an ambulance for transportation to a local hospital.

pare the CSTs for future domestic missions, it built relationships with partner agencies that will improve joint disaster response.

"Every time we get training like this, it always gives us the opportunity to think outside the box," he continued. "Training with other agencies, we understand that there is no one way to do things. Everyone has 'a' way, not 'the' way."

Local hospitals, students play role in United Harbors

By **SGT. GLEN BAKER**
224th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

Eight local hospitals joined 18 police, fire and military organizations in preparing for a crisis involving a hazardous chemical agent during the United Harbors exercise in June. The hospitals treated 50 role-players who had simulated injuries caused by a mustard agent June 25. The mock victims were required to don and doff hazardous materials suits and undergo decontamina-

tion showers. They were then escorted to one of several triage tents at St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach depending on their level of injury.

Kathy Dollarhide of St. Mary said the medical center joins other Long Beach-area hospitals every year to decontaminate simulated victims. The role-players this year were California State University, Long Beach, nursing students and St. Mary respiratory therapy students.

Getting the community involved in this type of exercise is essential to readiness, Dollarhide added: "No matter how many times we do it, we always walk away with the idea that working together and drilling together is very important for a crisis."

Scott Minikus of the Long Beach Police Department, who monitored the drill, said its inter-agency interaction will improve processes in the future. "We were talking at the end of drill and bouncing stuff off each oth-

er," he said. "That's where the true learning comes in. You take those little golden nuggets from side conversations and then give them out to everybody else."

Dollarhide added that St. Mary is eager to support the Armed Forces in domestic-response preparations. "I really appreciate the Army and National Guard," she said. "We're here to support the service that you do for our country. We are dedicated to helping out [with United Harbors] every year."

Search-and-destroy mission

CNG pilots teach law enforcement agents to spot illegal marijuana gardens from above

By **CAPT. AMANDA ELLISON**
JTF Domestic Support-Counterdrug

Pilots from Team Eagle, a component of the California National Guard's Joint Task Force Domestic Support-Counterdrug, flew one of the Cal Guard's new UH-72 Lakota helicopters over Mendocino County in June to support the Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA) Aerial Observation Course, a one-week program designed to train and certify local, federal and state law enforcement agents in aerial detection and surveillance methods used to spot illegal marijuana grow sites on public lands.

Counterdrug pilots have logged flight hours in support of law enforcement agencies' marijuana interdiction and eradication efforts for more than 20 years, and they know exactly what to look for.

"Spotting illicit outdoor marijuana is a Counterdrug pilot's specialty," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Thomas Schroeder, a Team Eagle pilot. "Some of the agents in this course have little to no experience in aerial marijuana detection. We coach them on identification techniques based on terrain features like concealment from public view, access to the grow site, cleared out areas of the forest and availability of water and sunlight.

"When they return to their home states," he said, "their departments will look to them as the subject matter experts."

Butch Gupta, a deputy with the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, said the Counterdrug pilots and crews are always top-notch and bring a wealth of experience to the table. Mendocino County hosts the training program each year because the location is ideal in terms of maneuverability, given the unrestricted airport in Ukiah, Calif., and the diversity of illegal marijuana cultivation methods used in the region.

"They are a very professional crew. They set the bar," Gupta said of the Counterdrug Task Force. "They know the terrain, how to fly it and what to look for when spotting the grow [sites]. This expertise helps train the students so they know what to look for when they go back to their hometowns."

Agents come from all over the world for the DEA's specialized training — some from as far away as the Netherlands and Jamaica. During the June class, more than 30 agents gathered in Ukiah for the instruction and experience.

"I've been doing this for 30 years, but it's been all ground experience, so spotting and locating marijuana from an aircraft is new to me," said Senior Deputy Brenda Glenn of the Sheriff's Office in Boise County, Idaho. "It's good training and experience because I didn't know what signs to look for from the air.

"The National Guard pilots show us tracks on the roads and how areas of land are thinned out to plant crops," she added. "It's educational."

The DEA officially started the training



Photos by Capt. Amanda Ellison

TOP: Chief Warrant Officer 3 Thomas Schroeder of the CNG's Joint Task Force Domestic Support-Counterdrug conducts a pre-flight safety briefing with students in the Drug Enforcement Administration's "Overflight School" in June. Schroeder was one of several Counterdrug pilots who supported the weeklong class in methods to spot marijuana gardens from the air. **ABOVE LEFT:** Fertilizer and chemicals used to grow marijuana litter an illegal grow site on public land, where they may enter the water system and the food chain. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Agents in Overflight School pull plants from a marijuana garden hidden near a vineyard in Ukiah, Calif. Agents identified the site from the air, then went in to destroy the plants.

program in Mendocino County in 1999, and the Counterdrug Task Force has flown in support of it ever since.

"Mendocino is extremely diverse in the [marijuana] growing styles, and anywhere in this county you'll see grows that would be found anywhere in the world," Gupta said. "It has the complete spectrum, and we've seen it all, from the Mexican-national guerilla style in the brush, to the mom and pop grows ... to greenhouses [and] even automated structures that have retractable roofs, so when [the growers] hear the choppers circling it closes and won't be as easily detected."

Commonly referred to as "Overflight School," the DEA course teaches students how to independently conduct aerial observation. As the course progresses, the instructors try to mimic what the students' actual missions will look like when they get back to their home states. Students become part of the flight crew during training and learn navigation principles, aircraft safety and proper communication with pilots, and they develop mission-planning and

time-management skills.

"From the air we can see the big picture, which allows us to identify terrain features ahead of time so we know where [the suspects] may run and how to protect ourselves from a safety standpoint," a DEA agent from Boise, Idaho, said. "We are running into more and more guns out there, so this will be very helpful in planning for eradication."

The Counterdrug Task Force provides air assets for this course at no cost to the law enforcement agencies. "Some states ... have to contract a helicopter to do spotting missions, which can cost about \$1,000 an hour, and can total up to \$6,000 when it's all said and done," a DEA special agent said.

Without the Counterdrug assets and pilots, the course could not have been provided this June, Gupta said. "We wouldn't have enough air assets to support the school," he said. "We have over 30 agents in the class this week, and with two flights a day, we wouldn't have the seats without

the Guard's support."

In total, the DEA had about eight different air assets on hand during the week, including contracted civilian helicopters, Sheriff's Department aircraft and assets from the Civil Air Patrol.

"What separates the CNG pilots from the others — it all comes down to discipline," said Rusty Noe, who retired from the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office and is now a DEA contractor. "We can depend on them to do what we ask, and they have phenomenal maintenance standards and a top-notch safety record."

One afternoon Gupta led the class to two illegal grow sites that had been spotted from the air a couple of days earlier. They were situated close to a highway and hidden behind a thriving vineyard.

The sites were estimated to be a few weeks old and were carefully planted, complete with intricate irrigation lines, fertilizers, pesticides and a wire fence to keep animals at bay. With a small stream just down the hill from the illegal grow site, it was highly probable that potentially poisonous chemicals would run off from the marijuana garden into the water system.

Agents pulled 314 plants from the two sites that day, and Gupta showed agents how to identify a cloned plant and destroy it.

"We bury the plants here to destroy them," he said. "We dig a 5-foot trench and unload the plants from the back of a dump truck and cover it with dirt. With the heat, it bakes itself and turns to mush. Within one hour the plants we just pulled will be destroyed."

Walking through a grow site after identifying it from the air gives agents a full-circle perspective.

"Seeing the aerial observation first then walking into the grows solidifies the training we've received over the past couple of days," a narcotics deputy based in Idaho said. "We see the water source [and] the dark spots from watering surrounding the plant that from the air looks like an anomaly because it shouldn't be there in that perfect pattern."

It's next to impossible for humans to plant sporadically in the way nature would, so the grows end up looking like crops, making them easier to identify from the air, a DEA agent said.

Upon completing the program, students earn a certificate in aerial surveillance techniques specific to cannabis cultivation in outdoor, hidden, illegal grow sites. Some states require certification before agents are allowed to conduct an overflight mission.

"We have always had a great relationship with the Guard over the years," said the DEA special agent in charge of running the Aerial Observation Course. "The Guard, particularly Counterdrug, is instrumental in what we do in the air and on the ground. We are just thankful for Counterdrug support each year."

CNG fighters, choppers head to 23rd RIMPAC

By MASTER SGT. DAVID LOEFFLER
144th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

F-16C fighter jets and HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopters from the California National Guard have begun to rip across the blue Hawaiian skies as more than 25,000 Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and foreign military members take part in the largest Rim of the Pacific (RIMPAC) exercise ever.

The 2012 RIMPAC is the 23rd exercise in a history of bi-annual drills that dates back four decades. The exercise provides a unique and dynamic training environment in which nations exchange ideas and train together with the primary mission of securing open sea lanes and protecting maritime lines of communication. Since RIMPAC's inception in 1971, the number of individuals as well as the number of countries participating has grown steadily. India, Mexico, Norway, the Philippines, Russia and Tonga are first-time participants this year.

"RIMPAC is a great opportunity for our team," said Lt. Col. Scott Seyfarth, project officer for the CNG's 144th Fighter Wing, based in Fresno. "We will be working with 22 nations, 42 surface ships, seven submarines, more than 170 aircraft and over 25,000 personnel. ... The lessons learned and experience gained in integrating with the other international exercise partners will be invaluable. This exercise allows us to work with our partner nations at both a strategic and tactical level."

Two Pave Hawks and about 40 Airmen from the CNG's Silicon Valley-based 129th Rescue Wing arrived in Ha-



Photo by Master Sgt. David Loeffler

Tech. Sgt. Patrick Campos, a crew chief for the 144th Fighter Wing, reviews data for an F-16C Fighting Falcon after a July 14 mission during the Rim of the Pacific exercise, or RIMPAC. The bi-annual exercise brings nations together to train with a primary focus on the safety of open sea lanes and the security of maritime movement.

waii on July 11 to perform personnel recovery efforts. The 129th is the only helicopter unit at RIMPAC, and this is the first time a helicopter unit has been included in the exercise.

The 144th Fighter Wing arrived in Hawaii on July 13 with eight jets, 32 pallets of cargo and 110 Guardsmen. RIMPAC will provide the Wing's pilots an opportunity to fight in a joint dissimilar air combat environment with other U.S. Air Force and Navy units as well as Canadian Airmen.

"None of this would be possible without the support from the most junior Airman on the maintenance or logistic teams all the way up the chain," Seyfarth said. "Without their hard work and dedication, our pilots don't fly."

The 144th plans to fly more than 140 sorties at RIMPAC, which equates to about 300 hours of flight time. The exercise will conclude Aug. 7.

"This training is perfectly tailored to allow our pilots and Airmen to train to our primary real-world mission of providing air superiority worldwide," Seyfarth said.

3-140th S&S departs for year in Kosovo



Photo by Master Sgt. David Loeffler

Soldiers of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3-140th Aviation Security and Support Battalion, present the colors at a departure ceremony July 6 in Stockton prior to the unit's yearlong deployment to Kosovo.

By TECH. SGT. DAVID LOEFFLER
California Military Department Public Affairs

Nearly 60 Soldiers with Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 3-140th Aviation Security and Support Battalion, departed California in June for training at Camp Atterbury, Ind., followed by a year supporting peacekeeping operations in Kosovo. The 3-140th will provide administrative and refueling support to coalition aviation units conducting missions with UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

"We will be providing airlift support for quick reaction forces when required," Commander Maj. Matthew McDermott, said during a mobilization ceremony July 6 at the unit's armory in Stockton. "I think the unit is very well-prepared for this deployment. The overall attitude and morale for this deployment is outstanding."

NATO has had a military presence in Kosovo since 1999, when Serbian forces agreed to withdraw from Kosovo following a 78-day NATO bombing campaign. The Republic of Kosovo declared its independence in 2008 following a United Nations administration period.

McDermott said more than half of the mobilizing 3-140th troops have deployed overseas in the past. "Everyone is looking forward to it. We are putting together a task force of four different states that we haven't worked with before," he said. "It is going to be a great training experience as far as bringing people together from different backgrounds and different states and making it all happen together."

Although many family members and friends were apprehensive about their loved ones leaving, they were reassured and supported at the mobilization ceremony by families with deployment experience, Cal Guard leadership and the 3-140th Family Support Group.

"I am so proud that they are trained and ready to do this very important mission, and I'd like to tell the families and friends that we are thankful that they share their loved ones for this mission," said Col. Laura Yeager, commander of the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade, higher headquarters for the 3-140th. "Sometimes the hardest job is on the families who are left behind that have to carry on without their Soldiers, and I know that they worry about them.

"I want to assure them that we are here to take care of the Soldiers and we have all types of resources for them," she continued. "If they need anything, the Brigade, the Headquarters and the state are here to support them."

3 nations' intel forces meet in Utah for Panther Strike

By SGT. GLEN BAKER
224th Sustainment Brigade Public Affairs

Twenty-one Army National Guard units as well as members of the Canadian and British armies participated in a military intelligence exercise, Panther Strike, at Camp



Photo by Spc. Ariel Solomon

Spec. Sean Radetich of the CNG's 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion exits a Humvee Egress Assistance Trainer on June 11 at Camp Williams, Utah, during the Panther Strike exercise.

Williams, Utah, in June. The annual exercise, first held in 2005, incorporates tactical and technical skills vital to accomplishing overseas missions.

"The mission is to provide collective training and evaluation of intelligence assets from the team [level] to the brigade combat team military intelligence staff level in a deployment-based scenario," said Maj. Scott A. Chalmers, plans and operations officer for Utah's 300th Military Intelligence Brigade.

The exercise gave different types of intelligence sections an opportunity to work together, he said. Some of the planners' tasks included creating a scenario and exercise concept that can be reused each year, maximizing intelligence training value and integrating signal intelligence and analysis as well as human intelligence, or espionage.

"This is the premiere military intelligence training exercise in the country where you will have signal intelligence, human intelligence, counterintelligence, imagery intelligence and all-source [intelligence] coupled with coalition partners," Chalmers said. "Soldiers coming to this exercise had the opportunity to work not only with the latest equipment and software; they had the opportunity to train using the full spectrum of intelligences available both in the Guard and in the active component. They had the opportunity to receive up-to-date training from the experts in the field, and they had the opportunity to test their training in concert with Soldiers from all over the country."

Foundation for the future



Photos by Staff Sgt. (CA) Robert Davison

California Cadet Corps prepares teens to succeed in college, work and life

By STAFF SGT. JESSICA INIGO
Los Angeles Regional Public Affairs

When Mark Ryan was a teenager in the late 1970s, he grew up in what he calls the "hood." South Los Angeles, especially back in the day, was not known as a neighborhood to foster community or fellowship. There were gangs, drugs and a wanton disrespect for established rules and norms. Looking back, Ryan can only speculate on how his life would have turned out without the California Cadet Corps.



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Luckily for him it is only speculation, since he is now a state-recognized lieutenant colonel and assistant executive officer of the organization that helped keep him in line and off the streets as a youth.

"I don't mean this to sound overly dramatic, but it is true to say the California Cadet Corps singlehandedly changed my life and saved me," Ryan said. "If I had not had this, I would have been on drugs, in gangs and on the streets somewhere."

The California Cadet Corps is likened to a Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, but with a somewhat different curriculum



TOP: Students compete in the California Cadet Corps State Drill Competition on April 9, 2011, at the Los Alamitos Army Airfield on Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos. **ABOVE:** Cadets sight in during the air rifle marksmanship portion of the California Cadet Corps Individual Major Awards competition on April 9, 2011, at JFTB, Los Alamitos.

and different rules that are not necessarily aimed at sending cadets into the military. Students enroll in the Corps as an elective course or alternative to physical education at their elementary, middle or high school.

Ryan was a cadet in junior high and high school from 1977 to 1983. He remained a part of the program after graduation and in 1984 was commissioned in the California State Military Reserve, which oversaw the Cadet Corps at the time.

Not every cadet, however, is considered an at-risk student. The structure and leadership skills taught through the program

span all different types of students and needs.

Recent high school graduate and former cadet Savannah Solis took the same path as Ryan, spending her junior high and high school days in the Corps, but she turned toward the program because she enjoyed learning about the military. Solis' father was in the Army, and she has early memories of him teaching her how to low-crawl in the kitchen.

Once she found out about the program, Solis enrolled immediately. She now praises the Corps for offering structure while at the

same time allowing her to be herself.

"In middle school, when I was in the 7th grade, I started to grow a little bit of a wild streak with just trying to be my own person. The Cadet Corps gave me that safe zone to be myself but still have the discipline that I needed," Solis said. "If I didn't have that structure, make those friends, learn those skills, I would have ended up in a different place in life, I think."

Solis attended Shannon Hills Middle School in San Bernardino, where she first entered the Cadet Corps, and later graduated with top honors from Cajon High School, also in San Bernardino. She now lives in Oregon, where she attends college. Solis continues to work with the Cadet Corps but said she's not as involved as she would like since moving out of California.

"I wish this program was nationwide," she said. "[I] love that it has given me the confidence and ability to be in the real world and has offered me different ways of learning and dealing with problems."

Solis added that programs like the Cadet Corps are key to student learning.

"Students are not going to stick with something that's not interesting to them," she said. "The Cadet Corps always gave me something to look forward to. I would just think, 'OK, I'll just make it through this one history class, do everything I've got to do for it, and then I can go to the California Cadet Corps.'"

"It really was the thing that was missing for me and what actually made me like school, to excel in it."

A 21st century program

By 1ST LT. JAN BENDER
California Military Department Public Affairs

California Military Department leadership has made it a top priority to reinvigorate the Department's fourth major component — the California Cadet Corps.

"Hardly anyone is aware of this, but the California Cadet Corps is that fourth component, right along with our state's Army National Guard, Air National Guard and State Military Reserve," said Lt. Col. Brian Anderson, chief of staff for the CNG's Youth and Community Programs Task Force. "This program has a storied history and impressive record of making a positive impact in the lives of California's youth. Our leadership now wants to bring this back into focus."

A school-based applied leadership program conducted within a military framework, the Cadet Corps was established in 1911 by the California legislature and the California National Guard to provide growth and leadership opportunities for cadets in elementary through high school levels. It is thought to be the oldest program of its type in the nation.

At its high point in 1951, the Corps had more than 150 detachments at schools throughout the state, where students enroll in the program as an elective course or alternative to physical education. In mid-2011 that number stood at 39 detachments, which the Corps was able to grow to 61 by the start of 2012.

Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, adjutant general of the Cal Guard, plans to maintain that momentum and has a vision to triple the size of the Cadet Corps. His strategic plan includes hiring a full-time staff to bolster the program while conducting an outreach campaign to seed new detachments at schools throughout the state.

Program leaders are confident new detachments will take root quickly with teachers and administrators. "Seeing is believing," said Brig. Gen. (CA) James Gabrielli, commander of CNG Youth and Community Programs. "Once they see how squared-away our cadets are and the tremendous role models they are for students in and outside the program, they'll

The military aspect of the program is not always the lure for cadets, though. In fact the initial shock of enforced order and obedience can come off all wrong to some students. However, once students are in the program, it is often just what the doctor ordered.

Victor Martinez of North Hollywood High school said he didn't think much about his future before joining the Corps. Now, he's keeping an eye on the long term.

"I want to get my Ph.D. in electrical or mechanical engineering," he said. "I was looking into the military too — the Navy. They seem to have a good program in that field."

Martinez, who finished his third year of competition in the Cadet Corps Individual Major Awards on Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, in April, said the program has given him a different perspective on life: "It made me actually want to give back to the community. I've had a great time with my fellow cadets."

Brig. Gen. Donald Currier, who was a cadet from 1974 to 1977 and is now the commander of the California Army National Guard, said the program's foundation in leadership offers tools not found in many other institutions.

"I learned more about leadership in the 3 1/2 years I was in the California Cadet Corps than I did in the 30 years I've been in the Army," he said.

The Corps' extracurricular activities like exhibition drill and competitive shooting also helped Currier avoid floundering into adulthood, he said.

Sgt. Maj. Daniel DeGeorge, the California National Guard's state chaplain's assistant, was the Cadet Corps assistant commandant at Rio Linda Junior and Senior High School from 1998 to 2002, when both of his sons were enrolled in the program.

"Both of my sons are in the California National Guard now, and through both of their deployments they have been very successful," he said. "They have families, have children and are very responsible. At those critical years, the Cadet Corps was shaping them to become responsible young men."



Photo by Staff Sgt. (CA) Robert Davison

Nearly 1,000 students from Cadet Corps detachments across California assemble following a pass-in-review ceremony during the California Cadet Corps Centennial Celebration on April 9, 2011, at Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos.

want to be a part of it."

Another top objective is to modernize the Corps' approach. As a result of staff cuts and budget reductions in recent years, the Corps has struggled to keep pace with educational advances. "We do so many things well, but the program is still using 20th century approaches with 21st century kids," Anderson said. "We've got to maintain that connection with our cadets and make use of all the powerful tools available."

The way ahead will be built around an interactive and progressive curriculum that leverages technology to ensure a dynamic, impactful experience. The program will be student-centered and emphasize applied leadership and character development.

Under the new plan, each detachment will partner with a CNG unit. Cadets will gain access to CNG facilities, role models and mentors, and Guardsmen will have an opportunity to embrace a leadership role in the lives of young community members.

"Our Soldiers and Airmen joined the Guard because they wanted to serve — not only serve our state and nation, but serve at home in their communities," Baldwin said.

"This unique program provides a prime opportunity for our citizen-Soldiers to get involved and make a difference."

Though initially conceived as preparatory training for eventual military service, the Cadet Corps through the years has evolved and today prepares youths for whatever paths they choose. Only about 3 percent of cadets go on to serve in the Armed Forces, but the Corps' methodology continues to produce positive results. Cadets maintain higher grades, levels of fitness and graduation rates than their peers and are more likely to pursue a college education.

California schools that are struggling with limited staffs and tightening fiscal constraints can benefit from the Corps, which excels at doing more with less. The program's current budget requires less than \$115 in state funding for each of the program's 5,500 cadets. Baldwin's plan relies on greater funding in years to come and forecasts even greater results.

"These young people leave the ranks of the Cadet Corps with a greater sense of who they are and a clearer vision of what life can hold for them if they hold themselves to a standard," Gabrielli said.

Corps Exercises

Cadet Corps key annual training events

Competitions to encourage excellence

- Academic Competitions
- Athletic Competitions
- State Air Rifle Matches
- State Drill Competition
- Color Guard and Guidon
- Individual Major Awards

Schools to develop skills

- Commandant Academy
- Cadet Staff School
- Basic Noncommissioned Officer Course
- Advanced Noncommissioned Officer Course
- Officer Candidate School



Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Rob Kareskint

CNG drops in on NorCal wildfire

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**,
San Diego Regional Public Affairs; and
SPC. GRANT LARSON,
69th Public Affairs Detachment

The California Army National Guard answered the call to serve its citizens in July, dropping more than 164,000 gallons of water on the Robbers fire in Placer, Trinity and Colusa counties.

The fire started July 11, and on July 13, Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. activated four of the Guard's UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and an HH-60G Pave Hawk medical evacuation (medevac) helicopter to assist the California Emergency Management Agency (Cal EMA) and the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire). Two of the Black Hawks and the Pave Hawk were based out of Mather Army Aviation Support Facility near Sacramento, while the other Black Hawks were based at Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, in Southern California.

"The California Army National Guard Soldiers are trained very well, and it feels really good that they're focused on fulfilling the mission," said Capt. David Ito of Cal Fire. "They're an outstanding resource for the citizens of California and Cal Fire."

The Black Hawks dropped more than 300 "Bambi buckets" full of water on the fire during five 14-hour duty days, each of which included eight hours in the air. A "Bambi bucket" can carry 660 gallons of water.

High temperatures and strong winds made it hard for crews to get the upper hand on the massive wildfire. As of July 18 the Robbers fire had burned 2,650 acres and consumed one home and four outbuildings, but it was 70 percent contained. At that time, one of the Black Hawk crews was diverted to the Sand fire in Tehachapi, Calif., while the other crews were released from duty. Cal Fire continued to fight the Robbers fire until it was 100 percent contained two days later.

Chief Warrant Officer 3 Robert Brockly, operations officer and senior instructor pilot at Mather, said the Guard is ready to respond immediately to any call for assistance from the state.

"We've had a lasting relationship with Cal Fire," he said. "Once we receive a call from them, we have our birds in the air in five to 10 minutes."

Before the start of the fire season each year, the California Army National Guard and Cal Fire conduct joint training operations including water bucket drops and radio communications. In addition Guard pilots have gained valuable experience in recent years through their federal mission, which has required numerous deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, Brockly said.

"The stress that's involved in flying in combat translates into fighting fires, as most [Cal Guard] pilots have been in combat at least once or twice," he said.

"You train so much that it's instinctive," added 1st Lt. Matthew Miklos, a platoon leader and Pave Hawk pilot for Company F, 2nd Battalion, 135th Aviation Regiment. "It's muscle memory, and that's a good feeling."

For some of the Cal Guard responders, the Robbers fire hit close to home.

"I grew up in the hills of Placerville and worked for Auburn State Park, so I'm honored to be a part of this," Miklos said. "It's pretty awesome to get to help out your neighbors."

"The Robbers fire is why we joined the Guard," Brockly added. "It gives us the opportunity to serve our own country and state."

In addition to firefighting operations, the 2-135th assisted local authorities by rescuing two local citizens who were injured in incidents unrelated to the fire and transporting them to a medical center. One patient was injured riding horseback, while the other was experiencing heat-related symptoms.



A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from the California Army National Guard drops water on the Robbers fire in Placer County, Calif., on July 14. During five days of firefighting, four Cal Guard Black Hawks dropped more than 164,000 gallons of water on the wildfire.

Better bucket, best results

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

California Army National Guard aviators rolled out a new piece of equipment in July that greatly increases the effectiveness of their firefighting operations. The Torrentula, a new version of the "Bambi bucket" carried by Guard firefighting helicopters, uses electric pumps to speed the process of filling the bucket and enables personnel to use a water source only 18 inches deep.

A Torrentula-equipped UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from the Los Alamitos, Calif.-based 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, joined three other Black Hawks fighting the Robbers fire in Northern California from July 13 through July 18. The Torrentula crew was able to use a shallow water source that was closer to the fire than the source used by the other three helicopters.

"Our air crew was able to deliver 44 drops in a single day on the fire compared to [another California National Guard] aircraft's 28 drops," said 1st Sgt. Robert Pruitt, a standardization instructor for Los Alamitos Army Airfield. "The Torrentula is equipped with the Power-fill pump system, enabling the flight crew to use water



sources in hard-to-reach areas such as tree-lined ponds and streams. A water source with only 2 feet of water was all that was needed, as the bucket dips and pumps instead of submerging."

The Torrentula also enables crews to empty part of their load rather than dropping all 660 gallons at once.

"The biggest difference is our drops can now be metered. Each bucket can be unloaded in as many separate drops as the operator requires," Pruitt said. "We can fill up just about anywhere, and with the limited water sources we saw a few years ago while fighting fires [in Southern California], this capability will help with turnaround times."



ABOVE: A Cal Guard UH-60 Black Hawk drops water on the Robbers fire in Placer County, Calif., on July 15. LEFT: Spc. John Fergades, far left, Spc. Joseph Chuka and 1st Sgt. Robert Pruitt of 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, maneuver a Torrentula "Bambi bucket" after battling the Robbers fire in Placer County, Calif., in July.

146th AW activated for Rocky fires

Tragic South Dakota crash kills four North Carolina National Guardsmen

By MAJ. KIMBERLY HOLMAN
146th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

On June 25 the CNG's 146th Airlift Wing (AW) proudly entered another annual fight against wildfires with the U.S. Forest Service, this time with flames threatening the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, Colo., and several other locations in the Rocky Mountain region. The threat was so dire that all eight Modular Airborne Fire Fighting Systems (MAFFS)-equipped Air National Guard and Air Force Reserve C-130 planes from across the country were activated to Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., at the same time, a situation seldom witnessed in more than 40 years of MAFFS response.

As firefighting efforts continued, July 1 turned out to be an exceptionally somber day for the Airmen fighting the wildfires ravaging the Rockies. At about 6 that evening, a C-130 from the North Carolina National Guard's 145th AW went down while fighting the White Draw fire in South Dakota. Four Airmen flying under call sign MAFFS 7 were killed and two endured serious injuries. The four deceased Airmen, Lt. Col. Paul Mikeal, 42, Maj. Ryan David, 35, Maj. Joseph McCormick, 36, and Senior Master Sgt. Robert Cannon, 50, were honored at an emotional memorial the following week in Charlotte, N.C.

"Today the 146th Airlift Wing is mourning those lost Airmen who we have flown side-by-side with for so many years," Col. Paul J. Hargrove, 146th AW commander, said at the memorial. "We hold the highest respect for these brave air crew members and want to convey to the families our deepest sorrow."

MAFFS flights were placed on hold the evening of the crash to give Airmen time to "reflect and reset" following the accident. Operations resumed July 3, while members of the 145th AW returned to Charlotte to be with friends and family and to mourn the loss of their fellow Airmen.

"The men who lost their lives were truly heroes, and I know that for many of us, flying is part of our healing process,"



Photo by Senior Airman Nicholas Carzis

A C-130J from the CNG's 146th Airlift Wing drops 3,000 gallons of fire retardant on the Squirrel Creek fire 70 miles east of Cheyenne, Wyo., on July 6. The 146th has been stationed in Wyoming, Utah and Idaho for firefighting missions this summer.

Hargrove said about returning to MAFFS duty. "This is an extremely challenging mission, but ... it helps to know that we are out there helping to save lives and property."

After the loss of MAFFS 7, a new call sign was added to the nation's MAFFS fleet for the first time. MAFFS 9 rolled onto the ramp at Hill Air Force Base, Utah, on July 10 to join the fire fight. "The Forest Service has had one spare MAFFS unit stored at the 146th Airlift Wing in the event they someday needed it," Hargrove said. The call sign MAFFS 7 has been retired in honor of those who lost their lives.

From June 25 through July 20, the MAFFS fleet completed more than 250 fire-retardant drops, releasing more than 641,000 gallons of retardant. The Forest Service changed staging locations to follow the fire activity multiple times, sending the 146th to work out of Cheyenne, Wyo., then to Hill Air Force Base and Boise, Idaho.

The Forest Service has since released some of the aircraft from fire duty. "With all the recent rain in the Rocky Mountains, they just don't need us down there right now," said Col. Jerry Champlin, 153rd Air Expeditionary Group commander. "Although the new request for assistance reduces the operational requirement down to four aircraft, the remaining MAFFS units will maintain their ability to quickly ramp up again if needed."

MAFFS is a self-contained aerial firefighting system owned by the Forest Service and flown on military planes that can disperse 3,000 gallons of water or fire retardant in less than 5 seconds, covering an area a quarter of a mile long by 100 feet wide. Once the load is discharged, it can be refilled in less than 12 minutes. The Forest Service owns the MAFFS equipment and supplies the retardant, while the Defense Department provides the aircraft, crews, and maintenance and support personnel.

Forklift rolls at NASCAR event; CST to the rescue

By SENIOR AIRMAN JESSICA GREEN
California Military Department Public Affairs

Members of the 95th Civil Support Team worked with first responders to save the life of an injured forklift driver June 22 during a NASCAR qualifying session at Sonoma Raceway in Northern California.

A driver from a track concessioner had tried to maneuver a 13-ton forklift down an incline carrying several hundred pounds of pipe, and the forklift rolled over. "The driver was not wearing his safety belt, was partially ejected from the operator seat and pinned under the wreckage, sustaining major injuries," said Gary Hall of the Suisun City Fire Department.

Staff Sgt. Esteban Peralta, Staff Sgt. Aaron Zuniga and Sgt. David Baynes of the 95th CST made first contact and assessment of the driver, began medically stabilizing him and worked to steady the forklift to prepare for the rescue effort. The Soldiers had been assigned to the Joint Hazards Assessment Team for the event.



Photo courtesy of 95th CST

Staff Sgt. Esteban Peralta, left, Sgt. David Baynes and Staff Sgt. Aaron Zuniga of the CNG's 95th Civil Support Team helped save the life of an injured worker June 22 at Sonoma Raceway in Northern California.

"We looked around for some wood and found a couple of short fences that we began breaking apart to support the boom," Baynes said. "We created an access point for the fire department."

The extraction took about 45 minutes, ultimately costing the patient his arm and leg. He was evacuated by air to a hospital.

"Your staff has an unwavering sense of duty and are some of the most capable and selfless operators in the business," Dennis Smiley, a detective sergeant with the special operations unit of the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office, wrote in a letter to Brig. Gen. David S. Baldwin, adjutant general of the Cal Guard. "They are a credit to their unit and the uniform."

CNG earns Army award for installation management

By SGT. MAJ. THOMAS LANGENBERG
CNG Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate

The California Army National Guard was recognized as one of the Army's top organizations for installation management in 2011, earning first place in the National Guard Silver Division of the Army Communities of Excellence competition.

The Army chief of staff presents Communities of Excellence awards annually to recognize business process improvement, individual innovation, groundbreaking initiatives, and dedication to efficiency, effectiveness and customer care. Thirty-five states and territories participated in the National Guard segment of the competition.

An independent panel of judges identified the winning organizations based on written applications and information gathered during site visits. Each winning installation receives a monetary award.

Since 2005, the CNG has received more than \$300,000 from Communities of Excellence. The previous awards have funded improvements at Camp Roberts, Joint Force Headquarters in Sacramento and Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos.

The CNG's Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate, or J-5 section, is actively preparing the 2012 awards submission for its 215 companies and detachments.



Photo courtesy of Brenda Harris

Brenda Harris and Col. John Lathrop of the CNG's Strategic Plans and Policy Directorate proudly display their office's 2011 American Communities of Excellence Award for installation management.

HH-60G Pave Hawk rescue helicopters from the Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif.-based 129th Rescue Wing fly in formation over Alcatraz Island near San Francisco on June 13. Photo by Airman 1st Class John D. Pharr III



ABOVE: Twenty Soldiers of Task Force Mad Dog are sworn into the Noncommissioned Officer Corps by Command Sgt. Maj. Michael E. Baker of the CNG's 578th Engineer Battalion during an induction ceremony at Forward Operating Base Sharana, Afghanistan, where the 578th is on a yearlong deployment as part of TF Mad Dog. Photo by 1st Lt. Adam J. Carrington
RIGHT: Sgt. Kevin Glancy of the CNG's 59th Army Band plays during the California Military Department's celebration of the Army's 237th birthday June 14. Photo by Master Sgt. David Loeffler



At a Glance



TOP: Pfc. David Anderson of the 235th Engineer Company provides cover for Staff Sgt. Daniel Caddy while Caddy uses a radio to report their situation to the unit's higher headquarters July 9 during a Combat Lifesaver Course at Camp Roberts, Calif. **Photo by Pfc. Brienne M. Roudebush** **CENTER:** Bianca Marrujo receives a surprise Skype visit from her father, Sgt. 1st Class Hector Marrujo, as she prepares for her June 1 graduation from Hilltop High School in San Diego. Sgt. 1st Class Marrujo is deployed to Afghanistan with the CNG's 670th Military Police Company. **Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey** **LEFT:** Mrs. Christine Gaffaney is joined by Brig. Gen. David Smalley and Col. Odie Blueitt of the Army Reserve as she holds a painting of her late husband, Capt. John P. Gaffaney, during a ceremony dedicating the Army Reserve Center in Garden Grove, Calif., in his honor July 21. Gaffaney, a longtime Cal Guard officer, was killed in November 2009 when he tried to disarm a gunman on Fort Hood, Texas. **Photo by Maj. Matthew Lawrence** **ABOVE:** Officer Candidates Mark Sternin, front left, Robert Allen, front right, Jason Boatwright, back left, Nicholas Andrews and Norman Luker stand proudly June 15 after finishing the first phase of their training to become Army officers. The five CNG members joined 114 other Soldiers from 18 states and territories in completing two weeks of intense Officer Candidate School leadership training at Fort Meade, S.D. **Photo by 1st Lt. Aaron Gatzke**



CELEBRATING THE BIRTH OF OUR NATION • JULY 4, 1776

INDEPENDENCE DAY

By SENIOR AIRMAN JESSICA GREEN
California Military Department Public Affairs

The 129th Rescue Wing displayed an impressive medley of search-and-rescue capabilities at this year's Red, White and Tahoe Blue Independence Day celebration in Incline Village, Nev., just across the California border, while other California Air and Army National Guard units participated in patriotic events around the Golden State.

Pararescuemen from the Wing's 131st Rescue Squadron parachuted from an MC-130P Combat Shadow cargo airplane into the deep-blue water of Lake Tahoe near a cheering crowd of patriotic spectators lining Incline Beach.

"We heard what an excellent presentation and demonstration there was, and my brother said we absolutely had to come and see," said Debra Dahl, who traveled from southeast Florida to celebrate Independence Day in Lake Tahoe.

Soon after the pararescuemen ditched their parachutes, an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter and crew plucked them from the waves to display their ability to save the lives of injured or stranded citizens, exemplifying their motto, "These things we do that others may live."

"We were going to have a water balloon fight to re-enact a period of military history for our country," event spectator Joanie Franks said. "But this [demonstration] was much better."

For the fourth year in a row, the celebration and exhibition drew a crowd of thousands. "It's tremendous that we get so much support and that they enjoy us coming out," said Senior Master Sgt. Eric Degner, a pararescueman assigned to the 131st Rescue Squadron.

Veterans, family members and patriotic citizens across the country celebrated Independence Day with pride and allegiance to the United States. The Cal Guard followed suit by supporting more than a dozen parades and celebrations across California with guest speakers, color guards and vehicles for display.

Among other events, Maj. Gen. Scott Johnson, commander of the 40th Infantry Division, represented the Cal Guard alongside vehicles from 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, at the annual 4th of July festival in Huntington Beach, while the 746th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion and 756th Transportation Company provided military vehicles and Soldiers for the Santa Clarita Independence Day Parade.

Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, adjutant general of the California National Guard, was the keynote speaker for the Spirit of the Fourth celebration in Rancho Bernardo, near San Diego. Noting the 236 years since our nation gained its independence, Baldwin said, "That singular event in human history on July 4, 1776, set the wheels in motion for a world dominated by democracy, and it created the greatest nation the world has ever seen."

Baldwin emphasized that he is proud to be associated with the distinguished veterans who have served this nation, and he stressed his confidence in the Armed Forces today.

"In a nation that enjoys the rights to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, we need to remember and give thanks for those who risked their lives more than two centuries ago to secure those freedoms," he concluded. "They shaped this country into a shining example of humanity and equality, and they turned democracy into our greatest export."



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Joseph Prouse



Photo by Spc. Gene Arns



Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey

LEFT: Sgt. 1st Class (CA) Eric Anderson of the California State Military Reserve greets young patriots at the Huntington Beach 4th of July parade. TOP: Airmen with the 129th Rescue Wing demonstrate search-and-rescue capabilities at the annual Red, White, and Tahoe Blue event in Incline Village, Nev. ABOVE: Spc. Nick Boyd, far left, Spc. Luisa Coronel, Pfc. Edward Ruiz and Pvt. Gary Brown of the 79th Brigade Special Troops Battalion present the colors at San Diego's Spirit of the Fourth celebration.

235th engineered for performance

By **1ST LT. WILL MARTIN**
49th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs

Midway through their two weeks of annual training at Camp Roberts, Calif., the Soldiers of the 235th Engineer Company rose before sunrise to conduct an Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT). It would prove to be the least grueling event facing them the next three days.

"When you're fatigued, that's when the math needs to start coming out," said Capt. Jose Dominguez, commander for the Army National Guard unit based in Petaluma, Calif. "During a deployment, you need to be able to meet the requirements of a combat engineer even when facing exhaustion."

To give his troops a taste of the punishing conditions that await them during their deployment to Afghanistan next summer, Dominguez and his staff organized a three-day Sapper Squad Competition. The contest was as detailed as it was taxing, involving intricate planning by company leadership. "We set conditions to reflect their upcoming deployment," Dominguez said before the contest. "We wanted them to encounter events that might transpire overseas."

The competition began July 16 with the APFT. That test was simply a warm-up, however, as squads then used sheer manpower to push a broken-down Humvee and later to pull an equally disabled 5-ton M923 vehicle. At that point, most troops would call it a day, but the Soldiers of the 235th simply called it noon.

Staff Sgt. Daniel Caddy has a term for this intense operational tempo — "stress inoculation" — and the combat veteran deems it



Photo by Sgt. Daniel Caddy

Spc. Timothy Burrus of the 235th Engineer Company leads the way during the unit's prisoner of war crawl on July 18 at Camp Roberts, Calif., part of the company's grueling three-day Sapper Squad Competition during its annual training.

essential to deployment readiness.

"Afghanistan can't be the first time our Soldiers are carrying out missions for 36 to 48 hours straight," said Caddy, who served with the 235th on its first deployment to Afghanistan in 2009. "Their having to tie knots and perform all the other fundamental skills in this scenario will translate into their effectiveness overseas."

The remainder of the competition ensured fatigue, intensity and tempo remained at a fever pitch. Day and night land naviga-

tion courses, a range-estimation exercise, mountaineering knot-tying drills, weapons assembly, mine identification, lifesaving medical treatment, tactical communications and a several-mile ruck march for which participants were not told the distance were all among the challenges facing the 235th Soldiers during their competition, which was won by Squad 1, Route Clearance Platoon A.

Near the end of the contest, after their bodies had been pushed to their limits, the Soldiers would finally sit — only to take a 50-

question test covering the basic soldiering skills covered during their first week of annual training.

Equally as important as testing the troops' skills amid fatigue and duress was the competition's capacity for solidifying the Soldiers as combat engineers and as brothers in arms, unit leaders said.

"The big thing about this training is its ability to build esprit de corps in each individual," said Sgt. Daniel Bietz, who deployed to Afghanistan in 2007 as a combat engineer with the active duty 82nd Airborne Division. "This unit is pretty unique in its rigorous, high level of motivation. I would say it's equal to what you'd find on active duty, and in many ways it is superior."

That camaraderie is crucial in cementing a unit whose combat veterans rub shoulders with scores of young, inexperienced Soldiers, some altogether new to the combat engineer field. Inexperienced as those young men might be, however, they clearly represent their generation's courageous minority who are enlisting with the knowledge they will almost certainly face combat.

"I joined to deploy," said Pvt. Chris Lyman of Eureka, Calif. "I didn't join the Army to sit around."

He's joined by Pfc. Troy Lynch, who came to the unit shortly after its first deployment to Afghanistan. Hearing his peers' tales of combat and camaraderie has fanned his desire to deploy. "I'm actually extending [my enlistment] to go," said Lynch, who hails from Iowa, where two of his fraternity brothers joined the military and deployed. "It's my turn now."

Nuclear scenario tests 49th MP response forces

By **1ST LT. WILL MARTIN**
49th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs

The near future of the California National Guard is clearly pointed toward its civil-support mission. With the close of the war in Iraq and the gradual downsizing of forces committed to Afghanistan, the Cal Guard has its eyes squarely on the homefront.

At the core of this domestic effort is the 49th Military Police Brigade, which is deeply rooted in the Cal Guard's civil-response mission. The Brigade's Homeland Response

Force (HRF) and Joint Task Force (JTF) — with its subordinate Quick Reaction Force and Ready Reaction Force — are fundamental to the Brigade's robust operational tempo.

"We constantly need to be training to understand the different challenges between the Joint Task Force and Homeland Response Force missions," said Maj. Daniel Williamson, full-time operations officer for the Brigade. "We're one of two JTFs that the adjutant general has identified to be able to respond to emergencies across the state, and our HRF mission requires we be responsive to federal missions across the western U.S."

It comes as little surprise, then, that Williamson and the rest of the Brigade's headquarters staff traveled in July to Camp San Luis Obispo to test their ability to carry out these multiple missions under the pressure of a two-day disaster exercise.

The scenario involved mass protests in Oakland that turned decidedly violent, requiring the activation of the JTF's Quick Reaction and Ready Reaction forces. To further test their mettle, a manmade disaster was inserted into the scenario — a nuclear detonation — requiring the activation of the HRF, a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region IX task force that draws its personnel from the Brigade's units and calls the 49th headquarters home.

Each of the Brigade staff sections was directly engaged by a barrage of scenario "injects" designed to expose deficiencies and fine-tune strengths. Observer-controllers from CNG headquarters in Sacramento were on site as operations officers received and generated orders, communications noncommissioned officers (NCO) erected a

command, control and communications unit, and judge advocate general officers provided guidance to the command staff on legally volatile incidents.

"Those of us who are full-timers, we practice this on a regular basis," said Sgt. 1st Class Clinton Bayoneta, operations battle NCO for the Brigade. The bulk of the Brigade consists of traditional part-time, or M-day, Guardsmen. "This exercise allows us to work with the M-day staff and get them some experience in civil-response operations, to make sure we are all on the same page."

The character of the Brigade, with its history of frequent combat mobilizations and abundance of civilian professionals, might be its greatest asset in responding to domestic incidents. Its combination of engineers, military police officers and chemical personnel ensures a variety of military and civilian experience especially suited toward civil emergencies.

"The fact is we've always dealt with a lot of op tempo, so we can easily adapt and overcome," Williamson said in reference to the Brigade's units' frequent deployments and civil taskings. "Many of our Soldiers are also trained as emergency responders, so we understand the civilian population's needs and we possess a base knowledge in reacting to civil unrest and natural emergencies."

But the Brigade's ultimate focus isn't on competency, but improvement, Bayoneta said.

"As long as we keep doing these exercises, we will continue to work out the kinks so long as we follow up on our [post-exercise] comments and deficiencies," he said. "We'll only continue to get better and better."



Photo by Sgt. Kenneth Bince

Capt. Karina Fletcher, operations officer for the 49th Military Police Brigade, left, confers with Capt. Suzann Gostovich, the Brigade's trial counsel, during a disaster-response command post exercise July 10 at Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Trouble in paradise

Makani Pahili hurricane scenario tests CNG response in Hawaii

Story and photos by **BRANDON HONIG**
California Military Department Public Affairs

Col. Philip Butch and his wife, Victoria, were sound asleep in January 1994, when an earthquake tore through Los Angeles and the Butch family home in Van Nuys. Butch stayed in bed, "hands and feet in the air like a cockroach to catch the [ceiling]," and urged Victoria to do the same.

"No, I've got to check on the kids," she said, struggling to navigate through the bedroom with items flying off the shelves around her. Her five young children were in rooms nearby, and she could hear their shouts. But within moments, she was on the ground.

"A TV jumped up and clipped my wife on the side of the head, gave her a six-inch gash and left her down for the count," Butch remembered. He administered first aid and gathered the children, all the while cutting his feet on broken curios that littered the floor, then took his wife to the hospital. Along the way he noticed the family dog had broken through the fence and run off.

Butch's unit, the now-deactivated 3rd Battalion, 144th Infantry Regiment, was called up to distribute humanitarian-aid packages. But in a clear understatement, Butch said, "I was not ready to deploy." A day and a half later, after his wife was sutured and his family secured, Butch reported for duty.

"The National Guard Bureau [after Hurricane Katrina] saw that states stricken by catastrophes oftentimes need help — and need it rapidly — because the National Guard are victims themselves," he said. "If my house is under rubble and I'm digging my wife and kids out, I'm not coming in uniform."

During the Makani Pahili exercise in June, three California National Guard units responded to a simulated hurricane that compromised the Hawaii National Guard's ability to conduct recovery efforts. The CNG's 147th Combat Communications Squadron (CCS) and 149th CCS established communications for emergency responders after the hurricane knocked out phones and Internet, and the 40th Infantry Division Domestic All-Hazards Response Team (DART) provided command and control for the Maui Emergency Operations Center.

The 147th and 149th landed on Maui and Oahu, respectively, to set up two Joint Incident Site Communications Capability packages, or JISCCs. Through satellite links, the JISCCs provide telephone, Internet, radio and video teleconference capabilities as well as other types of communications. This capability is vital to any rescue or recovery effort, as a natural disaster is likely to knock out all communications on any



Tech. Sgt. Christian Otineru of the 149th Combat Communications Squadron sets up an antenna on the roof of the Frank F. Fasi Municipal Building in Honolulu during the Makani Pahili disaster-preparedness exercise June 2. The antenna connected to the 149th's Joint Incident Site Communications Capability package in the basement, which provides phone, Internet, video conferencing and other communications via satellite.

Hawaiian island it hits, making it impossible to coordinate a response.

"Even with all the emergency operations plans perfectly in line before [a disaster], to do it with no coordination is virtually impossible," said Firefighter III Kaulana Kino of the Maui County Department of Fire and Public Safety. "An individual unit on its own, even if they're helping people, it's just responding to little one-off incidents. They can't get ahead of the incident, and we could have multiple units searching the same areas, wasting time."

He pointed out that Maui County comprises four islands: One is uninhabited, and the others have about 145,000 people, 7,000 people and 3,000 people. "Especially for such a geographically separated community, communication has to be the first goal in any kind of incident," he said. "There is no incident response without that."

The CNG squadrons' 10-man contingents in Makani Pahili were able to link fire departments, police departments, emergency management departments and myriad oth-

er government agencies for seamless communications. They also received and broadcast live video feeds of the destruction from cameras mounted on civil air patrol planes, enabling a well-coordinated response.

The 40th ID DART, meanwhile, deployed 12 Soldiers and Airmen with expertise in logistics, intelligence, information technology and other areas of domestic operations.

"We definitely need [the DART's] assistance, because we're members of the community that the disaster occurred in," said Lt. Col. Dan Okamura, officer in charge of the logistics cell at Hawaii National Guard headquarters. "We won't be able to rely on the Hawaii National Guard's full support, so these senior staff guys plug in the gaps when we don't have all the people we are supposed to have."

He pointed out that of the 5,200 Hawaii National Guard members, about 4,500 live on the island of Oahu, which includes the capital, Honolulu. The remaining 700 Guard members are mainly spread among four other islands, including two that have

a mere 10-member presence.

Three of the eight main Hawaiian islands have no Guard presence at all. Those are generally the most rural islands, where many of the homes and much of the infrastructure are likely to be "pancaked" by a major natural disaster, Butch said.

"Most structures in those rural areas don't meet earthquake codes; a category 5 hurricane would steamroll those houses," he said. "There could also be flooding here with all the precipitation and so many houses close to the water. In the event of a major catastrophe that decimates those islands, they're going to say 'uncle' quick."

Even on Hawaii's most developed island, Oahu, a few main roads handle a large proportion of the traffic, and the lush vegetation can create huge amounts of debris that clogs roads and causes widespread confusion.

Tech. Sgt. Matthew Meyer of the 149th CCS was a member of the Hawaii National Guard in 2006, when an earthquake knocked out power and communications on Oahu for 14 hours. "There were no traffic lights. All the restaurants and gas stations were closed," he said. "Nobody knew what to do. It was mass pandemonium."

On another occasion, a crane hit an overpass on a main road, making the overpass unstable. "It took three days to release the traffic," Meyer recalled. "People just abandoned their cars on the highway and walked home."

Any natural disaster in Hawaii is likely to create similar chaos and gridlock, only made worse by a lack of communication. Tech. Sgt. Hector Barragan of the 147th CCS said one of the first things he noticed upon arriving on Maui was the island's small number of manholes, because most utility lines are above-ground, where they are vulnerable to high winds.

Harold Buckle, communications officer for the Honolulu Department of Emergency Management, added that once the islands' communications systems go down, they may not be easy to bring back up. "With all the antennas on high sites — on hilltops and hillsides — it would be difficult for personnel to get to them to realign the microwaves," he said.

Each state's governor knows their citizens can rely on National Guard forces from neighboring states to support recovery op-

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Advancing the civil-support science

40th ID's two-year domestic all-hazards response team mission coming to a close

By **BRANDON HONIG**

California Military Department Public Affairs

In 2010, the CNG's 40th Infantry Division accepted a two-year mission to establish one of the first two National Guard domestic all-hazards response teams (DART), with responsibility for the 25 states and territories west of the Mississippi River. Drawing on lessons learned during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, the 23-person team of Soldiers and Airmen provides a modular and deployable command-and-control headquarters to synchronize the flow of National Guard forces in a disaster area.

The lack of such a capability in 2005 slowed reserve forces' response after Katrina — a mistake the National Guard Bureau (NGB) does not plan to repeat. During the past two years, the 40th ID DART and its 42nd ID DART counterpart in New York have made great strides in civil-response duties such as joint reception, staging, onward movement and integration, also known as JRSOI.

"Think of Katrina and all those forces coming in: How are you going to get them in there? You need a staging area, fuel, lodging, supplies," said Lt. Col. Denise Varner, a CNG Airman who was attached to the 40th ID DART for hurricane-preparedness exercise Makani Pahili in Hawaii in June. "Then you need to organize the personnel and materials into units, match them up with the incident commander, and they're into the fight."



Col. Philip Butch, commander of the 40th Infantry Division Domestic All-Hazards Response Team (DART), discusses logistics with Maj. Caroline Morales of the 224th Special Troops Battalion outside the command-and-control node for Maui's hurricane response during the Makani Pahili exercise June 5. Morales, executive officer for the 224th, was attached to the DART for the exercise.

Capt. Sean Byrne of the 40th ID DART said JRSOI was not well understood in the National Guard until recently, but NGB leaders now recognize its importance and have increased training for that skill set. "We learned a lot from Katrina, and NGB took deliberate steps to make ourselves better," Byrne said. "We've taken a lead role in disseminating a lot of good JRSOI training standards. ... We are really pushing the civil-support science further."

The DART has valuable experience in a broad array of command-and-control functions for civil support. During Makani Pahili, for instance, team members coordinated aviation assets for search-and-extraction, medical evacuation and reconnaissance missions, and they anticipated civilian authorities' difficulties, such as a potential shortfall in housing for displaced residents, and prepared to mitigate the shortfall by establishing a tent city.

Col. Philip Butch, commander of the 40th ID DART, said his team members have devoted themselves to book learning, Federal Emergency Management Agency courses and domestic-response exercises since picking up the mission.

"First you have to immerse yourself in understanding [domestic-response planning] through doctrine and study," he said. "Then the ability to put those skills into practice by actually deploying to exercises and refining our processes enabled us to move the ball forward in our mission."

"We've come leaps and bounds in our ability to do reception and staging and onward integration into a domestic problem set."

As a result, the 40th ID has a core of "great domestic planners," he said, and is better postured to support domestic operations.

The 40th ID will retain that expertise, but the DART mission will leave California at the end of September. The National Guard is rotating the DART mission among its eight divisions, and the Texas National Guard will have responsibility for the western United States next year.

"If we could have the DART in perpetuity, it would be great, but we've done great work and accomplished our mission," Byrne said. "It's great each of the eight divisions will have a whack at it and develop those core competencies in their staff."

The best of both worlds

Full-time, part-time Guardsmen bring complementary skills to communications mission

By **BRANDON HONIG**

California Military Department Public Affairs

When Airmen specializing in communications technology deploy to a combat theater, they know the equipment they will be using. Their military-communications networks are geared specifically for the U.S. Armed Forces, and all the components will look and perform the same way they did during training and previous operations.

In a domestic-response situation, those conditions change. The most important tool a combat communications squadron (CCS) brings to a domestic operation is interoperability: The Airmen connect the fire department with the police department, emergency management department and myriad other government agencies. Establishing that type of connectivity requires Airmen to think on their feet.

"We had an issue with our [wireless] router on day 1 of the exercise, and based on his civilian expertise, [Master Sgt. Keith Nuanes] was able to get in and correct the configuration with no ill effects to the mission," said Maj. Jon Dahl, who was the officer in charge of the 147th CCS during the Makani Pahili exercise in June.

Nuanes, who works on switches, routers and firewalls for Mitchell International, which provides information solutions to the insurance industry, is one of many Airmen in the 147th CCS and 149th CCS who deployed to Hawaii for Makani Pahili and brought with them valuable expertise obtained during their civilian careers.

Tech. Sgt. Kevin Gates of the 149th, for example, is the head of network engineering for the National Li-

brary of Medicine, part of the National Institutes of Health (NIH). He moved to Washington, D.C., two years ago to begin working for the NIH, but he still trains and serves with the North Highlands, Calif.-based 149th.

"I've done many years of network planning and projects, troubleshooting network connection problems and uplinks," he said. "It's nice going from a fixed [network] to a mobile, tactical situation [with the Guard] and bringing up a network from nothing."

Tech. Sgt. Michael Noe, one of Gates' team members on the 149th, said the Squadron's "melting pot" of full-time Guardsmen and part-time Guard members with civilian skills is ideal for a mission like Makani Pahili.

"Those skill sets help blend themselves to the project," said Noe, senior solutions engineering manager for information technology (IT) firm Power Assure. "My past experiences troubleshooting and my ability to interface with customers and understand requests and deliver and work through those things fit well with this group."

Maj. Tim Soos, officer in charge of the 149th CCS in Hawaii, said the Squadron's civilian Airmen work with a greater variety of technology than full-time service members and also may have more hands-on experience.

"The civilian sector usually leads the way in IT, so people working full-time jobs in the civilian world see new technologies long before we see it here," he said. "And for the full-time service members, once they get a system up and running, they often don't touch it for a while, but these [part-time Guardsmen] work on it every day."



Master Sgt. Keith Nuanes of the 147th Combat Communications Squadron, far right, monitors communications June 7 at the Maui County Department of Fire and Public Safety building in Wailuku, Hawaii, during Makani Pahili. Nuanes, who works in information technology for private firm Mitchell International, said his civilian experience is often beneficial in domestic-response situations.

Photo by Brandon Honig

CSMR instructors teach SecFor on JFTB

Security forces training shores up coverage for Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos

By **STAFF SGT. JESSICA INIGO**
Los Angeles Regional Public Affairs

With senses heightened, military personnel take in all the information available — there's been a breach on the base, a gun-toting madman is on the loose, or a felon has been arrested. Without proper training, any of these scenarios could spell disaster.

Fortunately about 40 California Guardsmen and California State Military Reserve (CSMR) members were offered a security forces training course on Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB), Los Alamitos, in June to eliminate gaps in security coverage. The course served as a learning tool for those without a security forces background and a refresher for those with perishable skills in the field.

Over the second and third weekends of June, three sectors of the California Military Department — CSMR Soldiers, traditional Guard Soldiers and full-time State Active Duty Guard Soldiers — teamed together for the first-ever JFTB security forces training program, which culminated with a graduation June 16. The training was conducted by the CSMR's 1st Battalion, Military Police Company. The instructors volunteered their time free of charge, including manning all the standard security positions while the Base's regular security forces were training.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo

Pfc. Anthony Iwami, left, and Sgt. Lance Fuller, both with the CNG's 40th Military Police Company, practice their skills in the edged-weapons survival portion of the security forces course conducted on Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, in June.

"I didn't expect to learn as much as I did," said Spc. Dayna Musser, a traditional Guardsman with the Training Site Detachment on JFTB, whose favorite part of the training was the edged-weapons survival portion. "It really hits home when you realize the situations you're training for are real

and you hear actual stories of things that happened to people."

Staff Sgt. (CA) Mike DeLio, who taught the edged-weapons survival segment, said the students gave their all and appeared fully committed to learning. "The knife is the

most common weapon in the world, and the average knife fight lasts just about five seconds," said DeLio, who is a squad leader in the CSMR's 1st Battalion, MP Company, on JFTB. "This [part of the] course is about changing attitudes and getting people to understand how to manage the kill zone."

Other training segments included vehicle search operations, installation access, road-block procedures, high-risk traffic stops, dignitary escort and an active-shooter scenario. The program, which was in development for more than a year, is the first of its kind in more than a decade.

The training provided critical skills to enhance the performance of security forces while also covering the gap between schoolhouse training and real-world fieldcraft, JFTB Deputy Commander Lt. Col. William Mayhue said. He added that the students now possess the skills to fully perform all their tasks in the most effective manner possible.

"Though all the Soldiers who went through this training do not hold the military police job title, this skill set has made them fully qualified as security forces," Mayhue said.

The graduation brought out dignitaries such as Los Alamitos Mayor Troy Edgar and local chiefs of police.

163rd RW unveils new Predator, Reaper hangar

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

On June 15, under blue Southern California skies, an MQ-1 Predator circled over Southern California Logistics Airport (SCLA) in Victorville, performing a normal training sortie as military and civic leaders celebrated the grand opening of a new 17,500-square-foot hangar facility below.

Hosted by the adjutant general of the California National Guard, Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, and 163rd Reconnaissance Wing Commander Col. Randall Ball, the ribbon-cutting ceremony opened a state-of-the-art, \$5 million hangar for remotely piloted air-

craft (RPA), which is the first of its kind in the Air National Guard.

"This [RPA] mission protects our troops overseas and assists the state and communities in times of natural or manmade crisis," Ball said at the ribbon-cutting.

Planning for the launch-and-recovery-element facility began in 2006, when it became clear the National Airspace System was not yet ready for routine operation of RPA in and around urban areas like those near March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County, where the 163rd is headquartered. The new site needed appropriate population density, runway dimensions, com-

mute time to March and flight time to the military training airspace.

Negotiations with the city of Victorville and SCLA began in 2008 and culminated with an agreement to utilize a jet engine test facility at SCLA as an interim operating facility pending lease and construction of a permanent location. Site-development and hangar-design planning began in early 2009 after congressional appropriation of construction funds. With steadfast community support, the project came to fruition and was completed earlier this year.

Speaking at the dedication, San Bernardino County 1st District Supervisor Brad Metzfeldt voiced his support for the 163rd, saying a military presence brings significant positive impact to the local High Desert communities. Many of the civic leaders and local government officials attending the event echoed Metzfeldt's support and sense of community appreciation.

In his keynote comments, Baldwin emphasized the importance of the military's relationship with the community. "Our National Guard is a community-based organization here to serve," he said. "We take very seriously the integration and partnering with our communities, because it's those communities that our Soldiers and Airmen work in and live in every day. It's those communities we are committed to protecting first and foremost."

The new facility will accommodate three MQ-1 Predators or two MQ-9 Reapers, which the Wing expects to acquire in the future, inside the hangar. In addition five

Predators or two Reapers can be housed in an adjacent fabric "big top" hangar. Furthermore the jet engine test facility that served as an interim solution provides an opportunity to expand SCLA's capabilities as a facility for launch-and-recovery or flight-test operations.

The site's ideal weather, close proximity to vast military airspace and joint training opportunities utilizing the nearby National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., also make SCLA a great fit for the Guard.

The 163rd's primary mission at SCLA is to support the formal training of Air Force and Air National Guard RPA pilots and sensor operators. While RPA have been used heavily overseas in the past decade, domestic roles in support of civil authorities are emerging rapidly. Natural disaster response and search-and-rescue operations are all ideally suited for RPA support.

"Everyone here wearing a uniform swore to defend the Constitution, which protects our civil liberties, and we are not going to violate people's civil liberties using these platforms," Baldwin said. "What we are going to do is to bring this tremendous capability to save lives and protect property."

"The first search-and-rescue mission [using an RPA] was conducted out of New Mexico using a Reaper, where they flew in unrestricted air space and saved the lives of kayakers who were lost," he continued. "This is the kind of capability we need here in California with the aircraft we have flying out of the training unit here at SCLA."



A California Air National Guard color guard presents the colors during a ceremony to mark the opening of the new remotely piloted aircraft (RPA) hangar at Southern California Logistics Airport in Victorville, Calif., which will house the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing's RPA.

217th EOD, law officers team up to blow stuff up

By PFC. BRIANNE ROUDEBUSH
69th Public Affairs Detachment

The temperature rises past 100 degrees as troops take cover behind a Humvee, sun blazing, sweat dripping, anticipation growing. In the distance they see a fiery explosion, and seconds later, they hear a thundering "Boom!"

The CNG's 217th Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) Company spends a lot of time out on the range, and their annual training July 6-17 at Camp Roberts, Calif., was no different. As they geared up for a deployment to Kosovo, the company focused on sharpening their skills and ensuring their effectiveness as EOD technicians.

"Our [training] objective was to conduct more specific EOD operations and continue growing in the EOD field, allowing us to become more proficient in our tasks for the upcoming deployment," said Staff Sgt. Ruben Sanchez, a team leader for the 217th.

Over the course of the 12 days, the Camp Roberts-based unit practiced gathering information and identifying ordnance, shot M107 long-range disruptors and M249 light machine guns, performed range clearance on live ammo ranges and blew stuff up.

On three of those days, officials from the Antioch Police Department, El Dorado County Sheriff's Office and Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office came out to train with the 217th. Officer John Fortner of Antioch P.D. said he was eager to learn because the police academy does not have a course on explosives or ordnance.

"For us, the mere exposure to their career and their training and experience is invaluable," he said. "Theoretically the notes we take here can be taken back to our police department and save someone's life."

Interagency training is also beneficial because each agency brings a different mindset and skill level, said Sgt. 1st Class Stevan Mays, the 217th's incoming first sergeant.

In the past, the Department of Defense EOD teams were typically called out to respond to bomb threats in local communities, Mays said. Now it is increasingly the local police department's responsibility because of budget cuts, though EOD units continue to provide support for communities that do not have bomb squads.

"We are being proactive in starting to foster some of these outside relationships," Mays said. "In an age of reduced budgets for both civilian law enforcement and [the military] across the board, it makes sense and benefits everyone to conduct this joint training and reduce expenses."

Lt. Amy Christey of the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office said the most beneficial part of the training was being able to use the demolition ranges. "I'm so grateful that this opportunity was brought to us and that we can work so well together because we're really in this together," she said.

The 217th has deployed multiple times to Iraq and Afghanistan, but the NATO peacekeeping mission in Kosovo will require a different set of skills than those combat missions. In a combat environment, the EOD team could destroy unexploded ordnances and improvised explosive devices where they lay without moving or handling them. In preparation for the Kosovo mission, the team spent time transitioning toward circuit disruption and collection of evidence, said Capt. Franklyn Pangelinan, commander of the 217th.

"Kosovo is an urban area, so we are not going to be able to just blow items in place because we have to worry about collateral damage," Pangelinan said.

The team will also work with the Kosovo Security Force and the Kosovo Police, teaching a five-week EOD course and continuing joint training with other NATO nations.



Photo by Photo by Pfc. Brienne M. Roubeshush

The California National Guard's 217th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company takes care of unexploded ordnance July 12 on a Camp Roberts, Calif., range during annual training.

EOD motto defused

By SPC. DAVID S. CHOI
69th Public Affairs Detachment

"Initial Success or Total Failure." That unofficial motto of the Naval School of Explosive Ordnance Disposal at Eglin Air Force Base, Fla., where all branches of the military send troops to become qualified, has sparked a debate among those in the explosive ordnance disposal (EOD) community.

EOD technicians locate, identify, neutralize, recover or dispose of any type of ordnance in various environments. With dropout rates frequently exceeding 50 percent at the Eglin school, EOD students realize the difference between a passing and failing performance may also be the difference between life and death in the field.

"That motto to me means that you need to know what you're doing exactly and what you're about to go up against," said Bakersfield native Spc. Chris F. Rodgers, a recent graduate of the Eglin school and an EOD specialist with the Camp Roberts, Calif.-based 217th EOD Company. "It leaves very little margin for error."

The commander of the Navy Expeditionary Combat Command, Rear Adm. Michael Tillotson, recently told independent newspaper Army Times that the motto could be seen as disrespectful to EOD technicians who have laid down their lives for their country. "The motto itself holds potential insensitivities and implies that our fallen and wounded EOD warriors have somehow failed," he said, according to the Times. "We owe our fallen warriors and their families honor and dignity for their heroic service."

First Sergeant Timothy Shields of the 217th said it was never the intent of the motto to imply that someone who gets hurt by an explosive device is incompetent. "I attended the school in the 1980s, and the motto was considered old even when I went to school," he said. "It's always been a teaching point at the school and a training point here [at the 217th]: You screw up one time or have a bad day in the field, you may not get a second chance."

Reports of the motto's removal have spurred EOD technicians to defend the motto on Facebook and other online forums. The outpouring of support influenced U.S. Rep. and former EOD officer Rick Crawford of Arkansas to submit a resolution to the House of Representatives Committee on Armed Services on April 19, expressing support for the designation of "Initial Success or Total Failure" as the official EOD motto throughout the military. It also proposed the first Saturday in May be designated National Explosive Ordnance Disposal Day. The measure was co-sponsored by Rep. Susan Davis of California.



Photos by Spc. David S. Choi



ABOVE: Sgt. Harold Adams of the 217th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company fires an M107 long-range disruptor while 1st Sgt. Stevan Mays peers through a spotting scope July 11 at Camp Roberts, Calif. The M107 is used to neutralize ordnance from a distance. TOP RIGHT: Sgt. Joseph Reyes of the 217th works to render harmless an anti-tank projectile July 11.

Living the American Dream

Capt. Tho euth Duong journeyed from the edge of genocide to the Cal Guard

By **1ST LT. WILL MARTIN**
49th Military Police Brigade Public Affairs

Tho euth Duong's life story is a study in contrasts. Parts tragedy and providence, his account is torn from the annals of history and speaks to the veracity of the American Dream. For Duong, a captain serving with the 49th Military Police Brigade, that Dream has become reality; but before the Dream, there was the nightmare that was his Cambodian childhood.

THE KILLING FIELDS

Born into stark, agrarian poverty in 1969, Duong could have just as easily grown old as a farmer in rural Cambodia. But history had different plans for Duong and his homeland, where Pol Pot, a communist upstart, energized a revolution that bloodied Cambodia and thrust darkness into Duong's childhood.

"I remember I had to work on a boat downloading food, and we had to harvest the leftover rice in the fields," Duong said of his forced labor at the hands of the Khmer Rouge revolutionaries, who seized his country in 1975 before carrying out a three-year genocide that claimed an estimated 1.7 million lives.

Just 5 years old when the Khmer Rouge claimed power, Duong experienced his father's murder as well as three brothers' forced relocations to communist-run factories. Only Duong, his 7-year-old brother and his mother — now a widow — remained at home. Soon after, his mother was forced to spend her waking hours at a nearby labor camp, allowing her neither the energy nor income to care for her starving sons.

"For a whole year, it was just me and my brother. We did everything; we took care of ourselves," Duong said. "Once in a while my mom stole some stuff for us, fruit or whatever, but I got sick all the time. She didn't think there was any chance I was going to make it. I had a bloated stomach; I looked like I was going to die."

RUMORS OF FREEDOM

Duong's first rays of hope came from an unlikely source: the North Vietnamese. Though brutal in their own right, the invading hordes of Vietnamese deposed Pol Pot in 1979 and brought order to the chaos that had saturated Duong's life.

"I remember when the Vietnamese came, they dropped propaganda leaflets. And after the leaflets, they dropped bombs," said Duong, who recalled hiding and watching tracer bullets fly overhead in the darkness of night. "But they kicked out Pol Pot and allowed us to move around wherever."

Reunited with all her children, Duong's mother saw a window of opportunity in their newfound freedom of movement. She quickly gathered her children and for two weeks traversed westbound on foot — "in slippers," Duong said — in an effort to reach bordering Thailand.

At the border, the Duong family narrowly escaped pursuing pirates and Vietnamese Soldiers before reaching a

United Nations rescue station. From there they were bused into Thailand and found a temporary home in a U.N. refugee camp. And for the first time in his memory, the 10-year-old Duong experienced something resembling a normal childhood.

"It was the first time going to school and brushing my teeth," Duong said. "I was excited about being in a stable environment and getting to go to school. There was stuff there I had never seen before — gum, candy, painting; I learned a little English."

LAND OF OPPORTUNITY

The English soon proved useful. Duong's family lived as refugees in the camp for three years until 1983, when an educated Cambodian who had fled to America to escape Pol Pot's wave of terror brought the Duongs to Long Beach, Calif. Embarking on a new life in an unknown land, Duong was struck by the excitement of it all.

"I started school in the last half of the 7th grade, didn't speak hardly any English, in the middle of big city," Duong said. "People thought I was in 3rd or 4th grade because I was so small and skinny [because of malnutrition]. The craziest part was to see all those buildings. It was very interesting."

With the help of a Cambodian classmate who pointed him from class to class, Duong soon picked up the language and excelled in his classes. His surroundings, however, were marked by violence and despair, encouraging Duong to seek out a way to further improve his station in life.

"In high school, the environment was really, really bad. Many of my friends joined gangs and used drugs. In the late '80s, crack was big, and people I knew were getting shot," Duong said. "After graduating [from high school], I had nowhere to go, no destination, so I joined the Army. Nobody wanted me to do it, but I had to do what was best for me."

Duong's life since enlisting — "the best decision I could have made" — has been marked by progress, challenge and growth: Multiple combat deployments, a two-decades-strong marriage, a college degree and an officer's commission through the California National Guard stand out as highlights of a life rooted in military service.

"When I came back to Long Beach after Desert Storm, I found out three of my best friends had been shot and killed [in California]," Duong said, reflecting on how easily he could have shared their fate. "The Army saved me."

After 22 years of service, Duong will soon retire to spend more time with his family and put more energy behind his civilian career as a probation officer. But in reflecting on his nightmarish childhood, when death and poverty were the norm, his gratitude is obvious.

"I came out from a war zone," Duong said, "and then to have a commission in the best army in the world, a college degree, married with kids, a house, a good civilian job ... Yeah, I'm living the American Dream."



Photo by Sgt. Kenneth Brice

Cpt. Tho euth Duong, a California National Guardsman serving with the 49th Military Police Brigade, escaped Cambodian genocide and is now living the American dream. **BOTTOM:** The Khmer Rouge killed an estimated 1.7 million people between 1975 and 1979, and it destroyed much of the country's rich, ancient heritage, but the temple Angkor Wat, a Cambodian national symbol, survived relatively unscathed.

Cambodia

Khmer Rouge inflicts genocide in 1970s



1975 · The Khmer Rouge Terror Begins

Pol Pot's forces take the capital, Phnom Penh, evacuate the cities and cut off Cambodia from the world

1979 · Vietnamese Troops Take Capital

Invasion ends a genocide that claimed an estimated 1.7 million lives, or 21% of the population

1989 · Vietnamese Troops Withdraw

Khmer Rouge resumes attempt to take power from newly proclaimed State of Cambodia

1994 · Khmer Rouge Outlawed

Cambodia's National Assembly bans the movement responsible for the genocide

1998 · Pol Pot Dies

Chhit Choeun, the only Khmer Rouge leader still at large, would be captured in 1999

Source: Yale University Cambodian Genocide Program



Photo by Sam Garza

Air Combat Command 'truly impressed' by 129th

Professionalism, dedication evident during Phase One Operational Readiness Inspection

By SENIOR AIRMAN JESSICA GREEN
129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

The 129th Rescue Wing showcased its Airmen's varied skills and their dedication during a Phase One Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) in June.

The five-day Air Combat Command (ACC) assessment conducted June 8-12 tested the Wing's readiness to conduct its combat search-and-rescue mission. Following months of preparation, the Airmen got the results they were looking for as they earned a "Satisfactory" rating.

"I'm tremendously proud of all of you and what you've done to completely turn around this unit and adhere to the Air Force standard," said Brig. Gen. David S. Baldwin, the CNG adjutant general. "You've shown throughout the breadth and depth of this organization that you can meet or exceed those standards. ... We have to continue to exceed the standard and show the world that you are the best rescue wing in the United States Air Force."

The ORI required the 129th to mobilize Airmen and equipment to a notional site while ACC inspectors evaluated every segment of the operation. The main objective was to demonstrate compliance readiness, aircraft generation, aircraft regeneration and cargo air-worthiness.

"Our mission was to educate, motivate and independently evaluate the 129th Rescue Wing with an eye to the overall objective of improving the capabilities of the combat air forces," said Col. Andy Donnelly, ACC Inspector General Team chief. "This unit demonstrated professional and motivated attitudes with consistently used personnel



Photo by Staff Sgt. Kim E. Ramirez

Airmen with the 129th Rescue Wing prepare an HHG-60G Pave Hawk for air shipment Dec. 3 at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., during training in advance of a Phase One Operational Readiness Inspection in June. Training like this helped prepare the Wing for the Inspection, which it passed with a "Satisfactory" rating.

protective equipment. ... We were truly impressed with the professionalism, devotion and dedication displayed throughout this inspection."

The unit was tasked to deploy three HH-60G Pave Hawk rescue helicopters, 95 Airmen and 100.4 tons of cargo to a U.S. Central Command location for the ORI. The 129th Maintenance Group successfully generated three of three primary aircraft, Donnelly said, and the highly involved leadership

team ensured all aircraft were prepared well ahead of the 24-hour mark.

The Wing earned "Satisfactory" ratings in aircraft generation, aircraft regeneration and deployment readiness as well as a "Satisfactory" overall rating for the ORI. Inspector General Team ratings are based on a five-tier rating scale, and a "Satisfactory" rating indicates the inspection subject met the demanding standards established by ACC.

During the test of aircraft regeneration, the restoration of aircraft to flight capability, three of three aircraft were accepted in less than 12 hours. In addition during the regeneration effort, Airmen demonstrated commendable personnel skills despite low manning numbers, the colonel said.

"We noticed a tremendous sense of pride and total focus on combat employment throughout the 129th Rescue Wing," Donnelly said. "[Those] characteristics have impacted positively in your warfighting capabilities."

The 129th is scheduled to complete its Phase Two ORI in late 2013, when the Wing will be evaluated during a simulated deployment.

"We did exactly what we needed to do," said Col. Steve Butow, 129th Rescue Wing commander. "Our challenge is to sustain this and move forward and make sure we're passing on our knowledge and our skills to the young Airmen here."

"Never doubt for a moment that this Wing can rise to the occasion and display the excellence, the service before self and the integrity that it takes to bring a victory across the finish line," he added.

Fundamentally the 129th's success was a function of leadership, from the Wing commander down through the noncommissioned officer (NCO) corps, Baldwin said.

"[Command Chief Master Sgt. Jason] Red, my hat is especially off to you and your chiefs," he said. "You made the biggest improvement, and that can be seen within the NCO corps, and they, as you know, are the ones that made this happen."

129th featured in Nepalese disaster documentary

By SENIOR AIRMAN JESSICA GREEN
129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

A Nepalese media team visited the 129th Rescue Wing on May 6 at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., to obtain footage for a disaster-response documentary being produced for the government of Nepal.

Nepal and the United States share common concerns regarding natural disasters like earthquakes and floods. The media team, which was sponsored by the U.S. State Department, will use interviews from 129th Airmen to show how the Wing and the National Guard respond to natural disasters.

Members of the 129th discussed coordination during past natural disasters between different states' National Guards, local and federal emergency responders, and active duty and Reserve military counterparts. Airmen also detailed the Wing's training and preparation for future disasters.

The documentary team from Kathmandu made multiple stops around the U.S. during a two-week trip to military and civilian emergency-response organizations, including the Federal Emergency Management Agency Center for Domestic Preparedness in Anniston, Ala., and the Department of Emergency Manage-



Photo by Senior Airman Jessica Green

Maj. David Weidman, a pilot for the 129th Rescue Wing, speaks with a Nepalese documentary crew about natural disaster response May 6 at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif.

ment in San Francisco.

By visiting various locations, the team was able to research and showcase how the U.S. has faced natural disasters, overcome challenges and learned lessons. The production aims to inform the 29 million citizens of Nepal about the reality of a potential natural disaster and educate them on the importance of preparedness, said Joan Storck, foreign broadcast producer for the State Department's Office of Broadcast Services.

'That owls may live'

By SENIOR AIRMAN JESSICA GREEN
129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

The 129th Rescue Wing is taking precautions to save a family of burrowing owls nested near a construction site at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif. Burrowing owls are a species of special concern in California and are protected under the federal Endangered Species Act. Moffett has one of the largest subpopulations of burrowing owls in the San Francisco Bay Area, but the number there has declined 40 to 50 percent in the last 15 years, said Debra Chromczak, an environmental consultant for the Wing.

"We had high nest abandonment this year probably due to the unusual weather conditions and lot of construction," she said. "If there are construction projects nearby we need to create a protective buffer around the owls. During the breeding season there needs to be a 250-foot buffer."



A burrowing owl at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif.

The Wing has established the buffer area. "Wing management was receptive to the fact that requirements contained in the 2009 Environmental Assessment were to be strictly adhered to," said Master Sgt. Mike Yeihey, environmental manager for the 129th Logistics Readiness Squadron. "Management supported hiring a wildlife biologist to ensure compliance with all aspects of the national [policy]."

National Guard, community go hand in hand

New “Civics 101” class teaches Guard leaders to engage community, elected officials

By **STAFF SGT. JESSICA INIGO**
Los Angeles Regional Public Affairs

The California Military Department’s Office of Strategic Communications has initiated training that encourages military leadership to actively engage with community



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo

Retired Lt. Col. Tom Lasser discusses the Constitution on June 22 with the first-ever CNG Civics 101 class, which encourages military leaders to engage with their communities.

members and include local elected officials in military functions.

In what will become a blueprint for further development, retired Army Lt. Col. Tom Lasser of the Southern California Regional Policy and Liaison Office on Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, kick-started the initiative by leading the first class June 22, explaining the benefits of community and civic-leader engagement, as well as steering them clear of any potential pitfalls.

The course, dubbed Civics 101 — Unit Engagement Training for Leaders, brought a handful of officers and senior enlisted members to the 244th Sustainment Brigade’s armory in Long Beach. The class learned about the history of the United States and its state militias, then discussed elected officials’ roles and how to foster a mutually beneficial relationship. Lasser suggested inviting elected officials to unit family days, holiday events, readiness cen-

ter activity days, open houses, homecomings and departure ceremonies.

“Stay out of politics,” Lasser warned, “and be careful you’re not being used.”

He then touched on community outreach and media relations as guidelines for fostering future relationships. Lasser stressed this concept: The National Guard is the community, and the community is the National Guard.

“This is your opportunity to educate elected officials on the Guard,” he said. “Tell our story from our perspective.”

First Sgt. (CA) Jerry L. Shulz, a current member of the California State Military Reserve and a former Long Beach city councilman, served as a guest speaker for the class, bringing to the table his perspective as both an elected official and as a military member.

“I think it’s awesome,” said Maj. Ted Arlauskas, rear detachment officer in charge for the 578th Engineer Battalion, at the end of the workshop. “Strategic communication, as we say in the Army, is essential to conveying our message. It’s important that the American people hear our message, especially in Southern California, where they’re not as integrated with our service members.”

The California Military Department Office of Strategic Communications’ portal is growing to include tips for engaging elected officials and a roster of all elected officials in the state. “It’s one more [tool] in our toolkit to inform the civilian populace,” Lasser said.

To learn more about civic engagement, units can call 916-854-3705 or visit the Strategic Communications portal at <https://portal.ca.ngb.army.mil/sites/stratcomm/default.aspx>.

‘Paradise’ from page 16

erations in the wake of a disaster. For Hawaii, though, that support can be hard to coordinate because of what Okamura called the “tyranny of distance” — the approximately 2,500 miles of ocean that separates the 50th state from the mainland.

The CNG, nonetheless, is prepared to provide support within a day. Meyer estimated it would take his unit one to two hours to prepare a C-130J plane to depart once the Hawaii governor requests support, followed by another hour to load the CCS’ equipment. Then it’s an 8- to 11-hour flight to Hawaii.

“[The C-130J] is a propeller plane, so it’s not fast, but it’s made for combat landings,” he said. “We could land in a papaya field if we needed to.”

The CCS is also prepared to drop its equipment — including a diesel generator and heating or air conditioning unit — out of the C-130J on a pallet with a parachute. Once the equipment is on the ground, it takes two Airmen about four hours to set up the JISCC.

In a situation like the one described in Makani Pahili — which included landslides, sinkholes, disabled bridges, blocked highways and downed structures — all of the Guard’s capabilities could be called in to play, and Makani Pahili put them to the test.

“Now is the time to make mistakes and call out things that we need to make changes to ... and keep practicing until we get it right,” said Mel Kaku, director of the Honolulu Department of Emergency Management. “When a real [disaster] hits, we won’t have the luxury of doing that. ... In an operational context, you only have once chance, and failure is not acceptable.”



Photo by Brandon Hong

Tech. Sgt. Matthew Meyer of the 149th Combat Communications Squadron troubleshoots communications for fire and police personnel June 4 at the Frank F. Fasi Municipal Building in Honolulu during the Makani Pahili disaster-preparedness exercise.

America’s youth: Unfit to serve?

Nonprofit, former CNG adjutant general say majority of Golden State’s young adults are too heavy or unlawful to serve their country

By **SPC. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

Former California military generals and admirals are voicing concerns over a possible national security issue involving today’s young adults. About 75 percent of 17- to 24-year-olds, the leaders say, are unable to join the military because they’re overweight, physically unfit or have a criminal record.

Retired Army Maj. Gen. Paul D. Monroe Jr., former adjutant general of the California National Guard, is one of 21 retired generals and admirals from California who are at the helm of Mission: Readiness, a national organization of about 300 high-ranking former military leaders. On July 19 at the Oakland Military Institute (OMI), a college preparatory academy run by the California National Guard, Monroe along with retired Army Brig. Gen. Keith H. Kerr and retired Rear Adm. William D. Rodriguez announced the release of the nonprofit’s new report “Lazy Days of Summer: A National Security Threat?”

“The report shows tens of thousands of children in California are falling behind in reading and math, and also gaining excess weight, in the summer months,” Monroe said. “We believe this could lead to even fewer young adults in the future being able to join the military simply because they are not qualified.”

One in four California young adults is too heavy to join the military, the report states. More than 65 percent of 12-year-olds participate in daily physical education classes, the report notes, but that proportion drops to just 15 percent by age 17.

“Whether or not they join the military, it’s a national security issue,” Monroe added. “If they don’t have a high school diploma, they’re going to be underemployed for the rest of their lives. And if they’re not physically fit, they’re going to be a drain on the economy.”

A key concern among young adults is what happens in the summer months. According to the report, when children return to school in the fall, a typical student has fallen a month behind their spring academic progress. “When falling behind academically during

the summer, children also put on additional weight, equal to half the total weight gain acquired during the entire year,” the report states.

“Summertime learning programs are a part of the comprehensive solution,” Kerr said. “With support from parents, these programs can help kids hold their ground academically.”

OMI is one of few academic programs that offer summer activities. “The Oakland Military Institute has taken the findings of this research to heart,” said Sean Moler, OMI athletic director. “OMI recognizes the importance of providing quality academic and athletic experiences for students year-round.”

“We’re here to call on national and California policymakers to support more funding for programs like this,” Kerr added.

Mission: Readiness’ national proposal to tackle the fitness issue includes passing child nutrition legislation that would help get junk food out of schools. The organization is also attempting to increase schools’ focus on physical fitness and create programs to improve graduation rates and limit future crime rates.

“In 2005 when the military did not make its recruiting numbers, generals and admirals decided to do something about this,” said Amy Dawson Taggart, national director for Mission: Readiness. “This is definitely a national security problem. We’re starting in California and making a push at the national level.”

By the time Californians are 18 to 24 years old, 42 percent are overweight or obese, according to data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention cited in “Lazy Days of Summer.” The report also states that researchers believe half of all adults in America could be obese by 2030.

“That percentage is increasing,” Monroe added. “And also consider this: About one in four teenagers in California fail to graduate from high school. Among those who do graduate, 24 percent cannot pass the military’s entrance exam for math and literacy skills.”

For more info, visit www.missionreadiness.org.



First Lieutenant Ed Baon, far left, Spc. Christopher Chelini and Spc. Michael Evans of the CNG's 95th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) complete a belly roll July 19 during joint operations with Soldiers from the 95th Chemical Company on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska. Photo by Percy Jones

Airmen, 146th AW earn CAFA awards V.A. sends state \$15m for homeless vets

The California Air Force Association recognized outstanding Airmen and units in the California National Guard and California State Military Reserve (CSMR) during its annual conference in May. The 146th Airlift Wing, commanded by Col. Paul Hargrove, earned the CNG Unit of the Year Award, while the five individual Guard winners were all members of the 162nd Combat Communications Group or 163rd Reconnaissance Wing:

Airman of the Year: Airman 1st Class Kevin Galusha, 222nd Intelligence Support Squadron, 162nd Combat Communications Group

Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) of the Year: Tech. Sgt. Kristina Ghio, 147th Combat Communications Squadron, 162nd Combat Communications Group

Senior NCO of the Year: Master Sgt. Peter Kelly, 163rd Reconnaissance Wing

Company Grade Officer of the Year: Capt. Daniel Vargas, 163rd Reconnaissance Wing

Field Grade Officer of the Year: Lt. Col. Keith Ward, 163rd Reconnaissance Wing

The Association also named two CSMR members as that organization's Senior NCO and Officer of the Year: Senior Master Sgt. Lorenzo Perez Jr. and Capt. Eric Van Der Heide, who both serve the 146th Airlift Wing Support Unit. In addition to the annual awards, two members of the CSMR received the Sustained Outstanding Performance Award: Lt. Col. (CA) David Smith, commander of the 163rd Air Wing Support Unit, and Col. (CA) Martin Ledwitz, CSMR director of civil affairs.

Earn manufacturing credentials

The Department of Defense has developed partnerships with major manufacturing credentialing agencies to extend civilian certifications to military personnel in engineering, logistics, maintenance and welding. The initiative will enable up to 126,000 service members to obtain civilian credentials and certifications in high-demand industries free of charge and aid their searches for civilian employment.

Three such partnerships begin this summer: An agreement with the Manufacturing Skills Standards Council will enable a limited number of Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines to achieve industry-recognized credentials that support a transition from military service to frontline jobs in advanced manufacturing and logistics, according to a statement issued by the White House. The second partnership will provide unlimited certification testing at the U.S. Army Ordnance School at Fort Lee, Va., for Soldiers in certain machinist and welding specialties. The school trains about 20,000 service members each year to develop, produce and maintain weapons. Service members who acquire these specialties will automatically receive the equivalent civilian credentials as well. Under the third partnership, officers and warrant officers at the Army's Engineer School at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., will have the opportunity to qualify as certified manufacturing technologists and earn Lean Bronze Certification — industry-standard manufacturing engineering certifications.

California will receive \$15.7 million from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to help veterans find housing as part of a \$100 million initiative to assist 42,000 homeless and at-risk veterans across the U.S. California will receive \$3 million in new grants and \$12.7 million in renewal grants, which is expected to help more than 500 veterans secure housing. Under the Supportive Services for Veteran Families program launched last year, the V.A. awards grants to nonprofits and consumer cooperatives that provide services to promote housing stability among very low-income veteran families. Last year, the V.A. provided about \$60 million to assist 22,000 veterans and their families.

EPA, V.A. team up to fill water jobs

The Environmental Protection Agency and the V.A. are connecting veterans with disabilities to career opportunities in the water and wastewater sectors through the EPA's Water Sector Workforce Initiative. The agencies are working with utilities to promote water sector careers, resources and educational programs for service members. More than a third of current water operators may retire within seven years, according to the Department of Labor, and employment for operators is expected to grow 20 percent between 2008 and 2018.

DID YOU KNOW...

government purchase cards (GPC) have limitations?

All GPC purchases must be used for official government requirements and be consistent with unit/organization requirements and purchase limits. GPCs are also restricted to a single-purchase limit based on the type of purchase. GPC users are not authorized to "split" multiple purchases across several days to circumvent the single-purchase limit. Products or services that exceed the single-purchase limit must be referred to a contracting office for formal contracting action. Approving and billing officials also set monthly GPC limits based on operational needs and budget constraints.

GPC users and their approving officials or billing officials can be held liable for improper purchases. Misuse of a GPC is subject to criminal, civil, Uniform Code of Military Justice, administrative and disciplinary actions. For more, see the Department of the Army Government Purchase Card Operating Procedures dated Feb. 23, 2012, or Army Regulation 715-XX. The Army and Air Force both use AR 715-XX.



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Soldiers with the California National Guard's 95th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) prepare to enter a CS gas, or tear gas, chamber July 19 during joint operations with Soldiers from the 95th Chemical Company on Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

Photo by Percy Jones

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