

GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard



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Building a better future

Guard's Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy shapes young lives

NCO and Soldier of the Year

Commander's corner

LZ X-Ray bolstered both sides' hopes in Vietnam

Major General William H. Wade II



Forty-four years ago, on Sunday, Nov. 15, 1965, in the Central Highlands of Vietnam in a clearing of the Ia Drang Valley known as LZ X-Ray, the 450 sky Soldiers of the 1st Battalion of the 7th Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), took on a North Vietnamese force that was more than three times their size. In this, the first pitched battle between American forces and the People's Army of Vietnam, American forces abruptly and quickly transitioned from their role as advisers to that of combatants. The ensuing three-day battle (the beginning of a 34-day campaign) was the stuff that legends are made from. The battle was the subject of a famous book and successful movie, "We Were Soldiers Once ... and Young," by retired Lt. Gen. (then a lieutenant colonel) Harold G. "Hal" Moore and reporter Joseph Galloway.

In July 2007, nearly 42 years after that fateful Sunday, Moore and Galloway attended a conference at the American Veterans Center and recalled their experiences and lessons learned. Anecdotally, Galloway recalled a reporter's indoctrination to combat:

My most enduring moment has to be the morning of the 15th, about 10 minutes before 7 a.m., when literally all hell broke loose and a couple of battalions attacked Charlie Company. I learned rapidly what it meant to be in the beaten zone. Everything they fired at Charlie Company that didn't hit something passed right through our command post, which was a rather barren termite hill, and I was laying flat on my belly, feathering out at the edges, while there were a lot of

pops and zips buzzing over my head. Then I felt a thump in my ribs, and carefully turned my head sideways to see what had hit me. It was a size 12 combat boot on the foot on Sergeant Major Basil L. Plumley, a bear of a man out of West Virginia. He leaned at the waist and shouted over the din of battle: "Can't take no pictures laying there on the ground, sonny!" And I thought, well, he's right! And then it passed through my mind that I was with the 7th Cavalry, a unit I had heard of before, in a river valley and surrounded by an overwhelmingly superior enemy force. It hadn't worked very well about 100 years before in a place called Little Big Horn, so it seemed to me that we might all die here today. So like a fool, I got up. And everything was OK after that. All the fear went away and I did my job, and other jobs as needed.

The next to speak was Spc. Bill Beck, assistant machine gunner, from Alpha Company. He said:

In 1993 all of us here at this table went back to Vietnam on a very special trip, and eventually to the battlefields with the enemy commanders. But before we did, we were all at a dinner on a floating Chinese restaurant on the West Lake in Hanoi. I was seated with an infantry colonel, who had been a lieutenant at the battle of LZ X-Ray, and he asked me, "Where were you?" I grabbed a napkin, drew a quick sketch of the battlefield and the dry creek bed, and put an X right beside it. Lieutenant Colonel [retired] George Forrest, former commander of Alpha Company, reached over and drew the symbol for a machine gun next to the X.

At that, the North Vietnamese colonel turned white, his mouth fell open, and he gasped. He said, "Your machine gun killed my battalion – 400 men – and my best friend among them. I am godfather to his daughter, who I just married off last month. This is very hard for me," he said. I looked at him and nodded, and said, "Well, it wasn't all that easy for me either."

Two opposing views — one American and one North Vietnamese. However, the disparity of views did not end on the battlefield; they permeated all the way to the top of each government, where each side saw this battle as an indication of eventual victory. Gen. William C. Westmoreland, the American commander in Vietnam, looked at the statistics of the 34-day Ia Drang campaign and saw a kill ratio of 12-to-1 in favor of the Americans, and as a result, he felt the American military could "bleed the enemy to death over the long haul, with a strategy of attrition." In a tragic irony, President Ho Chi Minh viewed the results of the Ia Drang battle as a draw, and he felt — like the Americans did — that time was on his side. If they only would have had patience and perseverance, they could wear down and outlast the Americans.

Lacking the will of the American people and a supportive political process to prosecute the war in Vietnam, patience and perseverance by the North Vietnamese eventually carried the day and ended the conflict. However, like Gettysburg, the Battle of the Bulge and Pork Chop Hill in Korea, the Battle of LZ X-Ray will live on in the annals of great battles — no matter what side you fought on.

Honor veterans on 11/11

Command Sergeant Major William Clark Jr.



Several significant events in American history occurred on November 11, and we call that date Veterans Day, a day to recognize our service men and women for their contributions to our country. Veterans Day is an annual American holiday and is both a federal and state holiday in every state.

In other parts of the world, November 11 is celebrated as Armistice Day, falling on the anniversary of the signing of the armistice that ended World War I. Major hostilities in World War I officially ended with the signing of the armistice at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month in 1918.

On November 11, 1942, the United States was fighting in World War II, and the draft ages had been expanded: Men 18 to 37 were now eligible. Black men had previously been passed over for the draft because of

racist assumptions about their abilities and the viability of a mixed-race military. This changed, however, in 1943, when a "quota" was imposed, meant to limit the number of black men drafted; the quota reflected the representation of black people in the overall population, roughly 10.6 percent. Initially, black Soldiers were restricted to "labor units," but this too ended as the war progressed and black men were finally used in combat units. By the end of the war, approximately 34 million men had registered and 10 million had been inducted into the military.

In 1968, Congress decided to change Veterans Day. New legislation moved the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. This did not sit well with many Americans: November 11 was a date of historical significance to

too many Americans to change it, and in 1978, Congress returned the observance to its traditional date.

An interesting event occurs at 11 a.m. on November 11 each year, as a combined color guard representing all U.S. military services executes "Present Arms" at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Arlington National Cemetery. Our nation's tribute to its fallen warriors is symbolized by the laying of a presidential wreath and the playing of "Taps." On Memorial Day in 1958, two unidentified fallen Soldiers, one from World War II and one from the Korean War, were buried next to the unknown Soldier of World War I.

A law was passed in 1973 allowing the addition of an unknown American from the Vietnam War, but because of improved

technology to identify the dead, it was not until 1984 that an unidentified warrior was buried in the tomb. However, in 1998, the unknown American was identified through DNA testing as 1st Lt. Michael Blassie, an Air Force pilot who was shot down in May 1972. His body was disinterred and reburied by his family in St. Louis.

As we celebrate this Veterans Day, remember we are still a nation at war. During the past eight years, our returning veterans have been recognized with praise for their service throughout the United States and around the globe, from combat operations to humanitarian aid missions. Our forces continue to be deployed in countries throughout the world, defending democracy and the American way of life. On Veterans Day, take the time to thank our veterans for their service and sacrifices.

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- ★ 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
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- ★ Caption (what is happening, who is pictured and the date of the photo)
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Cover Shot



Photo by Laura Herzog

Sunburst Youth Challenge Academy Drill Team cadets proudly march into their graduation ceremony last year in Los Alamitos, Calif.



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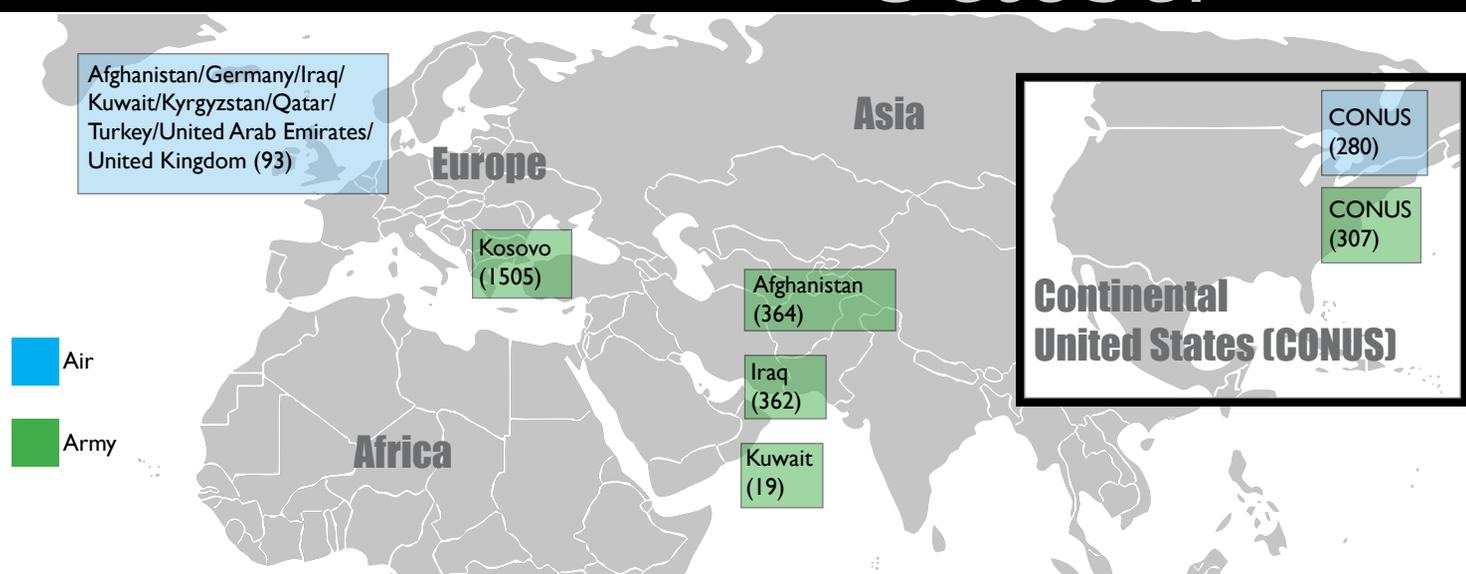
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The California National Guard as of October 2009



Building solutions

By Maj. Kimberly Holman
San Diego Regional Public Affairs



California provides ample training ground for IRT

In the northeastern hills of San Diego County, the plant life is charred and black from wildfires that tore through the area more than two years ago. The tips of branches, however, now show signs of recovery, as bright green growth appears in sharp contrast against the burnt bark.

Aiding in the area's recovery, National Guard engineers are rehabilitating the road leading into and out of the Mesa Grande Indian Reservation. Many residents there evacuated during the October 2007 fires and almost lost their lives because they were unable to pass firefighters moving toward the fire on a thin, unstable dirt road on a steep mountainside that serves as the only route into and out of the reservation.

"People were trying to get out, and the firefighters were trying to get in, but the road was so small we couldn't pass each other safely," one resident of the reservation recalled. "It was very scary, and we had to back up on this winding road until we found a place where the car could pass the fire trucks."

The California National Guard Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program sees problems like these as opportunities to offer no-cost answers. Units come to California from across the country to perform their annual training through the IRT program; this year's participants have included Soldiers and Airmen from Delaware, New Hampshire, Maryland, Oklahoma and California.

Oklahoma National Guardsmen conducted annual training this summer at the Mesa Grande Indian Reservation and widened a 2,000-foot stretch of road to a width of 24 feet. They also added a ditch on the side of the road for drainage and expanded a play area and a parking area on the reservation using the excess dirt.

The improvements came at no cost to the reservation or its residents.

"When we started getting things done, the people who live here were very appreciative," said Spc. Aaron Kanada of

the Oklahoma National Guard's 120th Engineer Battalion. "We have definitely made this road a lot safer, and it's good to see that the work we are doing is helping them."

Capt. Justin Goldman, commander of California's IRT program, said the task provided a real-world training scenario that prepared the troops for deployment.

"We train engineer units, transportation units, medical units, and we do this by deploying them to California in an environment similar to what they would see if they deployed to Iraq or Afghanistan," he said. "For example, engineer units will come out and they'll work in the terrain out in eastern San Diego county, very reminiscent of the mountainous terrain you'll see in Afghanistan, and even in the western county there are scenarios that are very similar to Iraq."

Units training through the IRT program completed several projects along the Mexico border this year in support of U.S. Customs and Border Protection, and communities like the Hoopa Indian Reservation near Eureka, Calif., have provided real-world training opportunities in the medical and dental fields.

"California has a robust Medical IRT program," Goldman said. "Several units rotate through the K'ima:w Medical Center on the Hoopa Indian Reservation in Northern California annually, and the large, modern clinic provides an opportunity for all different medical services to train and staff a clinic as they would if they were to fall into a combat support hospital overseas."

The medical clinic is generally understaffed and very busy. This provides an opportunity for Soldiers and Airmen to see many patients during their training period.

"Until you have an opportunity to come out and do the real thing with real people with real situations, with things thrown in the mix that maybe you don't prepare for in an exercise, you don't get to see how effectively you're drilling or how your training time is," Goldman said.



PHOTOS BY MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY

Oklahoma National Guardsmen widen a 2,000-foot stretch of road on the Mesa Grande Indian Reservation as part of their annual training. The California National Guard's Innovative Readiness Training program hosts units from across the country each year.

40th ID engineers earn Meritorious Unit Commendation

By Brandon Honig
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

American efforts in Iraq go far beyond putting boots on the ground to provide security for the fledgling democracy. Units like Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD), Engineer Brigade, 40th Infantry Division (ID), are providing infrastructure that will improve and lengthen the lives of Iraqi people for decades to come.

Among other projects during its deployment from May 13, 2006, to May 8, 2007, the 29-Soldier unit built and renovated hospitals, police stations, roads, airports, electrical power stations and water treatment plants.

The unit's exceptional service was recognized by Secretary of the Army Pete Geren, who bestowed the Meritorious Unit Commendation for the HHD's performance.

"The Meritorious Unit Commendation is awarded to units for exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding services during a period of military operations against an armed enemy, displaying such outstanding devotion and superior performance of exceptionally difficult tasks as to set it apart and above from other units with similar missions," the commendation states.

The degree of achievement required to earn a Meritorious Unit Commendation equals that required to warrant the Legion of Merit for an individual Soldier.

"Doing the types of things that you had to do and to be recognized the way that you [were], this is an important part of history and is very significant in our corps of engineers," said Brig. Gen. Scott W. Johnson, commander of the 40th ID, during an award ceremony Oct. 9 in Sacramento. "It was a big mission, and very integral to progress in Iraq ... and you accomplished your mission in extraordinarily fine fashion."



Col. (CA) Michael L. Herman attaches the Meritorious Unit Commendation streamer to the guidon for Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, Engineer Brigade, 40th Infantry Division. The unit was recognized for its exceptional conduct during a yearlong deployment to Iraq in 2006 and 2007.

During the ceremony, Johnson presented 19 members of the unit with their Meritorious Unit Commendation ribbons, a red pin with gold border worn above the right breast. Ten former members of the HHD were on deployment with other units. The 40th ID Engineer Brigade was inactivated in 2007 after the HHD returned from Iraq.

Col. (CA) Michael L. Herman, who commanded the HHD during its Iraq tour, said he is most proud that his unit doubled the proportion of the Iraqi population that has access to

clean, potable water.

"That's something we take for granted here in the U.S. We're used to turning on the tap and having the water come out clean, but that's not something they're used to in Iraq," Herman said. "Clean water affects infant mortality, it affects health, it affects the ability of children to grow into healthy adults with strong bodies and strong bones. It affects their control of disease.

"That stands out as a shining example of something we did for the people of Iraq that can never be overstated."

Dozens of units get new Bell home

By 1st Lt. Hannah Pitt
40th Brigade Support Battalion

The 40th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) "Superchargers," the logistical lifeline for the 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, on Oct. 4 celebrated the ribbon-cutting for the Bell Armed Forces Reserve Center, a 2,800-member facility consisting of a training building, an organizational maintenance shop and an unheated storage building in Bell, Calif. The facility will be home to 16 Army Reserve units, six Army National Guard units, two Marine Corps Reserve units and multiple Naval Reserve units.

The new center will provide Soldiers, Sailors and Marines a premiere training structure. Lt. Col. Julian Bond, commander of the 40th BSB, noted that the proximity of the forces working in the facility will create numerous opportunities for inter-agency training.

The training building comprises 195,591 square feet, con-



PHOTO COURTESY OF 40TH BSB

sisting of administrative offices, an assembly hall, a kitchen, weapons vaults, multiple classrooms, a mailroom, a medical center, an engagement skills trainer room, a physical fitness center, and recruiting and family support offices. The maintenance building holds 44,395 square feet.

"This new state-of-the-art facility will enhance the California Army National Guard's ability to support civil authorities and federal missions," said Brig. Gen. Scott Johnson, 40th Infantry Division commander.



PHOTO BY MASTER SGT. KURT SKOGLUND

Senior Airman James K. Parmentier, a guidance and control systems avionics technician with the 129th Rescue Wing, receives the John L. Levitow Award on Sept. 10 for his exceptional performance during Airman Leadership School.

129th Airman nabs top honor

By Master Sgt. Mavi Smith
I.G. Brown Air National Guard
Training and Education Center

Senior Airman James K. Parmentier, a guidance and control systems avionics technician with the 129th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, was the top graduate among 47 Airmen who attended Airman Leadership School at the I.G. Brown Air National Guard Training and Education Center in Tennessee earlier this year.

Parmentier, who was the B-Flight leader for his class, took home the John L. Levitow Award, the highest honor awarded a graduate of any Air Force enlisted professional military education course. The honor is presented to one student who demonstrates academic excellence as well as leadership, enthusiasm, military bearing and dedication to the spirit and mission of the Air Force. It is based on objective testing, performance evaluations, demonstrated leadership, and student and instructor evaluations.

"Senior Airman Parmentier is very deserving of this award," said Tech. Sgt. Jeela S. Matthews, the Airman Leadership School instructor for B-flight. "The entire flight voted for him. It speaks volumes that the whole flight believed in and accepted him throughout the entire class."

Matthews added that she gave Parmentier the highest possible instructor evaluation, which she had never done before.

"As a flight leader, he did everything you would expect a flight leader to do and more," she said. "He was very open, understanding, thorough and professional. He went out of his way to talk to and help others. He did everything right."

Airman Leadership School is a five-week in-residence course that teaches many of the leadership skills required of supervisors and reporting officials

"I'm honored and humbled that I was selected for this award," Parmentier said. "I did not expect it, and it's nice to know that I did that good of a job and got noticed for it. It really is a great honor."

CNG Soldiers are best on Bondsteel

By Sgt. 1st Class Paul Wade
69th Public Affairs Detachment

Two California National Guardsmen made their state proud last month as they claimed the Best Soldier and Best Noncommissioned Officer awards on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, following a grueling multi-skill competition.

"We have the best of the best here in this competition," said Rob Whittle, command sergeant major for Kosovo Force (KFOR) Multi-National Task Force-East. "Only [in] the last event did we know who the winner was. It was a tight event throughout every element of the competition."

Staff Sgt. Carlos Reyes Jr. and Spc. Henry Valenzuela — both of the Modesto, Calif.-based 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment — won the Best NCO and Best Soldier prizes, respectively.

"I am humbled to say the least," Reyes said. "I am proud but uncomfortable at the same time. I know there are many NCOs here that have accomplished great things in their careers. It is an honor to be considered among the best."

Fourteen competitors entered the event,

which tested varied abilities such as writing and physical fitness. The entrants recited the NCO Creed or the Warrior Creed, faced examinations on drill and ceremony, completed land navigation exercises and Army Warrior Tasks, ran up Radar Hill, qualified on weapons and endured a 10-mile ruck march followed by a medical stress test evaluation.

"I struggled with almost every event," Valenzuela said. "The amount of material we needed to study to be prepared for the oral board was intimidating. In the end, I am very honored."

It was inspiring to watch the Soldiers give their all, Whittle said, and the competition helped build future leaders while strengthening NCOs' leadership foundations. He added that the Cal Guard Soldiers have "some serious bragging rights," having shown themselves to be in the top 1 percent of Soldiers on Camp Bondsteel.

"They are literally the best of the best that we have here in Kosovo," Whittle said. "They are our future leaders, and I expect to see first sergeants and sergeants major out of this group some day. Today, I know, we built a stronger future for the NCO Corps."



PHOTOS BY SGT. MAJ. KEVIN GARRETT

ABOVE: Fourteen Soldiers participate in the Best NCO and Best Soldier competitions on Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, in October. RIGHT: Staff Sgt. Carlos Reyes Jr., right, and Spc. Henry Valenzuela, both of the California National Guard's 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, won the Best NCO and Best Soldier prizes, respectively.



49th MPs closing book on Iraq police training

By Spc. Eddie Siguenza
49th Military Police Brigade

The 49th Military Police Brigade has taken the handoff; its offense is on the Iraqi field.

During a transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 12 at Camp Liberty, Iraq, the 8th MP Brigade, an active-duty unit from Hawaii, handed over its responsibilities, signaling that the time has arrived for Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), 49th MP Brigade, to put its team back into action.

"You and your leaders are taking charge with incredible momentum behind you," said Maj. Gen. Peter Aylward, director, Joint Staff, National Guard Bureau. "You are the right organization to take the handoff and hit the line at full speed."

The HHC's approximately 100-Soldier contingent assumed responsibility for the operation of five battalions comprising more than 5,000 Soldiers for the next year.

"While many other units have helped train the Iraqi Police, the 49th MP Brigade is the birthplace of the police transition team (PTT)," said Brig. Gen. Donald J. Currier, commander of the 49th MP Brigade. "The PTT mission began with us [in 2005]. It is likely we will bring that mission to a close in Iraq. It is our duty, then, to close this chapter with honor and integrity."

PTTs combine civilians, brigade combat teams and MPs to streamline processes and improve communication between agencies.

During the Oct. 12 ceremony, 8th MP Brigade Commander Col. Byron A. Freeman called for a moment of silence to honor 11 service members who died during the unit's yearlong deployment.

"The 8th has done more than was needed," Aylward added. "While all of them gave some, sadly some gave all."

Freeman noted to Iraqi dignitaries in attendance that the 49th has deployed to Iraq in the past and performed



PHOTO COURTESY OF 49TH MP BRIGADE

Gen. Donald J. Currier unfurls the colors of the 49th Military Police Brigade during a transfer of authority ceremony Oct. 12 on Camp Liberty, Iraq. The unit created the first police transition teams (PTT) in Iraq during its deployment in 2005 and 2006, and it expects to complete the PTT mission during its current yearlong tour.

admirably.

"To our Iraqi guests, be assured you are gaining a true, tried and proven leader, one that is no stranger to this land," he said.

In 2005 and 2006, the 49th led three battalions as they trained Iraqi police in villages, towns and cities in various regions. That was the first time an MP brigade was tasked with the sole mission of training an Iraqi police force. This is expected to be the last time.

"There will still be the presence of military police in Iraq,

but not at this level," said Col. Grace Edinboro, deputy commander for the 49th MP Brigade. "I would say we'll be turning out the lights on MP missions in Iraq."

This time, the unit's role is one of partnership. Iraqi security forces are taking the lead on combat and police missions, while the 49th MPs advise, assist and report.

"We are in Iraq during a time when that nation is at a crossroads," Currier said. "If we do our job well by assisting the Iraqi government in building credibility with the populace, we may be able to influence the outcome of the entire conflict."

I-168 evacuates 3,400 wounded during Afghan tour

By Brandon Honig
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

When Sgt. Aron Decano says, "There's no other feeling that compares to really helping somebody," he is speaking from experience. He and 74 other Soldiers from Company C, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, returned last month from a 10-month tour in Afghanistan, during which they routinely rescued injured American service members and Afghan nationals.

"Anyone that will repeatedly fly unarmed and into hostile territory to ensure their fellow Soldiers make it home safe is a very special type of Soldier," said Col. Mitchell Medigovich, commander of the 40th Combat Aviation Brigade. "Undoubtedly, many families and Soldiers are truly grateful for [the Company C Soldiers'] courage in recovering those wounded in one of the most inhospitable places on Earth."

During its 10 months in Afghanistan, Company C transported and treated 3,400 patients, flew 2,200 missions and performed 51 combat hoists. During its 5,600 combat flight hours, Company C experienced no accidents and no injuries.

"These guys did it without pause, without hesitation. When that radio went off 24/7 for 10 months, these guys grabbed their gear ... and in an average of 12 minutes from the time we got the call, we were off the ground and en route," said Maj. Dan Anderson, commander of Company C. "There is no greater honor than to lead men and women like this into combat.

"Undoubtedly, there are people breathing, living, walking right now because of these Soldiers."

Anderson added that patients treated by Company C enjoyed some of the best care available anywhere, as its medics were recruited based on their civilian experience.

"We were very proud to bring the pinnacle of prehospital care that anyone had ever seen in Afghanistan," said Sgt. Mike Ferguson. "We really stacked the deck with a lot of paramedics that we brought with us, so we brought to Afghanistan a higher level of medical care than had been seen before in the prehospital world."

For many Company C Soldiers, the recent tour in Afghanistan was their fourth deployment since the Gulf War. Anderson said the spouses and families of Company C Soldiers made great sacrifices while the troops were deployed, but they can take pride in the accomplishments of their family members, who were entrusted with a "divine task."

"I was worried every day," said Erin Decano, wife of Sgt. Aron Decano, "but it was a good lesson in realizing there are some things bigger than yourself. Being a part of something that is so big and affects the whole world, I felt honored to be a part of that in some small way."

Company C flew 15 aircraft during its deployment, including three types of airframes. Anderson said an "indescribable" number of man-hours went into keeping the aircraft running, and the maintainers performed exceptionally well, in keeping with the entire unit's outstanding achievements.

"There's no doubt in my mind ... that



ABOVE: Soldiers of Company C, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, return to Sacramento on Oct. 15. RIGHT: Alexis Walters, 2, daughter of Staff Sgt. Robert Walters, waves a flag to the returning Soldiers.

you're the best out there," Medigovich said of Company C. "You do it better than anybody else."

The unit earned three Army Achievement Medals, two Army Achievement Medals for Meritorious Service, 33 Army Commendation Medals, 32 Air Medals, seven Air Medals for Meritorious Service, 11 Combat Action Badges and three Combat Medical Badges. In addition, Staff Sgt. Ernest Ottrix earned a Meritorious Service Medal, and five Soldiers earned Bronze Stars: Maj. Dan Anderson, Capt. Thomas Lemmons, 1st Sgt. Mario Jaurez, Sgt. 1st Class Al Smoot and Sgt. Marc Dragony.



"Our guys did a lot of missions that I don't think anyone in the Army can do better," Smoot said. "There's many Soldiers alive today who would not be if it weren't for these guys."

Wounded warriors inspire on 470-mile trek

By Maj. Danjel Bout
Joint Force Headquarters Government Affairs

In early October, Lt. Col. David Schmith and I joined more than 150 cyclists in the Ride 2 Recovery Golden State Challenge, a weeklong 470-mile, multi-stage ride from the San Francisco Veterans Affairs (VA) Hospital to the Los Angeles VA Hospital. The riders pedaled their way down the rugged coastal range to raise awareness for the challenges faced by wounded veterans and to raise funds for spinning and outdoor cycling programs at VA facilities nationwide.

The cycling programs sponsored by the Ride 2 Recovery Challenge provide wounded warriors with access to a sport that can have a dramatic impact on a participant's mental and physical conditioning. Those benefits were highlighted during the ride by the inspirational presence of a number of single- and double-amputee riders who lost limbs in Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom or the Vietnam War.

Under the tutelage of professional riders like former Olympian Wayne Stetina, the cyclists wound their way through California's fracture-laden topography



More than 150 cyclists last month participated in the Ride 2 Recovery Golden State Challenge, a 470-mile ride from San Francisco to Los Angeles to raise awareness for the challenges faced by wounded warriors and to raise money for veterans cycling programs nationwide.

and learned to lean on one another for assistance throughout the twisting course. Never was this more apparent than during a 93-mile section that climbed through steep passes around Big Sur on the third day of the ride. As cyclists climbed ever-higher, small groups of riders coalesced

around wounded warriors who were struggling to overcome the lung-searing grades. As the days wore on, these small groups of veterans and supporters built a strong sense of camaraderie, forged from an equal measure of suffering and triumph.

Veteran service organizations and first responders turned out in force to support the riders as they made their way south. California Highway Patrol provided escort officers along the route to direct traffic, and they were supplemented by American Legion Riders who provided motorcycle escorts along the entire route. A USO trailer also followed the riders, providing them with places to stop mid-route to rest and refuel.

During the ride, several celebrities also joined the veterans on their trek, including actors Adam Baldwin and Kristy Swanson and comedian Dennis Miller. Despite the star power, however, the focus during the ride was firmly on the wounded warriors who took part in the event.

"The strength and courage they displayed in pushing the limits of their abilities in undertaking this ride, as well as the daily challenges of recovering from their injuries, was inspirational," Schmith said. "It was a humbling experience and drove me to do things I didn't think I had the capability to achieve."

PHOTO BY SGT. ARON GOTT

PHOTO BY BRANDON HONIG

Turning around young lives



PHOTOS BY LAURA HERZOG



Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy provides a live-in, military-style school for teens who have dropped out of school or are at risk of dropping out. The 5 1/2-month program teaches academics, leadership and good citizenship while improving self-esteem.

Sunburst Youth Academy empowers teens with skills, discipline

**By Spc. Glen Baker
224th Sustainment Brigade**

Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy graduate Arthur Cabral made himself and his parents proud this year when he won the Most Inspirational Cadet award for his dedication and leadership and for the transformation his teachers and cadre had witnessed. But that achievement almost didn't happen.

Cabral, 17, said that when he arrived at Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy in Los Alamitos, Calif., he had no pride in his actions, was disrespectful to his parents and lacked self-esteem. And after less than three weeks at Sunburst, he was ready to give up on the program.

"I wanted to quit during week three, but Sergeant [Donnie] Hunter talked me out of it," Cabral remembered. "Then I motivated guys who wanted to quit to keep going. I put my platoon before myself."

Hunter works as a case manager in the recruiting, placement and mentoring departments at Sunburst. He has helped transform hundreds of young people at the academy, a live-

in, military-style school for troubled youths.

The California National Guard operates two of the nation's 33 National Guard Youth ChalleNGe academies. Grizzly Youth Academy on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif., was established in 1998.

"Ninety percent of our cadets graduate from the academy," Hunter said. "Our cadets have overcome problems like drug addiction, gang lifestyles that are third generation in the making, a lifetime of being lazy, having no direction or focus — and a good number are from broken homes."

The school's curriculum is controlled by the Orange County Department of Education and includes history, math, English, science and career-building. The students, however, also are taught marching, military bearing, mentoring, and how to function in a group environment, ask permission to speak and stand at parade rest and attention.

"This program works," said Sunburst teacher C.J. TerBorch. "The cadets start out having no confidence, self-esteem or discipline. They don't want to be here and have major attitude. ... By the end of the first week ... they are polite and

well-mannered. The transformation is beautiful to see."

During "shark attack," on the first day, new cadets are rousted out of their beds at 4:30 a.m.

"It's the only day that it's like a boot camp and they're yelled at," TerBorch said. "They're in shock. They're used to sleeping until noon and doing what they please. After shark attack ... there's a total transformation."

Sunburst Youth ChalleNGe Academy was founded in 2007. Candidates must be 16 to 19 1/2 years old, drug-free, have no felony offenses, a California residence, and be physically and mentally able to complete the 5 1/2-month program. They must complete a pre-challenge program phase in order to transition to cadet status.

"The mission is reclaiming the lives of at-risk youth," Hunter said. "Every eight seconds there's a dropout in the U.S. This is our new battlefield."

A typical day for a cadet begins with a 5:30 a.m. wake-up followed by health and hygiene, accountability formation, barracks maintenance and chow. From 8 to 3:30 they attend five



A hero on and off the battlefield

Sgt. Donnie Hunter showed valor in Iraq, heart at Sunburst

By Spc. Glen Baker
224th Sustainment Brigade

Sgt. Donnie C. Hunter is well-known at Sunburst Youth ChalleNge Academy for his heroic role in helping troubled youths achieve success. Many cadets, however, may not know their case manager has also been labeled a hero for actions on the battlefield only a short time ago.



PHOTO COURTESY OF SGT. DONNIE C. HUNTER

Sgt. Donnie C. Hunter

Hunter was a member of the Camp Bucca Area Security Operation Team in Iraq on Oct. 29, 2006, when a convoy of supply trucks and military vehicles headed for a forward operating base in Bucca. Hunter was in the lead scout truck, 300 meters in front of the convoy, when his humvee was hit by an improvised explosive device (IED) known as an explosively forced projectile.

“The explosively forced projectile is a copper platter bomb,” Hunter said. “It’s rolled in dirt and it looks like a rock. It eats through your vehicle like butter.”

In addition to multiple contusions, abrasions and burns, Hunter endured two hairline neck fractures, six fractured ribs, a fractured wrist, heart chamber expansion and temporary blindness in one eye caused by flying debris. Two of the other Soldiers in the vehicle were also injured, including truck commander Sgt. Joseph Mosely, whose legs had been “Christmas-treed” by shrapnel.

Hunter directed the driver, Spc. Juan Zamora, to move the vehicle out of a possible ambush-kill-zone. Despite one tire being melted onto the road, Zamora was able to drive the humvee about 100 meters as it was engaged by insurgents’ small-arms fire from 80 meters away.

Hunter oriented the vehicle’s .50 caliber M-2 machine gun and prepared to engage the insurgents, but then he discovered there were Iraqi women and children in his line of fire. He radioed for supporting fire from another humvee instead, which had a target-line clear of civilians.

During the ensuing firefight, Hunter called for medical support and provided security for medical recovery, refusing evacuation for several hours until the area was secured, the wounded were evacuated, the destroyed Humvee was recovered and Hunter was ordered to be medically evacuated.

Hunter was awarded the Bronze Star with V Device for valor on Sept. 5, 2007, for taking charge in a combat situation when the vehicle commander was incapacitated from injuries from an IED. The Bronze Star is the fourth-highest combat award given by the U.S. military.

“I’m humbled and honored,” Hunter said of the award. “My family is very proud of me. My wife is glad I’m alive.”

After his deployment, Hunter began volunteering at Sunburst Youth ChalleNge Academy, which led to a full-time position in May 2008.

“Working at the academy is the most rewarding experience of my life,” he said. “I feel that I am truly making a difference in young people’s lives and allowing opportunities that they wouldn’t have gotten elsewhere.”

“The mission is reclaiming the lives of at-risk youth. Every eight seconds there’s a dropout in the U.S. This is our new battlefield.”

Sgt. Donnie C. Hunter

academic classes. From 4 to 9 p.m. cadets complete physical fitness training, drill and ceremony, laundry, health and hygiene, homework and barracks maintenance. To graduate, cadets must earn 55 academic credits, pass a physical fitness test and complete 40 hours of community service.

The academy’s role in cadets’ lives, however, does not end at graduation. Each graduate is assigned a mentor, and the graduate checks in with their mentor once a week. The mentor submits monthly reports to the academy for a year after graduation. “This is where we get the lasting change,” Hunter said.

Graduate Jordan Davis, 19, said he is grateful for the skills and discipline he learned.

“I earned credits toward my diploma, got an attitude adjustment and got physically fit,” he said. “When I came here, I hated everybody and everything. I used to cuss a lot. I wasn’t a team player.

“I tried to fix myself but I couldn’t do it. I needed help from the academy,” he continued. “My dad said

that I’m a completely changed person.”

Cadet Lauren Velasquez, 16, said she already feels the change taking hold.

“I like that it’s not a regular high school: We’re all always here, so the discipline and structure instilled here will go home with us,” she said. “We will do our homework and pick up after ourselves when we return home.”

Graduate Steven Graham, 18, added that the cadre was always there to keep him motivated or help him through family or personal issues, and the teachers were always willing to offer one-on-one tutoring.

Beyond academics, military skills and leadership, Sunburst teaches life-coping skills and responsible citizenship.

“Before Sunburst, I was failing most of my classes. I had no self confidence, guidance, or direction,” graduate Ruben Ramos said. “If not for Sunburst, I would have been in a gang or in jail.”

In search of **WMDs**

9th CST teams up with first responders
to prepare for local threats

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

Nerve gas, gamma rays, nuclear fallout, dirty bombs, toxic plume. ... Most people would cower if reports of this nature came across their radio, but Staff Sgt. Jeremy Quinn, survey team chief, 9th Civil Support Team says, "That's our money maker ... our specialty."

Quinn is one of 22 Soldiers who make up the California National Guard's 9th Civil Support Team (CST). This highly motivated and specialized group of active guard reserve Soldiers is on call around the clock to support southern California first responders in the event of a natural disaster or an attack in which the presence of chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear agents is suspected.

"In southern California there is a multitude of [hazardous materials] responders, but this is a full-time guard position. This is our sole focus," Quinn said. "To be able to deploy a 22-man team in an hour, in this arena, is unheard of."

The CST's leadership invited numerous city, county, state and federal agencies to participate in a joint exercise, United Harbors, from Sept. 23 to Oct. 2 at multiple locations around the Los Angeles region. The event involved a hypothetical terrorism plot with chemical and radiological threats during July 4th celebrations up and down the California seaboard.

Local first responders were the first on the scene at each location. As they called for support from neighboring and larger agencies, the challenges began.

"The United Harbors concept was to initiate sort of a crawl phase in a maritime arena," said Maj. William Lee, deputy commander, 9th CST. "Many of the first responders had not done this before, and most had certainly not done it collectively. The ability to coordinate a maritime response with the necessary communication, transportation and logistics is key to a successful response."

While most non-military agencies are not averse to working with one another, by nature they tend to train towards self-sufficiency in their response. However, when dealing with a threat of this magnitude and potentially widespread consequences, great emphasis must be put towards creating higher levels of interagency fluidity. The CST leadership focused on promoting a more open flow of resources and communications throughout the exercise.

"Our driving effort is to be the conduit for all the different agencies around southern California," Lee said. "We want to create a continuity of response, sort of a single unified mindset of how things can be done."

The CST not only worked behind the scenes to orchestrate much of the exercise, but also offered up Soldiers as an asset to incident commanders as alerts went out across the radios.

Staff Sgt. Kim Gathinji, survey team chief for the 9th Civil Support Team, prepares to analyze a sample of an unknown liquid to determine if it is hazardous Sept. 30 during the United Harbors exercise, an antiterrorism drill organized by the 9th CST. The 10-day exercise included city, county, state and federal agencies in multiple Los Angeles-area locations.



To reinforce the CST's vision and its efforts to streamline interagency collaboration, the team brings unique tangible assets to the fight as well. In addition to plume-modeling software and a multilayer communications network, the CST operates a mobile analysis lab, which allows Soldiers to analyze samples gathered on site. This greatly reduces the turnaround time to determine the level and lethality of a threat.

The cutting-edge equipment the team rolls on the scene with is impressive, but no more so than the books-worth of knowledge they retain, which sounds like alphabet soup to most.

"This is a very perishable skill set," Lee said. "People who do it as an extra duty tend to lose conversions of radiation or IDLHs (immediately dangerous to life and health) of VX (nerve agent) or whatever it might be. ... There are so many different things to know at a forensic level, that if you're not doing it constantly, they tend to fade off a bit. Just the manipulation of a decimal point one or two places means life or death in some instances."

The 9th CST carries a depth of experience and knowledge of weapons of mass destruction, yet the maritime environment of the United Harbors exercise presented unique challenges.

"This is actually the first time that the Army's WMD side is going maritime. We're working to be proactive in that respect," said 1st Lt. Samuel Cho, the unit's medical operations officer. "This training is rarely done because of the shielding that water gives. A foot of water is like an inch of lead, so it's hard to find and hard to detect any kind of radiation underwater. It's like trying to find a needle in a haystack, at the bottom of a lake."

The maritime environment was challenging on all fronts. Each organization walked away more aware of its limitations and was forced to come to terms with unplanned contingencies and elements that were outside their control.

"One of the main objectives of this exercise was to develop more questions than answers in the end," Lee said. "We wanted everyone to delve deep into the situation and the problems so that questions surfaced that they didn't even know existed. Now they can work to answer those questions over the next several months as we build up to United Harbors 2010."

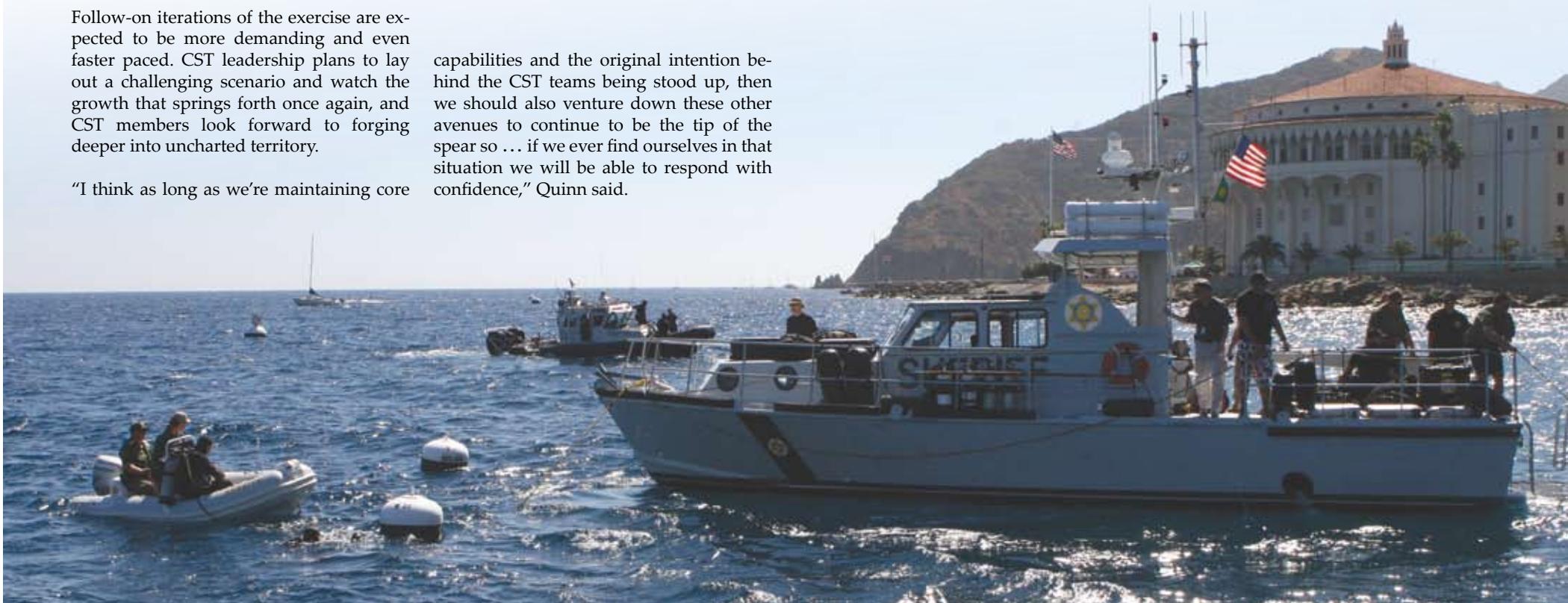
Follow-on iterations of the exercise are expected to be more demanding and even faster paced. CST leadership plans to lay out a challenging scenario and watch the growth that springs forth once again, and CST members look forward to forging deeper into uncharted territory.

"I think as long as we're maintaining core



TOP: Capt. Keith Haviland, initial response team commander for the 9th Civil Support Team, discusses individual action plans with a Long Beach Hazardous Materials Team member Sept. 30 during the United Harbors exercise in Long Beach Harbor. **ABOVE LEFT:** First responders from the Long Beach Fire Department, Long Beach Harbor Patrol, Long Beach Police Department, Los Angeles County Fire Department, Los Angeles County Department of Public Health and the FBI gather for a briefing. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Sgt. Keith Hapenny of the 9th CST confirms an instrument reading with a member of the Orange County Sheriff's Department bomb squad. **BELOW:** The Los Angeles County Sheriffs Department prepares to deploy divers to search for a suspected radiological source in Catalina Harbor.

capabilities and the original intention behind the CST teams being stood up, then we should also venture down these other avenues to continue to be the tip of the spear so ... if we ever find ourselves in that situation we will be able to respond with confidence," Quinn said.





ABOVE: Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the adjutant general of the California National Guard, presents a Purple Heart to retired 1st Sgt. Marion B. Hiers of the U.S. Army at Kindred Hospital in Folsom, Calif. Hiers, who served two tours in Vietnam, had his Purple Heart stolen years ago. He is now suffering from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or Lou Gehrig's disease. **LEFT:** A photo of Hiers from his days as a noncommissioned officer. Among other honors, Hiers earned a Bronze Star, two Army Commendation Medals and a Meritorious Service Medal.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. David J. Loeffler



Master Sgt. Dave Buttner, left, and Capt. Brad Beachler of the 146th Airlift Wing cycled 1,000 miles Oct. 3-9 from San Francisco to Los Angeles for the Amgen California Coast Tour, which raised money for The Arthritis Foundation. Buttner and Beachler each have severe arthritis.

Photo by Mary Buttner



Maj. Regina Bahten is sworn in by Brig. Gen. (CA) Steve Wyman Oct. 2 at Mather Field, Calif., becoming the California National Guard's first clinical psychiatrist since 1991. Bahten, who will serve the medical detachment at Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos, works as a psychiatrist for the Department of Veteran Affairs in Las Vegas. Bahten said the professionalism of her military colleagues inspired her to join the California National Guard. "I am honored to be part of a community of people like that."

Photo by 2nd Lt. Kara M. Greene



An American flag billows over the 18th hole as a golfer tees off at the San Diego Holes for Heroes Golf Tournament at Admiral Baker Golf Course on Sept. 25. Holes for Heroes raised \$63,000 through the golf tournament, dinner and auction to benefit wounded warriors through a variety of organizations.

Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey





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Sgt. 1st Class David Partak prepares boxes of See's Candy to be shipped to deployed service members. See's Candy has partnered with local Kiwanis Clubs to support troops in Afghanistan and Iraq for the past four years. Last year, more than 400 pounds of candy was sent to deployed California Army National Guard members.

Photo by Kathy Partak



Maj. Gen. John S. Harrel, commander of the California Army National Guard, and California Assemblyman Bob Blumenfield speak in front of a replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Van Nuys, Calif., during a memorial service on Oct. 18, which included the American Veterans Traveling Tribute (AVTT) exhibit. The event was hosted by Operation Gratitude, a nonprofit that sends care packages to service members overseas. The AVTT exhibit included a September 11 tribute, a display of gold dog tags identifying each service member killed since the Vietnam war and a replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington, D.C., displaying all 58,253 names of Americans killed in the Vietnam War.

Photo by John Popoch



Col. Marc Breslow, left, and Col. John Wilson present the Order of California medal to Col. Arlon B. Gage during a ceremony Aug. 22 at Southern Regional Command Headquarters. Gage, who retired as the director of medical services for the California State Military Reserve, received the award for his service from 1990 through 2009.

Photo by 1st Lt. Ron Alexander



Maj. Michael Wagle, a pilot with the 129th Rescue Wing, center, accepts the Spaatz Trophy at the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS) conference in Nashville, Tenn., on Sept. 13. The Spaatz Trophy is presented each year to the overall outstanding flying unit in the Air National Guard. Pictured with Wagle are (left to right) Gen. Harry M. Wyatt III, director of the Air National Guard, retired Maj. Gen. Cindy Kirkland of the Nevada National Guard and Chief Master Sgt. Christopher Muncy, command chief for the Air National Guard.

Photo courtesy of Air National Guard



LEFT: Brig. Gen. Mary J. Kight, assistant adjutant general of the California National Guard, and Command Sgt. Maj. Jose J. Gomez greet children at the Women's and Children's Shelter in Pristina, Kosovo, in September. California National Guard troops and other Kosovo Force (KFOR) Soldiers have supported the shelter for many years. Kight was in Kosovo visiting Cal Guard troops on Camp Bondsteel and Film City. ABOVE: Kosovar children perform for Kight, Gomez and other guests at the shelter.

Photos courtesy of KFOR Chronicle Team



An MC-130P Combat Shadow crew from the 129th Rescue Wing poses with the first place award it won in the Rescue Rodeo, a combat search-and-rescue flying competition Sept. 13 at Gabreski Airport, N.Y.

Photo courtesy of 129th Rescue Wing

"The goal of the corps of NCOs, whose duty is the day-to-day business of running the Army so that the officer corps has time to command it, is to continue to improve our Army at every turn. We want to leave it better than we found it. Regardless of the kind of unit you're in, it ought to be an 'elite' outfit, because its NCOs can make it one."

— William G. Bainbridge, Sergeant Major of the Army, 1975-1979



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

Corporal trains his troops to lead

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Paul Wade
69th Public Affairs Detachment

Cpl. Morris Martinez has deployed to 10 countries and has worn corporal's stripes in both the U.S. Marine Corps and the California Army National Guard. In 2001 and 2003, he deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq, respectively, as a Marine, and today he is preparing to return from a Cal Guard peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

The situations in the three countries were different, as were the uniforms he was wearing. But certain responsibilities as an NCO did not change.

"My troops see those stripes and expect you to lead, expect you to do the right thing," he said. "It is my job to show them how to do that by leading them in the right direction."

Martinez was a mortarman in Afghanistan, and he mainly patrolled and pulled security in Iraq.

"We were a block away [in Baghdad] when they tore down the statue of Saddam," he recalled.

Martinez's job in Kosovo is something he knows very well: He patrols. The situation in Kosovo, where no war is raging, is very different from that in Iraq. But despite the six years since his Iraq tour, Martinez still errs on the side of caution.

"I still look at things as a potential threat, but it is pretty safe here," he said during a recent visit to a local grade school, where he handed out a magazine that troops produce to aid children in learning about hazards and to help them learn English.



Cpl. Morris Martinez

"At first I had a difficult time transitioning from a combat veteran to working a peacekeeping mission," he said. "Just having a conversation with the locals was tough. But with help from our interpreter and being patient, I think the locals and our guys feel comfortable around each other now."

Martinez, who has a quiet but confident demeanor about him, said he uses a pretty standard philosophy about how to treat the people he meets in Kosovo, as well as the troopers watching his back.

"If you do something nice for someone else, it usually means something good will happen to you," he said.

"With the local children, just handing out a Jolly Rancher puts a smile on their face," he continued.



ABOVE: Cpl. Morris Martinez, right, greets Sadik Munsilla, a resident of Novosella, Kosovo. Martinez's patrol has befriended Munsilla and regularly brings him care packages. BELOW: Martinez, left, and his patrol stop by a grade school near Novosella.

"Spending time, talking to the adults, playing with the kids and kicking the ball around makes them feel safe, like someone cares."

Martinez seems well in tune with his responsibilities as a bridge between the junior enlisted troops and the NCO Corps. His maturity and experience carry him a long way, and he is comfortable in his role.

"With my guys, I try and let them lead by teaching them my job. If something should happen to me, I know they can step up," said Martinez, who regularly tosses out advice to his squad during their patrols. "It is the same with all NCOs: We need to know our job and be an expert at it, and know the rank above in case we have to fill in and lead."

With his troops scheduled to return home this month, Martinez will soon breathe a little easier.

"I won't let my guys get complacent. I don't want anyone getting injured," he said. "I will consider this mission a success when I get all my guys back to Escondido safely."



PHOTOS BY SGT. 1ST CLASS PAUL WADE

NCO beats breast cancer in time for deployment

By Lt. Col. Ellen Krenke
National Guard Bureau Public Affairs

A California Army National Guard non-commissioned officer who received a breast cancer diagnosis 30 days before scheduled to deploy is cancer-free today, and she credits early detection with her new lease on life.

With a yearlong deployment right around the corner when she got the diagnosis, Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Cowie opted for an aggressive treatment plan that would get her back to her unit quickly.

"As soon as people hear the word 'cancer,' they have the worst thought in mind," Cowie said. "That's really not the case these days. There are treatments available, and with early detection, everything can happen with a little better outcome. So early detection is really the key."

Her gamble paid off.

"I went from diagnosis to cancer-free in 30 days, with very little interruption in my life," Cowie said.

She deployed with her unit to Kuwait in 2007, and since that time she has followed up every six months to ensure she's still cancer-free.

Before her Kuwait tour, during pre-mobilization training at Camp Atterbury, Ind., Cowie had an ultrasound after something was spotted on her mammogram. Through the Tricare military health care plan, she found a breast care specialist in Indianapolis, who then performed a biopsy.

Three days later, Cowie found out she had Stage 0 breast cancer, which she said is "very, very early." The specialist told Cowie that breast cancer usually is caught at Stage 2 or 3.

"I thanked my lucky stars that someone looked close enough at the mammogram," Cowie said.

Once the cancer was diagnosed, Cowie discussed her schedule with her surgeon and oncologist: Her unit would be leaving Camp Atterbury in 30 days.

The doctors explained the options available to her, which included a new treatment, MammoSite, which Cowie said, "I was a good candidate for." MammoSite is a five-day course of high-daily-dose targeted radiation therapy.

"I was really committed to my deployment, being so far into the training," Cowie said. "It was not an option for me personally to back out and say, 'Hey, I have to go home.' I made a commitment to these troops and to this unit to see this through as long as the military would let me."

Cowie was treated twice a day for 15 to 20 minutes for five days.

"It was pretty aggressive, but ... I consider myself pretty lucky to have caught it so early," she said. "I am a perfect example of [the benefits of early detection]."

Throughout her ordeal, Cowie was supported by her biological family and her Guard family, she said.

"My family understands my dedication to duty," she said. "But the call to Mom was a little scary for me. I put it off until I absolutely had to. ... They [were] already worrying that I [was] deploying, so now I had to give them something else to worry about."

Cowie said her family offered support and didn't get overly emotional.

"That was the support that I really needed, because I wanted to stay focused. I didn't want to go into the negative thoughts. ... I just couldn't go there."

Cowie's Guard leaders told her it was her decision and that they would support her either way.

"I thought about it for two seconds and said, 'I'm staying,'" she recalled. "They were a big, big help to me."

The hardest part was continuing to lead her Soldiers, Cowie said.

"As an NCO, you always have to lead from the front. With this, that's a little difficult. There were days that were a little harder for me. But I knew my Soldiers looked up to me. I had to make sure that I was still [there] for my Soldiers, and at the same time still taking care of myself."

Cowie, who is a 15-year veteran of the Army Reserve and Army Guard, said the experience gave her

a greater appreciation for the research being conducted to cure all forms of cancer. Throughout her battle, Cowie was in contact with her surgeon and oncologist every day.

"I was committed to making this happen. The whole team knew what our end-goal was," she said.

Cowie knew she might have to follow her unit after it deployed if the treatment did not go as planned, but she had no other doubts about the path she chose.

"When things fall into place, you have to believe that someone is out there watching out for you, and that there is a plan ahead of you and you are on the right course."



With a yearlong deployment just around the corner, Staff Sgt. Elizabeth Cowie opted for an aggressive breast cancer treatment that quickly enabled her to return to her unit. Cowie, a 15-year veteran of the Army Reserve and Army National Guard, beat the early-stage cancer and deployed to Kuwait only 30 days after receiving her diagnosis. She remains cancer-free today.

Early Detection is Key

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer among women in the United States. More than 182,000 women receive a breast cancer diagnosis each year. The chance of a woman developing breast cancer during her lifetime is approximately 1 in 8. Early detection is key to successful treatment. These are steps you can take to detect breast cancer early, when it is most treatable:

- **Mammography:** A mammogram is an X-ray of the breast, which can detect breast cancer up to two years before a tumor can be felt. Women age 40 or older who are at average risk of breast cancer should have an annual mammogram.
- **Clinical Breast Exam (CBE):** During a CBE a doctor examines the breast and surrounding area for abnormalities that may indicate cancer. Women in their 20s or 30s should have a CBE every three years.
- **Self Exam:** Examining yourself on a regular basis familiarizes a woman with her breasts so she will notice any changes that occur.

Source:
cancerca.org

NCO & SOLDIER OF THE YEAR

PHOTOS BY STEPHEN PAYER



Testing their skills

Seventeen California Army National Guard members from across the state competed in September for the prestigious Noncommissioned Officer of the Year and Soldier of the Year awards on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif. The competitors, who were chosen by their respective commands, faced physical and problem-solving challenges that tested their leadership skills and knowledge of the military.

Among other tasks, the Soldiers completed land navigation courses, live-fire exercises, push-ups, sit-ups, a 2-mile run and a 5-mile fully loaded rucksack march. Classroom examinations focused on general Soldier skills, military customs, NCO duties and responsibilities, drill and ceremony, the value of counseling and current events.

The winners, Staff Sgt. Michael East and Pfc. Montero J. Brambila, will compete next year in regional and possibly national military competitions.

The California Army National Guard Soldier of the Year award and NCO of the Year award were presented at a banquet Oct. 23 in Monterey, Calif.



2009 WINNERS

California Army National Guard NCO of the Year

Staff Sgt. Michael East served in the Massachusetts National Guard as a forward observer for four years before moving to Dublin, Calif., in 2007 to join the 95th Civil Support Team, where he serves as a full-time chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear specialist. His experience in the Guard includes a tour in Iraq in 2004 and 2005, when he served on his brigade commander's personal security detachment. East, 28, is in his third year of a bachelor's degree program in homeland security through the American Military University. Though reluctant to leave the NCO Corps, East plans to attend Officer Candidate School in the next couple of years and become an infantry officer. East thanked his wife, Kristen, for her support and praised his opponents in the California NCO competition. "Winning the competition doesn't mean I'm the NCO of the year; I just won the competition," he said. "I look forward to the challenge of living up to the title, striving to be a better NCO and representing our state in the regional competition."



Staff Sgt. Michael East

California Army National Guard Soldier of the Year

Pfc. Joaquin M. Brambila, 19, a military intelligence analyst for the 79th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, is attending Southwestern Community College in Chula Vista, Calif., pursuing a degree in criminal justice. A veteran of the Guard since 2007, Brambila hopes to join the California National Guard Counterdrug Task Force one day, and ultimately become a federal agent. The National City, Calif., native said he joined the Guard because his sister, Staff Sgt. Diana Montero of the California National Guard's 670th Military Police Company, taught him right from wrong, and he wanted to follow in her footsteps. "It's unbelievable to be the top guy in the state of California," Brambila said about his recent award. "I'm pretty sure there's Soldiers who are better for it; I guess I was the guy for that day. ... I tried to really put my heart into it."



Pfc. Joaquin M. Brambila

California State Military Reserve NCO of the Year

Sgt. Jason C. Pipes joined the California State Military Reserve in 2006 and has since been activated for emergency service during Operation Lightning Strike, California's response to the 2008 wildfires, and the annual Golden Guardian exercise. A training NCO, Pipes studied anthropology, archaeology and military history at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee and has been published extensively in the field of World War II military history. Pipes, who grew up in Elkhorn, Wisc., has completed the basic qualification as a Military Emergency Management Specialist and is certified as a Basic Lifesaver Health Care Provider.



Sgt. Jason C. Pipes

California State Military Reserve Soldier of the Year

Spc. Tien Vinh Quach was born in Vietnam in a local community hospital that did not have electricity or running water. After spending time in a refugee camp, Quach's family was sponsored by an Asian-American family and moved to California in 1986. Quach moved to California, however, without his father, who had sacrificed his life by falling on a grenade to save his fellow Soldiers during the Vietnam War. Quach earned a degree in Asian Studies with an emphasis in international business in 2006 from San Diego State University, where he achieved National Dean's List honors and served as president of the Asian Pacific Student Alliance. Quach, who works for the Saigon Broadcasting Television Network, joined the CSMR in 2008 and serves as a security forces specialist at Joint Forces Training Base-Los Alamitos.

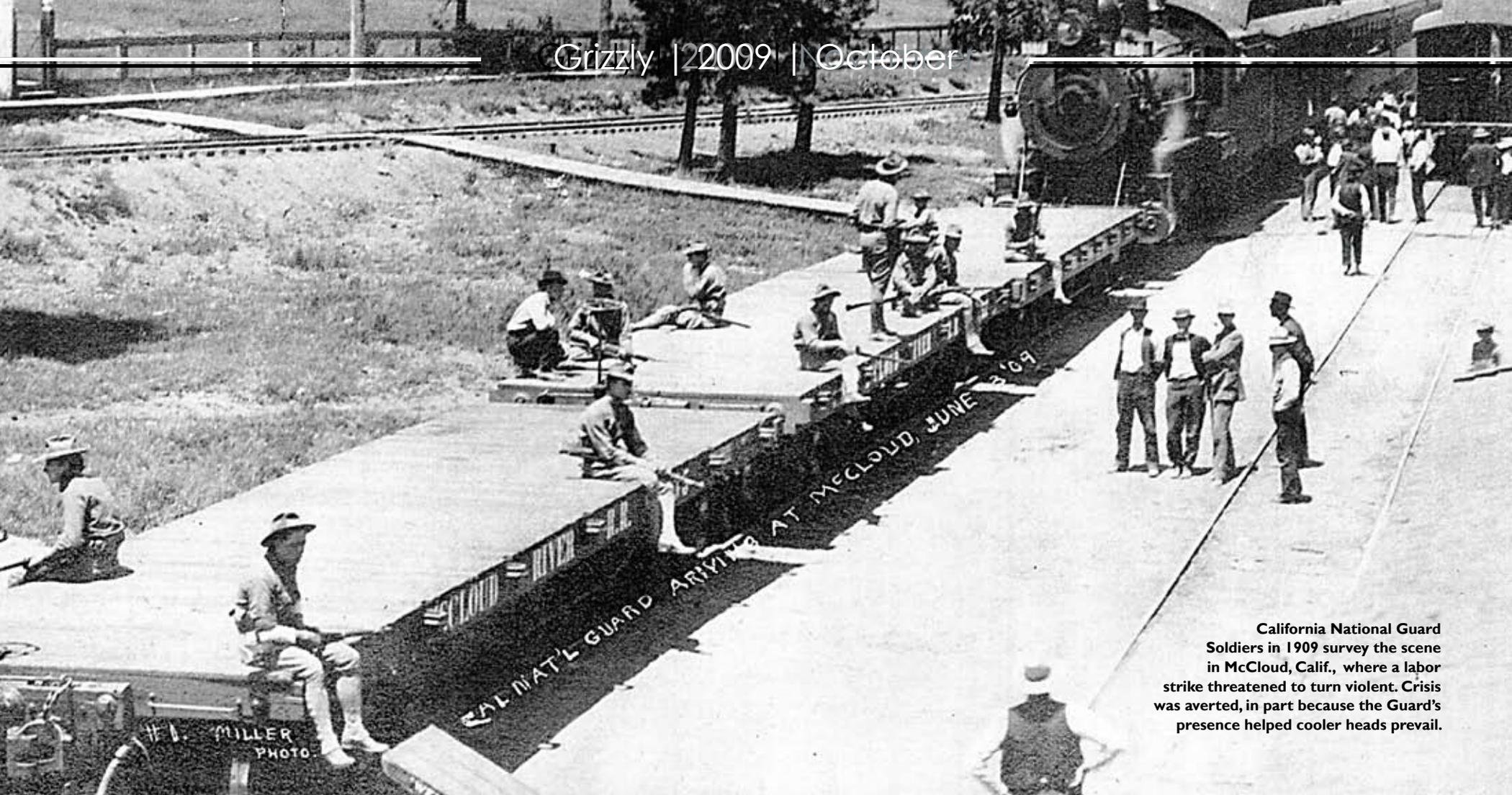


Spc. Tien Vinh Quach



LEFT: Maj. Gen. William H. Wade II, the adjutant general of the California National Guard, and his wife, Leslie, enter the NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year Royal Gala banquet in Monterey, Calif. on Oct. 23. **ABOVE:** Bronze trophies stand ready for presentation at the gala.

PHOTOS BY TECH. SGT. DAVID J. LOEFFLER



California National Guard Soldiers in 1909 survey the scene in McCloud, Calif., where a labor strike threatened to turn violent. Crisis was averted, in part because the Guard's presence helped cooler heads prevail.

PHOTO BY CHARLES MILLER

Guard presence led to 1909 strike resolution

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

At the turn of the 20th century, Social Security and unemployment insurance were still more than 30 years from being enacted, and a worker who was injured could be dismissed without any compensation. For these reasons, some workers in the early part of the century organized with fierce passion, though employers often put up violent resistance to anything that could cut into their profits.

In 1909, in McCloud, Calif., the California National Guard was called into action to keep the peace between two sides that were sitting on a keg waiting to explode. The trouble began with the perceived unfair treatment of Italian laborers who worked for the McCloud River Lumber Company and lived in the company town. The workers

complained that they were discriminated against in wages, housing and the standard of living in the town, which was essentially owned by the lumber company. Approximately 700 workers went on strike.

On May 29, about 200 strikers attempted to stop a train of loggers in order to gain sympathy and solidarity for their cause. Siskiyou County sheriffs were quick to realize the situation could turn dire, but they could not prevent the workers from gaining control of multiple company buildings and one ton of dynamite.

Gov. James Gillett was telegrammed with a request to assist local law enforcement agencies, and he contacted Maj. Gen. Joseph Lauck, adjutant general of the California

National Guard.

The Cal Guard troops approached by train, battle-ready. As soon as the train stopped, sharpshooters were set in place to kill on sight anyone approaching the area of operations. The Soldiers had their rifles ready and their bayonets sharpened, but the only fighting that occurred was between a single Soldier and a striker who threatened his position. The Soldier bayoneted the striker, who was treated and released.

The presence of the California National Guard, and the trust both sides felt for the organization, made it possible for the company and its employees to reach a peaceful resolution and end the conflict.

Blackhawks memorialize fallen comrades on SLO

By Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Payer,
California State Military Reserve (CSMR);
and Sandra R. Peralta, CSMR

At a 2008 reunion of 86th Infantry Division "Blackhawks," the Blackhawk Association's board of directors proposed a plan for a memorial garden and monument on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif., where the division had trained in the 1940s before deploying in support of World War II. Within a year, the Blackhawk Association had collected \$135,000 through donations and sales of plaques and engraved stones, which are now set around a bronze sculpture of a fighting Blackhawk on a base of black granite. Three plaques adorn the base, displaying a list of 161 men killed in action, a list of units in the 86th Division, and the unit's history.

"Today your generation melds with mine," Lt. Col. Nicole Balliet, commander of Camp SLO, said Sept. 16 during the monument's dedication ceremony. "We pay honor for your bravery and self-sacrifice, and honor fallen comrades."

During the ceremony, Col. Lawrence Haskins, chief of staff for the Cal Guard's Army Division, praised the Blackhawks for their valor and their sacrifices in the Ruhr Valley of Ger-

many among other locations across the globe.

The division comprised Soldiers from several states who trained at Camp SLO in the fall of 1944 and winter of 1945. The 15,000 Soldiers of the Blackhawk Division then served 42 days in Germany and Austria, capturing 53,354 prisoners. They were then deployed to the Philippines, where the war still raged. After Japan surrendered, however, the 86th continued to face combat, as Japanese warriors continued to fight, unaware that their nation had surrendered.

When the Blackhawks gathered at Camp SLO on Sept. 16, it had been more than 60 years since most of them had seen their training ground. The reunion was bittersweet for many, because it marked the last meeting of the 25-year-old Blackhawk Association, which faces budgetary constraints. But it seemed fitting to hold their final reunion in the place where their association first started as 18- and 19-year-olds so many years ago.

A new statue on Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif., commemorates the Soldiers of the 86th Infantry Division Blackhawks, who trained there in the 1940s before deploying to Europe and then Asia during World War II.





Tech. Sgt. Leah Price has completed four associate's degrees and is working toward completing a bachelor's degree and ultimately a master's degree in social work. She plans to take advantage of the new California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program, which will provide a total of \$1.8 million next year for up to 1,000 California National Guard members to attend California colleges and universities. For more information, visit www.calguard.ca.gov/education.

State sends troops to college

New benefit will aid up to 1,000 Guard members next year

By Brandon Honig
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Coming from a small town in Lake County, Calif., Leah Price joined the active-duty Air Force because she wanted to see the world, she wanted to further her education, and she was proud of her Airman father.

During her seven-year active-duty career, Price deployed to Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, and she felt the honor an Airman carries when she puts on a uniform to protect her homeland. She also pursued her education part-time, but she did not get as far as she would have liked.

"I was thinking I would finish my degree while I was active duty. ... I was close, but I never got to do it because of deployments," she said. "You know, you put your service before yourself."

During her active-duty service, Price also made a decision she would later regret: Having completed some higher education before joining the Air Force, she chose to decline her G.I. Bill education benefits.

Price attended school full-time after her active-duty career, ultimately planning to earn a master's degree in social work, but the financial requirements made it difficult to attain that level of education. Price's desire for education benefits was one reason she joined the California National Guard's 144th Fighter Wing in 2004.

Now a technical sergeant, Price has completed four associate's degrees, and she has two years left to earn her bachelor's degree before moving onto her master's.

Price adopted her sister's three children and is now expecting a fourth, so it can be difficult to find the time and money for those remaining years of education. But Price got a boost earlier this year, when Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger signed a bill creating the California National Guard Education Assistance Award Program.

The CNGEAP will provide a total of \$1.8 million next year for up to 1,000 California National Guard members to attend California colleges and universities. The benefit is available to current Guard members who have served at least two years in the Cal Guard, California State Military Reserve or Naval militia. Previously, state education benefits were available only to Soldiers and Airmen who had deployed overseas with the Guard, but the CNGEAP is also open to Guard members who have participated only in state missions.

"I was very excited when I saw that offering," Price said. "This is a good opportunity to be able to get back in there and complete that goal and set a new milestone in my career and my life."

Price is also planning to take advantage of the Troops to College priority placement program, which guarantees admission to a California State University campus for Soldiers and Airmen selected for the program. Price has tried to gain admission to Fresno State University in the past, only to find that the school was not accepting new students. She hopes the Troops to College program will change that. The deadline to apply for that program passes Nov. 13; ap-

plications and instructions are available through unit channels.

Price, however, isn't just looking out for her own education — she is also helping members of her wing attain the benefits available to them by making them aware of those opportunities.

One of Price's fellow 144th Fighter Wing members, Senior Airman Sofia M. Martinez, is hoping to join Price at Fresno State, where she will pursue a degree in psychology with a minor in business. Martinez, who works full-time as administrative assistant to the wing commander, hopes to one day gain her commission as an officer and also open a practice as a family and marriage counselor.

Martinez finished her associate's degree last semester at Fresno City College, and she said the new state education benefit may help her achieve her long-term goals.

"I think I would be able to complete [my degree] without it, but it would be that much harder to support myself and provide myself a good education," the 22-year-old Airman said.

She noted that working full-time for the Guard while simultaneously pursuing an education can be difficult, but her priorities push her to succeed in both arenas, and the National Guard helps her pursue those goals.

"The Guard provides a good base for a young person to excel in whatever they pursue, education being just one of those opportunities," she said.



California National Guard
Education Assistance
Award Program

Stay up to date with the
latest information, including
applications, program
requirements and tools
to help you find the program
that's right for you:

www.calguard.ca.gov/education

MOAA brings leaders, ideas to San Diego

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Inigo
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

San Diego hosted the Military Officers Association of America's annual conference Oct. 22-24. Bringing top leaders from the National Guard Bureau, the California National Guard and other organizations together, the meeting culminated by identifying challenges and potential solutions for citizen-Soldiers and their civilian employers.

Gen. Craig R. McKinley, chief of the National Guard Bureau, addressed the conference and said MOAA and associations like it are a driving force helping Soldiers and their families get what they need.

"The power of MOAA is getting things done on [Capitol] Hill," said retired Vice Admiral Norbert R. Ryan Jr., president of the MOAA. Most recently the Alexandria, Va.-based group has successfully lobbied to increase the military pay raise from 2.9 percent to 3.4 percent and to make the new Post-9/11 G.I. Bill transferable to qualifying family members, he said. "These are the issues service members are looking for and we are here to act as their voice."

McKinley spoke frankly about the nation's economic crisis, upcoming missions on the U.S.-Mexico border, American support for the troops and the eight years of conflict since 2001.

"We were thinking in a Cold War mindset," he said about the events leading up to and surrounding the September 11 terrorist attacks, explaining there was "a failure of imagination." He added that the loss of lives in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina was due to "a failure of initiative."

McKinley therefore challenged military personnel, their families and the American public to join forces with associations like the MOAA to "ensure leaders in Washington



Gen. Craig R. McKinley, chief of the National Guard Bureau, addresses attendees in San Diego at the Military Officers Association of America (MOAA) annual conference. McKinley implored military personnel, their families and the American public to support the MOAA in its efforts to lobby Washington for service members' needs.

never have a failure of imagination or initiative again."

He was followed by a panel that included Brig. Gen. Daniel J. Nelan, assistant adjutant general of the California National Guard; David L. McGinnis, principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for Reserve Affairs; business owners; and politicians. Among other issues, the panel tackled employment issues for National Guard members who have missed work at their civilian jobs to deploy.

"I have five pages of notes, not including the extensive list of ideas General Nelan provided," Ryan said holding set of typed and hand-written papers. "This is what gives MOAA our fuel. We'll turn these ideas into legislation and improve the quality of service to those people in uniform."

For more information or to view daily notes of the event, visit www.moaa.org.

146th Security Forces Flight departs for Saudi Arabia

By Maj. Kimberly Holman
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

More than 40 Airmen of the 146th Airlift Wing's (AW) Security Forces Flight deployed Oct. 18 for a six-month tour in Saudi Arabia in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The Airmen, who are trained in various areas of law enforcement, will be conducting routine air base defense. The first leg of their deployment took them to Fort Dix, N.J., for pre-mobilization combat skills training.

"I know it is difficult to leave your families, especially for extended periods of time, and how hard it is on the family members to be left without their husband, wife, father or mother," said Col. Paul Hargrove, commander of the 146th AW. "We all wish them a safe deployment and look forward to their quick and safe return."

Chief Master Sgt. Steve Timbol, security forces manager, said he was impressed by how the wing came together as a team to overcome last-minute changes and obstacles.

"We had one girl who stepped up as a last-minute substitution, and we had her ready to go in two days' time," he said. "People worked on their days off, and were even stitching the rank on her new desert uniforms as she went through the deployment line."

The Security Forces Flight deployed in 2007 to Kirkuk Air Base, Iraq, and provided armed security in a hostile environment, responding to more than 20 rocket attacks while reinforcing the base perimeter. The Airmen received the governor's Outstanding Unit Award in 2007 and again upon their return in 2008.



PHOTOS BY JULIE MORENCY



ABOVE: Airmen of the 146th Security Forces Flight board a C-130 aircraft that will take them to Fort Dix, N.J., for pre-mobilization combat skills training before deploying to Saudi Arabia for six months. INSET: Tech. Sgt. Jose Camacho hugs his daughter before departing for Fort Dix.

Making
a *difference*
has
never
been **so FUN**



The Sisterhood of the Traveling BDUs Conference is a project spearheaded by two teenage daughters of military service members who wanted to do something special for other teenage, female military dependents. It is their hope that with your help, the Sisterhood can assist other military daughters in coping with the challenges faced during their parents' deployment. The goal is to match up one female service member with four teenage dependents to act as a mentor throughout this special event, creating relationships and support systems that will endure beyond the conference.

All that is required is the willingness to do the following:

- Act as mentor/chaperone to four teenage girls from your region
- Act as a "big sister," providing emotional and moral support over the weekend and after the conference
- Provide a good example of a strong woman and be open and willing to share
- Pass a Live Scan background check

Volunteer today!

In order to match up girls with mentors in their regions, we hope to have mentors registered as early as possible. If you would like to participate in this event, please contact the project hotline. You will receive a follow-up call within three business days to get the registration process started.

Call (805) 782-6810

Schedule of Events

Friday, March 12

Morning — Travel via chartered buses from various locations throughout the state to Hilton Hotel in Clovis, Calif.

Evening — Mardi Gras-themed Purple Carpet Extravaganza, a fun-filled evening with vendors and entertainment

Saturday, March 13

Morning — Workshops focused on positive self/body image, leadership training and mentorship, as well as special guest speakers and much more

Night — PJ Party: Share experiences and reflect on the day's activities

Sunday, March 14

Morning — Travel Home

Transportation via chartered buses, hotel fees and meals are all covered.
Online mentorship training will be provided.

www.sisterhoodbdus.org

Friendship
Camaraderie
Understanding
Togetherness
Mentorship
Sisterhood
Strength

Guard your health this flu season



By Lt. Col. Susan Pangelinan
Joint Staff Medical Adviser

Nationally, a lot of information is being circulated in the media about influenza, the availability of the seasonal influenza vaccine and the vaccine for the H1N1 flu, sometimes called "swine flu." Thankfully this intense interest in both virus and vaccine means that most of our Guard members and their families understand the importance of getting their flu shot this season. Even many of you who have been reluctant to get a flu shot in the past are seeking out the vaccine today.

As members of the California National Guard, we are at an increased obligation to protect our health, as the state and nation rely on us to be there when the mission calls. This involves getting the seasonal influenza vaccine as soon as you are able to, protecting yourself from getting exposed to the virus and separating yourself (social-distancing) from others if you become ill.

If you are a traditional Guard member, you will receive your seasonal influenza vaccination through your unit process, on drill, at some point during the flu season (which typically runs from October through March), as you have in the past.

If you are not in the Air Guard or Army Guard but are a federal or state employee with the California National Guard, you can use your routine medical venue to receive the seasonal influenza vaccination. As a matter of convenience, you may take advantage of many locations that offer the vaccination for \$25 to \$35 at local supermarkets, pharmacies and other locations.

The main focus of this article is to emphasize the importance of seeking out a vaccination and becoming immunized. If you have a busy schedule and cannot take advantage of the hours your local Kaiser hospital or private doctor's office will be providing the vaccine, you should consider paying the nominal fee in order to get the vaccine at a time convenient to you. The sooner the better!

You should also protect yourself by using good hygiene throughout the flu season (and all year). Medical experts project that without meticulous attention to protective measures, up to 30 percent of the work force could be out for illness during a pandemic influenza outbreak. To mitigate this absenteeism and loss of productivity as well as potentially serious health complications, our medical leadership has provided guidelines to follow for force health protection. As recommended by Col. David Wilmot, joint surgeon, National Guard Bureau, please exercise the following precautions at all times to protect your health:

Personal Habits

- Do not go to work sick or until all symptoms have resolved.

H1N1 flu by the numbers

4,958

Number of confirmed H1N1 infections between Aug. 10 and Oct. 10.

292

Number of confirmed H1N1 deaths between Aug. 10 and Oct. 10.

SOURCE: CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION



- Be aware of flu symptoms: fever, body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea and vomiting. Seek care and evaluation by a health care professional if symptoms are detected.
- Cough or sneeze into the crook of your elbow or use a tissue (then discard the tissue).
- Wash your hands often with soap and water or use hand sanitizer, especially after coughing or sneezing.
- Limit personal contact such as shaking hands.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth with your hands.
- Limit travel to only critical requirements. Teleconferencing or video-conferencing should be used instead when available.

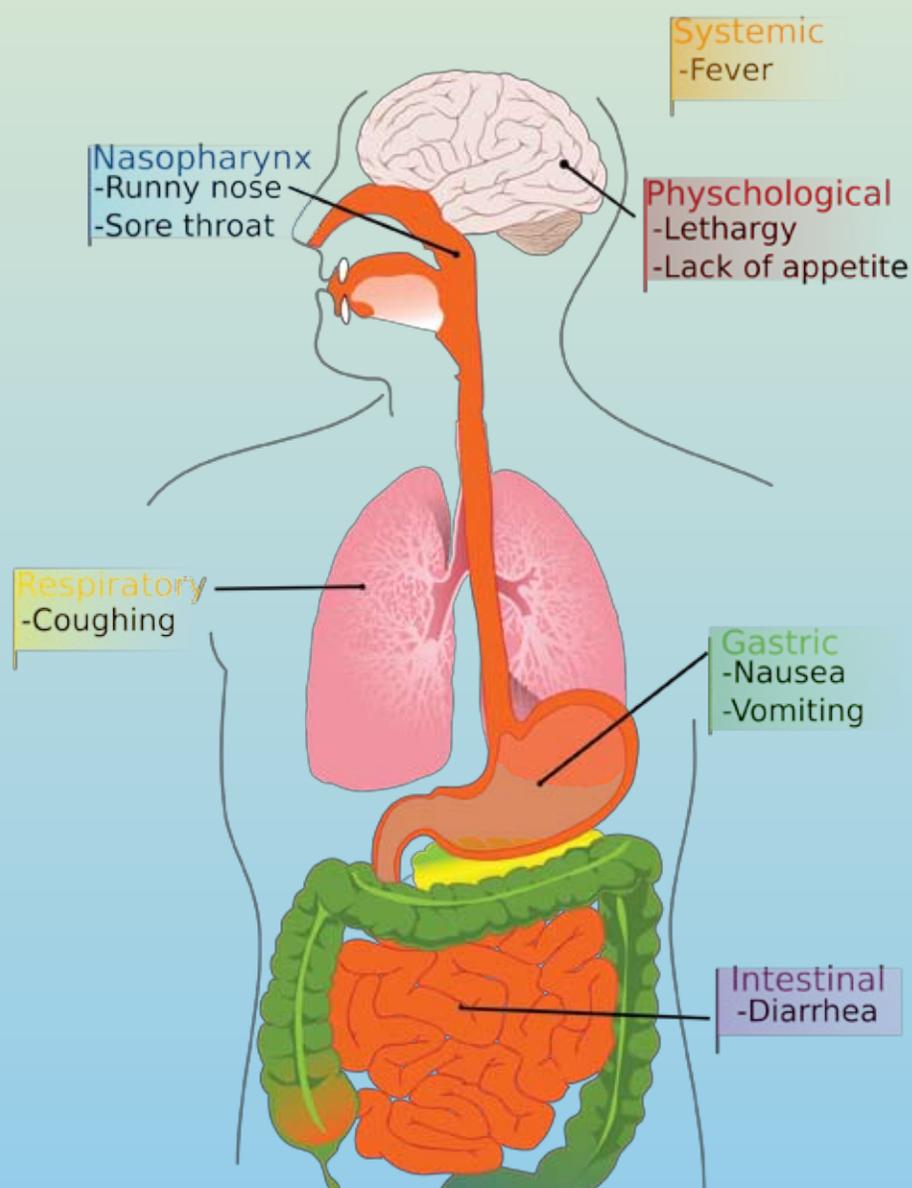
Care of Family Members

- If caring for a family member with H1N1 flu, discuss all pertinent issues with a health care provider.
- Try to keep the infected person in a separate room and keep the door closed as much as possible.
- Wear gloves, if available, when providing care, and wash your hands before and after giving care.
- Use an N95 mask or surgical mask if you must be in direct contact (within six feet) with someone who has flu symptoms.

General Information

- After exposure to the H1N1 virus, symptoms may not appear for three to seven days during the incubation period.
- For further information on H1N1, visit www.cdc.gov.
- For workplace safety info, see www.osha.gov/dsg/topics/pandemicflu/index.html.

Symptoms of H1N1 Flu



GRAPHIC BY WILLIAM THEAKER



Sgt. Peggy Withers of the California National Guard's Veterans Honors Program shows youths at the NorCal Military Youth Lock-in how to properly fold an American flag. The lock-in, held July 18 at the Roseville Armory in Roseville, Calif., offered local military youths an opportunity to network, have fun and engage in team-building activities. Photo by Sgt. (CA) Jessica Cooper

Employers prefer military experience

More than 40 percent of employers prefer job candidates with military experience, yet many veterans fail to mention or adequately market their military experience, according to a survey conducted by Harris Interactive on behalf of Web site [CareerBuilder.com](http://www.careerbuilder.com).

The online poll queried 2,667 hiring managers and human resource professionals and 4,478 other U.S. workers in May and June of this year.

Results showed 21 percent of employers are actively recruiting veterans and members of the National Guard, and 43 percent of employers said they would hire a veteran instead of someone without military experience if all other qualifications were equal.

Nonetheless, 11 percent of veterans said they do not include their military experience on their resumes, and 12 percent said they only include that experience sometimes.

Among other jobs, employers said they are targeting service members for positions in information technology, engineering, management and sales.

The survey can be found in the Press Room on www.careerbuilder.com.

Marriage Enrichment Seminar in Rancho Cordova this month

The Operation Ready Families Program is accepting registration for a Marriage Enrichment Seminar in Rancho Cordova, Calif., on Nov. 21-22.

Operation Ready Families will pay for attendees' hotel rooms Nov. 20-21.

The seminar is designed to coach married 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.

Registration is open only to couples that have not attended the seminar previously. Enrollment is limited.

For registration information, contact Monica Clapperton at 916-361-4958. For information on seminar content, contact Capt. Christopher Guadiz at 916-854-3398.

DID YOU KNOW...

... when an injury or accident occurs, it is very important to determine the status of the service member before filing a medical claim?

Service members who are injured while in the following statuses require a Line of Duty (LOD) investigation and report: Inactive Duty for Training, Annual Training, Full Time National Guard Special Work, Active Duty for Operational Support, Temporary Tour of Active Duty and Active Guard or Reserve.

If you are eligible to fill out an LOD, you may also be eligible to apply for incapacitation pay. This does not mean you will automatically qualify for reimbursement for lost wages. LOD investigations can be formal or informal. Formal investigations are required when there is suspected misconduct or negligence.

If injured while on Emergency State Active Duty (ESAD) or State Active Duty (SAD), service members and State Civil Service (SCS) employees will not fill out an LOD report or be eligible for incapacitation pay. Injured ESAD, SAD and SCS personnel require workers compensation claims. Federal technicians must use the Technician Workers Compensation Program if injured.

For Army National Guard LOD information, see Army Regulation 600-8-4 (Line of Duty Policy, Procedures and Investigations): www.apd.army.mil. For Air National Guard LOD information, see Air Force Instruction 36-2910 (Line of Duty [Misconduct] Determination): www.e-publishing.af.mil. For information on State Workers Compensation visit: www.dpa.ca.gov.

All California National Guard technicians are covered under the Technician Workers' Compensation Program outlined in Full-time Personnel Handbook 810: www.calguard.ca.gov/cahr/Documents/Pubs/FPR/CNGFPH_810.pdf.

Faces of Honor offers free medical, surgical care

The American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery's new Faces of Honor program offers free medical and surgical care for service members who sustained injuries to the face, head or neck while deployed in support of operations Enduring Freedom or Iraqi Freedom.

The program stressed that its services are meant to complement — not compete with — treatment received at military care facilities. For more information, visit www.facesofhonor.org.



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PHOTO BY SPC. DARRIEL SWATTS

Members of the 140th Engineer Support Company watch a blast created during a training exercise near Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. Soldiers of the 140th brushed up on their demolition skills using one-pound bricks of C4 and 20-pound cratering charges.

GRIZZLY NEWSMAGAZINE 2009

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