

GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard

Striving for the top

Best Warrior Competition tests CNG Soldiers, NCOs

6

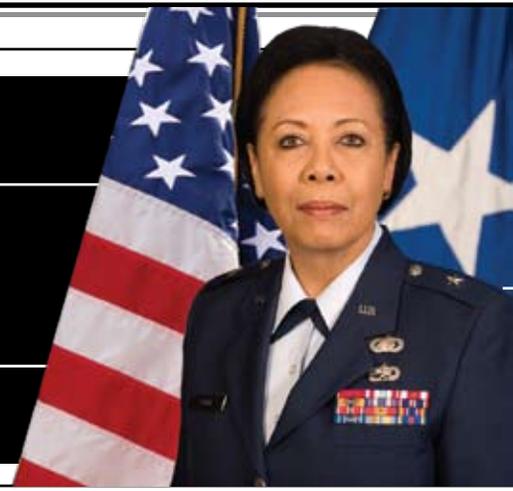


1-18th Cav earns Meritorious Unit Commendation

Commander's corner

New CA laws benefit service members

Brigadier General Mary J. Kight



During the past two years, our governor and State Legislature have recognized the great service of the California National Guard by passing laws to benefit the Guard's greatest resource — the men and women who serve. Those efforts have been aided by the California Military Department's Government Affairs Office, which advocates for new state laws and programs to benefit the Guard.

Having met with many members of the Legislature, it is easy to realize this: The professionalism and dedication of your service is the most important factor when lawmakers decide to vote for new protections and benefits. Your high level of service is paving the way for future generations of National Guard members to benefit. And for that, I thank you!

Some of the highlights of the 2009-10 legislative session are listed below. For information on state laws passed in 2010, and for info on the CNG's role in the California

legislative process, see Page 16.

Education Assistance Award Program

With unyielding support from Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sen. Dave Cogdill, the Legislature approved a state-funded education assistance program for members of the National Guard and the State Military Reserve. This long-sought-after retention benefit provides up to \$3.6 million annually to ensure the California National Guard is the most educated in the nation. For details, visit www.calguard.ca.gov/education.

Mental Health Liaison Teams

The state now funds National Guard personnel to help returning service members find mental health resources in their county. This program is a huge step forward to ensure service members successfully

For more on the Legislature, see Page 16

reintegrate into their communities after deployment. If you feel you may need assistance, please contact our Mental Health Office at 916-854-3019.

Financial Protections During Deployment

The California Military Department sponsored two bills to protect your finances while deployed, which passed this legislative session. One law ensures service members are able to defer car loan payments while deployed and extends certain financial protections to spouses and de-

pendents. The other entitles Guard members and Reservists to expedited judicial review and enables them to recover damages and attorney's fees if a lender unlawfully denies a request for deferment while deployed.

Academic Protections

Also sponsored by the Military Department, a new law requires California colleges to provide Guard members with reasonable accommodations to make up coursework they miss due to military service.

Funds to Improve Armories

Proceeds from the sale of state properties typically are used to pay off bonds California has incurred as debt for other programs. A new law sponsored by the Military Department ensures that when the Guard sells or leases an armory, the proceeds will be used to improve aging Guard facilities and to fund new facilities.

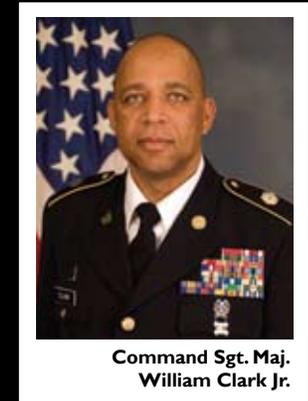
California National Guard Leadership



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Command Sgt. Maj. William Clark Jr.



Maj. Gen. John S. Harrel



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael H. Winstead



Maj. Gen. Dennis G. Lucas



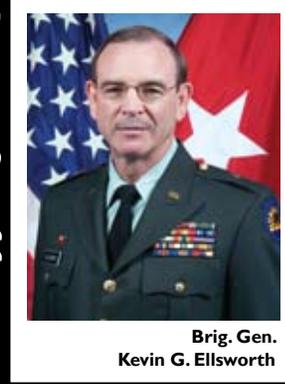
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Grizzly

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Articles:

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

Photographs:

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

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Cover Shot



Photo by Spc. Grant Larson

Spc. Daniel Trujillo of Joint Force Headquarters competes Sept. 16 in the Confidence Obstacle Course event of the California National Guard Best Warrior Competition on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif.

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The California National Guard as of **October** 2010





Airmen of the 129th Rescue Squadron test their skills on the Fort Hunter Liggett Multipurpose Range Complex on Aug. 12.

129th RSQ performs 'hot' rescue training

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. James Blaine
Fort Hunter Liggett Public Affairs

When you think of helicopters in the military, do you think of the Army first? The 129th Rescue Squadron out of Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., flies helicopters, but they are part of the Air Force.

Airmen from the 129th traveled to the Multipurpose Range Complex on Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., in August for terminal aerial employment training. In other words, if a pilot goes down behind enemy lines, it's the 129th's job to go and get that pilot back.

"The training presents the crews with situations and forces them to make critical decisions," said Maj. Mathew Wenthe, assistant director of operations, weapons and tactics for the 129th.

While inbound to a "hot" landing zone during the training, pilots and gunners came up with a game plan. They then executed that game plan to recover the pilots or medical casualties.

It was the gunners who really earned their keep during the training, reacting to pop-up targets that simulated the enemy.

"Acquiring targets is work in itself because the infantry targets are small," said Tech Sgt. Michael Porter, an aerial gunner for the 129th. "We'll be looking for 'em, looking for 'em, they'll pop up, and bang we got 'em."

During the exercise Porter used a GAU-2 minigun, which delivers 4,000 rounds per minute. The saturation provided by the gunner in one helicopter would enable a second aircraft to fly into the landing zone and extract the grounded pilot or casualty.



Maj. Gen. Dennis G. Lucas, commander of the California Air National Guard, left, thanks Capt. Benjamin Copley of the 129th Rescue Squadron for his service after Copley was presented a Purple Heart on Aug. 8 at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., in recognition of wounds sustained during a rescue mission in Afghanistan.

PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. DAN KACIR

129th Airman earns Purple Heart

By Airman 1st Class Jessica Green
129th Rescue Wing

Capt. Benjamin Copley of the 129th Rescue Squadron received a Purple Heart in August in recognition of wounds sustained while rescuing an interpreter in Afghanistan.

An HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter co-pilot, Copley was presented the award Aug. 8 at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., by Col. Amos Bagdasarian, commander of the 129th Rescue Wing. Copley had recently returned from his first deployment to Afghanistan, where he was wounded by enemy forces Feb. 4.

Copley was stationed at Camp Bastion, Afghanistan, for 55 days. Teams were running at an extremely high tempo, usually working 12-hour shifts that turned into 15-hour days, Copley said. By his seventh day in country, after running at least five missions a day, Copley thought he had seen it all. Then his team was called to help a civilian interpreter who was in critical condition after taking a bullet in the shoulder.

"We went into the zone, essentially off memory, landed and completed the pick up," Copley recalled. "Then as we were egressing the area,

all I remember was — BAM!"

A round went through the pilot's windshield as the Pave Hawk was leaving the area, shattering the night vision goggle mount on Copley's helmet.

"I got shrapnel in my face and neck," he said. "There was a lot of blood, so we flew directly to the Bastion hospital, and I instantly hopped in an ambulance."

While being treated at the hospital, Copley was informed that the maintenance squadron had already replaced the windshield and the aircraft was mission-ready again. The captain took a little longer to recover.

"After being on the ground for two days, I was cleared to fly again," he said.

Copley's duties required him to return to the scene of his injury many times. "I did a lot of soul searching since the incident and dealt with having to return to it every day," he said. "However, now that I'm back at the 129th, I've already volunteered for our next deployment rotation."

1-18th Cav awarded Meritorious Unit Commendation

By Capt. Jonathan Shiroma
79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

It's been said that good things come to those who wait. After more than four years since completing their security operations mission in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, the Soldiers of 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, have a bright, new red streamer on their guidon, the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

"We submitted the paperwork for this award years ago but somehow it got lost," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Tellez of Company C, 1-18th. "We had to start the whole process again."

The process was made more complicated, Tellez explained, when he and the 1-18th deployed to Kosovo in 2008, leaving the paperwork to the unit's rear detachment. But their perseverance and hard work paid off.

During an award ceremony Oct. 3 in Azusa, Calif., Maj. Gen. John S. Harrel, deputy adjutant general, California Army National Guard, presented the ribbon to Lt. Col. Lars Staack, outgoing 1-18th commander. For the Soldiers who deployed to Guantanamo Bay and remain in the 1-18th, this was a proud moment.

"At first many of us who had already deployed into a combat zone wanted a second combat [tour], but when this came up and there was a need for Soldiers down there, we put our personal preferences aside and moved forward," said Sgt. 1st Class Don Seibert. "So it's great to see our Soldiers getting recognized for their outstanding work."

The squadron's primary duty was to keep Camp Delta safe and secure and to ensure all detainees were treated fairly and humanely.

"This gives us a lot of pride," said Staff Sgt. Kevin Itter. "I believe we were the sixth unit to go on this mission, and to be recognized before the others shows the professionalism of our Soldiers."

Lt. Col. Lars Staack, outgoing commander of 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, affixes a Meritorious Unit Commendation streamer to the unit's guidon Oct. 3 in Azusa, Calif. The unit was recognized for outstanding service in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in 2005 and 2006.



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KEVIN ITTER



Units of 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, fly their OH-58 Kiowa (left), CH-47 Chinook (top and middle right) and UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters (bottom right and below) over southern California. The 3-140th will have responsibility for the whole state when the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade deploys in November.

3-140th prepares to add SoCal to coverage area

NorCal battalion will fill in for Iraq-bound 40th CAB

Story and photos by Sgt. Jon Guibord
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

A skilled Army pilot lifts the nose of his 50-foot-long CH-47 Chinook helicopter, while simultaneously increasing throttle to hold his landing configuration before losing visibility in a billowing cloud of sand and dust. Now consumed in the cloud, his crew chief describes the descent over the radio: "35! ... 30! ... 25! ... 20! ... 10! ... 0. ... Aft gear contact. Forward gear contact." Touch down.

Before the dust clears, the aircraft and crew from Company B, 126th Aviation Regiment, have all but disappeared into the night sky. They then circle around to repeat the maneuver in a desolate landing zone 10 miles north of the California-Mexico border.

That training on Aug. 25 was designed to keep pilots proficient in dust landings, which are used frequently during combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. However, it was just a small portion of the annual training for 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, which was conducted Aug. 20 through Sept. 3 on Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos. The training included a two-day exercise, Operation Southern Comfort, which simulated a catastrophic earthquake in Los Angeles.

"The purpose of this annual training period, and Operation Southern Comfort particularly, was to take us out of our comfort zone in northern California and acclimatize the battalion with the L.A. basin," said Capt. David Lovett, commander, Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 3-140th. "It was really important that we get familiar with the area in case anything [does] occur. We're the only show in town for the next year while California's other aviation assets are deploying."

The California National Guard's 40th Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) is gearing up for a yearlong deployment to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn. In recent years the 40th CAB has supported firefighting operations in southern California during record-breaking wildfire seasons, dropping millions of gallons of water from Chinooks and UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters. With the 40th CAB leaving in November, however, the 3-140th will step in to fill any responsibilities in southern California.

"If there is a disaster in the state on a large scale, we're going to bring a lot of assets to the fight," Lovett said. "We've got Bravo Company and their heavy-lift Chinooks to move a lot of equipment or personnel where it needs to go quickly. We've got Charlie Company and their Black Hawks, who are very experienced in medical evacuation and search-and-rescue operations. And we have the OH-58 [Kiowa helicopters] of Alpha Company, who are very skilled at reconnaissance and observation. And of course we have the HHC to perform command and control."

The pilots and air crews weren't the only Soldiers to benefit from annual training. Every enlisted Soldier performed Warrior Tasks, which prepared them for a multitude of scenarios they could experience overseas. Exercises that taught room-clearing, weapons maintenance, responding to indirect fire and other tasks.

From the battalion's most seasoned pilots to its newest enlisted members, the training brought the entire unit one step closer to deployment readiness for its crucial missions at home and abroad.





A Soldier competing in the 2010 California Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition low crawls through a section of the Confidence Obstacle Course on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif., on Sept. 16

CNG Soldiers compete to be best of the best

Story and photos by Spc. Grant Larson | 69th Public Affairs Detachment

The tension in the air was plentiful early on Sept. 12, a particularly cool and foggy morning on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif. Arms and legs were flailing, muscles were warming, and facial expressions were revealing anxiety and excitement.

That day's Army Physical Fitness Test was no ordinary examination. This performance would set the pace for the remainder of the California Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition (BWC).

As the first event — push-ups — approached, sponsors spoke words of encouragement to the 13 competitors, firing them up and motivating them to give 110 percent. And then they were off, pushing as if their lives depended on it.

"BWC is the Super Bowl for all these competitors," said Command Sgt. Maj. Rob Whittle of the 223rd Regiment, noncommissioned officer-in-charge of the competition, which ran from Sept. 12-17. "It is the absolute [apex] and should be the desire of every Soldier in the California Army National Guard to be able to reach this level of competition."

The competition is continually evolving, further challenging Soldiers and leaders to improve themselves and their units.

"We've progressed this competition so much over the past few years. It's no longer a single test of a Soldier; it's a multitude of tests on the Soldier," said Michael Winstead, command sergeant major for the California Army National Guard.

Whittle said he made a host of improvements to this year's BWC, including the use of two weapons systems, a stress-fire scenario, a Confidence Obstacle Course, an essay-writing component, combatives competition and new procedures for the appearance board.

"BWC is a reflection of today's National Guardsmen," Winstead said. "It tests both their tactical skills and physical ability."

The competition is also valuable because it brings Guard

Soldiers compete Sept. 13 in the running portion of the Army Physical Fitness Test during the 2010 Best Warrior Competition on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif.



members together from throughout the state and builds camaraderie, he said.

"[The BWC] actually shows you the value system of the Army," said Sgt. Willie Foster, a BWC competitor from the 1106th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group. "You come to realize through certain events like the ruck march [that] Soldiers will depend on you. Battered, bruised, beaten ... we kept going."

Another event required competitors to demonstrate such warrior skills as evaluating a casualty, performing a weapons function check and assembling a radio system. Being ready for the events meant long hours of preparation for each competitor, but preparation could only take a warrior so far.

"It's not just following something textbook," said competitor Spc. Rudy Zamora of the 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, following a land navigation test at night. "You have to sometimes go out of the box and really think about what you need to do. That challenge makes you a better Soldier."

Next year's BWC is expected to be more scenario-driven. Instead of moving from station to station, the exercise will include a multitude of tasks incorporated into an overall mission. The competition is also expected to expand from 13 competitors to 30, with individual companies and installations hopefully sending competitors, Winstead said.

"What we're doing is training tomorrow's leaders," Whittle said. "I want leaders at all levels to back this, and I want Soldiers to want to be able to compete in this competition."



A Soldier nears the finish of the ruck march event Sept. 15 at the 2010 Best Warrior Competition.



LEFT: Pfc. Ignacio Esparza of Company B, 79th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, pushes himself through the Confidence Obstacle Course on Sept. 16.

2010 BEST WARRIORS



Spc. Jesse Hendrick, left, a heavy construction equipment operator for the 40th Infantry Division, and Staff Sgt. Dane Hagan, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist for the 95th Civil Support Team, stand proud after being recognized as the top Soldier and NCO in this year's Best Warrior Competition at the Best Warrior Banquet in Sacramento on Oct. 23.



TOP: Staff Sgt. William Bonilla of the 100th Troop Command fires his M4 rifle during the Best Warrior Competition weapons qualification event Sept. 14. LEFT: A Soldier performs first aid on an injured role-player during the competition. RIGHT: Best Warrior competitors grapple in the combatives tournament.



Soaring Angel exercise prepares 129th for ORI

**By Airman 1st Class Jessica Green
129th Rescue Wing**

The 129th Rescue Wing (RQW) completed tactical training operation Soaring Angel 10-2 on Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., from Sept. 30 to Oct. 3 in preparation for the wing's operational readiness inspection (ORI) in December 2011.

The wing's objectives were to rapidly deploy and operate from an organic forward operating base more than 140 miles from the wing's home station at Moffett Federal Airfield, Calif., and to improve interoperability in communication, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance.

Soaring Angel comprised live scenarios that included critical casualty care, terrorist camp embedment and a call for live fire. The Soaring Angel scenarios allowed aerial gunners and flight engineers to train on their .50 caliber machine guns while pararescuemen provided medical assistance to role-players and assisted in hostage recovery. With more than 165,000 acres of undisturbed mountains, valleys, rivers and plains, Fort Hunter Liggett's Urban Assault Course and Multipurpose Range Complex provided a realistic training environment and ideal maneuver area for Soaring Angel.

"The nice thing about the range here is that there is a control tower operator that positions their pop-up and mobile targets around to simulate tanks, cars or groups of people," said Capt. Nathan Nowaski, an HH-60G Pave Hawk helicopter pilot and flight lead for all Soaring Angel night missions. "It's a lot more realistic than going to a range with stationary targets."

The 129th also received support from a local Army National Guard unmanned aerial vehicle, which provided capabilities not normally available during training exercises.

Nowaski said chaos is to be expected when conducting exercises involving such in-depth scenarios and real-world issues, but the exercises impart good lessons.

"We're starting to work out all of the kinks with the new Situational Awareness Data Link and smart multifunction color displays we've got," he said. "Most people aren't very proficient with them, so doing these exercises and building that proficiency will make future missions and the ORI run a lot more smoothly."

Lt. Col. Andrew Ferguson, 129th Operations Group plans officer, said he also expects the Soaring Angel experience to help the Airmen during their ORI next year.

"It's sort of a mindset and attitude you bring into exercises like this to expose everyone to what's expected during an inspection," he said. "I think it will help a lot ... next year."

During the ORI, the Air Combat Command inspector general will evaluate the wing's combat readiness and ability to execute assigned missions.



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JESSICA GREEN



PHOTO BY AIRMAN 1ST CLASS JESSICA GREEN



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. DAN KACIR

TOP: Maj. Mathew Wenthe, assistant director of operations for weapons and tactics, 129th Rescue Squadron, briefs officers about the hostage recovery scenario being conducted by members of the 129th Rescue Wing during training exercise Soaring Angel 10-2 at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif. on Oct. 2. **LEFT:** A pararescuemen from the 131st Rescue Squadron rides an all-terrain vehicle through the urban assault course on Fort Hunter Liggett. **ABOVE RIGHT:** An unmanned aerial vehicle awaits launch during Soaring Angel.

Army, Air Guard meet end strength for FY 2010

**By Tech. Sgt. John Orrell
National Guard Bureau**

The Army and Air National Guard met their nationwide end strength goals for fiscal year 2010.

The Army Guard finished the year with 362,015 Soldiers, which is 1 percent more than the Congressional limit of 359,200. Lt. Col. Ronald Walls, chief of the Army Guard's strength maintenance division, attributed the success to a high retention rate and an intentional effort to limit the number of accessions during the last two

months of the year.

"Simply put, fiscal year 2010 has proved to be the year of improved readiness through significant reduction of vacant [junior enlisted] positions, and [that] will continue to be one of the primary focal points in [fiscal year 2011]," Walls said.

"With changes to the Air Guard mission, we focused on precision recruiting. Career fields in high need, such as medical, intelligence, engineers and special forces, were what we targeted for recruiting this year."

— Col. Mary Salcido, director, recruiting and retention, Air National Guard

strength goal by less than 1 percent, finishing with 107,676 Airmen.

"With changes to the Air Guard mission, we focused on precision recruiting," said Col. Mary Salcido, director of recruiting and retention for the Air Guard. "Career fields in high need, such as medical, intelligence, engineers and special forces, were what we targeted for recruiting this year."

In September, the Air Guard accessed 451 recruits, or 73.1 percent of its mission. For the fiscal year, 6,983 Airmen were recruited, or 73.5 percent. The officer gain was 1,101, or 35.6 percent.

In September the Army Guard met 66.3 percent of its recruiting mission, with 4,061 recruits. For the fiscal year, 57,204 recruits were accessed, or 95.3 percent. A total of 4,925 officers were gained, or 89.5 percent.

The Air Guard surpassed its 2010 end

An inside look at the border security mission



PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. JESSICA INIGO

By Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo Joint Task Force Sierra Public Affairs

In the weeks since becoming fully operational on the U.S.-Mexico border, the California National Guard troops of Joint Task Force Sierra have taken on a three-pronged attack to help U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) in its mission.

Watching over the land and sea make up the first two avenues of approach, and then criminal analysts bring up the rear by ensuring all available data is pored over to remain one step ahead of the game.

In all avenues of approach, the Soldiers and Airmen act as a stable force, leaving ample time and space for Border Patrol agents to focus on their mission of stopping illegal activity of all sorts on the border between the two countries, according to Capt. Daniel R. Fox, the task force company commander.

Here is a closer look at each duty:

Land

The land watchers are made up of small groups of entry identification team (EIT) members who are placed at strategically selected spots throughout San Diego County. While positioned toward the south, these teams train their eyes to notice any movement across the vast, rolling hills between them and the Mexico border.

Operating 24 hours a day, these teams ensure that when Border Patrol agents move to make an apprehension, that there are no gaps in detection coverage.

Depending on the time of day, service members use binoculars, infrared sensing devices and stationary truck-mounted cameras to determine exactly what is on their radar.

"You really have to remain aware of all movements, even when it seems like nothing is going on — there is no room for complacency," said an EIT member who asked to remain anonymous because of mission safety reasons.

Maritime

Known as the "coast watchers," these groups of EIT members have the same basic mission as those who watch the land, but they have the added obstacle of monitoring an ever-moving object. Instead of training the eye for movement, they look for specific shapes through highly advanced optics provided by Border Patrol.

"The Guardsmen provide added personnel, giving CBP

an additional layer to our detection capability," said Border Patrol spokesman Justin M. De La Torre. "This directly increases our likelihood of apprehending anything that illegally enters our country in-between the ports of entry."

Along with the combined efforts of the California National Guard and U.S. Customs and Border Protection, the Border Patrol also joins forces with the Coast Guard for the maritime mission, reporting any suspicious activity to be halted on the sea or detained on land.

Intercepting Mexican panga boats crossing illegally into the country makes up the bulk of the activity, De La Torre said. These boats can carry a large load for human or drug trafficking.

"There really is a different look to the pangas than anything else we're seeing out there. It's different than other vessels and it's different than wildlife," said a coast watcher, who also requested anonymity.

Criminal analysis

Working with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, or ICE, this mission remains largely classified by officials. However, according to the agency's website, ICE is the largest investigative agency in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. It was formed in 2003 as part of the federal government's response to the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, and its primary mission is to protect national security, public safety and the integrity of the U.S. borders through the criminal and civil enforcement of federal laws governing border control, customs, trade and immigration.

Electronic databases, including fingerprint identification, remote video surveillance and mobile surveillance systems, are used to enhance detection. The handful of military analysts assisting CBP and ICE also utilize more low-tech human intelligence capabilities. The specifics of their gathering methods, exactly what they are viewing and how they are viewing it cannot be discussed in detail, according to De La Torre, but he emphasized that the mission is going smoothly.

Being plugged in on the intelligence side ensures that the California National Guard is not only acting as an extra set of eyes and ears, but that the CNG is actively involved in future operations to protect California from activities that could be detrimental to Americans, according to CBP leadership.

Overall

With all the various angles to the mission come differ-

ent skill requirements, as well as numerous hurdles the troops must overcome. According to leadership, service members are learning the ins-and-outs of their mission working alongside Border Patrol agents.

The three approaches, coupled with Border Patrol's previous and ongoing efforts, have kept illegal entry numbers down 42 percent from last year, according to Border Patrol statistics. Fox noted that many of the natural skill-sets needed for the mission are already possessed by military members making them vital to the mission.

Though the majority of the criminal activity continues to be human and narcotic trafficking, there is another side: Officials anticipate that terror groups could also try this avenue of approach to get into the United States.

According to De La Torre, more than 95 percent of illegal border-crossing is done by Mexican nationals, with the remainder coming from anywhere else in the world. As a sort of regional war on terror, both military and CBP officials said this joint partnership is helping to "disrupt, dismantle and ultimately defeat" illegal smuggling and entrance of all sorts between the two countries.

As an added bonus, the Southwest border mission acts as a nice transition for those recently returning from missions in Iraq or Afghanistan. This Homeland Security deployment on California soil is a more gradual introduction back into the American day-to-day, according to veterans currently serving on the task force. Of course, the mission also brought troops who are normally dispersed throughout California into San Diego County, sometimes keeping them away from families. However, the mission is worth it, according to Fox.

"We have established a good working relationship with CBP and we will continue to build that relationship for whatever the future holds," he said.

Fox added that part of mission success is ensuring home-life happiness remains. "We couldn't do this mission without the support of our families. We make every effort to make sure the Soldiers and Airmen get home to see their families on a frequent basis."

California's portion of the Southwest border mission requires about 260 Guardsmen to support CBP, which will give that agency time to train and hire new officials. This is part of a larger tasking from President Barack Obama, who asked this year for an additional 1,200 troops to be placed along the four border states. California was the first to become fully operational and has maintained a reserve of trained Soldiers and Airmen to fill in as needed throughout the yearlong mission.

Pararescuemen with the 131st Rescue Squadron restrain a hostage role-player on the urban assault course at Fort Hunter Liggett, Calif., during training exercise Soaring Angel 10-2 on Oct. 2.

For more on Soaring Angel, see Page 8.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Jessica Green



Soldiers of the Long Beach, Calif.-based 224th Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. They were deployed from Oct. 10 up to Oct. 17, the date of the Long Beach Marathon. Soldiers and civilians signed up to run or walk.

Photo by Spc. Glen Baker



Lt. Col. Michael Wise returns the guidon of 1st Squadron, 18th Cavalry Regiment, to Command Sgt. Maj. Walter Claude-Murray during a change-of-command ceremony in Azusa, Calif., on Oct. 3. Wise took the helm of the 1-18th from outgoing Commander Lt. Col. Lars Staack.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Kevin Itter



LEFT: Maj. Charles Lucas presents the Meritorious Achievement Medal to Col. Charles Lucas during a ceremony. Maj. Charles Lucas also presented the Meritorious Achievement Medal to Col. Charles Lucas and the 163rd Civil Engineer Squadron for Outstanding Achievement in recognition of their exceptional results and attendance at the state of preparation for 2008, to Sep. 2008, to Sep. 2008. Lucas presented the Meritorious Achievement Medal to the 163rd Civil Engineer Squadron. Photos by M...



At a Glance



224th Sustainment Brigade celebrate after completing a 10-mile run/walk event July 25 on the 224th Headquarters and Headquarters Company organized multiple events leading to a Marathon and Half-Marathon. First Lieutenant Nathan Lavy of the 224th said about 500 Soldiers took a half-marathon on COB Adder on Oct. 17, including 200 Soldiers from the 224th.



Capt. Rusten Currie receives a Meritorious Service Medal from Brig. Gen. Mary Kight, adjutant general of the California National Guard, on Sept. 30 in Joint Force Headquarters in Sacramento. Currie earned the recognition for exceptionally meritorious service from July 2008 through September 2010 while serving as aide-de-camp to the adjutant general. "During his tenure, he consistently demonstrated outstanding knowledge, professionalism, flexibility and adaptability," the award states. "He mastered a keen sense of security and uncompromising integrity for the demands of a rigorous schedule."

Photo by Tech. Sgt. David J. Loeffler

Gen. Dennis G. Lucas presented the Legion of Merit to Master Sgt. W. Manley, center, at a ceremony Oct. 2 on March Air Reserve Base, Calif. Lucas presented nine Airmen with Meritorious Service Medals (MSM) and Oak Leaf Clusters that day, and the 3rd Civil Engineering Squadron received the Governor's Outstanding Unit Citation in recognition of outstanding manning, maintenance, superior inspection and attainment of a high level of readiness from Oct. 1, 2009, to Oct. 30, 2009. BELOW: Lucas presents the Governor's Outstanding Unit Citation to the 3rd Civil Engineering Squadron. Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey



A CH-47 Chinook helicopter and crew from Company B, 1-126th Aviation Regiment, moves equipment to the 9,100-foot peak of Mount San Jacinto, Calif., on Sept. 9. The unit moved more than 30,000 pounds of equipment, including two tractors, so State Parks employees could repair erosion.

Photo by Skip Robinson



Maj. Gen. Dennis G. Lucas, commander of the California Air National Guard, presents a Hometown Heroes letter and coin to Capt. Michael Morabe of the 147th Combat Communications Squadron on Oct. 3 in San Diego. Morabe, who is accompanied by his daughters Risa, 9, and Makena, 7, was one of 22 Airmen with the 147th CCS who earned a Hometown Heroes award by deploying for more than 30 consecutive days in support of peacekeeping operations since 2001.

Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey



A C-130J from the 146th Airlift Wing flies over an Air Force Thunderbird demonstration plane during the Point Mugu Airshow on Aug. 7.

Photo by Airman 1st Class Nicholas Carzis



Sgt. 1st Class Andrew Matthews re-enlists in the California Army National Guard in front of the state Capitol in Sacramento on Oct. 22. He was one of 17 Soldiers who extended their commitment that day.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Joseph Prouse



TEACHING THE RIGHT PATH

CNG Airman connects with military academy students

Story and photos by 2nd Lt. Kara M. Siepmann
 Joint Task Force Domestic Support—Counterdrug

"Front leaning rest position ... MOVE!" shouts a drill instructor in a large-brimmed hat. Eighty young men and women drop to their hands and feet and begin doing push-ups on a concrete slab. Sweat beads quickly form on their foreheads in the August afternoon sun.

When the "smoke session" ends, the cadets snap into formation and one of their own stands in front. "See what happens when we waste time?!" he yells out to his peers.

From patrol cap to boots, these young souls look like new recruits in basic training. But as the cadets disperse, they don't adjust their helmets and body armor or pick up their rifles. They quietly and quickly file into classrooms with white walls and blue trim. It's 1300 at the Stanislaus Military Academy (SMA). Lunchtime is over.

When students are expelled from traditional school, they begin attending a continuation school. For those expelled from continuation school, a community school is the last stop before juvenile hall or jail, depending on age. John B. Allard Community School in Denair, Calif., serves grades 4-12 in the Stanislaus County Office of Education School District.

SMA was created at the Allard School dur-

ing the 2008-09 school year. Originally a senior high school program with 20 students, the program has grown to nearly 120. This year a junior academy was created for grades 6-8.

Like any school, SMA features academic studies, physical conditioning, character training and extra-curricular activities. Unique at the John B. Allard Community School is SMA's emphasis on strict military discipline. The goal of the SMA's rigorous requirements is to produce high school graduates who are proud of their accomplishments.

When the program began in 2008, there were start-up issues. "There were no student leaders, no students with high grades who shine," says school counselor Doug Ash, noting that SMA teachers felt pressure to help students succeed.

"Parents see this as the one way to save their kids," he says. "One parent told me last year, 'This is the first thing he's ever finished in his life.'"

The instructors at SMA are all credentialed teachers, but they also rely on help from drill instructors and mentors with military experience. In addition, Ash says, an active-duty military presence is key to making the experience "real" for students.



TOP: Cadets perform push-ups between classes at the Stanislaus Military Academy (SMA) at John B. Allard Community School in Denair, Calif. Using physical exercise and military-type discipline, instructors help cadets learn to respect authority, follow rules, put safety first and demonstrate appropriate behavior toward the staff and other cadets. **ABOVE:** Capt. James Arnold reviews an English lesson for the day. Cadets receive a comprehensive high school education through the program, and all academic teachers at SMA hold a California Teaching Credential.

“I hope I carry my discipline with me and not become sloppy again. I hope good things for myself.”

— Cadet Anna Dos Reis

Air Force Master Sgt. Ron Biggs of the California National Guard’s Joint Task Force Domestic Support—Counterdrug program meets with SMA students once a week, and he may increase it to twice a week this year. He feels his involvement is that important.

“All our alternative education students are at-risk youth who are in dire need of structure, discipline and normalcy in their lives,” Biggs says. “I offer examples of leadership and mentorship to the students.”

Biggs follows the National Center for Prevention and Research Solutions’ (NCPRS) Stay on Track curriculum. According to the nonprofit’s website, rigorous scientific research indicates students who complete the Stay on Track program demonstrate improvements in goal-setting, communication and decision-making. Stay on Track students also increase their ability to resist peer pressure and are more likely to view drug use as unacceptable, the research shows.

“My engagement with the students opens doors for them,” Biggs says. “When these students come back and tell me they’ve done everything I’ve recommended and they get into college or get a good job, it means so much to me. When they realize everything we’ve been telling them is true [and] the light bulb goes on in their minds that they can accomplish their goals — that’s more than any ‘thank you’ I could receive.”

The school’s attendance rate is 96 percent, compared with 69 percent at traditional alternative education institutions, SMA instructor Capt. James Arnold says. Last year 100 percent of eligible seniors graduated.

While those statistics bode well for SMA, the school also achieves results that are not easily captured by testing metrics: Students gain self-esteem and self-worth.

“When I went to regular high school, I didn’t go. [And] when I went, I didn’t pay attention,” Cadet Anna Dos Reis admits. Dos Reis is one of the original 20 students from last year, and she is on track to graduate this year.

One of Dos Reis’ classmates, Cadet Eriberto Barajas, is equally candid about his past.

“Before, I was disrespectful and I didn’t care about lots of things,” Barajas says, adding that he was fired from his first job for leaving to spend time with his friends and smoke marijuana.

Now more than a year later, he says, “If I was in a job interview, I would say I’m responsible, respectful, always on time and have leadership experience.”

Dos Reis and Barajas are cheerful about their future but understand the hard work is not over. “I hope I carry my discipline



TOP:A cadet at the Stanislaus Military Academy raises his hand to ask a question during a presentation by Master Sgt. Ron Biggs of the CNG Joint Task Force Domestic Support—Counterdrug. **LEFT and RIGHT:** Biggs leads the cadets in an exercise to develop trust.

with me and not become sloppy again,” Dos Reis says. “I hope good things for myself.”

Newer students, however, still seem wary of the program’s authoritarian format. “I chose to be here,” a junior cadet says proudly. But her voice wavers. In contrast to the second-year students, who are professional-looking and focused from their SMA experiences, the junior cadet seems nervous as she sways back and forth on her feet. While the older students describe themselves with positive, focused adjectives, she and a fellow junior cadet seem daunted by questions about themselves.

“I don’t know who I am,” junior Cadet Robert Fletcher says quietly, but he does know who he wants to be. “I’d like to control my anger more. I fight too much. And I’d like to finish things that I don’t want to do.”

If he stays with the program, Fletcher will improve, Arnold says.

“We use military discipline, but we offset it

with compassion to really show the cadets that we care for their overall growth now and in the future,” he says.

Despite the push-ups, the yelling and the rushing around, the cadets seem motivated and proud. Of the more than 100 students, only a handful fail to hold their heads high as they sit in class, walk around campus and participate in military-style training.

“Those students just started,” Biggs says of the few cadets who stand out. “They either adapt or leave the program.”

“Repeatedly demonstrating a bad attitude and not showing any sign of improvement constitutes failure to adapt,” Arnold explains.

This August day Biggs is out on the grass teaching 20 students about trust — trust toward their supervisors, their peers and their subordinates.

The students laugh as they stand in small clusters of five students. A lone student

in the middle of a circle crosses her arms across her chest, closes her eyes and lets her body go limp. The students on the outside push her gently clockwise around the circle. Twice the student in the center is dropped but quickly helped up by peers.

“You won’t always like who you’re working with, but you still have to give them respect,” Biggs reminds the group.

They all nod their heads.

Velarde attributes the program’s success to the students’ ability to self-regulate. “The transformation of the majority of students’ behavior is unbelievable,” he says. “They turn themselves around.”

But the teachers and administrative staff also deserve credit.

“This is my community,” Arnold says. “We [teachers] do extra hours, extra everything for these kids. They have value and are worth something, and I remind them of that every day.”

CNG maintained Nike nukes

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

When people think of nuclear missiles, we may picture giant silos in Montana or South Dakota. However, before the intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) became the standard of nuclear delivery and capability, defense of U.S. airspace against Soviet nuclear bombers was in the hands of the Nike missile system and the Army National Guard, including a unit in California.

The Nike program began in 1945 as an anti-aircraft surface-to-air missile project. The first Nike missile was the Ajax, which went active in 1953. Those missiles were placed near ICBM sites, dense population centers and places of strategic military value to defend against Soviet nuclear bombers. The Nike missiles were also deployed in NATO countries and Turkey to counter the Soviet military.

The missiles were brought up in elevators horizontally and then placed on their launchers. Soldiers continually prepared to get the missiles battle-ready in case of a Soviet first strike. One launcher was on 15-minute alert, two were on 30-minute alert and the final launcher was on two-hour alert.

Shortly after the Ajax became operational, the Nike program upgraded to Hercules missiles. The Hercules model was faster and stronger than its predecessor. In addition to striking individual bombers or groups of bombers, it was able to intercept and destroy ballistic missiles. With a speed of more than 3,000 mph (and later 8,000 mph), a ceiling of 100,000 feet and a range of 100 miles, the Nike Hercules was a demonstration

of the strength of the U.S. military's defensive arsenal. What most struck fear into enemies, however, was the 20 kiloton nuclear warhead and conventional high explosives at the tip of the missile.

A unique aspect of the Nike missile program was that it was run by Army National Guard personnel. There was only one active-duty officer, whose role was to ensure positive inventory of the nuclear arsenal. The 251st Air Defense Artillery Regiment was responsible for maintaining the missiles in California. The California National Guard Soldiers were directly under the chain of command of the active-duty Army. The Nike Missile program is the only instance of Army National Guard Soldiers being equipped with operational nuclear weapons.

As a reserve force entrusted to control nuclear weapons and secure the West Coast from the Soviet threat, the Nike missile system was a great achievement of the California National Guard. Nike installations were all over California from the 1940s to the 1970s, but with the rise of the ICBM — and the associated drop in the likelihood of nuclear bombers coming over the horizon — the Nike missile system became obsolete.

Although the system had proven itself against a live missile, it was not capable of dealing with long-range Soviet ICBMs. Most Nike sites in the Continental U.S. were deactivated by 1974. Many Nike missile sites can be visited, and a missile is on display at Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif.

By the Numbers

20 kilotons Each Nike missile was as strong as the atomic bomb that destroyed Nagasaki, Japan, during World War II, which was equivalent to 20,000 tons of TNT.

Armed Forces Fact

Between 1958 and 1979, the Army deployed 145 Nike Hercules batteries, including 35 built for the Hercules and 110 converted from Ajax installations.

Perspective

"It's not mad! Mutual Assured Destruction is the foundation of deterrence."

— Robert S. McNamara,
U.S. Secretary of Defense, 1961-68



A Nike Ajax missile



A Nike Hercules missile

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Rapid Trident 2010

PHOTOS BY PFC. MARILYN LOWRY



Soldiers unload piles of books, art supplies and classroom items donated to a schoolhouse in Lviv, Ukraine, by multinational troops participating in Rapid Trident 2010. The donation drive was initiated by Brig. Gen. Charlotte Miller, assistant adjutant general, Army Division, California National Guard, and included all 15 nations represented at Rapid Trident. **BELOW:** Ukrainian schoolchildren smile as they check out the new items.

CNG leads school donation drive

**By Pfc. Marilyn Lowry
69th Public Affairs Detachment**

In a humble schoolhouse in a tiny village outside Lviv, Ukraine, children anxiously awaited the arrival of a bus carrying new art supplies and athletic equipment.

As Soldiers participating in Rapid Trident unloaded the gifts onto a table in the schoolyard, the 7- to 15-year-old students eagerly filed out to meet the multinational troops and enjoy the new equipment.

With the sound of laughing children playing with new soccer balls in the background, the school's principal, Olga Vasulivna, expressed gratitude for all that had been done.

"This is very pleasant for me that such large nations took the time to visit and help a school so small as ours," she said. "We will remember this."

After hearing about the need for supplies in Lviv, Brig. Gen. Charlotte Miller had initiated a donation drive among all nations participating in Rapid Trident. Miller is the assistant adjutant general, Army Division, California National Guard.



The donation drive was led by CNG Capt. Luis Lopez, who said he felt incredible about the experience. An educator in California, Lopez said he knew the drive made a difference in the education of those children in Lviv. Lopez was one of many Soldiers who suggested troops should sponsor a school — as part of standard procedure — anytime they visit a country.



PHOTO BY PFC. MARILYN LOWRY

Ukrainian Soldiers man a checkpoint during a multinational field training exercise in Central City, Ukraine, on Sept. 14.

War-gaming for counter-insurgency

**By Pfc. Marilyn Lowry
69th Public Affairs Detachment**

"Always ready" is a motto well-known to National Guard Soldiers, and it is one the leaders of Rapid Trident took to heart in planning the annual series of joint exercises hosted by the Ukrainian Army and the California Army National Guard.

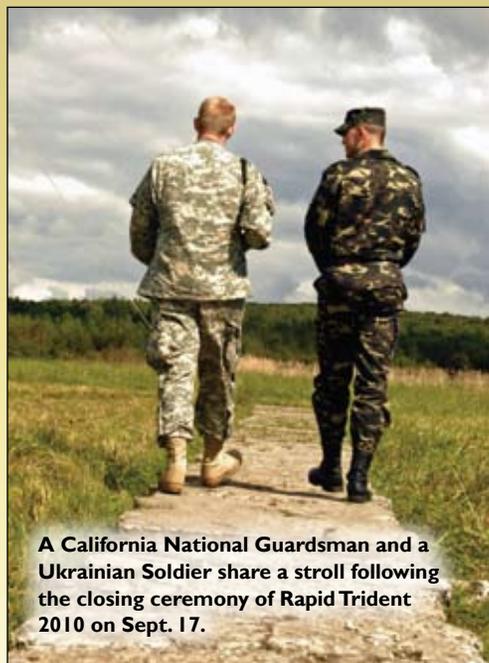
Among other events, this year's training mission, Sept. 6-17, included a multinational war-gaming exercise led by English Brig. Gen. Nicholas Welch, commander of the 7th Armored Brigade. The goal of the exercise was to build successful responses to possible counter-insurgency scenarios, with a focus on situations involving mass casualties, humanitarian aid failure and similar situations that would trigger a substantial military reaction.

"This is a tremendous training opportunity, where we have 14 nations in this headquarters," Welch said. "There's no monopoly on ideas when it comes to counter-insurgency. From all the nations, I'm learning every day."

The planning process included ratifying plans, working out gaps in the plans, building contingency plans and issuing orders against "what-ifs." Simulated events were created through an interconnected computer network.

Welch and other Soldiers said they were grateful for the training opportunity, which provided an assortment of problem-solving techniques for future use.

PHOTO BY PFC. MARILYN LOWRY



A California National Guardsman and a Ukrainian Soldier share a stroll following the closing ceremony of Rapid Trident 2010 on Sept. 17.

Soldiers overcome language, technical barriers

**By Spc. Nevada J. Smith
69th Public Affairs Detachment**

Working for the principles of peace, various nations participate each year in the Rapid Trident mission in Ukraine to learn to work together effectively despite differing tactics and technologies.

Co-hosted by the Ukrainian Army and the California Army National Guard, the Rapid Trident training mission teaches interoperability between armies and promotes cultural diversity and tolerance. In addition to Soldiers from the U.S. and Ukraine, Rapid Trident 2010 included troops from Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Germany, Macedonia, Moldova, Norway, Poland, Slovenia, Sweden and the United Kingdom. Russia was represented as an observer.

Service members from those nations breached both language and technological barriers to effectively execute a command post exercise and a field training exercise.

Through the course of the training, a change could be seen within the participating troops. When the exercise began, scenes were reminiscent of a high school lunch room, with clearly defined cliques and barriers. As the mission progressed and Soldiers from different nations began to get to know each other, those barriers fell. Tables in the chow hall quickly became multinational meeting places, with troops from each country scattered throughout, sharing stories and culture with their foreign counterparts.

"[The whole purpose] is to forge new relationships with international Soldiers while gaining experience," said 1st Lt. Michael A. Rodriguez, command historian for the California National Guard.

With the exercise coming to an end, a frequent sight was the exchanging of unit patches and e-mail addresses, as newfound friends ensured they would be able to stay in contact.

CA laws passed in 2010 protect your rights



AB 2365 protects troops who defer debt payments

California has laws to protect a deployed service member's financial situation at home. Perhaps the most important gives the service member the ability to defer payment of their mortgage during the deployment. There can be no added interest or penalty for invoking that right.

Usually when a service member requests a deferment, the lender grants the request. Unfortunately sometimes the lender fails to grant the request or simply does not respond. To resolve this problem, Capt. (CA) Jay Coggan, a member of the California State Military Reserve Judge Advocate General Corps, proposed adding sections to the Military and Veterans Code that would allow the service member to recover damages, attorney fees and court costs, and would require an expedited judicial review of the service member's case.

Assembly Bill 2365 was authored by Assemblyman Ted Lieu, who is also an Air Force Reserve judge advocate, to create a legal remedy for service members to take care of these issues before they deploy. Should the lender not comply, the service member will be able to seek the assistance of a qualified attorney with the understanding that the lender will be required to pay reasonable attorney fees. Further, the court must review the case within 25 days, and there will be no court costs to the service member.

SB 1075 helps students called to service

Senate Bill 1075, authored by Sen. Lou Correa, requires all California colleges to reasonably accommodate and assist service members so they can make up any coursework missed due to military service.

Many National Guard members have been required to leave their studies temporarily to respond to state emergencies, and some of those members have suffered academically because of their absence. Prior to the passage of SB 1075, the law required colleges to issue a credit for tuition and fees the student had paid; the credit would then be applied to a subsequent academic year. (Colleges also must provide a 100 percent refund if the student withdraws prior to the school's established withdrawal date.)

SB 1075 added a requirement that California colleges assist the student in making up coursework missed because of military service. The military member must notify the school and their instructors of any absences immediately upon being called to state active duty. The member also must furnish a copy of their military orders, if requested by the school or instructor.

The California Legislative Process

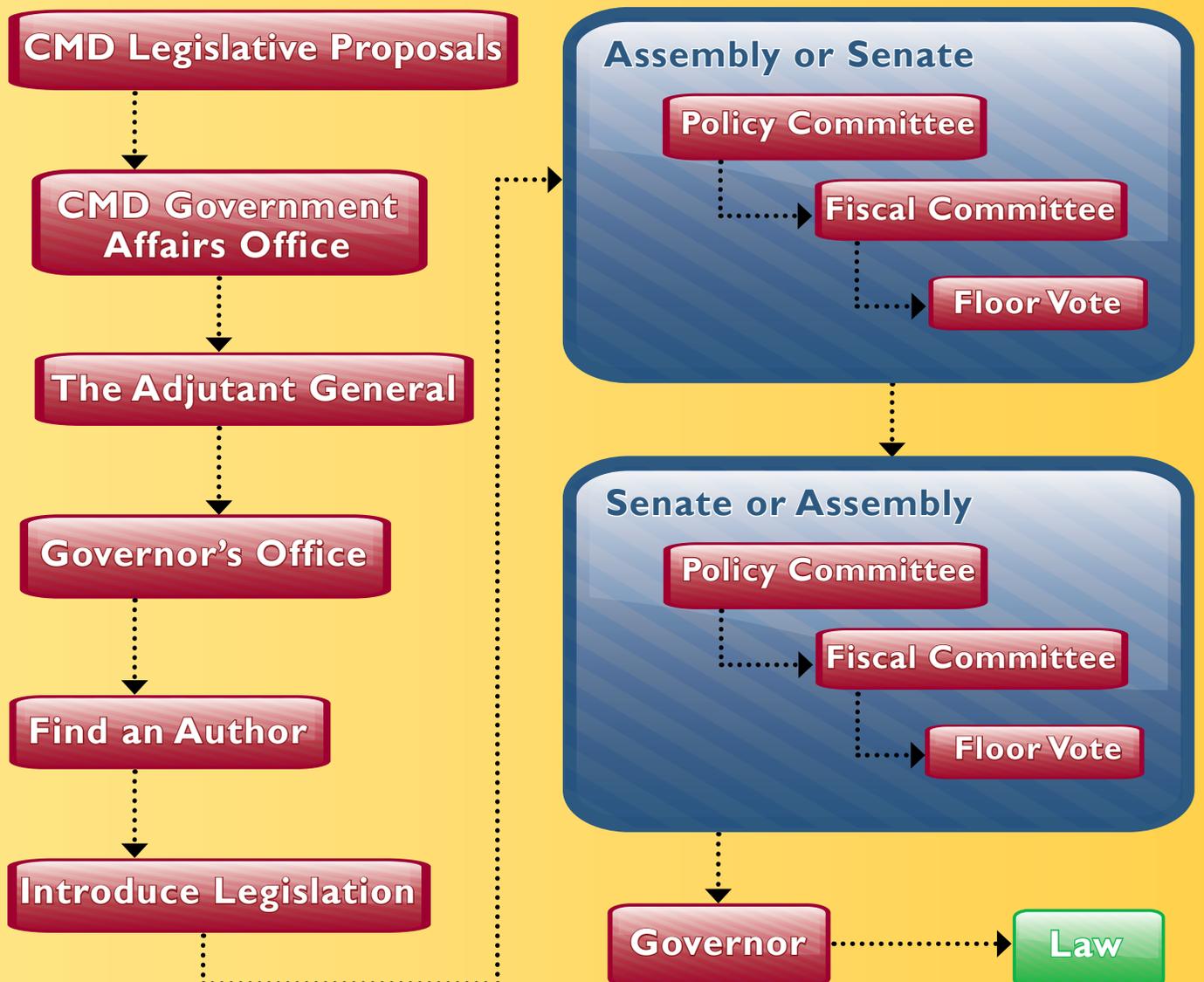
The California Military Department (CMD) routinely sponsors state legislation to address a multitude of issues faced by service members, their families or the department.

Every year, service members, commands and directorates within the California National Guard have the opportunity to suggest legislative proposals for the upcoming state legislative session. After vetting the proposals with leadership, the CMD Government Affairs Office submits the top proposals to the Office of the Governor. When a proposal is approved by the Office of the Governor, the Government Affairs Office finds an appropriate legislator to author the bill.

After the bill is drafted and introduced to the Legislature, it goes through an array of policy and fiscal committees before heading for a floor vote in its house of origin (the state Senate or Assembly). While in committees, government affairs staff work to ensure passage of the legislation by providing background, vetting proposed amendments and giving testimony to the committees. The bill then moves to the next house and repeats the committee process before another floor vote.

If a bill passes all those hurdles, it moves to the governor for approval. The governor has three available actions: He can sign, veto or take no action on the bill. If the bill is signed, it will become law on Jan. 1 of the following year. If the bill is vetoed, it will not become law unless the legislature overrides the veto with a 2/3 vote. If the governor takes no action, the bill will automatically become law on Jan. 1.

For more on the legislative process, visit www.legislature.ca.gov or contact the CMD Government Affairs Office at 916-854-3705.



146th hosts Yellow Ribbon post-deployment event

By Airman 1st Class Ashley Ramirez
146th Airlift Wing

The 146th Airlift Wing Family Readiness Group held its first Yellow Ribbon post-deployment event Aug. 28-29. The event hosted more than 150 Air National Guard members, who had returned from deployment within the last 60 days, and their families.

Mandated by Congress in 2008, the Yellow Ribbon Program works with National Guard and Reserve members and their families to provide information, services, referrals and proactive outreach opportunities throughout a member's deployment cycle.

This year's event gave members and their families access to more than a dozen sources of information and services from providers such as TriWest/TriCare, the Department of Veterans Affairs, Troops to Teachers, Military OneSource, USAA and many more. The event also included workshops on stress management, money management, personalities and behavioral tendencies.

"There are so many benefits and entitlements out there that are earned by our members, particularly when they are deployed, and it is so difficult to get them that information," said Julie Morency, Air-

man and Family Readiness Program manager for the 146th. "Our families are asked to function without the extra support that active-duty installations offer their members. Yellow Ribbon is a way to help rectify that."

Senior Master Sgt. Bob Taylor, first sergeant for the 146th, said 400 wing members deployed between October 2009 and June 2010, and most volunteered for deployment. He said the Yellow Ribbon event provided valuable information for service members.

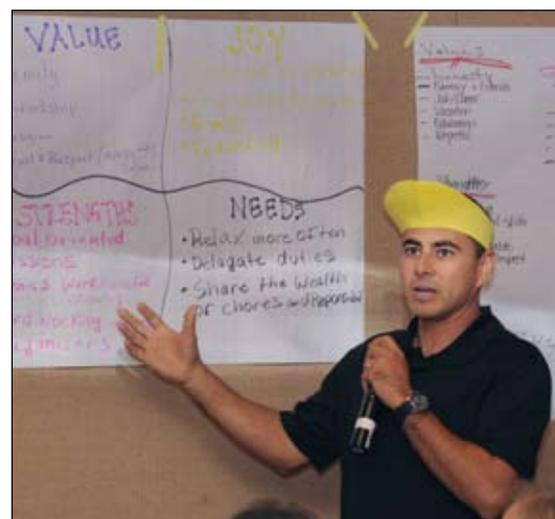
"Everybody learned something," Taylor said. "When you're deployed, you don't get that type of information."

Morency said Yellow Ribbon and similar events help service members and their families build relationships with other military families, thereby creating a support system when an Airman is deployed.

"Our members and families live in geographically separated locations, and most don't identify themselves as military families," she said. "This allows them to build a network of others in the same situation and build their own military community."



ABOVE: Senior Master Sgt. Linda Norman and Chief Master Sgt. Steve Toberman of the 146th Airlift Wing participate in a "telephone" exercise to help identify personality types during a Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program event in Ventura, Calif., on Aug. 28-29. RIGHT: Staff Sgt. Pedro Kladis of the 146th discusses another exercise to help identify personality traits and how to best cope with those traits as Airmen settle back into their lives after deployment.



PHOTOS BY TECH SGT. ALEX KOENIG

Additional bills passed this year

AB 1829 Military decorations and fraud

Authored by Assemblyman Paul Cook, Assembly Bill 1829 makes it a misdemeanor, instead of an infraction, to falsely represent yourself as being decorated in the U.S. military.

SB 1127 Internet resources for veterans and family members

Authored by the late Sen. Jenny Oropeza, Senate Bill 1127 requires the California Department of Veterans Affairs to publish user-friendly information on its website to help family members recognize signs of traumatic brain injury, post-traumatic stress disorder and other ailments a service member may experience after returning from active duty. The website, www.cdva.ca.gov, must also list information about how a veteran or family member can seek assistance.

AB 2416 Child custody

Also authored by Cook, AB 2416 protects the custodial rights of deployed parents by providing for modification of child custody and visitation orders. The court is also empowered to grant visitation rights for family members of a deployed parent.

AB 2500 California professional licenses

Authored by Assemblyman Curt Hagman, AB 2500 enables licensees under any board or commission of the Department of Consumer Affairs to have their license reinstated if it expires while serving on military active duty. The licensing board, in certain circumstances, may require the individual to pass a current license exam.

AB 2181 Minor construction contracting

Also authored by Hagman, AB 2181 increases the state's spending ability for construction and repair projects critical to National Guard armories and facilities.

AB 1908 Veterans organization license plates

AB 1908, authored by Cook, enables the California Department of Veterans Affairs to modify the design of license plates that support veterans organizations in order to make the plates more appealing to non-veterans.

SB 1057 Veterans Day

Authored by Sen. Jeff Denham, SB 1057 requires all state agencies and the Legislature to close each November 11 in honor of Veterans Day. The holiday can be moved only if November 11 falls on a Saturday or Sunday.

Simple steps to manage your VA compensation

By Nicole Townsend
CNG Transition Assistance Adviser

Most service members know that each time there is a change in their duty status (i.e. mobilization, demobilization or life change), it is their responsibility to update the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS).

Did you also know that if you receive Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) disability compensation, you must contact the VA each time you mobilize to start/stop direct deposit? Also, if a subsequent injury occurs, you must notify your VA regional office of the need for a subsequent ratings decision.

A few simple steps can help you avoid compensation delays:

1. Call the VA at 1-800-827-1000.
2. Choose Option 3 to set up or change direct deposit.
3. The VA Direct Deposit Office will send a Report of Contact to your VA regional office.
4. At the same time, mail your mobilization orders to your nearest VA regional office for a date-stamp and to stop compensation. VA regional office locations are listed below.
5. When you demobilize, mail the deployment "member copy" of your DD214 document to the VA regional office so it can restart compensation. Also, for subsequent ratings decisions, be sure to mail appropriate medical or dental documentation for the claim to the VA regional office.

VA Regional Offices

Los Angeles office, serving Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara and Ventura counties:
11000 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90024

San Diego office, serving Imperial, Orange, Riverside and San Diego counties:
8810 Rio San Diego Dr.
San Diego, CA 92108

Oakland office, serving all other California counties, except those served by the Reno, Nev., office:
1301 Clay St., Rm. 1300 North,
Oakland, CA 94612

Reno, Nev., office, serving Alpine, Lassen, Modoc and Mono counties:
5460 Reno Corporate Dr.
Reno, NV 89511

All offices can be reached at 1-800-827-1000

40th STB serves up hot meals in Los Alamitos

By Spc. Jennifer C. Eddy
40th Infantry Division

Temperatures soaring to 140 degrees inside a mobile containerized kitchen didn't stop 40th Support Troop Battalion (STB) cooks from providing hot lunches to hungry 40th Infantry Division Soldiers on Oct. 3 during monthly training on Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos.

Hot lunches are a new initiative implemented by 1st Sgt. George Gonzalez. This helps maintain field capabilities by using the containerized kitchen equipment and implementing the supply-chain procedures necessary to prepare meals on a large scale.

It has the additional benefit of creating a boon in troop morale. Despite the sweltering sun beating down on the kitchen, four 40th STB cooks were excited to provide nutritious food for their fellow Soldiers.

"Cooks are always working, and they stay busy, that's what attracted me to the [military occupational specialty]," Spc. Laban Scales said. "Serving good, free food improves morale for troops."

About 120 Soldiers took advantage of the opportunity for free meals on the training base. Spc. Ted O. Villa, an aviation operations Soldier with Company B, 40th STB, noted the food is quick and convenient for Soldiers on base.

The October exercise marked the first time the STB has used the containerized kitchen in 2010. Scales noted it is important for STB Soldiers to use the equipment regularly to familiarize themselves with it.

"It's important to train, because like any other military occupational specialty, if you don't use your skills you'll lose them," said Sgt. 1st Class Kelly L. Drzewiecki, noncommissioned officer in charge of the mess section.



PHOTO BY SGT. 1ST CLASS RAFAEL RODRIGUEZ

Staff Sgt. Eddie Harrison of the 40th Support Troop Battalion mess section serves a plate of hot food to Pfc. Krysten Fridd inside a mobile containerized kitchen Oct. 3 on Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos.

Brothers serve 224th as medics in Iraq

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Nathan Lavy
224th Sustainment Brigade

Some things are better with family, which medic Jason Tugmon found out Aug. 26, when he was promoted to sergeant on Contingency Operating Base (COB) Adder, Iraq.

"It is an honor to get promoted to the rank of sergeant," said the 224th Sustainment Brigade Soldier and San Dimas, Calif., native. "It would have been an honor to have anyone pin me, but it was especially meaningful to have my little brother here to do it."

Tugmon and his brother, Spc. Brian Tugmon, are both medics for the 224th serving on COB Adder, where they share a containerized housing unit.

"It was nice promoting my brother," Spc. Tugmon said. "It makes it easier for people to distinguish the two of us."

The brothers' daily routine consists of seeing patients, taking their vital signs and occasionally administering intravenous fluids or anthrax and influenza vaccinations. They also periodically work rotations at the Combat Support Hospital on COB Adder and serve on convoys.

"Having my brother here is a blessing; the only downside is I worry about him when I'm out on convoys," Sgt. Tugmon said. "It's weird, but when I'm here on the post, I feel like he's protected. For the most part it's great, though, because I have someone I



ters and living in the same housing unit, the two maintain a positive attitude and a healthy sibling relationship.

"We are already predisposed to each other's expectations," Spc. Tugmon said. "We respect one another enough not to get in tedious fights. We have the ability to share and help each other through stressful times, which a lot of siblings don't have."

LEFT: Spc. Brian Tugmon of Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 224th Sustainment Brigade, promotes his brother Sgt. Jason Tugmon of the 224th HHC on Aug. 26 at Contingency Operating Base Adder, Iraq. BELOW: The Tugmon brothers, natives of San Dimas, Calif., serve as medics for the 224th on COB Adder.

can confide in."

Both brothers are pursuing degrees through the online school Grantham University. Spc. Tugmon is working on his undergraduate degree, and Sgt. Tugmon is working on a master's in health care administration.

"My brother and I have different hobbies, but one thing we do consistently is go to the gym together," Spc. Tugmon said. "On my free time, I go to the chapel and play bass guitar."

Despite working together in close quar-





First Sergeant Al Smoot of Company C, I-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, is hoisted from an HH-60 Black Hawk helicopter during annual training for 3rd Battalion, 140th Aviation Regiment, in August.
 For more on the 3-140th, see Page 5.
 Photo by Sgt. Jon Guibord

MG Harrel named Army DAG

Maj. Gen. John S. Harrel succeeded Brig. Gen. Louis J. Antonetti as deputy adjutant general, California Army National Guard, on Oct. 1 after Antonetti's retirement from military service. Harrel is also the commander of the 17,000-Soldier California Army National Guard, a position he has held since June 2009.

"[Harrel's] career has been marked by outstanding service, making significant gains in all measured areas of readiness," said Brig. Gen. Mary Kight, adjutant general of the California National Guard. "Under his leadership, I am confident that the strategic and operational direction of Army Division will continue to move forward."

Harrel's active military service began in 1975, when he was commissioned as an officer in the Marine Corps. He served the Marines until 1980, when then-Captain Harrel transferred to the CNG. Among his many CNG leadership positions, Harrel served as commander of 1st Battalion, 185th Armor Regiment; commander of Task Force Falcon/Multi-National Brigade (East), Kosovo and Army Forces Kosovo, Macedonia and Albania; and commander of the 40th Infantry Division. His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit (with one Oak Leaf Cluster), Meritorious Service Medal (with two Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Commendation Medal (with two Oak Leaf Clusters) and Army Achievement Medal.

CNG Soldier wins NOMAR award

Spc. Joaquin Brambila Montero is the National Guard Bureau's (NGB) recipient of the National Organization for Mexican American Rights (NOMAR) Meritorious Service Award. A traditional member of the 79th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, Brambila also works full-time as an intelligence analyst for the CNG Joint Task Force Domestic Support—Counterdrug.

"He has distinguished himself ... with outstanding duty performance, enhancing the image of Guardsmen of Mexican heritage," said Brig. Gen. Mary Kight, adjutant general of the California National Guard. "Specialist Brambila Montero exemplifies the core values of the California Army National Guard."

Brambila Montero won the CNG's 2009 Soldier of the Year competition and advanced to the NGB Region 7 competition, which included eight states and territories. He placed first in the Region 7 Army Physical Fitness Test, with a score of 310. Brambila Montero is pursuing a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and volunteers regularly at his local public library.

CNG offers marriage seminar

Marriage Enrichment Seminars are scheduled for Nov. 20-21 in Rancho Cordova, Calif., and Jan. 22-23 in San Diego.

The seminar coaches couples on how to communicate effectively, work as a team to solve problems, manage conflicts without damaging closeness, and preserve and enhance love, commitment and friendship. For more information and registration, contact Maj. Christopher Guadiz, chaplain, at 916-854-3398.

CSMR celebrates 70 years

The California State Military Reserve will celebrate the 70th anniversary of its founding during a gala Dec. 11 in Anaheim, Calif. The California State Guard, which later became the CSMR, was activated Jan. 2, 1941, as the U.S. prepared to enter World War II. The Dec. 11 gala will be World War II-themed.

Tickets cost \$45. For information or to register, contact Lt. Col. (CA) James Adair at jimadair@cox.net.

CORRECTION: An article in the October issue incorrectly identified reporter Spc. David S. Choi's unit. He is a member of the 69th Public Affairs Detachment.

DID YOU KNOW...

... there are procedures for processing an interstate transfer (IST) from the California National Guard?

In the Army National Guard, a Soldier should inform his or her chain of command of their intent to move out of state. The unit will then notify the California IST coordinator, who will locate possible choices of units to which the Soldier may transfer. A coordinated transfer between states can be accomplished prior to relocation by using Department of the Army Form 4187, National Guard Bureau Form 22-5 or informal memorandum.

In the Air National Guard, an Airman should inform his or her chain of command. The California Air National Guard will then supply the Airman's new home state with an affiliation packet that comprises a variety of relevant documents, including a list of Air National Guard units to which the Airman would like to transfer.

National Guard members sometimes relocate quickly, before the transfer process is initiated or completed. Those situations require an uncoordinated IST. In those cases, a Soldier should request an excused absence from training for 90 days or request to be placed in the Inactive National Guard to find a new National Guard unit and execute a transfer. An Airman can address the issue with his or her chain of command and work with them to determine the best path, and the Airman may be excused from drills while searching for a new unit.

Service members must meet height and weight standards to be authorized for an IST. They must clear all supply actions before the IST can be completed, and they must attend all scheduled training with their current unit unless properly excused.

References: National Guard Regulation 600-200, Air National Guard Instruction 36



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Wheeled vehicle mechanic Spc. Stormy Oeur, left, provides reconnaissance support as explosive ordnance disposal specialist Staff Sgt. Peter C. Picone fires an M107 long-range disruptor into targets during the 217th Ordnance Company's monthly training on Camp Roberts, Calif., in September. The M107 is used from a safe distance to disrupt explosives that could otherwise endanger service members.

Photo by Spc. David S. Choi

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