

GRIZZLY

www.calguard.ca.gov/publicaffairs

2008
March
Vol. 3 No.3



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Everyone's Mission

Major General William H. Wade II



There is a new term that is now and forever a part of our lexicon: SUSTAINABILITY. It is something that will affect every person, every unit, and every facet of operations of the California National Guard. It is not just another environmental program, but rather, it is about the environment and the community (both military and civilian), and the interaction and interdependence of those systems. It is an holistic approach to energy efficiency, renewable energy, water conservation, sustainable acquisition, pollution prevention, recycling, building construction, fleet management, and electronics stewardship.

It is not just about compliance and doing things right. More importantly, it's about doing the right thing. The President and the Governor – our federal and state Commanders in Chief - have given us the mission to integrate sustainability into all California National Guard operations. For the military department personnel, think of this as mission analysis during the Military Decision Making Process—you have received the mission from higher, now analyze it for specified and implied tasks, and then develop feasible, acceptable, supportable courses of action.

I want to stress that sustainability is not just another environmental program. Sustainability is a California National Guard operational program, which is why I recently assembled representatives from across the entire California Guard

structure, whom are responsible for some activity that impacts our environment, to prepare action plans that make sustainability and every day activity and requirement Collectively, we can reduce environmental impacts while simultaneously improving our mission readiness.

In April, four action teams will brief me and the entire senior leadership team on the proposed changes to the California National Guard strategic plan that will be developed and are necessary to make sustainability a way of life in our Guard. This is an important, some on my staff call it historic – evolution in the way the California National Guard operates.

You may not realize it, but sustainability is already underway in the California National Guard. For example, the Air National Guard is putting renewable energy - solar panels - at their bases in California. On the Army side, Camp San Luis Obispo earned recognition and awards from the Governor, National Guard Bureau, and the Army for successfully integrating environmental management into their military mission requirements. These are simple indicators of the great environmental ethic and mission focus that exist in the California Guard and that you need to harness and direct.

While these examples may be indicators of some great progress in the field, the inconsistent nature of

the programs also show me that we don't necessarily have that same ethic across the board, and it is especially lacking among leadership at all levels. My charge to everyone is simple: check your personal biases and prejudices at the door and accomplish the mission. The Governor and the President have directed us to implement sustainability into our operations; however, I don't merely accept it as a mission. Rather, I embrace it as not only a condition of employment, but a way of life from here on.

Soldiers and Airmen tell me that if an activity is important, leadership should put resources against it. In the Army, we have long known that Soldiers do best what leaders check. Using these benchmarks, you can clearly see how important these action plans are to me and the other senior leaders. As a result, we will all personally check – and actively participate in – the progress of this vitally important program.

Speaking of resources . . . programs are only as good as the funds which support them. The Army and the Air Force have taken different approaches to their programs. The Army expects us to tell them what we want and fit it into our existing budget; whereas, the Air Force centralizes projects and pushes them out to the field. Because of that, the Air Force recently made significant capital investment in sustainable technologies. The lesson learned is that if we're going to get Army funding, we need to have clear

goals and a plan to achieve those goals. You develop the plan, and as The Adjutant General for the State of California, I will go forward and push for funding from the top. I expect fund managers to do the same by pushing requests for funding from the bottom so that our future projects are sustainable. For example, I do not expect facilities to construct a building without having first requested additional funds to ensure it can be The Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certified and meet the sustainability goals that are being developed over the next few weeks. Likewise, I do not expect trainers to launch a training event without considering impacts to the environment, while planning to mitigate those impacts before the event, rather than correct them after the event.

Make no mistake this is hard work. This is leading-edge, forward-thinking, lead-from-the-front by personal and professional example, graduate level stuff; that, to be successful, will require full use of the organizational skills, professional knowledge, and creativity of every member of our state Guard. This is the kind of challenge that the military, and especially the California National Guard, excels at. With that, you have the mission - Charlie Mike.



Uniform Change - Set the Standard

Command Sergeant Major William Clark Jr.

The Army Battle Dress Uniforms are evolving and the Wear Out date is April 2008. As the Army phases out uniforms, the Air Force is changing to the Airman Battle Uniform (ABU). This will be significant changes for both Soldiers and Airmen in the years to come. Leaders at all levels must communicate with

their Soldiers and Airmen new policies and changes in the regulations that is the standard when wearing the uniform. Non-Commissioned Officers are the first line leaders that must enforce the uniform standards. Non-Commissioned Officers are responsible for fire teams, squads and sections. Non-Com-

missioned Officers are responsible for conducting pre-combat checks and services on all assigned equipment and personnel. We as senior leaders must inspect what we expect our Non-Commissioned Officers to accomplish. We must lead by example and be the standard for our Soldiers and Airmen. When we

allow our NCO's not to enforce the standards there will also be a lack of discipline. Lack of discipline is an indicator of poor leadership at all levels. Our Soldiers and Airmen deserve and expect great leadership and we must not let them down.

For more details read page 18.

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FROM THE EDITOR

This month we bid farewell the Bravo Company, 126th General Support Aviation Battalion (GSAB) as they departed for a one year tour to Afghanistan. We will welcome home Charlie Company, 1-185th Infantry who returns from Iraq. 2008 will see many Soldiers and Airmen deploy in support of the Global War on Terrorism and peace keeping operations. The Public Affairs office will work diligently to place these stories in the Grizzly Magazine. If you attend an event and capture the moment with some great photographs, send them our way!

Congratulations to the winners of the Soldier of the Year and Airman of the Year competition. See their biographies and picture on page 10-11.

SUBMISSIONS

Articles:

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

Photographs:

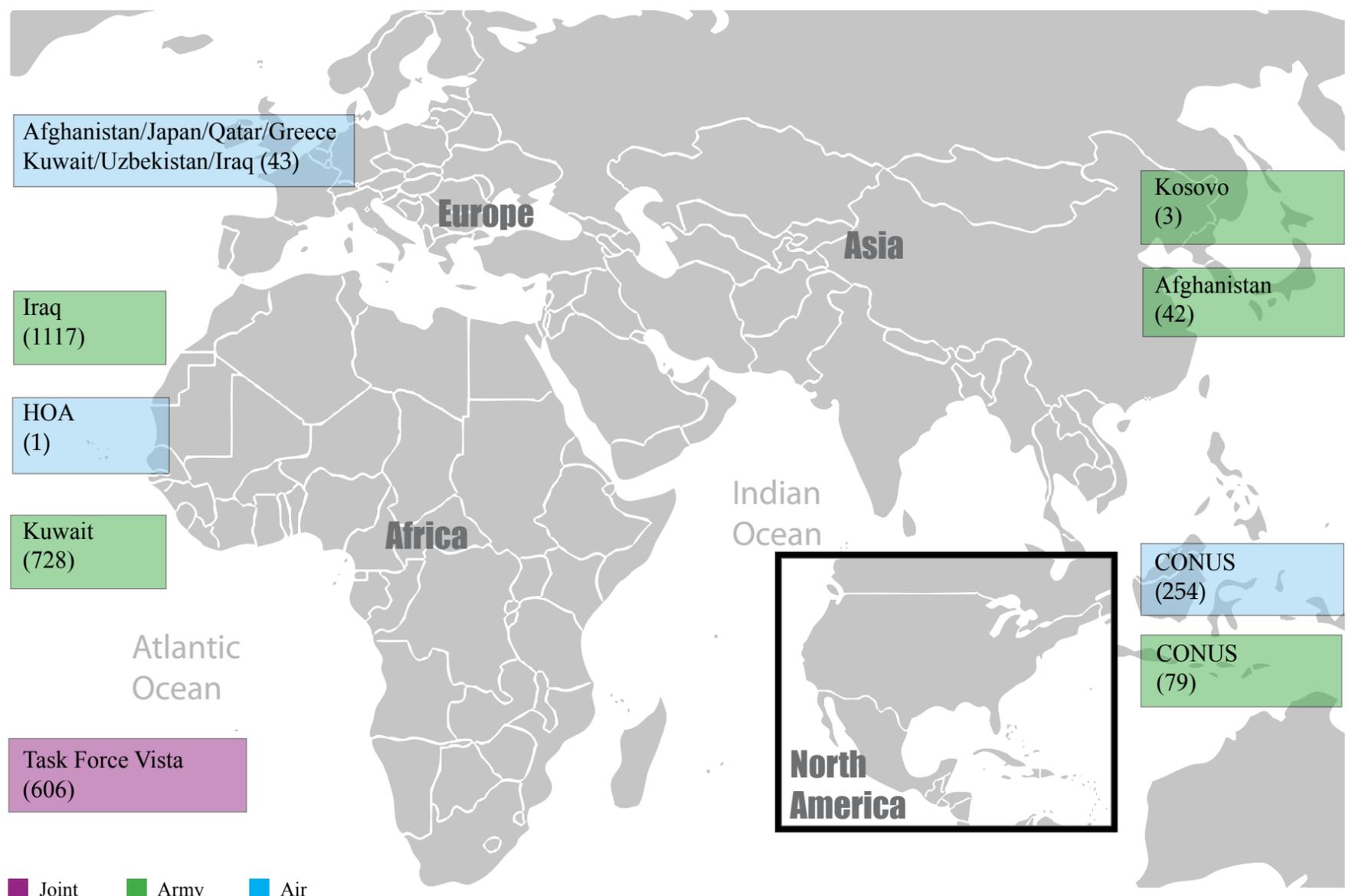
- ★ Highest resolution possible, minimum 300 dpi
- ★ Credits (who took photograph)
- ★ Cutline (what action is taking place in the photograph and identify individuals in photograph)

Email story submissions by the 15th of every month to:
mirtha.villarreal@us.army.mil

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE 1-160 INFANTRY

Where We Are

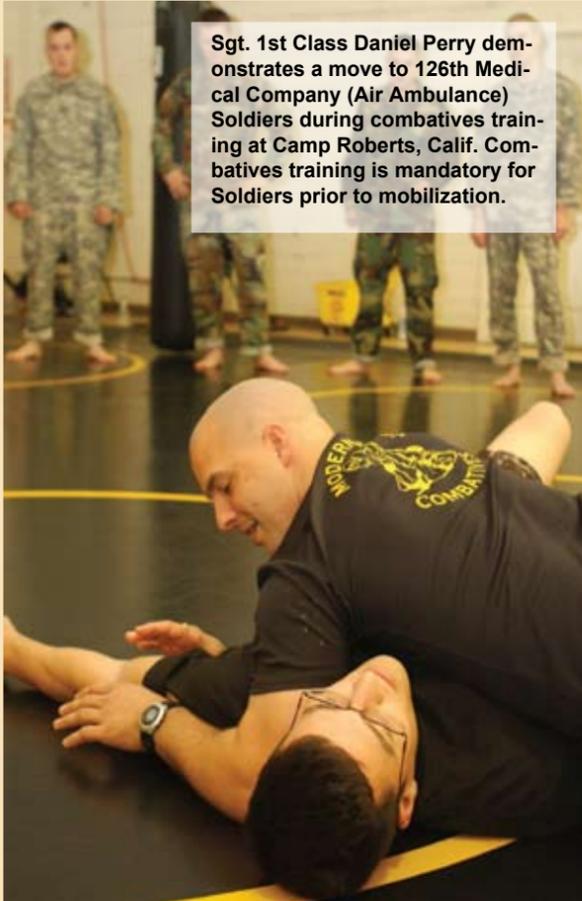
The California National Guard as of March 2008



COMBATIVES

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PFC. JOSEPH C. SAMUDIO

Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Perry demonstrates a move to 126th Medical Company (Air Ambulance) Soldiers during combatives training at Camp Roberts, Calif. Combatives training is mandatory for Soldiers prior to mobilization.



CAMP ROBERTS, Calif. – Pacing back and forth, arms gesturing to exemplify every point, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Perry looks like he belongs on Spike TV's *The Ultimate Fighter* rather than taking his newest class of Soldiers through combatives training.

Perry, a member of the 223rd Infantry Regiment based out of Camp Roberts, and his two assistant instructors occupy a small corner of the Camp Robert's gym with members from the 126th Medical Company (Air Ambulance).

With a booming voice echoing throughout the building and a physical presence that commands authority, Perry explains the rules of the wrestling mat and a run down of what his students are going to be learning.

"We teach Soldiers how to win in combat," said Perry. "The winner in combat is the one who shows up first with a gun."

"My job is not to make Ultimate Fighting Championship fighters. My job is to train you so that you can hold down your enemy until your buddy shows up with a weapon," explained Perry.

The Soldiers sign in on a roster, remove their identification tags and any jewelry, and begin cuffing their Army Combat Uniforms for the upcoming wrestling instruction. Perry continues to walk around sounding off as if addressing an entire brigade, going over the basic combatives moves and philosophies. The members of the 126th listen intently as he explains techniques like the arm bar and closing the distance.

The Soldiers laugh and exchange verbal jabs while they sterilize their bare feet on alcohol soaked towels laid out on the edge of the wrestling mat. They form a circle and begin stretching as the instructors go over the training objectives. Today's training is the first of five days of combatives training the medical troops of the 126th are re-

quired to go through before they deploy to Afghanistan this summer.

Insurgents are mixed with the general population in theater. Soldiers need to have both lethal and non-lethal skills in dealing with the enemy. If their weapon fails them or they are unable to use it due to the proximity of innocent people, they can employ their combatives training to put the enemy into a position where they would be forced to submit and cooperate, said Perry.

According to the history of Modern Army Combatives (www.modernarmycombatives.org) there are four levels of combatives training: Brazilian Jujitsu, Judo, Muay Thai and American Kickboxing. The final style introduces Khali stick fighting, western martial arts and contact weapons such as pipes, knives, Kevlar helmets, and anything that can be used as a weapon.

The program began in 1995 by Lt. Col. Stan McCrystal, 2nd Ranger Battalion commander. McCrystal wanted to reinvigorate the existing combatives program that had been around since World War II. Realizing the current Army needed more than basic hand-to-hand combat skills, McCrystal established a committee headed by then-Staff Sgt. Matt Larson.

Larson, an accomplished black belt in several martial arts, is currently the president of the United

States Combatives Arts Association (USCAA) and has essentially rewritten the U.S. Army Combatives doctrine.

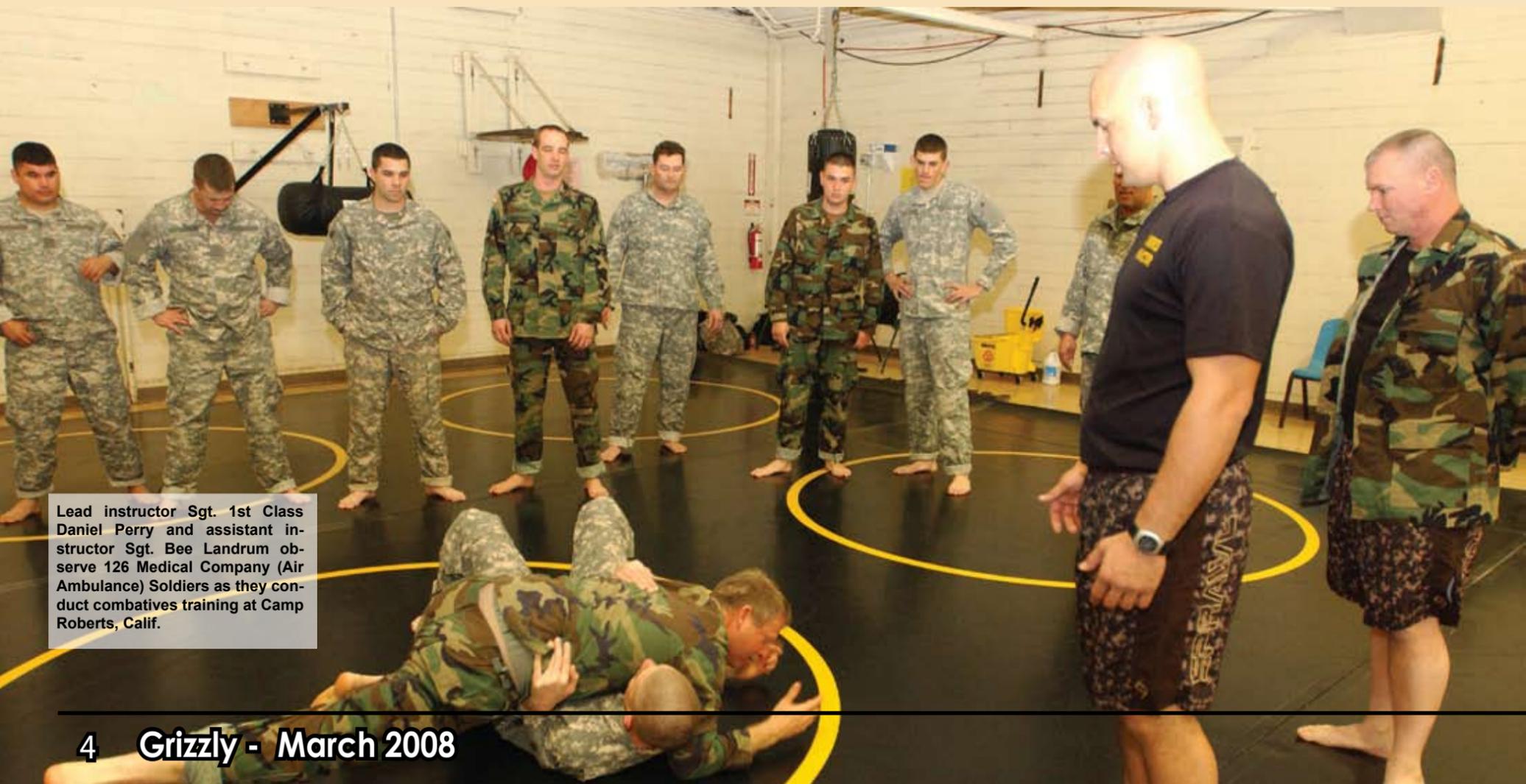
"The final design needed to be easy to teach and easy to learn as well as be disseminated throughout the entire army," said Perry. "Because of its simplicity, the combatives program has the ability to create its own instructors and ensure all Soldiers are proficient at the basic tasks."

"Overall it's a great defensive measure enabling the Soldier to protect themselves as well as the civilian population," said Maj. Robert Atkinson, Task Force Warrior operations officer. "As a former company commander, if I had the ability to send my Soldiers to get combatives certified I would definitely do it - it's a great asset. Soldiers can not know enough combatives; it's great for self protection."

"Combatives training in the CNG is one part of the TFW mobilization training. It's mandatory for all deploying California Army National Guard units," said Atkinson. Each unit has to be certified in several training areas before continuing on to their pre-mob station.

"California's Task Force Warrior is on the leading edge, having been the first to implement a full combatives program which has since become a standard across the nation," Atkinson said.

Lead instructor Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Perry and assistant instructor Sgt. Bee Landrum observe 126 Medical Company (Air Ambulance) Soldiers as they conduct combatives training at Camp Roberts, Calif.



CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD INFANTRY COMPANY TRANSFERS AUTHORITY FOR A CRITICAL OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM MISSION

STORY BY COMMAND SGT. MAJ. MICHAEL WINSTEAD

CAMP SLAYER, Iraq - On 22 Feb., 2008 at Camp Slayer, Iraq, there were two groups of happy Soldiers, but it was for entirely different reasons. Company C, 1st Battalion 185th Infantry Regiment, a California Army National Guard unit was about to transfer authority of the critical mission that they had been conducting for the past six months, and start their journey home.

Co. C, 1-185th IN was called up on short notice last spring as part of Task Force 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery, California Army National Guard, to fill critical force protection, convoy security, and military police missions in Iraq created by the surge of 2007. With less than two months notice, Capt. Ty Shepard, Commander of Co. C, 1-185th IN, and 1st Sgt. Darryl Harris, the Co. C, 1-185th First Sergeant were able to form a combat ready company made up entirely from infantry Soldiers from supplementary units within the California Army National Guard.

"Capt. Shepard and 1st Sgt. Harris literally started with only a guidon and formed a combat ready unit around it" said Lt. Col. Ian Falk, the commander of 1-143 FA. "They also had to train and prepare for a mission that was not standard for an infantry rifle company."

Charlie Company was called up to perform an in lieu of their military police mission.

"During their training at Fort Dix, New Jersey, they seemed to thrive on this new training and always found ways to adapt their infantry skills to their new role," stated Falk.

Once in Iraq Charlie Company found that they would have a dynamic and dangerous mission in the heart of Baghdad that would require all of their skills as infantrymen, as well as the new skills learned in military police training. In fact, Company C was only one of two units within the Michigan Army National Guard, 177th Mili-

tary Police Brigade that operated outside the wire on a daily basis. During the 6 months Charlie 1-185th IN operated over 250 successful combat missions, including the care and custody of over 2,000 detainees and escorting numerous high profile detainees to Iraqi courts in Baghdad.

While six months may seem like a short combat tour, 90% of their Soldiers earned either a Combat Infantryman's Badge or the Combat Action Badge for being engaged or engaging the enemy. The last incident a grenade attack only days before their TOA; thankfully there were no casualties. Co. C, 1-185 IN conducted every mission with the utmost professionalism and skill resulting in 100% mission success and only a few minor casualties.

"They can breathe a little easier now as they have begun their journey home after successfully transferring the reins of mission responsibility to another fine Army National Guard Infantry Compa-

ny," stated Falk.

On the other side of the small gravel covered courtyard stood the new Company C; this time from the 1st Battalion, 279th Infantry Regiment, from the Oklahoma Army National Guard. Company C, 1-279th IN, was extremely happy as well, but not because they were going home, but because the transfer of authority marked the end of their three months of arduous pre-deployment training at Fort Bliss, Texas, and the beginning of their long awaited combat tour in Iraq. The new commander, Capt. John Sherrill, thanked their predecessors for their professionalism and the smooth transition and challenged his Soldiers to continue the mission with the same level of professionalism and effectiveness.



Capt. Ty Shepard, the commander for Company C, 1st battalion 185th Infantry, a California National Guard unit stationed at Camp Slayer, Iraq, takes the lead for his Soldiers at their Transfer of Authority Ceremony. "They can breathe a little easier now as they have begun their journey home after successfully transferring the reins of mission responsibility to another fine Army National Guard Infantry Company," stated Lt. Col. Ian Falk, the commander of the 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery.

PHOTO CREDIT: STAFF SGT. JAMES DOKKEN

147TH COMBAT COMMUNICATIONS SQUADRON RECEIVES EAGLE VISION III

STORY BY SENIOR AIRMAN PAUL DUQUETTE

The day of January 18, 2008 won't soon be forgotten by the service-members of the California Air National Guard's (CANG) 147th Combat Communications Squadron (CBCS). On a beautiful San Diego day, the 147th CBCS ceremoniously accepted Eagle Vision III (EV) and its commercial satellite imagery mission.

The narrator for the ceremony was the 147th CBCS Commander Lt. Col. Douglas Hire. Guest speakers, in order of who spoke first, were the Assistant Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Mary Kight, Commander of the California Air National Guard Maj. Gen. Dennis Lucas and the Pentagon's Director of the Air Force Combat Support Office, Mr. James "Snake" Clark.

During General Lucas's speech, he said, "California has been in the leading the role of transformation for a little over eight years." He went on to say, to follow suite with the transformation in California, it's one of his goals to make the California Air National Guard the leader of change. He also said, "One thing that will not change is our devotion to the mission and to excellence in all we do."

Eagle Vision is the Department of Defense's first lightweight, mobile commercial satellite imagery

system. It provides unclassified commercial satellite imagery. It evolved from a need during Desert Storm to quickly acquire and disseminate broad-area imagery for contingency operations.

The system provides unclassified commercial imagery to support war-time operations, and disseminates imagery following man-made and natural disasters that must be mapped quickly to efficiently deploy and support emergency resources.

The mobile EV system can be driven or flown to an emergency or military location anywhere in the world and set up to receive image data directly from the orbiting satellites. It has capabilities to produce and enhance raw image data products for delivery in either digital or hardcopy formats.

Mr. Clark is one of the Defense Department's leading experts in the field of commercial imagery. He is credited with the conception of the Eagle Vision program during the first gulf war. Eagle Vision was developed by a French company called Matra System and Information, now known as European Air Defense Systems (EADS).

Mr. Clark said, "The EV system has evolved over the years." He

said it represents 18 years of international cooperation between the French and Americans, as well as the Air National Guard and active duty Air Force.

During General Lucas' and General Kight's speeches, they credited Mr. Clark for being responsible for the 147th CBCS receiving the EV III mission. General Lucas said, "This Eagle Vision mission is extremely

important, not only to the state but the nation as well."

With the EV mission, the 147th CBCS joins other ANG combat communications squadrons to include South Carolina (EV IV); Hawaii (EV V); Alabama (EV VI) as well as an active duty Intelligence Squadron in Ramstein, Germany (EV 1).

Eagle Vision Satellite performs a bow movement during the ceremony.



From left, Maj. Gen. Dennis Lucas, Brig. Gen. Mary Kight and Mr. James Clark cut the ceremonial ribbon.

PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. DIANE DUCAT



CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD AVIATION UNIT PREPARES FOR AFGHANISTAN DEPLOYMENT

PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. DAVID J. LOEFFLER

A farewell ceremony for approximately 80 California National Guardsmen from B Co., 1-126th general support aviation battalion (GSAB) was held Sunday, Feb. 24, at the Stockton Flight Facility, Stockton, Calif.

Prior to their deployment, the aviation unit will spend approximately one month in Fort Sill, Okla. conducting pre-deployment training. The Soldiers and aviators departed to Fort Sill Tuesday, Feb. 26, from the Sacramento International Airport, where family and media were invited to see the Soldiers off.

B Company will perform full spectrum army aviation operations to include Combat and Combat support missions in the Afghanistan Area of Responsibility.

The history of the 140th Aviation is intrinsically tied to rotary-wing aviation, the Stockton airport and various designations of which the name "49th" has usually been the prefix.

The 49th Aviation Company was formed in Stockton during the 1940's when one of its earliest commanders was Colonel Stimson, for whom the road to the flight facility is named and to whom the Stockton Armory is dedicated.



ARE YOU A HOTHEAD?!

MAJ STEVEN KEIHL, DIRECTOR OF MENTAL HEALTH



I was working in my yard last week and jammed my finger into a rose bush... it hurt and I got angry. I was trying to watch the Super Bowl and my one year old daughter turned off the television... I got angry. I wanted to take a nap and my dog wanted to go outside... you guessed it, I got angry. I was late for an appointment and the traffic was horrible... yep, angry again. I received an email from a family member that was not very complimentary... angry. Every once in awhile I get angry with my friends, angry with my family, even angry with my boss (sorry Col. Cooper). You may not want to admit it, but so do you!

The truth is, we all get angry. Anger often gets a bad rap and most people tend to assume that anger is bad. That isn't true. In fact, anger is a normal and usually healthy human emotion. The reality is that every healthy human being on the planet experiences the emotion of anger from time to time. Anger varies greatly in intensity and can appear as simple irritation to pure rage. Anger can also be caused by a variety of issues... you can be angry at a person (coworker, ex-wife, etc), an event (traffic jam, barking dog, etc), chronic worrying, or even reflection over past traumatic or troublesome events.

The problem with anger is not that we experience it. The problem is most often found in how we express anger. Anger leads to some basic physiological shifts such as elevated heart rate and blood pressure and increased hormone activity to include adrenaline. These shifts naturally lead to aggression. Our body tells our mind that it is time to modify behavior and get ready for a fight. These internal instincts have likely contributed to human survival over the years. However, it is also likely that such instincts have contributed to outbursts and ac-

tions that have created senseless emotional turmoil and even physical pain.

Anger is an emotion. Every emotion will either control an individual or be controlled by an individual. Any emotion that controls you will likely cause you problems. So, the secret to experiencing anger without negative consequences is to learn to control your anger... control your emotions.

Don't misunderstand what I am saying. Controlling your emotions is not the same as burying them or hiding them. In fact, burying your anger can be a very dangerous habit that can cause a great deal of stress to your body. Unexpressed anger can lead to passive-aggressive behavior, cynicism, hostility, and critical attitudes. Ever know someone who can hardly say a nice word about anyone? It is likely this person has yet to learn to control his or her emotions. It is also likely that this same person has a fair share of relational turmoil... who wants to be around someone so negative and critical? Additionally, repressing anger can lead to physical problems often due to the stress placed on the body such as hypertension, high blood pressure, or even depression. We cannot and should not attempt to eliminate our emotions. Rather, we need to learn to express our emotions in a healthy manner. Repression is not the answer.

For some, controlling emotions is obtained by learning to calm the intensity. There are a million and one techniques developed to help individuals learn to calm down and relax when emotions are intense. You can close your eyes, take deep breaths, and count to ten, twenty, or even a hundred depending on the intensity of your anger. This technique and others really do work. We can learn to slow down our

heart rate and calm the physiological reactions to emotions. For many, this is a great first step in dealing with anger... but remember, it does not resolve the issue. Too often people mistake calming exercises for conflict resolution. Just because you are able to calm down does not mean that the conflict goes away.

This brings me to the key to anger management... healthy expression of emotion. We can learn to be assertive without being aggressive. We can learn to share with others how we feel without attacking them. This may take some time and effort, but it is well worth the investment. Healthy expression of emotion allows for more meaningful and satisfying interpersonal communication and connection to occur, which naturally leads to better relationships and greater satisfaction.

So, do you have an anger problem? If so, you probably already know it. Are your behaviors consistent with someone who is in control or out of control? When angry, do you physically lash out by throwing things, breaking things, or even physically attacking other people? If so, you need to get some help and learn to find healthy methods of both calming your anger and dealing with frustrations. You can learn to use anger control techniques to calm your emotions. You can learn conflict resolution techniques to assist in dealing with difficult relationships or situations. You can develop more effective communication, interpersonal skills, and you can even learn to modify or change negative environments that may contribute to chronic stress or frustration. Don't let your anger control you a second longer... get some help, gain control, and learn to move into the future with a sense of hope and personal satisfaction.

New Resource Information

The Mental Health Office recently updated our Website to include some fantastic resources and referral options for service members and families. We will continually update this information. Our featured new resource for March is www.giveanhour.org. This is a non-profit organization where licensed mental health providers donate an hour of their week to support service members and their families. This benefit can last up to an entire year!

Contacting the Mental Health Task Force

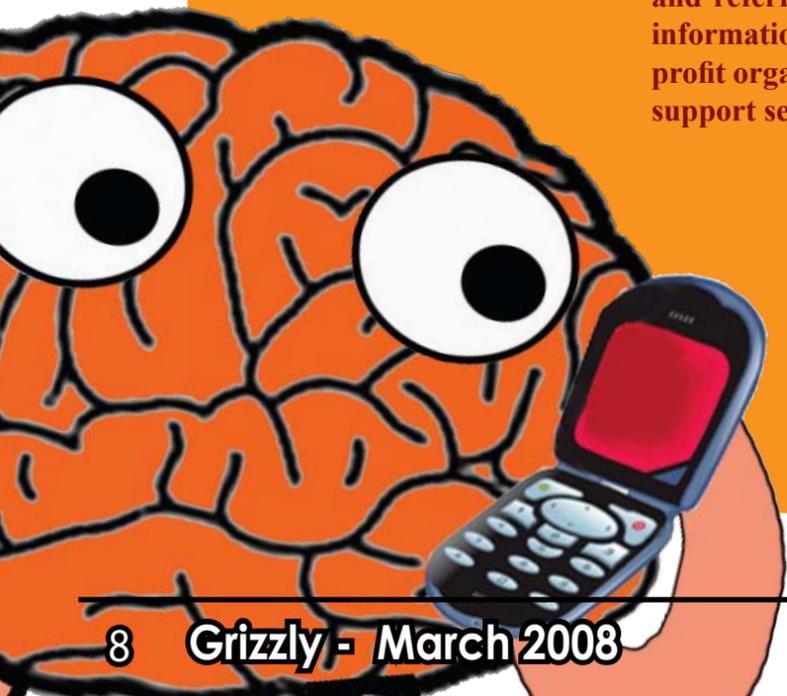
Office – 916-854-3019

DSN – 466-3019

Cell – 916-240-3477

Email – mental.healthca@ng.army.mil

Website - <http://www.calguard.ca.gov/mhtf/Pages/default.aspx>





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 LONG BEACH, CA 90822-1096

EMAIL : paul.w.mckenna@us.army.mil
 PHONE : 562-594-1816

SOLDIER OF THE YEAR



**Sergeant
Mike Benton**

is the commander's Bradley gunner and NCOIC of the Headquarter's Platoon of the 1-185th Combined Arms Battalion's Bravo Company in Riverside. After graduating from Gateway High School in January 2007, Sgt. Benton enlisted in the Army and attended infantry school at Fort Benning, Ga.

In 2003, Sgt. Benton enlisted in the California Army National Guard, and in 2004, his unit, the 1-160th Infantry's Bravo Company, mobilized and deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. When Sgt. Benton realized his company was lacking a sufficient number of weapon mounts for their vehicles, he designed and fabricated a one-piece pintle-weapon mount that enabled his unit to outfit every vehicle with the proper weapons system, a design copied later by other units.

Sgt. Benton's military awards include the Combat Infantryman Badge, Meritorious Service Medal, Army Commendation Medal (third award), Army Achievement Medal (second award), Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Iraq Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Korean Defense Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with "M" Device, NCO Professional Development Ribbon, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, NATO Medal and the California Good Conduct Medal.

Sgt. Benton is pursuing a bachelor's degree in physics with the future goals of earning a doctorate and attending the Army Astronaut board.



**Specialist
Raymond Race Jr.**

is an Information Technology Specialist for HHC, 1-185th AR (CAB), 224 San Bernardino, CA. He graduated a year early in Aug 1997 from Victor Valley Union High School. After graduating from high school, Specialist Race joined the United States Marine Corps and was honorably discharged in March 2004.

Specialist Race joined the National Guard in Jan 2005 as a Radio Repair Technician for B Co. 40FSB, Barstow, CA. In June 2005 Spec. Race was awarded the 11B MOS. In July 2005 he was activated to serve as filler for the 29th Brigade Combat Team in Iraq. In Iraq he served as a 240B Gunner for the MP Platoon, HHC, 29th Brigade Combat Team

Upon returning he was assigned to his current position as an Information Technology Specialist with HHC, 1-185th AR (CAB). With HHC 1-185th AR (CAB) He is currently waiting to be reassigned as a 25Q, Multichannel Transmission Systems Operator for HHC, 1-185th AR (CAB) to better serve the needs of his Battalion. Currently he has started at National University to complete his Bachelor's Degree in Construction Engineering.

Specialist Race's awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, (2) Army Commendation Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Marine Corps Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with 'M' Device, Army Service Ribbon, Army Reserve Overseas Training Ribbon, and California Commendation Medal.

In the civilian sector he works as a Lead Estimator for Shanks Electric Corporation, an Electrical and General Contractor in Southern California.



**Staff Sergeant
Weston Sanchez Jr.**

enlisted in the CSMR on Sept. 1, 2005, and was assigned as a medic to the Installation Support Group, Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos. Currently, he is the NCOIC of the ISG security section that supplements the JFTB Security Force, and he also serves on the ISG Color Guard team.

His military education includes the CSMR Basic Orientation Course, JFTB Security Augmentation Training Course, Primary Leadership Development Course, Convoy Operations Simulator Instructor Course, Combat Lifesavers Course and the Initial Entry Force Course.

Staff Sergeant Sanchez graduated in 1991 from Savanna High School in Anaheim and earned an associates degree from Fullerton College. He is currently pursuing a bachelor's degree in sociology and a teaching credential from California State University, Fullerton.

He continues to provide a wide variety of support services to the California Army National Guard. He has participated at Camp Roberts on the Soldier Readiness Processing support team, and is a convoy operations simulator instructor.

Staff Sergeant Sanchez's military decorations include the California Medal of Merit, the CSMR Meritorious Achievement Medal, the California State Service Ribbon, CSMR Professional Development Ribbon, Mission Qualification Ribbon, Recruiting Achievement Ribbon, and he earned the Expert Shooting Badge (Pistol).

In his civilian career, Staff Sgt. Sanchez works as an assistant instructor in special education, is a campus safety supervisor and an academic counseling technician. He also mentors with the Navy Junior Reserve Officers Training Course at La Habra High School.



**Specialist
Joseph R. Marino**

grew up in San Pedro and currently resides in Rancho Palos Verdes. Spc. Marino first attended school in the Los Angeles Unified School District and graduated from Peninsula High School in 2004. Spc. Marino is currently attending California State University, Long Beach, and is on course to graduate with a degree in communicational studies in 2009.

Early in life, Spc. Marino was determined to pursue a career as a firefighter. During his junior year in high school, he joined the Los Angeles City Fire Department's Explorer Program, and as a result, was able to gain the knowledge, training and experience necessary to test and apply to become a Los Angeles City Firefighter. He is now in the application process and recently received perfect scores on his oral interviews.

Specialist Marino enlisted in the California State Military Reserve on April 8, 2007. He is a Soldier in the Installation Support Group, Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, and is assigned to the security section. Spc. Marino proudly serves alongside his father, Cpl. Joseph M. Marino Sr., who is also a member of the ISG.

Specialist Marino's awards include the CSMR Mission Qualification Ribbon and the Expert Shooting Badge.

In his civilian career, Spc. Marino works for the Shoreline Ambulance Company in Huntington Beach as a licensed Emergency Medical Technician. He operates various ambulances to include critical care transport, basic life support and 9-1-1 fire vehicles.

AIRMEN OF THE YEAR



**Master Sergeant
Jerry W. Bobo**

began his career in the Air National Guard in 1988. Most of his military service was served as a rated crew chief on F-4, RF-4 and KC-135 E/R aircraft. His noted leadership abilities led to an assignment as the 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron first sergeant in 2003. The BRAC realignment and aircraft conversion increased Master Sgt. Bobo's responsibilities to cover the Maintenance Operations Flight and Maintenance Group.

Master Sergeant Bobo completed two years toward a degree in criminal justice while attending Cal State San Bernardino. He graduated from Senior NCO Academy on July 11, 2004, and from First Sergeant Academy on June 13, 2003.

Master Sergeant Bobo selflessly volunteered for many operational missions to include AEF deployments to France and Turkey for operations Joint Forge and Enduring Freedom, the latter being the 163rd's 2006 farewell deployment in the KC-135R Stratotanker. Some of his CONUS missions included supporting Global Lighting joint exercises and the Hurricane Katrina relief effort.

Master Sgt. Bobo carries the same qualities, professionalism and sense of service to his civilian vocation. He serves as lead advisor for the U.S. Border Patrol and mentors the youth in his community in the areas of leadership and community service. He also serves as president of the Temecula Station Welfare and Recreation Council, a position in which he organizes activities that promote agent morale and station camaraderie.



**Senior Master Sergeant
Donna J. Goodno**

was born and raised in San Diego. After graduating from high school in June 1981, she enlisted in the Air Force in May 1984.

Senior Master Sergeant Goodno was recognized as the 435th TAW Outstanding Performer during operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm for her exemplary attention to detail while working long hours locating combat teams that were missing while deployed to Saudi Arabia.

Senior Master Sgt. Goodno enlisted in the California Air National Guard at the 147th Combat Communications Squadron, and accepted a full-time position at the 147 CBCS as the Support Services Supervisor in June 2002.

Senior Master Sergeant Goodno volunteered for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2002 and deployed to Al Jaber, Kuwait, as the AOR COMSEC manager. In January 2007, she volunteered for a deployment to Baghdad International Airport, Iraq. She served as the maintenance superintendent for the 447th Air Expeditionary Squadron. She was responsible for 27 personnel, five workcenters and over \$17 million in assets. She volunteered to be the 447th AEG notary, assisting over 800 servicemembers and their families with critical paperwork. As a testament of her dedication to the mission, she was recognized with a No. 1 ranking among the 87 SNCOs when she received the 447th Air Expeditionary Group Senior Non-Commissioned Officer of the Month award.



**Staff Sergeant
William D. Kammerer**

is a Satellite, Wideband and telemetry systems journeyman assigned to the satellite/wideband systems workcenter at the 147th Combat Communications Squadron, San Diego Air National Guard Station. Staff Sgt. Kammerer enlisted in the Air Force in January 2002, and after finishing basic training in April, he successfully completed aircraft structural maintenance training at Naval Air Station Pensacola, Fla.

His first tour was at Royal Air Force Base Lakenheath in the United Kingdom. Staff Sgt. Kammerer worked on F-15 model C and E fighter jets, maintaining and repairing the structural integrity of the aircraft. At the end of his two-year tour, Staff Sgt. Kammerer joined the California Air National Guard's 147th Combat Communications Squadron in April 2005 through the Palace Chase program.

Staff Sergeant Kammerer volunteered for duty in Iraq and was selected three times for airborne missions to install or repair radio equipment at off-base sites. For his exemplary conduct, he was recommended for – and ultimately awarded – the Air Force Achievement Medal by his chain-of-command at Balad Air Base, Iraq.

Staff Sergeant Kammerer earned a Community College of the Air Force associates degree in aviation maintenance technology in the fall of 2007, and he recently completed requirements for his second CCAF associates degree in electronics systems technology. Staff Sgt. Kammerer is also a senior at National University where he is on course to graduate with a bachelor's degree in May 2008, after which he plans to pursue graduate studies.



**Staff Sergeant
Maria L. Tubergen**

is an operations personnel apprentice assigned to the 129th Rescue Squadron at Moffett Federal Airfield in Sacramento.

Born in Hastings, Mich., Staff Sgt. Tubergen graduated from Western Michigan University in April 2005 with a bachelor's degree in health, physical education and recreation, and is now pursuing a master's degree in nursing, with the goal of becoming an Air Force flight nurse.

Staff Sergeant Tubergen enlisted in the Air National Guard in June 2001, and after basic training, deployed with the 130th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron to Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, Africa. She refined and implemented an alert-paging system that resulted in an effective notification process which was critical to combat search-and-rescue missions. Staff Sgt. Tubergen networked with CJTF-HOA staff offices; her efforts resulted in a 20 percent reduction in the time, effort and materials needed to complete squadron personnel in- and outprocessing documentation. In addition, she singlehandedly prepared 48 award packages and 50 flag certificates for employers, which increased the morale of the 129th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron members and their respective employers.

While deployed, Staff Sgt. Tubergen selflessly volunteered 15 hours of her off-duty time to assist the Djibouti Orphanage staff in the feed, play and care of 80 infants. Staff Sgt. Tubergen has assisted in the 129th RQW's Children's Christmas Party, Hispanic Day and Family Day. She also volunteers at the San Jose Animal Care Center, participated in Coastal Clean-up days, serves as a second grade Catechist teacher and participates in the San Jose "Role Model" program by serving as a youth mentor.

KINGDOM PARADE

STORY BY COL. TERRY KNIGHT



Brig Gen. Mary Kight participates in the 23rd Annual Kingdom Day Parade

The California National Guard recently participated in the 23rd Annual Kingdom Day Parade, one of the nation's largest events celebrating the birthday of Martin Luther King, Jr. KNBC TV provided live coverage of the event which drew tens of thousands of spectators.

California's Assistant Adjutant General, Brig. Gen. Mary Kight, served as grand marshal and reviewing officer for the parade. She was joined by the 40th Infantry Division Color Guard and more than 3,000 participants who marched 2.5 miles on the boulevard

named for the Nobel Peace Prize-winning civil rights leader.

The parade route, which stretched from Western Avenue to Crenshaw Boulevard in South Central Los Angeles, was alive with floats, drill teams, marching bands, and a number of celebrities, including singer Stevie Wonder and actor Jermaine Williams.

Prior to the parade, Brig. Gen. Kight was recognized at a special breakfast and afforded the opportunity to meet with L.A.'s black and Korean-American communities' leader.

ARMY NATIONAL GUARD SOLDIER RECEIVES VIP TREATMENT

STORY BY MAMIE YONG MAYWHORT

For the past two Christmases, the volunteers and sponsors of Homefront America, an all volunteer military support and outreach organization based in San Juan Capistrano have teamed up to provide military families with a Christmas they will cherish forever.

The program, dubbed "Homefront Santa" works by matching military families with sponsors for the holiday. Military families submit their applications with supporting documents and "wish list" to the organization; and based on a pre-defined set of criteria, the families are matched up with a sponsor.

The Bonilla family was one of these families. In March of 2007, Army Spec. William Bonilla, an National Guard Soldier serving with the HHC 1/160th IN, departed for his fourth deployment since 09/11; with each deployment lasting an average of one year. Only this



Bonilla Family enjoys a day in Disneyland.

time, he would be separated from his family for 18 months.

Shortly before Christmas, Homefront America learned that Spec. Bonilla would be home in January

or two weeks. With this information, Homefront America teamed up with their sponsors, MilitaryConnection.com and Sarducci's Capistrano Depot to make Spec. Bonilla's leave an extra special one.

MilitaryConnection.com sponsored the family to Disneyland, and provided the children with gift cards to Toys R Us, and the owners of Sarducci's rolled out the red carpet to treat the Bonillas to a VIP luncheon at their restaurant.

In her thank you letter, Mrs. Maria Bonilla writes, "Thank you for making everything possible, and to know that you do it for the love of helping us military families, makes the gift even more special for us. Homefront America made us feel appreciated, and I want you to know that we truly appreciate you too."

So, next time when you ask Spec. Bonilla what he would like to do on his leave, chances are he will say "go to Disneyland and enjoy a nice lunch at Sarduccis in San Juan Capistrano."

For information on Homefront America, Inc, visit www.homefrontamerica.org
 For information on MilitaryConnection.com, visit www.militaryconnection.com
 For information on Sarducci's Capistrano Depot, visit www.sarduccis.com

TF STEEL CASTLE BLAZES NEW TRAILS ON BORDER

STORY BY MAJ. NICK DUCICH



PHOTO CREDIT: 1ST LT. ANTONIO MARISTELA



Task Force Steel Castle continues its work on the border, improving border infrastructure and adding to the safety of Border Patrol agents. It's a mission of National Guard involvement on the Southwest border that has a long history and miles of marked accomplishments. The National Guard has been working on the border since sections of runway landing mat were welded in place during OPERATION GATEKEEPER in the early '90s. In subsequent years, additional fence, both primary and secondary, have been added, an all-weather road has replaced a rutted dirt trail and drainage projects have been constructed to protect this infrastructure during heavy winter rains – all built by National Guard engineers. With the advent of OPERATION JUMP START in June 2006, and the arrival of additional assets both in equipment and personnel, the task

of improving border infrastructure has ramped up considerably.

On July 12, 2006, Task Force Steel Castle assumed operational control of the California Counter-Drug directorate's asset Team Engineer in support of OPERATION JUMP START. With the combination of almost two decades of experience on the border and an available fleet of equipment, Team Engineer served as the backbone to Task Force Steel Castle's daunting task of developing and improving Customs and Border Protection's critical infrastructure. This critical infrastructure stretches the length of the 166 miles of international border with the primary mission to reduce the flow of illegal drugs and alien smuggling from Mexico to the United States.

Within two months of operation, Task Force Steel Castle was rein-

forced to a peak of 255 personnel forming two separate engineer company teams. Team Engineer representing the main effort with 2 vertical construction platoons, 1 horizontal platoon, a maintenance platoon complete with transportation and fueling capability. Team Sentinel mission focus was to shift to a supporting role of quality control for rotational units in addition to executing specialized construction.

Over the past 18 months, some of Task Force Steel Castle's major accomplishments for OPERATION JUMP START include:

- Successfully supporting 24 rotational units consisting of engineer, transportation and maintenance units totaling 1800 Service Members.

- Expansion of the border enforcement zone westward. The Russian Hill cut-and-fill project has already moved approximately 140,000 of the projected 180,000 cubic yards of dirt to reduce the present near vertical incline to no more than ten percent.

- A massive drainage project is also near completion following the installation of two 72-inch reinforced concrete pipe drainage structures on Russian Hill to properly channel the effluent from Mexico and natural storm water. The expansion of the secondary fence westward and additional all-weather road, following completion of grading operations will allow for faster and safer movement of Border Patrol agents along the western sections of the San Diego Sector.

- The installation of 27 light poles complete with power, which has enhanced agent safety at night, and has increased competitor detection while deterring illegal entries.

- The retrofit of almost 8,000 linear feet of secondary fence to a height of sixteen feet in San Diego Sector

- The seven-and-a-half miles primary patrol road rehabilitation in East San Diego County to include 27 culverts, three low water crossings, and several miles of rock-lined V-ditches for proper drainage.

- Placement of 478 anti-vehicular barriers in the Yuha Desert, of the El Centro sector along the border, closing off 3.7 miles to competitors intending to cross illegally by vehicle, often carrying contraband, drugs and human cargo. This barrier design, made of recycled pieces of railroad, prevents vehicle crossing across the open flat areas of desert, yet allows for the natural migration of native wildlife, and has resulted in huge monetary savings for U.S. Customs and Border Protection.

- The hosting of two Mobile Training Teams awarding almost 40 Task Force Steel Castle Service Members a 21E Heavy Equipment Operator MOS.

The accomplishments continue to grow along with the efforts and dedication of the engineer force.

As the mission enters the final phase, the personnel reductions have not damped the level of Operational Tempo for Task Force Steel Castle. Team Engineer continues to execute vertical and horizontal construction projects in addition to supporting Joint Task Force North and OPERATION JUMP START unit rotations to the border. Beginning in February 2008, over 1000 additional Soldiers and Airmen under the direction of Task Force Steel Castle will continue the effort to develop and improve the critical infrastructure until mission completion early this summer.

This monumental execution of diverse construction projects by the National Guard has immediate impact as we improve the individual border agent's safety while providing enhanced manoeuvre and mobility to U.S. Customs and Border Protection.



Members of the CNG CDTF deploy to one of Shasta County's national forest while supporting reclamation efforts for Operation ALESIA, one of the largest marijuana suppression efforts ever.



Colonel Timothy Swann, CNG CDTF Commander, explains to John P. Walters, Director of the President's Office of National Drug Control Policy, the support role of the Soldiers and Airmen while escorting him on a reclamation mission with Shasta County Sheriff Tom Bosenko during Operation ALESIA.

CALIFORNIA COUNTERDRUG TASK FORCE RECEIVES NATIONAL RECOGNITION

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CALIFORNIA NATIONAL GUARD COUNTERDRUG TASK FORCE STAFF

Washington D.C. – On January 17th 2008, John P. Walters, Director of the President's Office of National Drug Control Policy, presented the California National Guard Counterdrug Task Force (CNG CDTF) the Distinguished Service Award in recognition of their outstanding service to the Nation in support of the National Marijuana Eradication Initiative for planning and executing Operation ALESIA in support of the Shasta County Sheriff's Office.

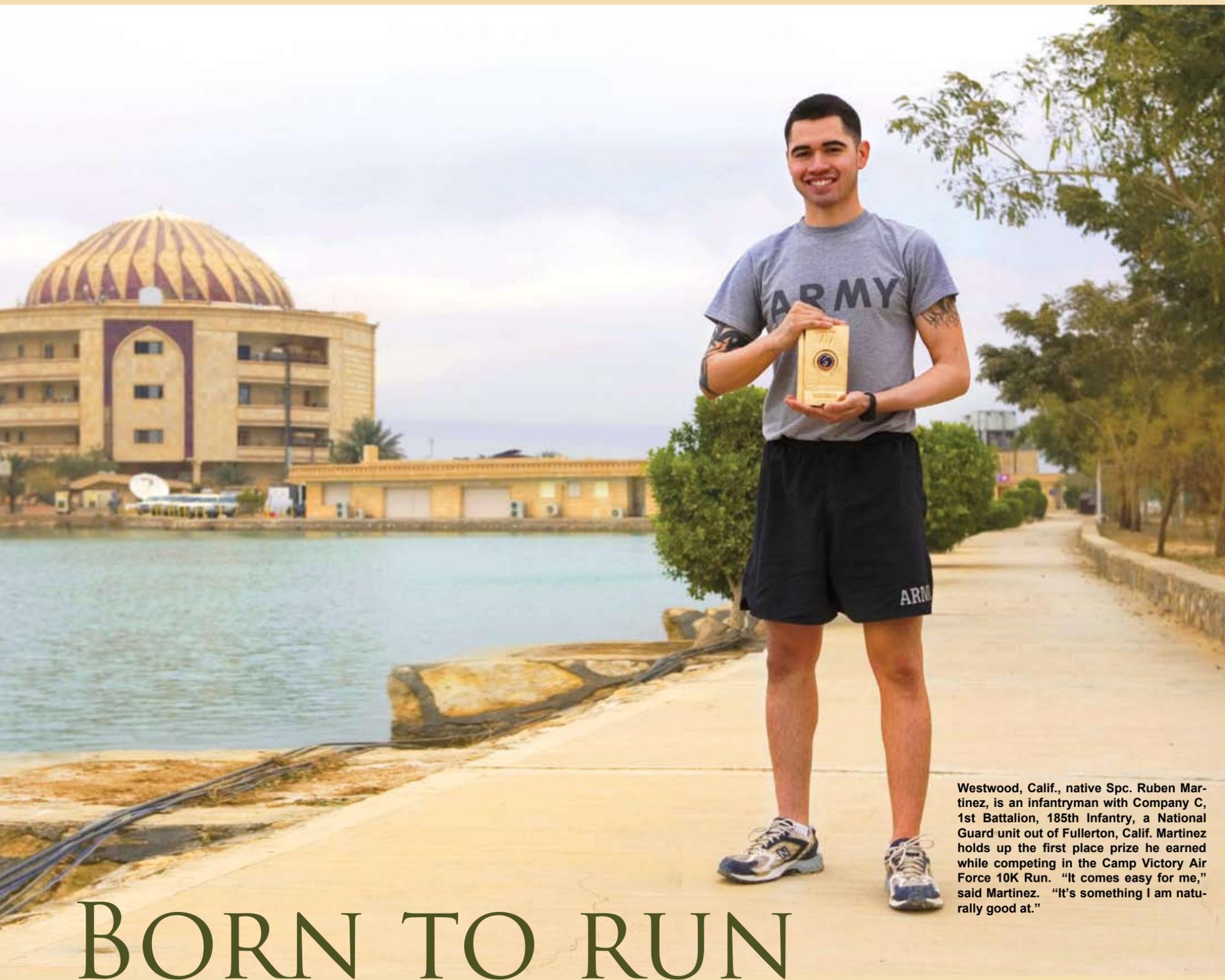
During the Operation, Shasta County Sheriff's Office in conjunction with the CNG CDTF led a coalition of 18 federal, state, and local agencies in a marijuana suppression mission to remove marijuana grows, investigate and apprehend drug trafficking individuals, and remove infrastructure on public lands in Shasta County. This

multi-agency Operation eradicated more marijuana in a three week period than four of seven targeted National Marijuana Eradication Initiative states during all of 2007. In addition, the Sheriff of Shasta County made two separate trips to Washington, DC to personally brief the President on the operation and the importance of drug prevention efforts targeted at our nation's youth. The Operation resulted in the discovery of 55 marijuana grows; eradication of nearly 300,000 marijuana plants; the seizure of ten weapons, pipe bombs, grenades, and night vision equipment; and the arrest of 20 suspects. During investigation and eradication operations, the CNG CDTF provided concurrent aviation, analysis, and reclamation support to law enforcement agencies, and anti-drug education to over 1,800 children in the area's schools.

The Task Force's reclamation efforts involved the removal of marijuana cultivation equipment, camps and cooking facilities, and tons of trash from 30 garden sites, leaving the public's forest in much better condition than what it was found. Additionally, a number of Task Force members served as field analysts and worked in conjunction with numerous law enforcement agencies to document evidence in the marijuana garden complexes and assist in multiple investigations to stem the flow of illegal narco-terrorists in California and the United States using an innovative technique of synchronizing military capabilities in support of law enforcement. The award was presented to the Shasta County Sheriff's Office and the CNG CDTF and its members in recognition of their outstanding achievements and distinguished

service during Operation ALESIA. In 1983 the California National Guard became involved in counterdrug operations and today the counterdrug program is the largest in the United States. Last year alone, the CNG CDTF conducted 289 interdiction missions in support of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies seizing drugs valued at over \$15.6 billion and they supported 477 events reaching nearly 50 thousand Californians, primarily youth, to enable them to be resilient and drug free.

The CNG CDTF consists of Army and Air National Guard members from units throughout California who perform counterdrug duties in a support role while serving full-time on active duty status.



Westwood, Calif., native Spc. Ruben Martinez, is an infantryman with Company C, 1st Battalion, 185th Infantry, a National Guard unit out of Fullerton, Calif. Martinez holds up the first place prize he earned while competing in the Camp Victory Air Force 10K Run. "It comes easy for me," said Martinez. "It's something I am naturally good at."

BORN TO RUN

STORY AND PHOTO BY 1ST LT. KEITH WOLOWODIUK AND STAFF SGT. BRYANT MAUDE

CAMP SLAYER, Iraq – "THUD, THUD, THUD, THUD," is the sound you hear when entering the Camp Slayer Fishbowl Gym when Spc. Ruben Martinez, an infantryman with Company C, 1st Battalion, 185th Infantry, is working out. A runner to the core, Martinez will run for fun and sport.

"It comes easy for me," said Martinez. "It's something I am naturally good at."

He first started running in high school and his skills and dedication earned him a scholarship at the University of California, Los Angeles, where he is pursuing a double major in criminal justice and business management.

Currently, Martinez runs around Victory Base Complex, Iraq, any chance he gets. On average, Martinez runs 50 miles a week to stay in shape

and has managed to burn through two pairs of running shoes. On his most recent Army Physical Fitness Test, Martinez was the fastest runner in the company scoring 11 minutes, 40 seconds on his two-mile event.

He also likes to compete. Martinez has managed to participate in seven 5K and 10K runs while being deployed to Iraq. And he doesn't just compete, he wins. The lowest he ever placed was third, and that was a race held at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, a few days after he arrived in theater. His excuse for third place was jet lag.

He made up for the low showing in Kuwait by winning a number of silvers and golds over the next several months, to include a second place finish in the Camp Victory Navy 10K Run, a first place finish in the Camp Victory Air Force 10K run and during his R & R he participated with

his team mates in the UCLA All Comer's Meet where he placed fifth overall. Now that's Army Strong!

This was not his first time running in Iraq; he racked up eight prizes during Operation Iraqi Freedom III. He is also remembered as the guy who broke five treadmills.

"I was banned from using the treadmills for a month by the Moral Welfare and Recreation staff," recalled Martinez. "They were afraid I would break all of them!"

Martinez plans to return home, graduate college, and try out for the U.S. Olympic Team.

NO FOB TOO FAR

STORY BY CAPT. EDWIN M. RODRIGUEZ

As the surge strategy continues to stabilize sectarian violence in Iraq, the men of the 1st Battalion, 160th Light Infantry, 40th Infantry Brigade Combat Team along with Soldiers from 17 other states continue their critical role in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom VII.

The Sidewinder Battalion provides security escorts to convoys and has remained steadfast during their time in a combat zone. The majority of missions are led by junior noncommissioned officers, which affords them opportunities to make real-world decisions that in past conflicts were made by platoon sergeants and platoon leaders.

Building a cohesive war-fighting unit from the ground up has proved challenging and rewarding. Most Soldiers did not know each other prior to mobilization; they were a mix of Soldiers from numerous military occupancy specializations throughout the state. The driving force behind the strong bonds has been the grueling training, the never-quit warrior philosophy, high operational tempo, and the looking out for each other mentality established by key leaders within the Sidewinder Battalion.

"It has been a privilege to work with these great Americans. They bring experience and it's truly invigorating to be on missions with them," said Sgt. 1st Class Ronnie Troyn, Platoon Sergeant.

The Sidewinder Battalion has run the gauntlet against anti-coalition forces. Soldiers have been wounded from improvised explosive devices and explosively formed penetrators, exchanged small arms fire, reacted to indirect enemy fire attacks, prevented high-jackings, and saved the lives of third country nationals throughout Iraq.

"Their commitment to continue with the mission after being wounded clearly displays intestinal fortitude, courage and loyalty to their comrades," said Maj. Harry Hudick, Battalion Executive Officer. The brave Soldiers have successfully escorted convoys through the most treacherous areas in Iraq.

when trying to win the hearts and mind campaign and supporting counter-insurgency operations," said Staff Sgt. Warren Wilson, Operations NCO.

The battalion encourages its Soldiers to interact and gain feedback from an Iraqi perspective in an ef-

"It has certainly been rewarding to work alongside such quality personnel. I never thought I would be working on a mission with Navy personnel," said 1st Lt. Thana Kit-tisathanon, a platoon leader.

For more than 60 years, the Department of Defense has been on a path to greater integration of the military branches and greater emphasis on "jointness". The mission clearly resonates the attributes of joint doctrine that the DoD has sought. The joint expeditionary concept has enabled key leaders to mission focus on an entirely different platform with effective multi-service tactics, techniques and procedures in an asymmetrical warfare environment.

"The paradigm shift into joint expeditionary operations has been an added benefit to the Soldiers, especially with the junior NCOs making the decisions on the ground," said Capt. Edwin Rodriguez, Company Commander.



"Being exposed to an improvised explosive device strike was definitely eye opening. It kind of stuns you for the first 15 seconds. You ask yourself what the heck was that?" explained Sgt. Troy Tolmack, a squad leader. "Then the training kicks in, you start thinking about secondary explosions, the welfare of the Soldiers around you and the responsibilities at hand."

The battalion's mission covers several areas of operations in Iraq. It provides Soldiers with a unique opportunity to see the country from the ground level. Soldiers interact with local Iraqis civilians, soldiers, and police on a daily basis.

"Building rapport, listening, interacting, and helping the locals with their concerns are force multipliers

fort to maximize support for coalition forces and lessen the influence of anti-coalition forces. The results have been brought about positive results in some of the more dangerous areas.

"Their concerns indirectly impact our mission. It's simple cause and effect. A sheik's perception is valued, especially when he can influence anti-coalition force activity in his geographical area," said Capt. Juan Mora, Company Commander.

The missions take the Soldiers to nearly every Forward Operating Base in Iraq and have conducted numerous joint operations with Navy and Air Force personnel and other coalition forces along the dangerous roads.

In this type of austere environment and high mission tempo, maintenance is one of the major keys to mission success. Taking shortcuts with preventive maintenance checks and services can significantly impact missions and lives. Soldiers may find themselves in a dangerous area for an extended period of time. The burden of ensuring maintenance readiness falls on all Soldiers. There's no ifs, ands, or buts about it, some Soldiers know their Up-Armored Humvees better than their significant others. The Sidewinder Maintenance Section maintains a fleet of Humvees and armored security vehicles at an operational readiness rate of over 94%. To date, the battalion has logged more than 9,000,000 combat miles and over 1650 combat missions throughout Iraq.



"That's no easy feat when you look at the number of miles and extreme climate conditions those vehicles go through," said Capt. John Shiffer, Company Commander.

"You definitely don't want to be caught in 130 degree heat with a blown engine 200 miles from the nearest Forward Operating Base, it's just not a good feeling," said 1st Lt. Goodyear, Executive Officer. The limited resources along desolate routes are few and far between. The decision makers on the ground have a tremendous responsibility for ensuring mission success.

Resourcefulness and ingenuity has been the trademark with the battalion. New ground was broken with the Combat Operations Interactive Network (COIN) database system. A first of its kind, the idea was conceived by two NCOs in the operations section who envisioned



a new way of tracking multiple combat missions with multiple combat platforms and everything associated with the mission.

"From an analyst's point of view, the COIN system saves hundreds of man-hours after an IED strike on one of our vehicles. It's user friendly, sustains the day to day

operations within the Tactical Operations Center and everything is systematically monitored," said Staff Sgt. Dennis Hernandez.

"The Soldiers have been key to our success while conducting combat logistics patrols. Their dedication and Herculean efforts are what is making the difference every day in Iraq," said battalion commander, Lt. Colonel Andrew Rosso.

The Sidewinder Battalion will re-deploy to California in the summer of 2008. Until then, the Soldiers will continue to travel through Iraq's most dangerous zones. Their quest and perseverance to secure critical materiel for military forces throughout Iraq has proven the status quo, "No FOB too Far."



Photo courtesy of the 1-160 Infantry

THE ARMY COMBAT UNIFORMS

The Army Battle Dress Uniforms are evolving and the Wear Out date is April 2008. As the Army phases out uniforms, the Air Force is changing to the Airman Battle Uniform (ABU). This is a significant change for our Soldiers and Airmen. How do we ensure our Soldiers and Airmen are informed of these significant changes? What are the new standards and who must enforce them at the lowest level?

The Army will cease to wear the following uniform items effective 30 April 2008.

1. The Battle Dress Uniform
2. The Desert Battle Dress Uniform
3. T-Shirt, Brown
4. Boots, Combat, Leather Black
5. Woodland and Desert Camouflage Pattern Caps
6. Olive Drab Green Nametape and U.S. Army
7. Subdued Olive Green, Shoulder Sleeve Insignias and Subdued Shoulder Sleeve Insignias-Former Wartime Service
8. Black Rigger Belt
9. Belt, Web with Open-Faced Buckle
10. Jungle Boots (Green and Black)
11. The Black Knit Cap and Black Micro Fleece Knit Cap for AC, USAR and ARNG will have a wear out date of 30 Sep 09
12. The Coat, Cold Weather, Woodland Camouflage Pattern (Field Jacket) for AC, USAR, and ARNG will have a wear out date of 30 Sep 10



THE AIRMAN BATTLE UNIFORMS

The ABU was authorized for wear by all Air Force personnel as of November 2006. The ABU replaces both the temperate and hot weather BDU and the DCU. Mandatory wear date for the ABU is 1 October 2011. Phase-out date for the BDU/DCU will be the same. The wear of the ABU or BDU cannot be mandated nor prohibited during this transition period. All personnel are reminded that we are in a multi-year transition from the BDU/DCU to the ABU. Flexibility on the part of all personnel will allow continued focus on outfitting war fighters, while other distribution plan dynamics are put in place. These include initial issue of the ABU to basic military trainees as of October 2007 and limited availability in AAFES outlets. The basic uniform configuration is:

1. ABU Coat (Shirt)
2. ABU Trouser
3. ABU Patrol Cap
4. Desert Sand Colored T-Shirt
5. Desert Sand Colored Rigger Belt
6. Sage Green Boot Socks
7. Sage Green Suede Boots (Desert Tan Boots authorized)

Shade variations between the ABU coat and trousers do exist in some inventories, these are authorized for wear. Shade variations are expected to be solved within a year.

ABUs purchased by Air Force Personnel through AAFES military clothing sales stores, or issued through IEE or contract equivalent, are certified as fully compliant with all specifications. If personnel choose to use personal funds to purchase from non-AAFES suppliers, the Air Force is not responsible if the uniform is not fully compliant.



This will be significant changes for both Soldiers and Airmen in the years to come. Leaders at all levels must communicate with their Soldiers and Airmen new policies and changes in the regulations that is the standard when wearing the uniform. Non-Commissioned Officers are the first line leaders that must enforce the uniform standards. Non-Commissioned Officers are responsible for fire teams, squads and sections. Non-Commissioned Officers are responsible for conducting pre-combat checks and services on all assigned equipment and personnel.

We as senior leaders must inspect what we expect our Non-Commissioned Officers to accomplish. We must lead by example and be the standard for our Soldiers and Airmen. When we allow our NCO's not to enforce the standards there will also be a lack of discipline. Lack of discipline is an indicator of poor leadership at all levels. Our Soldiers and Airmen deserve and expect great leadership and we must not let them down.

CalPERS for CNG

Beginning Jan. 1, 2008, California National Guard members have the option of joining the CalPERS retirement plan as a "National Guard member". These voluntary members generally receive the same basic benefits as State Miscellaneous members including retirement, disability, and death benefits. Some benefit programs available to State miscellaneous members are not available to National Guard members.

In the past, National Guard members were not eligible to join CalPERS because they did not work enough time to qualify for membership – generally working half time or more over the course of a year. Senate Bill 14 (Negrete McLeod) allows National Guard members to enroll in CalPERS at their discretion. It is not mandatory. To minimize the cost to the State, National Guard members who elect to join CalPERS are required to pay both the employee and employer share of retirement contributions, currently 21.33 percent.

Guard members would receive service credit for their actual compensated service, on a per-day basis such as their one weekend per month of training, their annual two-week training period, and for any State and federal active duty, to include when ordered to Emergency State Active Duty time. Guard members may also purchase service credit for previous National Guard service (i.e. Title 10 and 32).

It is estimated that up to 20,000 National Guard members could be eligible for CalPERS membership. Senate Bill 14 program implementation is currently under development and information is limited until program implementation. Monitor the CalPERS Website for the latest information at: www.calpers.ca.gov.

Enlisted Promotions

Enlisted promotion system point submission deadline is March 31 2008, please ensure you have inputted and accepted or declined a promotion request for your Soldiers. Any questions concerning enlisted promotions contact the enlisted promotion management branch @ 916-854-3230/3298/3139, or Sgt. Maj. Blanca Trevino @916-854-3104.

Organization Aids Children

The Believe In Tomorrow National Children's Foundation provides, free of charge, hospital and retreat housing, as well as support services to children facing life-threatening illnesses and their families. It offers priority to military families. The foundation's two major hospital housing facilities are located in Baltimore near the Johns Hopkins Children's Center. Both provide extended stay options for families. The foundation also offers six retreat facilities. All are near the Atlantic Ocean or in the mountains of Maryland and North Carolina. For more information, visit the Believe In Tomorrow National Children's Foundation website at <http://www.believetomorrow.org/index.html>.

Group Helps Servicemembers Buy Homes

A nonprofit organization, the Military Housing Assistance Fund (MHAF), is offering a solution for our servicemembers who want to buy a home, but cannot afford the down payment or closing costs. Every dollar the MHAF receives is gifted to servicemembers to assist them in purchasing their own homes or to those serving in combat zones that are unable to make their monthly mortgage payments. For more information, visit the Military Housing Assistance Fund website at <http://www.militaryhousingassistancefund.org/>.

Postal Service Offers Military Discount

If you send a package to a servicemember after March 3, 2008, you can take advantage of the new flat-rate box from the Postal Service that is 50 percent larger and delivered for \$10.95 to any APO/FPO address, which is \$2 less than for domestic destinations. The new priority mail large flat-rate box (12" x 12" x 5-1/2" or 800 cubic inches) will be available in post offices nationwide beginning March 3, 2008, but customers can begin ordering them Feb. 20, 2008 at the United States Postal Service website at usps.com/supplies or by calling 800-610-8734.

Did you know?

That while serving on active duty you earn leave days and your commander can grant you a pass?

Of course you knew that, but did you know that there are regulations and instructions on how you can take/use that leave and the definitions of pass and special pass?

AR 600-8-10 and AFI 36-3003 explain that it is the commander's responsibility to manage the leave and pass program. You earn 2.5 days of leave a month and it is your responsibility to plan for the use of that leave through your chain of command. A pass is considered the following; a one or two day authorized absence normally consisting of the weekend. A special pass is considered the following; three or four days of authorized absence. Now the question weighing on everyone's mind, can I use leave in conjunction with a pass. ALARACT 241-2006 (Policy change on the use of leave in conjunction with a special pass). Yes you can use leave in conjunction with a pass. Well then here is the next question, can I take leave in conjunction with a special pass? Yes, as long as the leave begins and ends on post, at the duty location, or where the Soldier normally commutes to duty from. Again it is the commander's responsibility to manage the leave and pass program, leave is earned but it is not a right to take leave. Both leave and passes are privileges' that should be managed and not abused.

References:
DoDI 1327.6
Air Force Instruction 36-3003
Army Regulation 600-8-10
ALARACT 241-2006



photo by Staff Sgt. Ulises Villalba

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