

# GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard



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129th brings  
lifesaving skills  
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# Leadership Corner

## CNG, employers join forces

Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin



The men and women of the California National Guard are selfless patriots who put their lives on the line to protect this country and this state. They shouldn't have to put their careers on the line as well, but sadly that happens all too often.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, CNG members have mobilized more than 38,000 times in support of the global fight against terrorism. While Californians are undoubtedly grateful for their service, many may be hesitant to hire Guard members because of the possibility of future deployments that will cause prolonged absences from work.

The U.S. is experiencing troubling economic circumstances, and all categories of workers are facing difficulties finding employment. But those difficulties are magnified for National Guard veterans.

The nationwide unemployment rate was 8.5 percent in December, according to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, while in California it exceeded 11 percent. Even worse, a June 2011 analysis showed the rate of unemployment in some states was twice as high for Guard members who recently returned from overseas tours as it was for the general population. And so far, the statistics do not seem to be improving.

In June 2011, the jobless rate for all veterans in the U.S. who had served at any time since September 2001 was 13.3 percent. That was up from 12.1 percent in May 2011, and up from 11.5 percent in June 2010. Due to the draw-down of combat forces overseas, there were about 211,000 more veterans in the nationwide labor force in June 2011 than there were only one year earlier.

We know employers miss out on top-notch employees when they turn aside returning CNG members. Guardsmen bring all the best characteristics of Soldiers and Airmen to their civilian work — invaluable traits such as dedication, responsibility, loyalty, calm under pressure and a mission-oriented, no-fail mindset. As an added bo-

**CNG troops are always ready when called upon and always there for those who need us. Those are not traits that simply disappear when we take off the uniform: They are traits that employers can count on.**

**- Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin  
The Adjutant General**

nus, employers can benefit from tax credits when hiring veterans.

Fortunately we are not the only people who recognize those valuable traits. California Military Department personnel have been working with John A. Perez, the speaker of the California State Assembly, as well as several high-profile employers in a variety of industries that are eager to hire just that type of hard-working, selfless, highly motivated performer with a military background.

Speaker Perez and those employers are the first to join forces with the California Military Department in an effort to reduce unemployment in the California National Guard by 25 percent in the next 12 months.

Thanks to \$500,000 in funding from Speaker Perez's office, the new employment program based at California Military Department Headquarters in Sacramento will work individually with job-seeking CNG members to as-

sess their marketable attributes and link them with appropriate employers.

The program staff will take into account service members' career goals, background, experience and education — both civilian and military — and counsel them on how to present those outstanding attributes. Then the staff will place those prospective employees in front of hiring businesses for job interviews.

On the program's website, which will launch soon, service members will be able to upload their resume for review by Cal Guard staff, who will contact the service member directly. CNG personnel will then offer tips on improving the service member's resume and discuss options for potential employment.

Also on the website, prospective employers will be able to sign up to be part of the program's employment network. Upon submitting contact information, employers should expect to receive a call promptly to work out the details of connecting qualified Soldiers and Airmen with their businesses.

Military experience should be seen as an advantage to employers — not a detriment — and the businesses that have signed up to be part of this new employment initiative are likely only the tip of the iceberg. National Guard service produces selfless, team-oriented leaders and followers with integrity, decisiveness, punctuality and a contagious can-do attitude. We will market those traits across California until businesses seeking National Guard members are the norm rather than the exception.

CNG troops are always ready when called upon and always there for those who need us. Those are not traits that simply disappear when we take off the uniform: They are traits that employers can count on. Now CNG members can count on the California Military Department to help them find companies that appreciate and reward those values.

### 2011 Unemployment

#### UNITED STATES

**13,097,000** total unemployed in Dec. 2011  
14,393,000 in Dec 2010



Unemployment rate in Dec. 2011 **8.5%**  
9.4% in Dec 2010

#### CALIFORNIA

**2,021,200** total unemployed in Dec. 2011  
2,272,500 in Dec 2010



Unemployment rate in Dec. 2011 **11.1%**  
12.5% in Dec 2010

#### POST-9/11 VETS

**248,000** veterans unemployed in Dec. 2011  
210,000 in Dec 2010



Unemployment rate in Dec. 2011 **13.1%**  
11.7% in Dec 2010

1,000,000 workers = [human icon]  
Source: U.S. Department of Labor



Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Wang

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The Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard

## March

### Vol. 7 No. 2 2012

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### Articles:

- ★ 250-300 words for a half-page story; 600-800 words for a full-page article
- ★ Include first and last names, and verify spelling
- ★ Spell out acronyms, abbreviations and full unit designations on first reference
- ★ If there is a public affairs officer assigned to your unit, ensure he or she reviews it

### Photographs:

- ★ Highest resolution possible: 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



Photograph by Senior Airman Jessica Green

Master Sgt. Jimmy Petrolia, left, and Staff Sgt. Adam Vanhaaster, pararescuemen with the 129th Rescue Wing, provide medical attention to a 54-year-old man who suffered stroke-like symptoms Feb. 4 while aboard the ship MSC Beijing about 200 miles off the coast of California.



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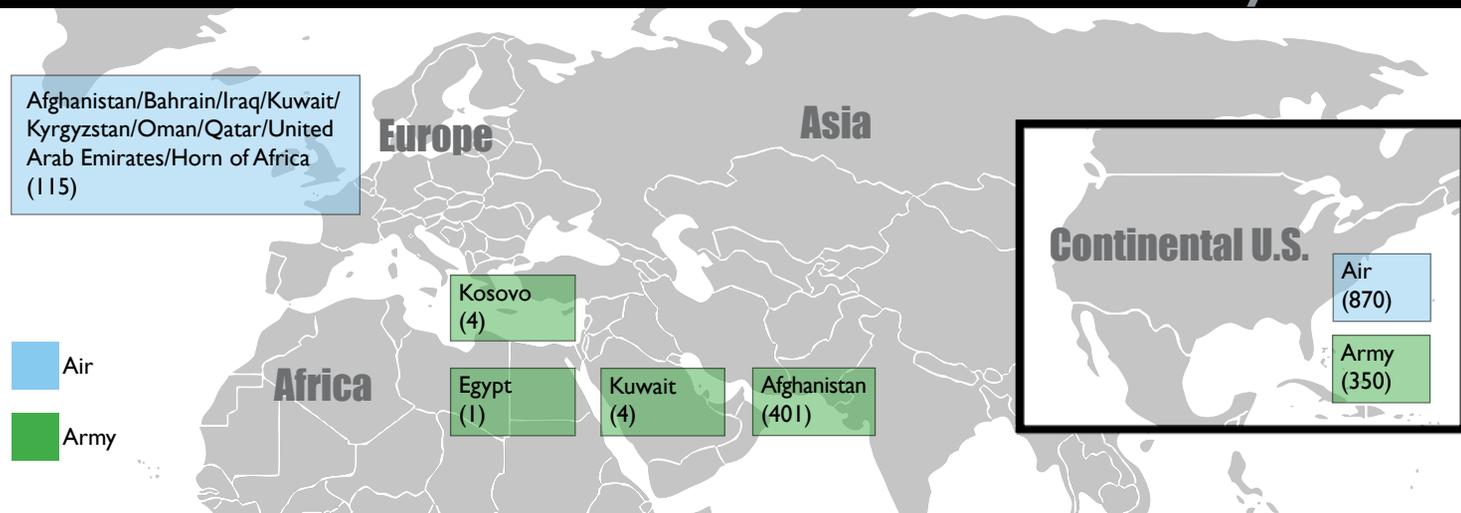
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# SMA: 'Need to hold onto' Camp Bob

Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond Chandler lauds Camp Bob on visit to 70-year-old training center

By MASTER SGT. PAUL WADE  
California Military Department Public Affairs

"The capability to train Soldiers for the fight is still here," Sgt. Maj. of the Army (SMA) Raymond F. Chandler III said during a recent visit to the CNG's Camp Roberts, which was established in 1941. "The unique capability this place displays is not available everywhere."



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Chandler passed his observations on to Rep. Sam Farr during a Feb. 17 meeting on Capitol Hill that focused on quality of life for military personnel. Farr's 17th Congressional District includes Camp Roberts, which has been the subject of negative reports in the local news that prompted Farr to invite Chandler for a visit. "I believe it is important for leaders to see the situation for themselves before making an assessment," Farr said.

The congressman has shown a passion for Camp Roberts as a state and national resource, but he's mindful that the true critics are the troops who train there, and no one is a greater champion for the troops than the SMA, who serves as the Army chief of staff's personal adviser on enlisted-related matters. The SMA planted his feet on Camp Roberts just after midnight Jan. 25.

"Our intent was two-fold: show the progress and direction we are taking to improve our facilities [and] demonstrate the momentum our people are providing in making the effort," said Brig. Gen. Keith Jones, the post commander. "

Jones' top noncommissioned officer, Command Sgt. Maj. James Norris, said he felt part of the reason Farr invited Chandler to Camp Bob, as it is often called, was to dispel negative myths about the post that had been propagated in the media. "We had an idea of what the SMA would be looking for and wanted to make sure he got the straight story," Norris said.

Chandler's tour kicked off before 8 a.m., and he was immediately shown the camp's ugly side. He was slowly driven past the eyesore of 658 timeworn barracks along an adjacent highway. Jones and Norris said the condemned, quarantined wooden structures are set to be razed this summer.

Chandler was then led into an older, non-refurbished stock barrack to see the current condition. About 70 such buildings are still being used by units during two-week annual training periods or for longer stays in preparation for deployment. The World War II-era barracks have lasted this long because of the high-quality timber used to construct the framing, but the lack of amenities inside the barracks give them the look of rundown hospital wards, complete with broken tiles, aged mattresses, rust-stained faucets and showers, and plastic curtains hung from metal tubing around each bunk for privacy.

Jones explained the jury-rigged items were installed after Sept. 11, 2001, to handle the unexpected influx of troops training for the global fight against terrorism.

Chandler was then introduced to Col. Walter Goodwater and Command Sgt. Maj. Jo-

seph Menard of the Facilities and Engineering Office, who guided Chandler through a vision of what is to come. The SMA climbed a new concrete entrance platform to a refurbished barracks building, with a wider footprint equipped with handrails. Inside, nothing seemed untouched with improvements, from the dropped ceiling with fluorescent lights to the seamless tiled floor. Chandler stood in the brightly lit room painted in a two-tone cream and tan and listened as Menard beamed about the work being done and the challenges facing engineers working on 70-year-old buildings.

About 20 guest-quarter buildings are under the hammer and nail for remodeling, including 16 that are expected to be ready by the end of 2012, when they will be able to accommodate about 768 troops. "I have stayed in these [buildings]. I've listened to what the Soldiers have said, and I've tested my own concepts," Menard said. "That is how we know what to work on. ... I love what I do, and I love building things that benefit the troops."

One room that hadn't been touched, however, is the one that most causes Soldiers to shake their heads and cringe. "The latrines are contracted separately from the troop barracks because of the scope of the work needed," Menard said. "But we have a design plan already approved."

Once the work is complete, the latrines will have higher-quality water coming out of new showers that will be complete with caddies, toilets with full stalls, hooks to support gear, and molded countertops and sink bowls. The entire room will have cleanable surfaces, he added. The SMA took a thorough look at the stark contrast between the living quarters and the bathrooms, and nodded approvingly at the plan.

The convoy then moved past the skeleton of a much-anticipated dining facility that will better serve the troops because of its proximity to the billeting area instead of the current facility's location on top of a hill.

Task Force Warrior (TFW), the CNG's pre-mobilization training assistance element, was next on the agenda. Chandler spent a few minutes passing through the TFW facility before Sgt. 1st Class Ralph Blatz, a TFW instructor, escorted the SMA to Soldiers Field, a mixed bag of training lanes built to prepare troops for a multitude of situations they may face while in harm's way.

"Most of what you see here, Sergeant Major, was done self-help-style by my team," Blatz said. "We begged and borrowed, grabbed heavy equipment and constructed a lot of these berms, walls and structures. And we did it between training or during our time off."

The impact of their training grounds, however, is far-reaching. TFW is used by 20 states in addition to California, and the CNG wants the site to become a Western Region Center of Excellence. Many troops now train at places like Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Wash., and Fort Bliss, Texas, but with the title of Center of Excellence, states west of the Mississippi River would have another option for troops who are preparing to jet off to an overseas duty station.

The SMA then wheeled over to the Re-



Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph Menard, right, points out the quality of wood used to construct the barracks on Camp Roberts in the 1940s to Sgt. Maj. of the Army Raymond Chandler III, center, and Brig. Gen. Keith Jones, the post commander for Camp Roberts.

gional Training Site-Maintenance, a National Guard Bureau-funded Institute of Excellence accredited by the Combined Arms Support Command. As if to punctuate that accolade, the grounds surrounding the complex were immaculate. Chief Warrant Officer 4 Mark Walton and Master Sgt. Cari Beetham stood at the entrance ready to show the SMA their site with pride.

The SMA then took a trip into the camp's back country, where he was shown an industrial rock-crushing site, a large sandbox where engineers can push dirt around to perfect their skills, and two key bridges. The low-water bridge had already received a cost-effective suspension-panel makeover, and the high-water version will soon receive similar improvements.

Chandler then received a quick but comprehensive brief on range and training area opportunities from Master Sgt. William Black at the range-control building. The list read like a highlight reel of high-tech gadgetry and Army proving grounds: "We have courses for infantry squad and platoon battle, urban assault, forward operating base training, simulators for calling in field artillery, laser engagement, virtual battlefields and convoys operations, barrel-rolling egress trainers for the Humvee and [mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle], and pretty much every weapons range needed except for gunnery for tanks and Bradleys," he said. "We are also the only dud-producing impact area on the West Coast, meaning if you need to shoot off high-explosive, big rounds that might become unexploded ordnance, we are the place to do it."

Jones also described the growing importance of the camp's restricted airspace, which in turn supports the camp's unmanned aerial vehicle program.

Navy Sailors, Marines and Special Forces Soldiers have all had their boots on Camp Roberts soil, and the camp's relationship with its closest military neighbor, Fort Hunter-Liggett, was a primary topic of con-

versation in regards to co-utilization.

"As we move forward, we have to look at how to maximize and be as efficient as possible with the resources we have," Chandler said. "If you have a facility that has a capability, where does that capability fit into everything that you're trying to do as an Army? Not just active component, Guard or Reserve, but as an Army. And then you have to make decisions on where best to use those resources.

"This place obviously has some very unique skill sets and capabilities, especially with the restricted airspace, which is so limited in the United States," he continued. "It is just one of those things that you need to hold onto."

Jones, Norris and London poured out as much information as they could during the four-hour whirlwind tour, and the SMA absorbed it, taking notes physically and mentally as they moved through the 43,000-acre training site.

"Part of my vision is Soldiers [will] want to come here," Jones said. "Leaders [will] want to train here. Organizations [will] want to send their teams here, because they see the value.

"I sensed the SMA left feeling that further investment in this camp would be reinforcing success, not the failure alluded to in earlier press coverage," he continued. "I think Congressman Farr did us a great favor by vectoring the SMA to us today."

Norris said he is enjoying the enthusiasm he currently sees on Camp Roberts, and he can't wait to see what tomorrow will bring. "There's an energy on post right now that is spreading like wildfire," he said. "People are seeing projects coming to fruition, and that gives them hope that more will follow. We want to make sure everyone knows all the training opportunities which are available and make plans to use as many as possible during their training days."

# 144th fighters scramble to protect Obama

By **SENIOR MASTER SGT. CHRIS DRUDGE**  
144th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

A general aviation plane carrying a load of marijuana strayed into President Barack Obama's no-fly zone over Los Angeles on Feb. 16 and was forced to land at the Long Beach Airport after being intercepted by two F-16C fighter aircraft from the 144th Fighter Wing.

"Any time the president is in the area, restricted air space is imposed, which increases the likelihood of a scramble for the F-16s at the 144th Fighter Wing," said Lt. Col. Michael Reilly, operations officer for the 144th Fighter Wing Alert Detachment at March Air Reserve Base in Riverside County.

Civilian aircraft are typically prohibited from flying within 10 miles of any plane or helicopter carrying the president.

A single-engine Cessna 182 airplane entered the president's restricted airspace at about 11 a.m. on Feb. 16 as the president was flying from Orange County to Los Angeles aboard Marine One, a helicopter provided for Obama's use. Federal officials said the Cessna was never close enough to endanger the president.

Authorities said the Cessna pilot failed to respond to repeated attempts from air traffic controllers to contact him. The plane was then quickly intercepted in the Los Angeles area by two 144th Fighter Wing aircraft based at March Air Reserve Base under the direction of the North American Aerospace Defense Com-



Photo by U.S. Air Force

File photo

mand, or NORAD.

After the Cessna touched down, federal agents and Long Beach police detained the pilot for questioning and found more than 20 pounds of marijuana on board the aircraft. The pilot was taken into custody by Long Beach police.

"It was a very satisfying feeling for the whole unit that we successfully completed the NORAD mission," Reilly said. "The hard work and professionalism of the entire detachment resulted in a flawless launch and recovery — complete mission success."

# Garden Grove Reserve center to be named for Gaffaney

Longtime Guardsman died as Reservist on Fort Hood, trying to stop shooter

A new Army Reserve Center being built in Garden Grove, Calif., will be named in honor of Capt. John Gaffaney, a longtime member of the California Army National Guard and the Army Reserve, who lost his life valiantly trying to save others from a man on a shooting rampage at Fort Hood, Texas, in 2009.

According to numerous eyewitnesses, Gaffaney threw a chair at the gunman and attempted to rush him to stop

the attack. While his courageous efforts saved the lives of others, Gaffaney, who was 51, was shot five times.

"Captain Gaffaney was a valued member of the United States Army. His dedicated service exemplified the professionalism and valor of all American Servicemembers," Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, adjutant general of the CNG, wrote in a memorandum supporting the honor for Gaffaney. "The naming of an Army Reserve center as memorial for Captain Gaffaney would be a fitting tribute to his legacy and the sacrifice he made for his country and his fellow Soldiers."

In 2010, Gaffaney was posthumously awarded the Soldier's Medal in recognition of his valiant actions during the attack, which killed 13 people and injured 19. The Soldier's Medal is the Army's highest peacetime award for Soldiers who distinguish themselves by heroism not involving conflict with the enemy.

Gaffaney enlisted in the Cal Guard in 1984 and served in various capacities as an armor officer on his way to achieving the rank of major in 1997. In 1999 he retired from military service to spend time with his family and concentrate on his civilian career as a supervisor for Adult Protective Services in San Diego County.

After the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Gaffaney was determined to serve again. He was older than 50, however, so to re-enter the Guard as a regiment officer was not possible. He regained his commission with the Army Reserve in 2006 because of his skills and degrees and was commissioned as a captain in the Medical Corps. He was on Fort Hood in 2009 preparing to deploy to Iraq.



Photo courtesy of Christine Gaffaney

**Capt. John Gaffaney joined the Army Reserve as a psychiatric nurse after many years in the CNG. He tragically died trying to stop a shooter on Fort Hood, Texas.**

# Long-distance labor coach

Airman Skypes from Afghanistan to witness daughter's birth



Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey

**Kathee and Senior Airman Alvin Fajardo communicate via Skype on Jan. 8, the day their daughter, Aliyah Madison, was born. Alvin, seen on the laptop screen, was deployed to Afghanistan, and his family was in Riverside, Calif.**

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

Labor pains began Jan. 8 in Riverside, and Mom quickly made a phone call to let the father know it was time. This was not an ordinary call across town — in fact it was not even in the next time zone. Eight time zones away, Dad was woken up at 2 a.m. to log on to his laptop and watch the birth of his baby girl.

Despite being deployed to Afghanistan, Senior Airman Alvin Fajardo of the 163rd Civil Engineering Squadron was able to meet his daughter as she came into the world. "It felt as though I was there in person throughout the entire birth," said Fajardo, who was on his first deployment. "The Skype connection was perfect, with great video even though I was 6,000 miles away."

A power production barrier maintenance technician, Fajardo was able to help deliver his baby girl, Aliyah Madison, via teleconference technology using the popular web service Skype.

"The doctor and the nurses were welcoming and really receptive to having him in the room via the Internet," said Kathee Fajardo, Alvin's wife. "As the nurses monitored, they explained all the details to Alvin as if he were physically in the delivery room, making the experience so much less stressful for me, knowing he was a part of my support."

Aliyah was born at 8:15 a.m., according to the Airman's clock. In California it was 7:45 p.m. The parents on both sides of the world were happy to be able to digitally reunite and welcome Aliyah into the world.

"It was a very positive experience for our family and one I would recommend to any deployed member," Alvin said.

Kathee was grateful to members of her husband's unit, who helped conceive of the idea to connect via Skype and helped make it happen. "I have to thank Senior Airman [Jessica] Abrego for setting up the arrangements ahead of time and being able to contact my husband's supervisors when the time came to have our baby," Kathee said. "The people in his unit are really supportive and family oriented to go the extra mile to make sure he was contacted."

Aliyah is the couple's third child, joining 12-year-old Christian and 4-year-old Aj, and hers was not the couple's first challenging delivery.

"This delivery was bittersweet because when my son Aj was born, my father had passed away days beforehand. And so to have my husband deployed this time was hard on me," Kathee said. "Having the Air Guard support our family meant a lot to us both and I want to continue to support the unit as well as the Air Guard as a whole."

# Guarding the homeland

Joint Task Force Sierra kept watchful eye on land, sea, sky and under ground

By MAJ. KIMBERLY HOLMAN and  
STAFF SGT. JESSICA INIGO  
Joint Task Force Sierra Public Affairs

February marked the end of the CNG's contribution to Operation Phalanx, a four-state effort to curb the smuggling of people, drugs, weapons and cash into and out of the U.S. on its Southwest border. From Aug. 24, 2010, through Feb. 4, 2012, about 260 CNG members supported Joint Task Force Sierra, which made an immeasurable impact in securing our nation's borders.

"This is one of those days that I had hoped would never come," Paul A. Beeson, chief patrol agent for the San Diego Sector of U.S. Border Patrol, said Jan. 30 as the Guard's mission came to a close. "Quite frankly, we have some true partners here that we are saying goodbye to and will greatly miss."

Guardsmen were assigned to seven Border Patrol stations, manned eight entry identification team sites and collected and analyzed intelligence for Homeland Security Investigations. Their efforts contributed to the seizure of 110 tons of marijuana, the arrest of 6,662 individuals trying to illegally enter the U.S., and the development of strategies for a rapid, targeted response to transnational criminal organizations.

"You performed your mission quietly, unassumingly and professionally every single day, all the while demonstrating the Customs and Border Protection core values of vigilance, integrity and service to country," Beeson said. "Your dedication, hard work and unwavering support have significantly bolstered our border security."

CNG members served as additional eyes and ears for Border Patrol, keeping a vigilant watch from strategic remote sites on the coast and along the U.S.-Mexico border and reporting any suspicious activity to patrolling agents. Guardsmen also provided a visible presence, creating an effective deterrent to attempts to enter the U.S. illegally.

CNG criminal analysts also provided crucial support to Homeland Security Investigations, such as linguistic translation, trend analysis and many other functions.

In these key support roles, the National Guard was a "force multiplier" for Border



Photo by Immigrations and Customs Enforcement

CNG and Department of Homeland Security members teamed up during Operation Phalanx from August 2010 through February 2012 to keep a vigilant watch on the U.S.-Mexico border (opposite page, top), scan the coast for illegal maritime activity (opposite, bottom), find illegal smuggling tunnels (above) and perform a variety of criminal analysis work (bottom right).

Patrol, freeing up that agency's personnel to perform law enforcement duties.

"The statistics alone clearly show that this mission was a resounding success," said Col. William T. Arruda, commander of Joint Task Force Sierra. "But beyond the numbers, we have stood side by side with our Border Patrol partners and have developed a deep bond of trust and respect."

The CNG has a long history of supporting Customs and Border Protection efforts on the Southwest border, including a similar mission dubbed Joint Task Force Vista from 2006 to 2008, as well as National Guard Counterdrug operations that date back to the early 1990s. The CNG and Customs and Border Protection have proven to mutually benefit from their integration, working together in a mission of national security.

#### COASTAL ENTRY IDENTIFICATION TEAMS

The coastal entry identification teams supported by CNG members worked like well-

oiled machines, according to Border Patrol and Guard leadership. Largely a night operation, the teams manned sites along the coast from southern San Diego County to Ventura County north of Los Angeles and from San Clemente Island, 68 nautical miles west of San Diego. While the mission officially ended Feb. 29, several entry identification teams were asked to remain in place because of their highly critical role.

Each site used night-vision equipment, including radar and handheld infrared binoculars, and many used the Long Range Advanced Scout Surveillance System, or LRS3, which can identify objects more than nine miles away. Functional in light or darkness, the LRS3 includes a video camera, a forward-looking infrared thermal sight that shows an object's heat signature, and a GPS laser range finder that calculates the distance and position of objects. These optics helped teams watch for entries into U.S. waters by motorboats known as pangas, which propel loads of drugs and are used for human trafficking. During the mis-

sion, coastal teams were responsible for the seizure of more than five tons of narcotics and the apprehension of 700 individuals.

#### CRIMINAL ANALYSTS

CNG criminal analysts assisted Immigration and Customs Enforcement Homeland Security Investigations in the department's Narcotics Office, Human Trafficking Office and San Diego Tunnel Task Force. The analysts worked in linguistic translation, case support and link analysis, statistical and trend analysis, report writing and dissemination of information. During the mission, four tunnels were discovered with the assistance of National Guardsmen, turning up 105 tons of narcotics.

#### CHULA VISTA, BROWN FIELD AND REMOTE VIDEO SURVEILLANCE

With observation locations on the southwesternmost landscape in the continental U.S., CNG troops at the Brown Field and Chula Vista Border Patrol stations kept a watchful eye on the busiest corridor for illegal border crossings in the world.

The CNG contingent at Chula Vista Station was credited with 4,700 apprehension assists and was the only contingent to spot an ultra-light aircraft drug smuggling event. Guard members there contributed to the seizure of 400 pounds of narcotics.

Brown Field Station's Guard members assisted with nearly 400 apprehensions.

Nearby, Guardsmen were assigned to monitor Remote Video Surveillance Sensors observing activity along the border fence. They continuously viewed TV monitors that displayed activity recorded by 14 camera systems throughout the westernmost seven miles of the border. Each system includes a thermal night imaging camera and a color daytime system. Furthermore, the RVSS systems include sensors that relay seismic, magnetic and infrared activity near the border fence.

#### CAMPO, BOULEVARD AND EL CAJON STATIONS

Campo, Boulevard and El Cajon stations are known for their extreme climates — a harsh, high-desert environment with the largest daily fluctuation in temperature in all of North America. Troops posted there often watched the sun rise in 35-degree

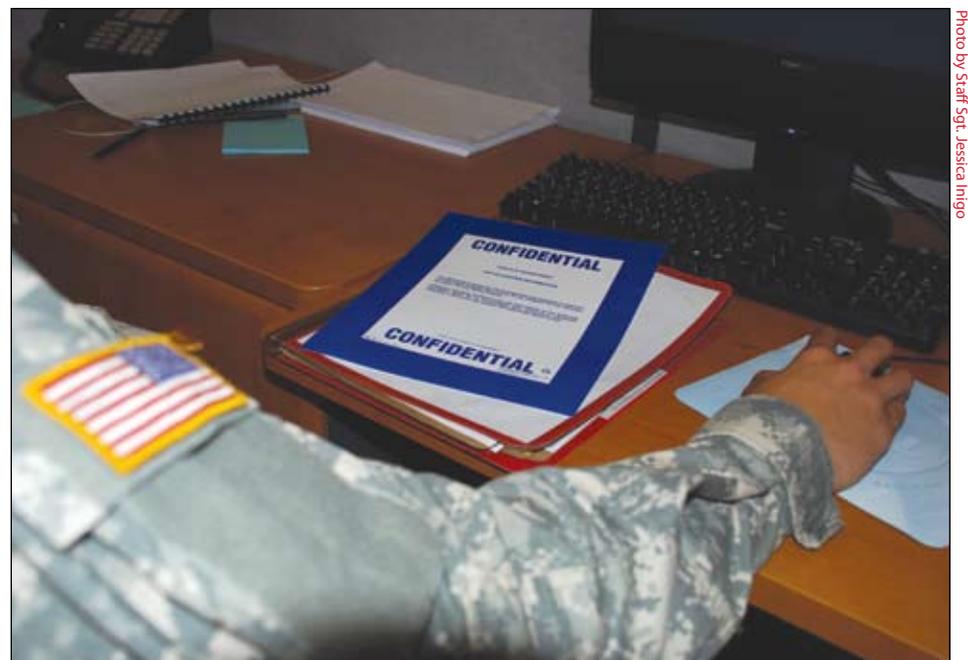


Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo

## Joint Task Force Sierra

August 2010 - February 2012

- 6,662 people apprehended
- 110 tons of drugs seized
- 4 tunnels discovered

weather, then saw temperatures soar above 100 by afternoon, making it a dangerous place to work outdoors.

In 2007, Border Patrol Agent Eric Cabral died of heat exhaustion and dehydration while pursuing a group of illegal aliens in the Boulevard area. And in 2009, Agent Robert Rosas was ambushed and assassinated by a group of illegal border-crossers in the hills of Campo Station. This ruthless murder and other events led to the reinstatement of National Guard troops along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Forces were brought to the area to gain operational control and let the world know that this needless killing would not be tolerated. Campo has successfully regained control in the area, and Border Patrol's focus has since shifted to other areas, where criminals have been forced to move their operations. Much of this success has been attributed to efforts of the National Guardsmen who supported operations there. Over the course of the mission these stations assisted with the apprehension of nearly 900 individuals and the seizure of close to 600 pounds of narcotics.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo



## ESGR summit brings job resources to JTF members

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo



**A representative from The Art Institute of California-San Diego speaks with a member of Joint Task Force Sierra on Jan. 18 about educational opportunities he could pursue after the Southwest border mission concludes.**

**By STAFF SGT. JESSICA INIGO**  
Joint Task Force Sierra Public Affairs

In an economy that does not shine too bright, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) assures Guard members that there is light.

As the 260 service members of Joint Task Force Sierra prepared to leave the Southwest border mission in February, many planned to return to being traditional National Guardsmen, working one weekend a month plus two weeks in the summer. Many did not yet know what they would do for full-time employment.

For those entering "life after mission," there are options galore, according to ESGR, and the ESGR Employment Summit on Jan. 18 brought the resources to prove it. Everything from veterans benefits to universities, unemployment benefits and employment options were showcased at the Summit, the second for Task Force members during their domestic deployment.

The newest job-hunting asset introduced at the Summit was the Hero 2 Hired employment site, [www.h2h.jobs](http://www.h2h.jobs). It includes military occupational specialty-related questionnaires that help veterans recognize their skills and traits to help them reach their full potential.

"That's an awesome site," said Staff Sgt. Mark Tsunokai, Joint Task Force Sierra's operations noncommissioned officer in charge. "There are lots of good things on there to make job searching much easier."

Spc. Ruth Flores, an entry identification team member in the Chula Vista Sector, said the new site opens up a whole world of job opportunities. "You just put in your resume and there are like 3,000 jobs available."

An Internet cafe was set up at the National City Armory near San Diego to enable service members to sign in to the website and begin their search. Sam Giovinazzi of ESGR walked the service members through the site and impressed upon them how they could use the site as a job-hunting tool.

Once service members log onto the site, jobs and opportunities will be pinpointed based on the member's skills, resume keywords, networking and interviewing skills, Giovinazzi said. "They really need to think about those four factors when looking for a job."

Along with the new site, there were face-to-face opportunities available during the Employment Summit. U.S. Customs and Border Protection set up an information booth on job opportunities in that agency; universities explained how best to use Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits; the Department of Veterans Affairs had multitudes of information on veterans needs; and website Military OneSource provided materials about programs available to troops and their families, especially during times of need.

Spc. Celestino Chora, an entry identification team member in the Chula Vista Sector, said the face time was huge for him. "To be here in person and get to talk to people and get the most updated information was very helpful," he said. "Hopefully now I'll know where to turn."

# 129th PJs to the rescue

## 129th Rescue Wing Airmen medevac offshore patient

By MAJ. ALYSON TEETER  
129th Rescue Wing Public Affairs

Air National Guardsmen from the 129th Rescue Wing performed a rescue mission 200 miles off the coast of California on Feb. 4.



For more, scan this QR code

Responding to a call from the 11th District Coast Guard at Alameda, two HH-60G Pave Hawk rescue helicopters, one MC-130P Combat Shadow tanker and a group of pararescue jumpers, or PJs, departed Moffett Federal Airfield in the Silicon Valley mid-morning and reached the cargo ship MSC Beijing by noon. The team provided medical assistance to a 54-year-old man who had suffered stroke-like symptoms and evacuated the patient to San Jose Regional Medical Center.

"This is a prime example of how the 129th and the California National Guard are ready to support civilian authorities at a moment's notice," said Col. Steven J. Butow, commander of the 129th Rescue Wing. "The Coast Guard knew they could depend on our specialized capability as one of the premier rescue units in the nation."

This rescue brings the total number of people saved by the 129th Rescue Wing in its history to 948.

# 948 LIVES SAVED



The 129 RQW rescue mission was established in 1975

## 129RQW Awards

- 1986 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
- Air Force Outstanding Unit Award 1991
- 1997 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
- Air Force Outstanding Unit Award 2000
- 2001 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor
- Outstanding ANG Flying Unit 2001  
awarded by The Air Force Association
- 2002 Air Force Outstanding Unit Award
- Air Force Outstanding Unit Award 2008
- 2009 Spaatz Trophy  
awarded by The National Guard Association of the U.S.

BELOW LEFT: Staff Sgt. Michael Wang watches for 129th Rescue Wing pararescuemen aboard the MSC Beijing to signal for a pick-up 200 miles off the California coast, where they responded to a call for medical assistance Feb. 4. BOTTOM RIGHT: Staff Sgt. Adam Vanhaaster guides the MSC Beijing patient onto an HH-60G helicopter to provide treatment.

### MC-130P COMBAT SHADOW

**Primary Function:** Air refueling for special operation forces helicopters and support for evacuation, search and humanitarian relief missions  
**Thrust:** 4,910 shaft HP in each of four engines  
**Wingspan:** 132 feet, 7 inches  
**Height/Length:** 38 feet, 6 inches/98 feet, 9 inches  
**Speed:** 289 mph (at sea level)  
**Range:** Beyond 4,000 miles  
**Ceiling:** 33,000 feet  
**Crew:** two pilots, two navigators, two loadmasters, flight engineer, radio operator

### HH-60G PAVE HAWK

**Primary Function:** Personnel recovery in hostile conditions and other military operations  
**Thrust:** 1,560-1,940 shaft HP in each of two engines  
**Rotor Diameter:** 53 feet, 7 inches  
**Height/Length:** 16 feet, 8 inches /64 feet, 8 inches  
**Speed:** 184 mph  
**Range:** 504 nautical miles  
**Ceiling:** 14,000 feet  
**Armament:** two 7.62 mm or .50-caliber machine guns  
**Crew:** two pilots, flight engineer, aerial gunner



Photos and graphic by Senior Airman Jessica Green

# An honor and a privilege

## The CNG Honor Guard program performs more than 1,000 services a month for deceased vets

By MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY  
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

California National Guard honor guard teams donned pristine white gloves, performed crisp, sharp movements and precisely folded an American flag to present to a deceased veteran's family more than 12,500 times in 2011.

Since 2000, the CNG's 12 honor guard

teams have rendered honors at 79,860 funerals and planeside services, making the CNG Honor Guard one of the most active in the country.

"It is an honor to serve those who have risked their lives in the present and in the past," said Pfc. John Gabino, a traditional Guardsman who volunteers to participate in honor guard services. "When you hear their life stories and accomplishments, it

makes you appreciate people."

The 12 CNG honor guard teams throughout the state comprise a total of 80 full-time service members as well as about 220 traditional part-time Guard members who volunteer to conduct military funerals for National Guard, Reserve and active duty veterans.

"The people who do what we do have a passion for taking care of the veterans," said Sgt. Maj. Daniel DeGeorge, noncommissioned officer (NCO) in charge of the CNG Honor Guard. "It consumes you, and all you want to do is give more attention to detail at every service."

"We have Soldiers who will go two weeks without a day off, knowing there's a veteran that needs to be laid to rest," he added.

The clacking heels of honor guard members march in to military funerals every day. More than 136,300 military funerals were conducted nationwide by National Guard honor guard details in 2011, accounting for more than half of the 220,000-plus military funerals held each year, according to the Pentagon.

"We meet history on a daily basis," DeGeorge said. "One of my details for a funeral was on Pearl Harbor Day back when I first started with the Honor Guard, and there standing next to me, asking me questions, was a Pearl Harbor survivor."

Every funeral provides a unique opportunity to feel you are giving back to someone who served our country, DeGeorge said.

"The Honor Guard has also [had] the honor of serving during ceremonies for repatriated remains and, most recently, a 1950s Soldier missing in action during the Korean War," added Sgt. Jesus Rojas, a full-time Honor Guard member in San Diego.

"I feel honored to serve and pay tribute to veterans," he continued. "Satisfaction comes from knowing you honored a veteran and a military family."

CNG honor guard teams continually train on drill movements, firing of rifles and representing the California National Guard to make sure each service is nearly flawless.

The number of funerals performed by CNG honor guards has increased by more than 500 each of the past seven years, in part because many World War II veterans have died, DeGeorge said. Honor guards are also participating in more funerals for Korean War and Vietnam War veterans.

Increased awareness of the military services available to veterans is another contributing factor.

"The more we educate the public about what's available to their loved ones who served their country, the more people are making those phone calls for their entitlements," said DeGeorge, who has been with the CNG Veterans Honors Program since its founding in 2000. "It is free to every veteran who was discharged under circumstances other than dishonorable."

For more, see the Honor Guard web site, [www.calguard.ca.gov/g1/Pages/vhp.aspx](http://www.calguard.ca.gov/g1/Pages/vhp.aspx).



A CNG honor guard performs a service for Spc. Sean Walsh on Dec. 3 at Oak Hill Funeral Home in San Jose. Walsh was killed by indirect fire Nov. 16 while serving in Afghanistan with the CNG's 870th Military Police Company.

# OH-58 Kiowa flies off into the sunset

Airframe served many purposes overseas and at home during 42 years in operation for Army

By SKIP ROBINSON

Vertical/Vertical 911 Magazine

Since its first delivery in May 1969, the OH-58 Kiowa helicopter has been faithfully serving the U.S. Army and Army National Guard. But now, as with all good things, the time has come to say goodbye, as the OH-58 nears retirement.

In its 42 years of operation, the highlights of the OH-58 have included serving in the Vietnam War and in Europe during the Cold War. Although mostly tasked as a scout and reconnaissance platform, the Kiowa was also used in light utility and transport missions.

In the early 1990s, the OH-58 was recruited for a very different mission: participation in the National Guard's Counterdrug Program through the Army National Guard's Reconnaissance and Aerial Interdiction Detachments (RAID). Team Eagle is the name given to CNG RAID units since a service-wide restructuring in 2005 led to an expanded mission profile that includes such security and support roles as counter-terrorism. Conducted in close cooperation with civilian law enforcement agencies, the Counterdrug mission of the CNG's Team Eagle highlights the versatility of the venerable OH-58 at the twilight of its career.

## THE AIRCRAFT

In 1988, Congress mandated that the National Guard participate in drug eradication within the U.S., which would enable the service to assist federal, state and local law enforcement agencies with aircraft and other operational assets. In response the Army National Guard created the RAID program, which by the end of 1994 had 76 modified Kiowas available in 27 states to conduct aerial Counterdrug reconnaissance and interdiction missions. With the ongoing success of RAID, the program has grown to include as many as 144 Kiowas in 37 states and territories.

The Kiowas assigned to RAID were modified with a 420-shaft-horsepower Allison/Rolls-Royce T-63-A-720 turbine engine, replacing the original 317-s.h.p. T-63-A-700 version. With this power increase, the aircraft was designated the OH-58+. System upgrades included a forward-looking infrared (FLIR) turret and law-enforcement-compatible radios. In all, three versions of the OH-58+ have been used by RAID units such as Team Eagle over the years.

## THE MISSION

One of the main missions for the CNG's Team Eagle units is to serve as a flying platform for local, state and federal drug enforcement agents. As one Team Eagle pilot explained, "Once we are requested, we meet at a predetermined location or local airport and start flying missions for the requesting agency. We try to provide the support they need, as long as it's safe for our crews, agents and aircraft."

This pilot explained that the law enforcement agents who fly with Team Eagle are thoroughly briefed to become aerial observers. "We brief them in helicopter operations, flight characteristics, familiarization on the cockpit and radios, FLIR and other mission equipment. We train the agent on emergency egress and emergency procedures. We'll take the agent out on a familiarization flight to teach about aerial hazards, such as wires, low-level concerns, distances from obstacles, et cetera."

He then discussed the mission concerns each pilot faces: "Generally we operate between 2,000 feet and 7,000 feet altitude and fly heavy at the start of the mission. We fly throughout the summer, so performance is at a premium. Fuel loads are from two to 2 1/2 hours, but this might have to be adjusted because of our weight and hot-heavy conditions. ... Because of the limited power, pilots need to be aware of where they are at all times and not allow themselves to get into a low-speed, low-altitude flight profile without a way out. Power management is very important."

During the marijuana harvesting season, typically mid-April to early October, Team Eagle can be anywhere in California, from San Diego County in the south to the "Emerald Triangle" of Humboldt, Trinity and Mendocino counties in the north. As another Team Eagle pilot explained, "We try to be as flexible as possible so we can support any request



Photo by Skip Robinson



Photo by Warrant Officer 1 Jon Gulbord



Photo by 2nd Lt. Jan Bender

**TOP:** Two OH-58 Kiowa crews with the CNG's Joint Task Force Domestic Support-Counterdrug fly over Northern California in July 2011 during the multi-agency Operation Full Court Press. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Students at Hillcrest Elementary School in Monterey Park flock to an OH-58 Kiowa helicopter landed by Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Yarbrough during an anti-drug presentation in October 2009 by members of the Counterdrug Task Force's Drug Demand Reduction Team. **ABOVE LEFT:** A crew with 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, flies a Kiowa over Southern California in August 2010.

on short notice. The summer months can get very hectic, but we do the best we can with the assets we have."

According to this pilot, Team Eagle lets "the local agencies take the lead, since they are familiar with the terrain and conditions of the operational area. We always fly with at least one agent in the back of the helicopter, but prefer two. ... They will observe and mark locations of interest with GPS coordinates."

The agents are generally very experienced in anti-drug operations and try to "think like a grower" in identifying likely locations for marijuana grow sites. "The agents have been doing this for a long time and know most of the growers' tricks and how to counter them," the pilot said. "They also know how and where marijuana grows best, angle of light, amount of sun needed, et cetera. With this information, you can figure out where the larger marijuana grows are most of the time."

The local, state and federal agents involved in Counterdrug operations are primarily interested in large outdoor grow sites, especially those on public lands such as state and national forests. Said one pilot, "I've seen grows on 45-degree sloping terrain with a 1,000-foot drop-off around it, and miles from any roads. We honestly don't know how the growers are able to get into some of these places, much less how they haul in all the equipment and growing supplies. ... I've seen grows right next to public roads, on hillsides next to populated areas and also places I can't discuss."

## FULL COURT PRESS

A multi-agency operation in July 2011, Full Court Press, highlighted the collaborative efforts Team Eagle engages in. It took place in Mendocino County and surrounding counties over three weeks of intense operations.

With the support of Team Eagle OH-58+ helicopters and crews, Operation Full Court Press resulted in the seizure of 632,058 marijuana plants and 1,986 pounds of processed marijuana as well as the arrest of 132 individuals. Additionally more than 51,404 pounds of trash, 40 miles of irrigation line, 5,459 pounds of fertilizer and 149 pounds of pesticides were removed from grow sites on public lands. It was an impressive victory for all involved, and ably demonstrated the continued value of the aging Kiowa OH-58.

Now in the twilight of its Army National Guard career, the Kiowa is being replaced with the Eurocopter UH-72A Lakota, which will be used for a variety of security and support missions. But whatever the future holds, it won't erase the history of the OH-58, which has served Guard units well and shown its versatility across a broad spectrum of operations.

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**TOP:** About 170 Soldiers of the California National Guard's 2668th Transportation Company, based in Oroville, prepare to leave Sacramento on Jan. 30 for pre-mobilization training at Fort Bliss, Texas. Upon completing their training, the 2668th Soldiers will deploy to Afghanistan, where they will conduct convoy operations and convoy security and train Afghan National Army forces. **Photo by Master Sgt. David J. Loeffler**

**ABOVE:** Cal Guard Soldiers salute the remains of Marine Cpl. Christopher G. Singer, 23, of Temecula, Calif., as he is brought home to California at the CNG's Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos on Jan. 31. Singer died Jan. 21 while conducting combat operations in Helmand province, Afghanistan. Several hundred people paid their respects at JFTB-Los Alamitos, including local police officers, firefighters and numerous veteran-support organizations. **Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey**

**RIGHT:** Chief Warrant Officer 4 Thomas Murphy, second from left, accepts The Legion of Merit award, recognizing his exceptionally meritorious service during 42 years in the military, most recently with Company A, 1st Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment (Assault). Murphy's career was exemplified by selfless service, devotion to duty and mentorship of Soldiers and officers, his citation states. He was joined at the ceremony by Col. Pete Seitz, left, Lt. Col. Mark Kampa and 1st Sgt. Jaime Velasquez. **Photo courtesy of Chief Warrant Officer 4 Thomas Murphy**



# At a Glance



**LEFT:** CNG Soldiers and Airmen prepare to hold a massive American flag during the national anthem sung by longtime California resident Huey Lewis prior to the San Francisco 49ers vs. New Orleans Saints playoff game Jan. 14 in San Francisco. **Photo by Brandon Honig**  
**ABOVE:** CNG members crowd the on-field stage during Sean Kingston's halftime performance Jan. 14. **Photo by 1st Lt. Will Martin**



**ABOVE and LEFT:** Soldiers of the California National Guard's 140th Chemical Company prepare to depart Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos for Camp Shelby Miss., where they will train for a yearlong deployment to Kuwait. Nearly 150 members of the 140th Chemical Company left Los Alamitos on Feb. 16. They will conduct security operations on U.S. military installations during their overseas mission. **Photos by Staff Sgt. (CA) Gene Arias**



**TOP:** Spc. Ali Keshvardoost of the CNG's 640th Interpreter Platoon, 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, enjoys a hug from his son, Armin, daughter, Atousa, and wife, Shirin, at Balboa Naval Hospital in San Diego after receiving his Purple Heart from Brig. Gen. Terry Ferrell, commander of the National Training Center on Fort Irwin, Calif. Keshvardoost was wounded Sept. 25 when an improvised explosive device struck his patrol in Afghanistan, where he was serving as a Dari and Farsi interpreter for the 179th Infantry Regiment of the Oklahoma National Guard. **Photo courtesy of the Keshvardoost family**  
**ABOVE:** Tamara Eugene performs a praise dance while Capt. Sonya Moore of the California National Guard's 349th Quartermaster Company sings the spiritual "Mary Did You Know?" in celebration of African American/Black History Month at California Military Department Headquarters in Sacramento on Feb. 22. The theme for the month was "Black Women in American Culture and History." **Photo by Tech. Sgt. Joseph Prouse**

# Rolling Thunder tests emergency transport

115th RSG simulated a massive earthquake that knocked out roads and other infrastructure

By MASTER SGT. PAUL WADE

California Military Department Public Affairs

"If it happens, it could affect this entire area along here," said Timothy Funk, first sergeant for Detachment 1, 2632nd Transportation Company, pointing at a map of the San Francisco Bay Area. "Right along the Hayward Fault line or any of the others we have, if key bridges or roads are damaged, our forces could be cut off from each other. That is why we have planned alternate routes."

The mention of fault lines sends shivers through those who have lived near the City by the Bay and remember the 6.9-magnitude earthquake that shook Candlestick Park during the 1989 World Series, collapsed part of the Bay Bridge, caused \$10 billion in damage and killed 63 people. Others may remember the 5.1-magnitude quake in Napa in 2001 or the pair of quakes that shook Berkeley last October. It has happened many times before, and it will happen again. Seismologists say "the big one" could be right around the corner, and when it hits, the quake will likely lay waste to important infrastructure.

The CNG's 115th Regional Support Group (RSG), headquartered in Roseville, decided not to wait for the next tremor; the unit simulated the quake a minute after midnight Jan. 6 during an Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise (EDRE) that tested its transportation corps.

"Rolling Thunder is in effect," said Col. Rene Horton, the group commander, as she called each of her company and battalion commanders. "A major earthquake has hit the Bay Area. This could be a tragic event, but we have been training for this and we have a job to do. Roll out and do great things. Do you understand your orders, commander?"

"Yes ma'am," came the reply each time.

"Then execute."

This set the wheels in motion on more than 60 vehicles and 215 citizen-Soldiers. RSG units stretching 300 miles from Atascadero in the south to Roseville in the north scrambled into their trucks and drove to intermediate staging bases, which simulated armories that house Soldiers trained in security, police work and responding to civil disturbance. In the case of an actual emergency, the RSG units would have loaded up to 552 troops and brought them into action to stabilize a situation or lend a helping hand.

Some RSG vehicles carry vital materials such as rations, medical and life-support supplies, and tools and recovery equipment to keep the hauling machines moving.

"Right now we are focusing on getting our teams where they are supposed to be," said Lt. Col. Kurt Velte of the 115th RSG, who created this first-ever exercise that solely targeted wheeled assets. "Getting the infantry and military police units is just notional for now. ... We want to stress our systems and identify those bumps in the road first."

California has more than 2.3 million miles of paved roads, which if uprooted and torn asunder, could create havoc for emergency responders. That is why each of the five RSG teams was given two or three routes to get to their objectives. But they had to get out of the armory gate first.

"One of the items we have been stressing is a packing list. Our troops need to have a box or bag at home that contains things like 30 days of meds, eight days of clothes, stuff they will need in an emergency that they can grab and go," Velte said. "We want to be responding to this alert in five to six hours."

Velte said he had been planning the exercise for six months. "We always think we are ready, and then it becomes the 'should have, could have' game. The National Guard's motto is 'Always Ready, Always There.' But are we really?"

As the clock ticked close to 2 a.m., Horton expressed concern: "Every minute we delay, the life of a citizen of California is at stake. Our timely response is critical.



Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Wade

**Staff Sgt. David Ingles, right, and Staff Sgt. Cheldan Mairel of the Stockton-based 118th Maintenance Company discuss recovery operations using a Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck wrecker at an intermediate staging base at Sierra College in Rocklin on Jan. 6 during the 115th Regional Support Group's Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercise. Sixty vehicles and 217 Soldiers were involved in the exercise, moving wheeled assets around the state in response to an earthquake scenario.**

"We aren't in the 'run' phase of this exercise just yet," she noted. "We need to add our artificial stressors, while keeping safety at the highest priority. All of these are important so we can spot our shortfalls."

A few minutes later, troops began to walk into armories with sleep still in their eyes to receive a mission brief. In Meadowview a full-time student, a security guard, a commercial truck driver and a corrections officer put their civilian lives on hold, donned their Army combat uniforms and got to work servicing their vehicles.

"This is the traditional role of the National Guard. This is why we exist, and this is why we are always going to be relevant," said Sgt. 1st Class Victor Maurizzio of Detachment 1, 2632nd Transportation Company. "This exercise can only strengthen our capabilities. What we want to do today is fail. We want to find those deficiencies and create a plan to never have them happen again."

Sgt. 1st Class Brian Breaker, convoy commander in Roseville, said the unit has learned from experience. "These are our fellow citizens, and they need to be treated like friends and family," he said as he sent his troops out. "We could even have our own troops affected by these disasters."

When the Soldiers approached their vehicles, it was like seeing an old friend. And it was the operator's job to revive that friend, which may have been sitting in the motor pool for a month without being started. Their eyes scanned dispatch books, heads poked under hoods, cold hands removed dipsticks and churned over cold engines.

Teams from the 349th and 1040th Quartermaster companies, 118th Maintenance Company, 1113th Transportation Company, 340th Brigade Support Battalion and 297th Area Support Medical Company were all doing the same preparations — and all under the watchful eyes of evaluators from outside the RSG. Experts from the CNG's Task Force Warrior, 223rd Regional Training Institute and field maintenance shops were positioned throughout the exercise areas to observe, note and report their findings.

"We created some training lanes for our evaluators to check the level of proficiency," said Maj. Michael Faatz of the California Military Department Surface Maintenance Office in Sacramento. "They will look at licenses, tire changing abili-

ties, wrecker and recovery skills and the continuity of each team's standard operating procedures."

In the early morning hours, as dawn was breaking, the RSG leadership (including Col. Keith Tresh, the incoming commander, who will replace Horton as she becomes the deputy commander at California's U.S. Property and Fiscal Office) gathered once more in the emergency operations center. Reports were coming in, and real-time traffic video was fed onto a heads-up display along with satellite weather, road conditions and breaking news. Dust storms were spotted at one of the staging bases.

Horton headed to a staging base in the Sierra College parking lot in Rocklin and arrived in time to see several units drive in and pull security. Simultaneously, teams were arriving at staging bases in Benicia, Kettleman City and Ripon. Horton greeted her troops with a smile, excited to take a concept from paper and put it to the test. "Our EDRE ties directly into [the adjutant general's] No. 1 priority, and that is defense support to civil authorities," she said. "Our Soldiers love this. It keeps them sharp. We will make adjustments as needed and continue to improve from here."

Maurizzio said the exercise went very smoothly in the Meadowview area, especially considering all the moving parts, and Horton received similarly successful reports from all the other teams.

"The troops appeared sharp, motivated. It looks like we have very few bugs to iron out because of the great preparation done by the teams," said Command Sgt. Maj. Randall Cady, the RSG's top enlisted Soldier, whose primary concern was the safety, training and well-being of the troops in the exercise. "This training is so crucial. We need a plan that can be passed on because we are constantly dealing with rotating crews."

Velte added that natural disasters don't pay attention to holidays, and staging an exercise like the EDRE the first weekend in January keeps the citizen-Soldiers of California ready, valued and vigilant. "There was a learning curve here, but we just validated our troop-lift capability," he said. "Our objective was to be able to move over 500 rapid-response-force Soldiers within 12 hours of notification. Even with our own glitches, we were positioned to accomplish this in less than 10 hours."

# Youth academies yield large net benefits, study shows

Youth ChalleNGe programs generate \$2.66 in social benefits for every \$1 spent, analysis indicates

The National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program strongly affects participants' educational achievement, employment and earnings, and it may reduce criminal activity, according to a study released Feb. 28 by an independent, nonprofit, nonpartisan research group. The analysis showed that every \$1 spent on Youth ChalleNGe programs generates \$2.66 in social benefits.

The California National Guard is home to two ChalleNGe academies: Grizzly Youth Academy on Camp San Luis Obispo and Sunburst Youth Academy on Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamos.

The study, conducted by MDRC and published by the Rand Corp., looked at 10 Youth ChalleNGe sites chosen randomly from the 33 institutions nationwide. The academies provide an intensive residential and mentoring program for high school dropouts and 16- to 18-year-olds who are at risk of dropping out. Decades of research show that high school dropouts are more

likely to commit crimes, abuse drugs and alcohol, have children out of wedlock, earn low wages, be unemployed or underemployed, and suffer poor health, according to the study authors.

Their analysis showed that 36 months after the beginning of the study, admission to the program had increased GED attainment by 22 percentage points, traditional high school degree attainment by 4 percentage points, attendance to some college by 16 percentage points, vocational training and employment by 7 percentage points, and annual earnings by 20 percent. There was also evidence that participation in the ChalleNGe program lowered criminal activity nine months and 21 months after the study began, but that effect was no longer apparent after 36 months.

The researchers estimated the present discounted value of ChalleNGe academies' operating costs to be \$11,633 per student. (The discount rate assumes people value current

consumption over future consumption.) They also estimated that the time spent on ChalleNGe activities by cadets, non-admitted applicants and mentors should be valued at \$2,058 per admitted cadet.

On the other hand, cadets' lifetime earnings were estimated to increase by \$38,654 each, even after subtracting the cost of their post-ChalleNGe-academy education. Additionally, ChalleNGe program effects on social welfare dependency and crime were estimated to generate benefits valued at \$1,334 per admittee.

With all factors considered, MDRC determined that the present discounted value of operating and opportunity costs associated with ChalleNGe total \$15,436 per cadet, while the present discounted value of the program's social benefits total \$40,985. For each admitted cadet, therefore, the program generates net benefits of \$25,549.

The investigators noted that because high-

er educational attainment yields benefits to individuals and society that are not fully captured by the study methodology, it is likely that these benefit estimates understate the social return on investment of the ChalleNGe program.

"These cost-benefit comparisons suggest that continued operation of existing ChalleNGe sites will yield substantial net benefits, albeit largely in the form of private benefits to program participants from higher earnings rather than benefits to the public sector and other members of society," the study authors concluded. "The estimated return on investment in the ChalleNGe program is considerably higher than that estimated for other rigorously evaluated social programs, such as Job Corps, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and state welfare-to-work programs that seek to alter the life course of disadvantaged youth and young adults."

For the full report, visit [www.rand.org](http://www.rand.org).

## CNG, rugby: A winning combination

By **TECH. SGT. JOSEPH PROUSE**  
California Military Department Public Affairs

Sacramento Area Youth Rugby hosts an annual kick-off tournament in Northern California boasting one of the largest turnouts in the United States. This year more than 130 teams competed in the two-day event, and coordinators estimated more than 5,000 people were spread throughout the playing fields, stadium and vendor booths at Cordova High School in Rancho Cordova.

Much like the military, rugby uses a language all its own, with words like try, pill, maul and scrum. When viewed closer, the similarities between the two grow even stronger.

"The National Guard and rugby are great partners," said Lt. Col. Brian Anderson, executive officer for CNG Youth and Community Programs, who spent time at the event engaging players and spectators. "Rugby is a sport about teamwork. It's physically and mentally tough, and it requires young athletes to make split-second decisions. That concept and those values are things that we in the military value and cherish."

"Those are skills that you just can't teach overnight," he continued, "so learning to work with the community and with rugby programs really helps us work with a group of people that foster those kinds of values and play a sport that really develops those skills."

For the third year in a row, the California National Guard played a major role in the sponsorship of the kick-off tournament, which turned out to be a great opportunity to meet the athletes and get to know a growing sport that cultivates sportsmanship and intense physicality in



**Sgt. 1st Class Mark Hovey talks with a young rugby player Jan. 17 in Rancho Cordova during the annual kick-off tournament hosted by Sacramento Area Youth Rugby and sponsored by the CNG.**

its participants.

The California National Guard provided a color guard for the event, and Sgt. Eric Seiler of the CNG's 59th Army Band sang the national anthem before the championship game. The CNG also had a visible presence throughout the event.

"We came out here to support them with referee jerseys that have our logo and our name brand on there," Anderson said. "We provide some of the safety equipment, specifically the pads [on the goalposts], and each team gets a kit with the National Guard logo on their water bottles and supplies that the coaches can take back to their schools."

Sacramento Valley Rugby Foundation Chairman Roger Clauge said the CNG's sponsorship is very important for the event. "It's an expensive tournament to put on. ... We've got a couple of other sponsors, and being able to get the sponsorship means that we can run the world's largest youth rugby tournament."

In the next 18 months, the Foundation plans to break ground on a 180-acre soccer and rugby complex on the former site of Mather Air Force Base near Sacramento, Clauge added.

## OMI Family Poetry Night exceeds all expectations

Oakland Military Institute cadets impress with creativity, leadership

Overwhelmed by the number of students volunteering to participate, the Oakland Military Institute (OMI) extended its inaugural Family Poetry Night beyond the planned 90-minute timeframe for the Jan. 12 event, which generated tremendous feedback and established a new annual tradition.

The event was organized by 10th grade English teacher Natalie Garcia and 8th grade English teacher Julia Ferreira, whose classes had recently completed poetry units. "We decided to have the students do [Family Poetry Night] as the end of all the hard work they put into their poems and independent studies — a culmination and celebration of their great work," Ferreira said.

Each cadet learned about a variety of po-



**Cierra Cryer, an 8th grade student at The Oakland Military Institute (OMI), reads an original poem Jan. 12 during OMI's first annual Family Poetry Night, which inspired 67 cadets to share their work. Cryer's father, Daryl Cryer, retired in September from the California Army National Guard as a sergeant first class.**

etry forms and then was required to write a poem about themselves, their life experiences or their families. A couple of cadets wrote about how their lives had changed since enrolling at OMI, Ferreira said.

A college preparatory academy that far exceeds the state average with more than 90 percent of graduates bound for college, OMI offers a positive learning environment that is enhanced by training in leadership, teamwork and the structured discipline of the military.

"We offer lot of opportunities for creative expression for our students — talent shows, art classes, everything we do," Ferreira said. "Some schools don't do that."

Family Poetry Night kicked off with a reading from local poet Barbara Jane Reyes and concluded with a group activity in which each student wrote a short poem with their family members who were in attendance. The family-written poems were then combined into a single poem, "Our Family" and published on the OMI website, [www.oakmil.org](http://www.oakmil.org).

Students in Ferreira's class were "strongly encouraged" to read their original work for the group on Poetry Night, while participation was "completely voluntary" for students in Garcia's class, Ferreira said. The teachers were therefore pleasantly surprised when 67 cadets — including five who were not in either Ferreira or Garcia's class — got up on stage to read.

Ferreira tied the students' willingness to participate to OMI's mission of encouraging leadership.

"If students have enough confidence, they want to be active and get involved," she said. "This was a chance to get up and be a leader and share your poem. ... We create leaders here."

# AIRMEN OF THE YEAR

## Ceremony honors top enlisted members

By MAJ. KIMBERLY HOLMAN  
146th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

This year's Outstanding Airman of the Year Awards Banquet was an elegant occasion hosted by the 146th Airlift Wing, whose roots and history have earned it the nickname the "Hollywood Guard." So it was appropriate that the event took place in the hills of Hollywood at the Sheraton Universal in Universal City on Jan. 21.

Themed for a night at the Academy Awards, guests were greeted at the red carpet entrance by "paparazzi" snapping their photos next to oversized golden Oscar-like statues in the shape of the National Guard Minuteman.

Despite the glamorous entrance, the tables inside were bedecked with noisemakers and horns to rival a New Year's Eve celebration, and as soon as the awards began, the room was on its feet to congratulate the nominees, as admirers became as boisterous as ever, even in their formal attire.

"We Airmen like to get rowdy," said Lt. Col. Mike Beyer, chaplain for the 162nd Combat Communications Group, which took home three of the four awards that night. "But it's only appropriate that we have such great fun recognizing their achievements. These are the best of the best, and their excellence excites and inspires us all."

Photo by Senior Airman Nicholas Carzis



Tech. Sgt. Joshua Baker of the 146th Airlift Wing Honor Guard and other California National Guard Airmen participate in a ceremony honoring service members who are missing in action or prisoners of war during the Outstanding Airman of the Year Awards Banquet in Universal City on Jan. 22. The CNG's four wings and one Air group each nominated enlisted members who vied for top honors in four Airmen of the Year categories



## First Sergeant of the Year

Master Sgt. Ronald T. Hazelton Jr., who was born in Visalia, enlisted in the California Air National Guard on Sept. 2, 1999, and was assigned to the 261st Combat Communications Squadron, 162nd Combat Communications Group. After basic training, he attended Vehicle Maintenance Technical School and graduated in the top 5 percent of his inter-service mechanic course. Hazelton was also recognized as an Airman leader, serving as a "rope," and had the most improved fitness results in his class.

### Master Sergeant Ronald T. Hazelton Jr.

First Sergeant  
261st Combat  
Communications Squadron

Upon returning to the 261st, he became involved with the base honor guard and continued in that role until late 2003. Following the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, Hazelton answered the call for volunteers to provide security at local airports, serving at the Burbank Airport for seven months.

In August 2003, Hazelton completed the Airman Leadership School course, and was promoted to staff sergeant in October 2003. In 2004, he became the unit fitness program manager, and he continued as an alternate until 2007. Hazelton became a full-time technician in 2005 and later completed his seven-skill-level training as a vehicle and vehicular equipment maintenance craftsman. He was promoted to technical sergeant on March 1, 2006, and later that year he attended the Vehicle Management and Analysis Apprentice Course, graduating with a 98 percent. In April 2008, he was appointed vehicle maintenance superintendent.

In July 2008, Hazelton fought California wildfires during Operation Lightning Strike in Northern California. He prepared vehicles with extremely short notice to support California's firefighting operations, and he worked 17 days managing a 20-person firefighting hand crew. Hazelton was promoted to master sergeant in December 2008. In March 2009, he accepted the additional duty of assuming the first sergeant position and attended the first sergeant course. He was appointed first sergeant for the 261st in May 2009. In February 2010, Hazelton graduated from the First Sergeant Academy.

In his free time, Hazelton volunteers at Limerick Elementary School and Laurence Middle School, working with children and exposing them to Air Force values. He also works with Read Across America, reading to children and speaking with them about life experiences and decisions. Hazelton is also an executive officer for the California Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States and currently serves as the organization's secretary. He is also an active member of the Air Force Sergeants Association and is pursuing an associate of arts degree from the Community College of the Air Force.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Alex Koenig



First Sgt. Ronald Hazelton (center right) of the 162nd Combat Communications Group accepts the award for the top first sergeant in the California Air National Guard (CANG). He is accompanied on stage by Chief Master Sgt. Debra Fordyce (far left), the 162nd's top enlisted member; Command Chief Master Sgt. Christopher Muncy, the top enlisted member of the Air National Guard; and Brig. Gen. James Witham, commander of the CANG.



## Senior NCO of the Year

Master Sgt. Peter J. Kelley is a top-notch senior noncommissioned officer who consistently displays superior leadership as a munitions system superintendent for the 163rd Maintenance Group.

Born in Maine, Kelley enlisted in the Air Force in September 1980, graduating with honors from basic military training. He attended technical training school at Lowry Air Force Base, Colo., where he was recognized as an aircraft armament systems honor graduate, then was assigned to the 35th Tactical Fighter Wing at George Air Force Base, Calif.

While at George AFB, Kelley was promoted below the zone, achieving the rank of staff sergeant in 36 months, surpassing the Air Force standard of 48 months. During that same time period, Kelley completed a Community College of the Air Force degree in aircraft armament technology, an associate's degree in liberal arts from Victor

Valley College in Victorville, Calif., and a bachelor's degree in aviation management from Southern Illinois University.

Kelley separated from the Air Force in September 1984 and accepted a position with General Dynamics' Convair Division in San Diego, where he worked through 1993 as an operations supervisor and then a production supervisor for the Tomahawk Cruise Missile, MD-11, DC-10 and Advance Missile programs.

In May 1999, Kelley earned his master teaching credential from Chapman University in Orange, Calif., and moved to Maine to work as a 5th grade teacher.

In 2000, Kelley enlisted in the Maine Air National Guard. He retrained as a personnel systems specialist and was mobilized after Sept. 11, 2001. In April 2004, Kelley became a full-time munitions specialist technician for Maine's 101st Air Refueling Wing, and later that year he was selected as a life support and survival equipment technician for the wing.

In July 2006, Kelley moved to San Diego and transferred to the CNG's 163rd Reconnaissance Wing as a full-time personnel specialist with the Military Personnel Flight. In February 2007, Kelley was reassigned to the 163rd Aircraft Maintenance Squadron as the munitions accountable systems officer and noncommissioned officer of the munitions flight.

Kelley recently completed the Electronics Principles Course at Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., as a distinguished graduate and is currently attending MQ-1 Avionic Technical School at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. He previously earned the Air Force Meritorious Service Medal for his contributions to the 163rd Maintenance Group.

### Master Sergeant Peter J. Kelley

**Munitions Systems  
Superintendent  
163rd Maintenance Group**

Valley College in Victorville, Calif., and a bachelor's degree in aviation management from Southern Illinois University.



## NCO of the Year

Tech. Sgt. Kristina M. Ghio was born on Naval Base Portsmouth, Va., and shortly thereafter relocated to San Diego. She later attended Grossmont Community College in nearby El Cajon.

Ghio enlisted in the active duty Air Force in May 2001 as a telephone systems apprentice and attended technical training at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas, and Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas. While at Sheppard AFB, Ghio decided to pursue student leadership and achieved the level of "yellow rope." In addition to her student leadership responsibilities, Ghio earned the Student of the Month Award for superior scholastic achievement in three consecutive months.

Ghio was then assigned to Buckley Air Force Base, Colo., where she was an active member of the Booster Club and won Airman of the Quarter while completing her five-skill-level training.

Her next assignment was on Osan Air Base, South Korea, where Ghio completed two consecutive short tours from 2003 to 2005. While at Osan, Ghio was the Booster Club

president and a wing-level self-aid buddy care instructor who taught more than 1,000 Airmen. As Booster Club president she hosted more than 15 family events including retirement and promotion ceremonies, which bolstered esprit de corps during a critical operational readiness inspection year.

### Technical Sergeant Kristina M. Ghio

**Client Systems Craftsman  
147th Combat  
Communications Squadron**

In January 2006, Ghio was reassigned to Offutt Air Force Base, Neb., where she was employed as an outside-plant crew chief and was also assigned as the squadron safety noncommissioned officer. Her safety program was lauded as the best seen in a numbered Air Force inspection, with zero write-ups and a 20 percent decline in safety mishaps during her first quarter of assignment. While at Offutt, Ghio was also selected to be on the executive team to host the 55th Wing Annual Birthday Ball and was chosen to escort the guest speaker, Tommy Lasorda, to the event as well as numerous tours on base.

In May 2007, Ghio began her career with the California Air National Guard, accepting an assignment with the 147th Combat Communications Squadron (CCS) in San Diego. Ghio immediately enrolled at Embry-Riddle Worldwide, pursuing a bachelor's degree in technical management. After a few months, she was hired as a full-time technician in the 147th CCS maintenance control office.

In 2008 and 2009, Ghio was elected president of her unit's Rising Six enlisted council and coordinated multiple fundraisers and events such as holiday parties and the San Diego Padres Military Appreciation Day.

After receiving an "excellent" rating during the 147th Combat Communications Squadron's operational readiness inspection, Ghio deployed to Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, for a 90-day rotation. While at Al Udeid, Ghio was instrumental in developing a Client Systems Service Center with 24-hour operations. The new center was recognized as the wing's "Team of the Month" for outstanding customer support.

Upon her return from Qatar, Ghio volunteered for a six-month rotation to Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, where she served as executive program manager, helping the 36th Communications Squadron prepare for both the command cyber readiness inspection and their compliance inspection.



## Airman of the Year

Airman 1st Class Kevin M. Galusha, who was born in Hollister, Calif., enlisted in the California Air National Guard on Nov. 31, 2009, and was assigned to the 222nd Intelligence Support Squadron.

Following basic military training, Galusha was sent to Keesler Air Force Base, Miss., for technical training, which included Information Technology Fundamentals, Cyber Transport and Security+ courses. During that training period, Galusha was selected to be the class leader for the Information Technology Fundamentals and Cyber Transport courses. He spent countless hours working with his fellow Airmen, holding study groups and personal study sessions to ensure the success of each of his classmates. With the end

### Airman First Class Kevin M. Galusha

**Cyber Transport  
Systems Apprentice  
222nd Intelligence  
Support Squadron**

of the year quickly approaching, Galusha needed to complete the Security+ Course in eight days instead of the normally allotted 10 days. On Dec. 23, 2010, he took the COMP TIA Security+ exam and received an outstanding score of 870.

On Dec. 26, Galusha reported to the 222nd Intelligence Support Squadron, where he was integrated into the active duty Air Force's 48th Intelligence Squadron, and began his 45 seasoning training days. During that time, Galusha completed all of his online training tasks for his training business area and began training on tasks required for his five-skill-level qualifications. Additionally he became proficient and was assigned as a signals intelligence maintenance technician assisting the 48th Intelligence Squadron.

Galusha works full-time as an information technology consultant for an independent consulting firm in Hanford, Calif., gaining valuable experience in communication solutions such as phone systems, client systems, server systems and networking devices.

He has completed 74 credit hours at West Hills Community College in Lemoore, Calif., with an emphasis on communications and computer information systems. Galusha is also working toward an information technology competency degree online through Western Governors University.

Community involvement is important to Galusha. He works with the Civil Air Patrol as an aerospace education manager, teaching his local Civil Air Patrol squadron about aerospace science. He is also working with the Kings County Executive Association and the Hanford Chamber of Commerce to promote the utilization of local businesses.

# BEEF returns from Gitmo

## 146th CES built, maintained and improved facilities on six-month tour

By **SGT. SAUL ROSA**

Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay Public Affairs

The California Air National Guard's 146th Civil Engineering Squadron (CES) completed its final duty as the 474th Base Engineer Emergency Force (BEEF) at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, during a change-of-authority ceremony on Jan. 12.

The 146th arrived in Guantanamo Bay in July for a six-month tour in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay during which it gained valuable experience and grew to be a more cohesive unit.

Designated the 474th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron at Guantanamo Bay, the unit maintained the expeditionary legal complex and Camp Justice during its deployment, said Maj. Patrick Shanahan, commander of the 146th CES.

"I believe it's been an outstanding deploy-

ment for our team," he said, noting that this was the first time the unit had deployed together. "My team understood [the importance of the mission], accepted the challenge and did an excellent job."

Shanahan added that the Airmen did not know what to expect upon arriving at Guantanamo Bay, or Gitmo, as it is commonly called.

"There is a lot of talk about Gitmo, and what you see that's presented in the news doesn't always tell the whole story," he said. "So I know that coming here and seeing everything firsthand was really enlightening for all of us to know what the Joint Task Force mission is."

The unit's greatest accomplishment during the tour was constructing two buildings for public affairs personnel, Shanahan said. The 146th also made improvements to Camp Justice and surrounding facilities.

When the 146th CES was not focusing on mission tasks, its members were volunteering their skills to Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay.

"We know what it means to work as a team, because in our jobs we can't work in isolation," Shanahan said. "We need the cooperation of other people, so we understand what it means for someone to help us, and we want to either pay that back or pay it forward by helping other people."

The 146th was in a unique position to assist other members of the Task Force, Shanahan said, as it was the only squadron at Guantanamo Bay with their capabilities.

"We've been able to provide expertise, skills and trades that the [Joint Task Force] wouldn't have otherwise, so we wanted to fill that void and provide those services," he said.



Photo by Ty Blomson

**First Sgt. Peter Hunter of the 146th Civil Engineering Squadron (CES) stands at attention during a transfer-of-authority ceremony at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, as the 146th transfers command of the 474th Expeditionary CES to the incoming 139th CES.**

# Nicaraguan refugee shows gratitude through service

By **STAFF SGT. EMILY SUHR**

224th Sustainment Brigade

Spc. Rene Zamora of Santa Clara knows what it is like to truly live the Army values of selfless service, honor and personal courage.

During the 1980s, Zamora's home country of Nicaragua went through a civil war. To keep the regime in place, the government established a draft for every boy age 16 or older. As Zamora was nearing 14, the Soldiers on the street began stopping him to check his birth certificate, counting down the days until he would be required to join.

"To my family, my dad especially, that was a wake-up call," Zamora said. "He was not against the government, nor for it, but he didn't like the idea that his only son should be serving for this cause — especially with the poor training that they had — and fighting another Nicaraguan, a fellow countryman. It was not a good feeling for anybody, so he did pretty much everything he could to get us out of there."

The family applied for visas to the United States, stating that they were going on vacation. However, to ensure the family would return, the Nicaraguan government insisted one family member remain in Nicaragua. So Zamora's father packed up his wife and two children and sent them to live in America, while he stayed behind.

Rene made a good life for himself in the U.S., earning a master's of

business administration (MBA) degree and following in his father's footsteps by becoming a financial analyst. But when Rene's nephew asked for his help convincing the family to let him join the military, Zamora found his other calling.

"I've had so many opportunities that I couldn't even imagine having in Nicaragua," Rene said. "The fact that I have an MBA, the fact that I have a family and I can move freely [without] worrying about instabilities of the government, strikes, things like that. It's a great feeling, and there's a price."

"I think a lot of people over here take that for granted," he continued. "Myself and my family, we know the cost. We know what it takes to enjoy all this."

So at the age of 35, the father of two signed up to be a medic in the California Army National Guard, joining Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 143rd Field Artillery Regiment. "I really like what I do both in the Army and in my civilian life, and that's a big plus," he said. "I'm a financial analyst/combat medic. What a combination."

After finishing his advanced individual training (AIT) in May 2011, Zamora got an opportunity to put his newly acquired medical skills to work Sept. 11, when a civilian crashed his bike near the National Guard armory in Walnut Creek.

"It came natural. I just went for it," Rene said, describing how he



**Spc. Rene Zamora, who fled civil war in his home country of Nicaragua in the 1980s, serves 1st Battalion, 143rd Infantry Regiment, to show his appreciation for the opportunities afforded him in the United States.**

and another Soldier immediately began performing CPR. "To me it was kind of amazing. I was helping someone without really thinking. ... When the [emergency medical technicians arrived] and I had a second to react to what I did, I was like, 'Oh my God, I just did it. I responded and I did it right.'"

Though Rene's wife and two children were initially concerned about him entering the Army because of his late age, they now could not be more supportive. "My 12-year-old, he's so proud. ... He was a big encouragement when I was in basic [training] and AIT," Rene said. "We spoke many times on the phone, and now when he sees me in my uniform ready to go to a drill, he's like, 'That's my dad!'"

Zamora hopes to transition into the officer ranks and make a career in the Cal Guard, but for now, he is enjoying his role as a combat medic and proudly showing his gratitude for the opportunities afforded him in this country.

# Cobra Gold unifies U.S., Asia-Pacific region militaries

**COL. PHILIP BUTCH**

40th Infantry Division

Soldiers from the CNG's 40th Infantry Division and 100th Troop Command, and Airmen from the CNG's 163rd Reconnaissance Wing participated in this year's Cobra Gold 12 exercise Feb. 1-18 in Thailand. Cobra Gold is U.S. Pacific Command's largest and longest-running military exercise in the Asia-Pacific region.

The annual 18-day exercise involved more than 13,000 people from 17 nations and was primarily designed to advance regional security and cooperation among countries in the region. Participating nations included Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand.

Live-fire training, noncombatant evacuation activities and humanitarian aid exercises were all part of Cobra Gold 12, with a computer-simulated, command-post-driven exercise as the featured drill.

The 40th ID was instrumental in the execution of the computer-generated exercise, replicating a combined army force with Soldiers from Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. The troops from the 40th ID successfully unified all participating countries' forces during the exercise and achieved great overall success.



Photo by 40th Infantry Division

**40th Infantry Division leaders pose with leaders from the armies of Japan, Singapore and Thailand during the Cobra Gold 12 exercise on Camp Suranaree, Thailand, in February.**

# 'To me, that day, you were a hero'

Injured motorist's letter offers heartfelt thanks for 1st Lt. Ed Baon of the 95th CST

Ed:

*It was wonderful, finally being able to speak with you last night.*

*The car accident on September 18th was the most traumatic thing to ever happen to us and very nearly cost Laurie, my wife, and me our lives. To be stopped at the end of a line of cars, be struck by an unlicensed 17-year-old in a truck and pushed into oncoming traffic with a resulting head-on collision was absolutely awful.*

*Your coming to my aid so quickly — and with such reaffirming authority — made an unthinkable experience bearable. I can still hear your voice instructing me not to move and that I was going to be OK. When the emergency personnel arrived you were essential — to cut me free of my seatbelt — allowing me to be extracted from my car, placed on that hard board and put into the ambulance.*

*Although my wife's burst L1 vertebrae is still the subject of possible surgery, our physical wounds (significant as they are) will hopefully heal over time — we shall deal with the limitations that result from them. The trauma, however, I am not sure of. We civilians do not often have to face this and need to acquire the tools to deal with the aftermath of such an event.*

*You talked about "just doing what you needed to" — "what anyone would have done." I wish that were true of the world's population. You are, indeed, very special. Even though you might feel that your actions were just a small act of a Good Samaritan, to me, that day, you were a hero.*

*As I mentioned, the last words I heard from you — as you spoke to the ambulance driver — were inquiring as to the whereabouts of your knife. I knew, then, it would probably be lost in all the chaos. I was determined to replace it as soon as I could find out who you were and where you lived. The CHP report took many months to complete, but when it finally came I was able to identify and call you. Enclosed you will find a Swiss Army knife — which has been sitting on my desk for a while — to replace the one you lost and to thank you, once more, for being there when you were needed.*

*It is odd that I never even got to see your face but I will remember you forever.*

Stuart Marson



Photo by Staff Sgt. Emily Sahr



1st Lt. Edward Baon, medical operations officer for the CNG's 95th Civil Support Team, above, helped Stuart Marson through a terrifying situation following the Sept. 18 multi-vehicle accident pictured at left.

Photo courtesy of Stuart Marson

## 144th Airmen use Guard skills to save lives

On 3 recent occasions, CNG members were in the right place at the right time to administer aid

**SENIOR MASTER SGT. CHRIS DRUDGE**  
144th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Citizen-Airmen are not only leaders, wingmen and warriors, but also guardians and servants of the communities in which they work, play and live. In the past few months, four members of the California Air National Guard's 144th Fighter Wing have demonstrated true heroism and dedication

to their communities by coming to the rescue and ultimately saving the lives of three individuals on separate occasions.

On Jan. 27, Airman 1st Class Tod Miley and Airman 1st Class David Hutchason were at their civilian place of employment when they heard a car accident outside. They then saw a classic car had crashed into a tree, and an unresponsive elderly man was slumped over in the front seat.

Both Airmen acted instinctively and administered self-aid and buddy care they had learned at the 144th. Hutchason called 911 while Miley laid the driver on the front seat and initiated CPR. Following instructions from the 911 operator, the Airmen laid the driver on the ground and continued chest compressions until paramedics arrived.

"It was definitely being in the right place at the right time," Miley said. "We were there, did what we had to do and then walked away when the paramedics took over. We didn't even know if he survived until much later, when I received a call from someone at the 144th."

Unbeknownst to the Airmen, the man they had saved was retired Chief Master Sgt. Lawrence Pollastrini, who was on his way home from his civilian job at the 144th when he suffered a heart attack. "It was a huge relief finding out that we did actually save a life," Hutchason said.

Pollastrini's wife, Kathy, said three cardiologists at the hospital told her Pollastrini would not have survived if Hutchason and Miley hadn't responded the way they did.

"You guys did a good thing," Pollastrini told the Airmen after the accident. "My grandkids really appreciate it."

Just before Christmas, another CNG Airman, Staff Sgt. Scott Calhoun of the 144th Fighter Wing Maintenance Group, was on vacation in San Diego when he noticed something floating in the bay. Without hesitation Calhoun, an avionics specialist, leaped over a fence railing and headed for the water. He yelled to bystanders to call 911 as he entered the frigid water and swam 40 yards to reach the floating individual.

"When I reached him, he was cold, blue and unresponsive," Calhoun said. "I grabbed him by his collar and pulled him back to shore."

Once they reached the shore, Calhoun administered first-aid and buddy care. "When I felt for a pulse, he spit up water and asked if he was in heaven," Calhoun remembered.

He then treated the rescued man for hypothermia and shock using sweatshirts from onlookers and towels from a nearby hotel pool. Emergency medical service personnel then arrived on scene and transported the

individual to a hospital.

Calhoun credited the 144th Fighter Wing's self-aid and buddy care training for giving him the knowledge and confidence to react quickly and calmly in a life threatening situation.

Earlier in December, Senior Airman Richard Sorondo, a firefighter with the 144th Fighter Wing Civil Engineering Squadron and a full-time officer with the Fresno Police Department, had been called to a home with an unresponsive victim. Upon arriving, Sorondo was flagged down by a neighbor, Thomas Hite, and directed to the incapacitated individual.

The victim had apparently fallen backward off his elevated porch and remained on the ground until Hite discovered him. Sorondo quickly determined the individual required CPR, so he and Hite performed the lifesaving technique until paramedics arrived.

Sorondo relied on self-aid training instilled by the 144th and the Fresno Police Department to respond quickly and with appropriate action. The fallen individual is alive and well, thanks to Hite and Sorondo's heroic actions.

These four Airmen exemplify the Air Force ethos and embody the Air Force core values of integrity first, service before self, and excellence in all we do.



Photo by Tech Sgt. Charles Vaughn

Airmen 1st Class David Hutchason, left, and Tod Miley of the 144th Fighter Wing stand beside retired Chief Master Sgt. Lawrence Pollastrini on Feb. 5, days after the active Airmen administered CPR to Pollastrini, who had suffered a heart attack and crashed his car.

# The Post-9/11 G.I. Bill: Your future awaits

By **TECH. SGT. NICHOLAS WILKENING**  
261st Combat Communications Squadron

There are immeasurable benefits afforded to each service member who honorably serves this country, but it could be said that none is more comprehensive and advantageous in pursuing an occupation than the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill.

The Post-9/11 G.I. Bill was enacted by Congress in 2008 to provide a more robust educational benefit for members who had served in operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. In December 2010, Congress expanded upon the bill with the Post-9/11 Veterans Education Assistance Improvements Act, which provided benefits to National Guard members who had served in Title 32 or full-time Active Guard and Reserve status.

The intention of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill was to fix problems that accompanied the Montgomery G.I. Bill. One of the biggest problems was the amount of the monthly stipend, which did not provide a realistic means of living with the

rising cost of higher education. Another issue with the previous benefit was that it did not address the employment deficit many veterans faced after years of war.

The education benefit changed dramatically with the passage of the Post-9/11 G.I. Bill. The new benefit includes full tuition coverage up to the highest tuition rate within each respective state; basic allowance for housing set at an E-5-with-dependent rate; a book stipend of \$41.67 per semester hour up to up to \$1,000; and, one of the most impactful pieces of the benefit, the ability for each veteran to transfer their G.I. Bill benefits to their spouse or dependent.

Veterans who have expended all of their Montgomery G.I. Bill benefits but also served after Sept. 11, 2001, and have qualifying Title 10 or AGR service now have access to an additional 12 months of Post-9/11 G.I. Bill benefits as an extension with no additional commitment.

These benefits are not only for bachelor's or master's degree programs: Many service members have used them for

on-the-job training, flight school, apprenticeship programs, vocational training and professional certifications.

Although the benefits are available to every veteran who has honorably served since 2001, only a small percentage of veterans use them. According to independent website [thegibill.com](http://thegibill.com), only 20 percent of veterans use their G.I. Bill benefits within six months of separating from service, and utilization increases only slightly to 24 percent after 24 months of separation. That number is staggeringly low when the potential impact of the entitlement is measured.

In 2009 the median income for a young adult with a bachelor's degree was \$45,000, according to the National Center for Education Statistics, while it was \$36,000 for those with an associate's degree, \$30,000 for those with a high school diploma or its equivalent, and \$21,000 for those without a high school diploma. In other words, a young adult with a bachelor's degree earned 114 percent more than one with-

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## Sergeants Major Assoc. aims to help

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**  
California Military Department Public Affairs

When Sgt. 1st Class Melissa Black, a full-time employee on Camp Roberts, Calif., began working with the Sergeants Major Association (SMA) of California to help organize the SMA's planned conference at Camp Roberts in February, she quickly picked up some important information for her own personal development.

"I didn't know we were eligible to be involved with the Sergeants Major Association starting at the rank of sergeant first class," Black said. "I am a firm believer in junior enlisted [troops] taking action and getting involved, because there are strength in numbers. ... Here I was, not even taking my own advice to be involved, because I didn't look into being involved in this particular organization."

The SMA is open to the top three enlisted grades of the reserve components. The Association has been involved in many projects over the years to help noncommissioned officers and Soldiers of all ranks in California, such as supporting the Noncommissioned Officers Education System and establishing enlisted clubs and NCO clubs at Camp Roberts and Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif.

The Association is perhaps best known, however, for its support of troops and their families through the SMA Chaplains Fund. The Chaplains Fund provides immediate, limited financial assistance in the form of grants and no-interest loans to Soldiers and Airmen in times of personal or family crisis

"If a member of the California National Guard is in need of help with food, a car payment or other necessities, we then work to provide a donation to the Soldier or Airman to provide assistance," said retired Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Massicotte, SMA treasurer. "It is our goal to help the individual or family through a situation to bring them back to their goals."

The Association is also involved in several projects to enhance the professional development of its members. For example, the Association



Retired Master Sgt. Lorie Clayton, president of the Sergeants Major Association (SMA) of California, welcomes the SMA's newest member, Sgt. 1st Class Melissa Black, during the SMA's semi-annual conference on Camp Roberts, Calif., in February.

donates each year to the California Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States' Scholarship Fund.

"The Sergeant Major Association seeks to bring value to the Noncommissioned Officers Corps by combining retired and active senior NCOs in a forum to hone our leadership through a series of workshops," said Command Sgt. Maj. Ronald Cabrera.

During the February conference, the members discussed professional development training for all ranks and ways to use the members' military knowledge to serve as mentors.

"I would be long gone [from the Association] if I didn't want to be involved in helping," said retired Sgt. Maj. Bob Delaney.

Several other areas of concern were discussed during the conference, including planned and needed upgrades to Camp Roberts facilities. The Association members were given a tour of the base and the upgrades being discussed by Camp Roberts leadership. Members also stressed the importance of sharing financial literature with younger troops and imparting ways to improve their interviewing skills to further their civilian job prospects.

"We are interested in promoting the well-being of the enlisted members and continuing to arm them with knowledge — the most powerful weapon," said retired Master Sgt. Lorie Clayton, president of the California Sergeants Major Association.

For more on the Sergeants Major Association, visit [www.smaofcalifornia.org](http://www.smaofcalifornia.org).

## Dixon earns honor as CA's first ordnance master instructor

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**  
California Military Department Public Affairs

Sgt. 1st Class Alvin Dixon of the Regional Training Site—Maintenance School on Camp Roberts, Calif., is among an elite class of instructors in the U.S. Army: He recently earned recognition as the only ordnance master instructor in California.

"Sergeant First Class Dixon's accomplishment as a master trainer sets him within the top of the ordnance career field, as only approximately 7 percent of U.S. Army ordnance training instructors have reached this pinnacle," Chief Warrant Officer 3 Mark Walton said Feb. 18 at a ceremony to recognize Dixon's accomplishment during the semi-annual Sergeants Major Association conference on Camp Roberts.

When he began as an instructor 11 years ago, Dixon set out to become an ordnance master instructor. He had started out as an active duty light wheeled-vehicle and power-generation mechanic on Fort Hood, Texas, and has now been in the maintenance field for 31 years. He joined the CNG in 1986.

"I was motivated to become an ordnance master instructor because I wanted to help other Soldiers in becoming a master instructor," he said.

As a part of Dixon's pursuit, he was required to pass a college course in education, complete a small instructor training course, develop a program to improve training at the Army Ordnance School, teach 1,000 hours and earn five "outstanding" evaluations of his instruction, complete 18 months of cumulative teaching experience, present a professional development seminar for his peers, observe four peer instructors, score 90 or better on all examinations in his specialty area and appear before an evaluation board.

Dixon is currently a wheeled-vehicle instructor at the Regional Training Site—Maintenance Ordnance School, where he will conduct classes throughout 2012 for the Army National Guard, Reserve and active duty components.



Command Sgt. Maj. James Norris, left, congratulates Sgt. 1st Class Alvin Dixon on becoming a master instructor Feb. 18 on Camp Roberts, Calif.



Spc. Aaron Adams of the California Army National Guard's 132nd Multi-Role Bridge Company (MRBC) posts security for a bridge-building exercise Jan. 27 at Camp Roberts, Calif., during training in advance of the unit's yearlong deployment to Afghanistan. The MRBC, which was established in 2008, sent about 200 Soldiers to Afghanistan, where they are responsible for the maintenance, construction and removal of a variety of bridge systems throughout the country. The unit is also playing a crucial role in improving and maintaining local infrastructure, as well as ensuring maneuverability of coalition forces across Afghanistan. Photo by Sgt. Aaron Ricca

## Grizzly mag nabs top NGB honor

The Grizzly Newsmagazine was recognized by the National Guard Bureau as the top magazine-format publication in the 54 states and territories in 2011. The Grizzly also took top honors in the "Picture Page" category for its November "At a Glance" section, which featured four photos by Staff Sgt. Emily Suhr, one by Master Sgt. David J. Loeffler and one by Sgt. Aaron Ricca. Additionally the Joint Task Force Sierra Public Affairs Office earned 2nd place in the "Newsletter/Field Newspaper" category for its coverage of the Southwest border mission.

## Free tax prep for Guard members

National Guard members and their families worldwide are entitled to receive free tax preparation, advice, filing and assistance at offices within their installations. Personnel at those offices are trained and equipped to address military-specific tax issues such as combat zone tax benefits and the effect of the new Earned Income Tax Credit guidelines.

If your installation does not currently sponsor the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) Program with the IRS, check with your legal office to determine whether it's a possibility. To learn more about VITA, email [partner@irs.gov](mailto:partner@irs.gov).

## STARBASE teaches 45,000th student

The CNG's STARBASE program in Sacramento reached a milestone in January as it welcomed its 45,000th student.

STARBASE was established in 1993 by the Department of Defense and the National Guard. Located at the Old Sacramento Army Depot, STARBASE supports 11 school districts in the greater Sacramento area. It aims to foster a lifelong interest in science, technology, engineering and math by immersing 5th grade students in real-life and simulated experiences in rocket science, aviation, chemistry and physics.

## NGAUS conference in Reno

The National Guard Association of the United States will hold its 134th annual General Conference in Reno, Nev., this year Sept. 9-12. Themed "National Guard: Hometown Force, Global Reach," the conference will include speakers from the Pentagon and Congress, a variety of professional development workshops and exhibitions of the latest products and services for service members. Registration costs \$165 for NGAUS members and \$330 for others. For more information, visit [www.ngausconference.com](http://www.ngausconference.com).

## EANGUS meeting in Long Beach

The Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States will host its 41st annual General Conference and Exhibition in Long Beach this year Aug. 25-27. For more information, visit [www.eangus.org](http://www.eangus.org).

## DID YOU KNOW...

### training management principles apply to both standard and non-standard missions?

National Guard commanders must often develop training programs for non-standard missions in support of civil authorities that demand unique skill sets and/or a combination of doctrinal and non-doctrinal skill sets. Commanders can use doctrinal tasks to establish a mission essential task list (METL) regardless of the mission.

If doctrinal tasks do not fit all or part of the unit's mission requirements, commanders can develop non-doctrinal tasks, conditions and standards that enable the unit to achieve the capabilities required to support the mission. Accurately tailoring METL tasks to unit requirements enables commanders to maximize training resources and ensure mission success.

Army Field Manual 7-0 is a great resource for commanders to assist with training management. See chapter 3 for more information on this topic.

## 'Post-9/11 G.I. Bill' continued from page 18

out a high school diploma, 50 percent more than one who had only completed high school and 25 percent more than one with an associate's degree. For a young adult with a master's degree or more education, the median was \$60,000, about 33 percent more than the median for a young adult with a bachelor's degree.

Veterans are afforded many benefits associated with job placement, home-buying and medical entitlements. The long-term advantages of attaining a professional education are a great supplement to those benefits and provide mobility to many veterans in their pursuit of long-term employment.

The economy is recovering from the worst shock it has seen since the Great Depres-

sion, and, unfortunately, history has shown that veterans are at a great disadvantage in finding gainful employment after leaving the service. The Post-9/11 G.I. Bill is meant to educate, retrain and promote each veteran into a new career field or help them expand upon their current one. Unfortunately, many service members and former service members choose to delay or simply not use their benefits.

This benefit is designed to help each Airman, Soldier, Marine and Sailor find a career path that will set them up for success. Use the benefit and take advantage of a great opportunity for professional and personal growth. For further information, visit [www.gibill.va.gov](http://www.gibill.va.gov) or call 1-888-G.I.BILL-1.



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A C-130J aircraft and crew from the Port Hueneme, Calif.-based 146th Airlift Wing participate in flare training off the Ventura County coast in January. Flares are used as countermeasures to confuse and redirect heat-seeking missiles when flying in uncontrolled air space. Photo by Scott Dworkin | [scottdworkinphoto.com](http://scottdworkinphoto.com)

### The Grizzly Newsmagazine

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# THE GRIZZLY NEWSMAGAZINE

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