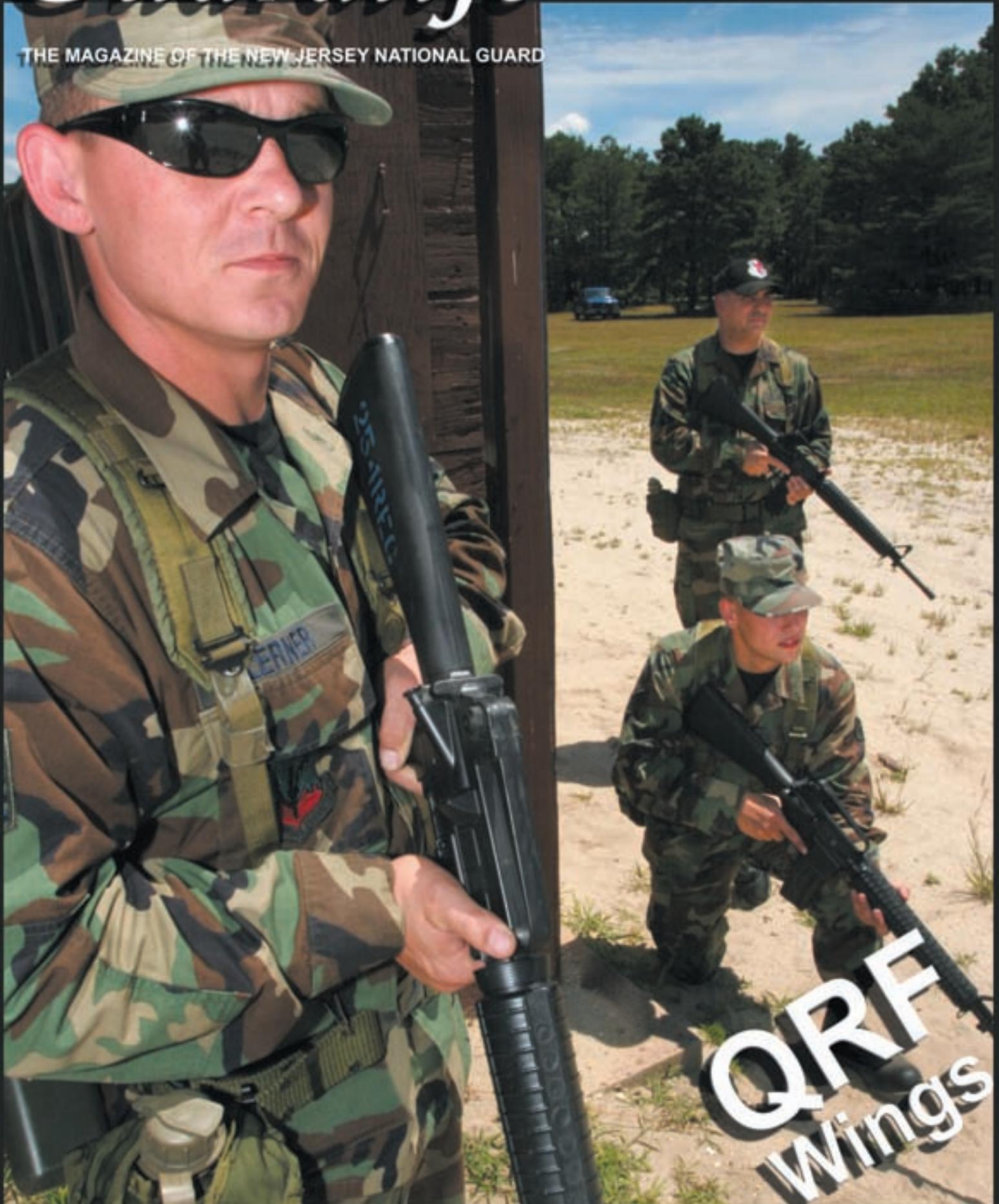


Guardlife

July
2007

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NEW JERSEY NATIONAL GUARD



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Wings

Guardlife

Volume 33, Number 3

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Cover: Vigilant force

Tech. Sgt. Robert W. Lerner and members of his squad survey deserted buildings during Quick Reaction Force training on July 22. Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing and 108th Air Refueling Wing were trained by Soldiers from the 254th Regiment on how to respond to a variety of situations in the event of a state emergency. Turn to page 7 for the rest of the story. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen

Inside Cover: Four to go

Soldiers from B Company, Detachment 1, 628th Aviation Support Battalion, New Jersey Army National Guard, guide a Blackhawk UH-60L helicopter onboard a C-5 Galaxy. The Galaxy, which is attached to the 167th Airlift Wing, West Virginia Air National Guard, transported the Blackhawks to the 32nd Aviation Regiment, 8th United States Army, Republic of Korea. On July 31, Army Guard aviators flew the four Blackhawks from the Sikorsky Facility at Naval Air Station Lakehurst to McGuire Air Force Base. Upon their arrival, the Soldiers prepped the aircraft for transport. On August 2, the Galaxy arrived and in a space of under four hours, the helicopters were loaded and on their way to the Land of the Morning Calm. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

e JAG
more to Belize

nlisted Promotions
at Governor's mansion

Always Ready

By Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General - New Jersey

Few things give me as much pleasure in life than welcoming back our hometown troops from overseas deployments. This June, however, it was a joy and relief to see the men and women of the 102nd Reconnaissance Surveillance Targeting Acquisition (RSTA) and the 250th Brigade Support Battalion (BSB) returning from their extended tours in Iraq.

From that afternoon on a hot and humid Tuesday when our troops touched down and within hours embraced their loved ones...to the following Saturday's official Welcome Home ceremony...I don't think I stopped grinning that whole week (or sighing with relief).

Back in February, when State Command Sgt. Maj. Jerome Jenkins and I traveled to Iraq to visit our 102nd RSTA and 250th BSB Soldiers, I remember standing in awe at the determination of these troops...accepting the unthinkable: a last-minute extension of an already year-long tour. "Disappointed, but not deterred" was how I described these Soldiers at that time. Their "can do" attitude amazed me back then...it amazes me still today.

In July, Governor Jon Corzine personally hosted a barbecue picnic for our returning Soldiers and Airmen. For the fourth time since taking office, Governor Corzine welcomed troops and family members to his official residence for a party...this time, a welcome home party. Burgers, music, games, entertainment...now this is how you say welcome home and thank you! Face-to-face and one-on-one. I hope all the military members and families that attended enjoyed the sunny fun-filled day and realize how appreciated their sacrifices are.

Presently, smaller groups of New Jersey Soldiers and Airmen continue to rotate into Iraq and Afghanistan. From security forces to embedded trainers, our people continue to make a difference and show the true spirit of volunteerism. So much so that commanders have had to limit approval of individual volunteer assignments with future unit deployments looming on the horizon.

And that horizon is drawing closer. While we adjust to meet the challenges of the next couple of years, we will ensure that the New Jersey National Guard provides a trained and ready force to defend our nation. Trained, ready...and fit to fight!



Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth (left), The Adjutant General - New Jersey, and Governor Jon S. Corzine, Commander-in-Chief of the New Jersey National Guard, watch the volleyball game between Soldiers and Airmen at Drumthwacket (see pages 12-13) for more about the event. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

A big part of staying fit to fight is keeping ourselves healthy and safe. We are in a dangerous business. We need to constantly be vigilant and keep safety foremost in our minds. We've all seen examples of what the slightest bit of negligence can do to a sophisticated piece of equipment or – more importantly – how it can impact human lives. We cannot allow complacency or bad habits to infiltrate our work ethic. We owe this to ourselves, to our troops and to the families that support us.

If you look around during any welcome home ceremony, you cannot miss the civilians – sometimes in embroidered jackets and flight caps – greeting our returning Soldiers and Airmen as if they were family. They are members of various veterans' organizations. Having had the honor of attending a number of their national and regional conventions, I've seen firsthand the support that these groups give the men and women currently serving in uniform. These veterans' organizations have always been staunch supporters of the Guard.

There is a symbiotic relationship that exists between military members and all veterans' groups. Whether sending care packages to our deployed Soldiers and Airmen...donating items to DMAVA Memorial Homes and Vets Haven...or raising awareness of issues that impact us all...these organizations are there for us. And we should be there for them. As former brothers and sisters in arms, they have earned our respect...as patriotic citizens, they deserve our support. 🇺🇸

SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME

A high-angle, close-up photograph of a KC-135E tanker aircraft refueling an F-22 Raptor fighter jet. The KC-135E's boom is extended, and the Raptor is positioned below it. The Raptor's cockpit canopy is visible, showing the pilot. The KC-135E's wings have "NJ ANG" written on them. The background is a clear blue sky.

A 108th Air Refueling Wing KC-135E refuels an F-22 Raptor on its way to an Air Show in Rhode Island on June 23. The refueling was part of a media flight highlighting the New Jersey Air National Guard. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eric Erbe, 108ARW/CF.

Transformation and you

By Command Sgt. Maj. William R. Kryscnski, 50th Brigade

As you all know, the New Jersey Army National Guard has begun a transformation process that will occupy our training priorities over the next several years.

This transformation is a huge process that involves consolidating some units, eliminating several units and developing new units. Old equipment will be turned in and newer equipment and systems will be issued. Along with that process comes many facets of training to become familiar with and proficient on the new equipment.

Although the state's overall strength will stay the about the same, it will become necessary for many of our Soldiers to become qualified in new military job specialties (MOS) and possibly move from one unit or armory to another.

Needless to say, the transformation process will be a challenge for everyone in the New Jersey Army National Guard.

As Soldiers who are part of this transformation process, you have certain responsibilities. Just like we manage our everyday lives, we will now have to put more emphasis on managing our military careers. Soldiers must look at what the new military occupational specialties will be, like Combat Engineers, Communications specialists, Intelligence specialists, Military Police, Water Treatment specialists, etc.

In addition, you should look at where these new units are located as compared to where you are drilling now. Soldiers must ask themselves: Is this a better opportunity for me? Will I be closer to home so I can reduce travel costs? Does this new position provide me with training that can be utilized in my civilian career as well?

Our Combat Battalions will transform to become lighter, more mobile, shedding the heavy armor of tanks. The decision for our former tankers is: Where do I go? Should I be an Infantryman, Cavalry Scout, Mortarman, Artilleryman, Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic, Emergency Medical Technician, Military Policeman, Intelligence Analyst, or one of several other job specialties that will be available?

When analyzing these opportunities, Soldiers need to know if they can qualify for one of these new job specialties. What was your GT score when you came into the military? If you want to be an Intelligence analyst (96B), you need a ST score of 105 or higher. If being a Combat Engineer (21B) is of



interest to you, you would need a CO score of 90 or higher to qualify. Military Policemen (31B) need a ST score of 95 or higher. Communications specialties (25B) or systems analysts need ST scores of 100 or higher.

We have several Combat Support Units whose functions will remain the same, however, under the transformation their overall troop strength will decrease. Soldiers in those units must decide if they want to change their MOS or look for across the state to find where vacancies exist in their current MOS. The Medical Company is one such unit that comes to mind. This unit is currently over strength and many of our qualified EMT/medics will have to either change their

specialty or move over to another unit where vacancies exist for Soldiers with medical expertise.

Another Soldier responsibility during transformation will be to continue your NCO education. Under the current promotional system Soldiers who are at the rank of Specialist/E4 can be promoted to Sergeant/E5, however if they don't complete the Warrior Leadership Course, they CANNOT be eligible for promotion to Staff Sergeant/E6. If you are a Staff Sergeant/E6 you ARE NOT eligible for promotion to Sergeant First Class/E7 without completing the Basic NCO Course.

We have many outstanding young E4's, E5's and E6's, who have the ability to be excellent NCO leaders and perform at a higher level. However, without a concerted effort on their part to complete NCOES they CANNOT be promoted to the higher rank.

You are the future leaders and decision makers of the New Jersey Army National Guard. A successful transformation can not be completed without all Soldiers taking responsibility for their military careers.

Soldiers have a responsibility to constantly seek out education and improve individual job performance and team proficiency. We need the Soldiers of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to step up, accept the challenge and be part of the transformation process.

By doing so, our units become more mission capable and ready to perform when an actual emergency or crisis occurs. Remember we can only be winners in life if we set goals and try to achieve them, no matter what obstacles are put in our path. Adapt, overcome and move forward at all times. 🇺🇸

Airmen learn Soldiering skills

By Maj. Steven Rothstein, JFHQ/ACOS

One hundred New Jersey Air National Guard Airmen have volunteered to be members of a Air National Guard Quick Reaction Force (ANG QRF) capable of rapidly mobilizing in the event of a state emergency.

These Airmen already bring skill sets unique to their “high-demand” AFSC’s (Air Force Specialty Codes) such as civil engineering, security police and others. Now they will have basic knowledge of traditional “Soldiering” skills including convoy operations, as well as clearing and securing a building.

The QRF idea originated with Col. Ronald Alfors, the Chief of Staff-Air, as an evolution of the extensive support the Air Guard has always provided in state emergencies. “We have always provided a specialized capability to state response by leveraging our members’ AFSC training,” stated

Alfors. “If Airmen are needed to put boots on the ground for these other types of missions, they would go through a 72 hour just-in-time training program at the Joint Training and Training Development Center (JT2DC) before hitting the street.”

While the doctrine and plans were in place for this eventuality, the scenario was never exercised. “This puts a core of 100 people through that just-in-time training up front, while still maintaining the ability to provide training to many more if needed.”

Taking that vision to reality was truly a joint effort led by Lt. Col. Randolph Slaughter, Officer in Charge of Plans and Programs and Chief Master Sgt. Richard Bouffard, NCOIC of Plans and Programs on the Air side with Lt. Col. Brian Sharkey and Capt. Scott Hofstetter on the Army side. They worked with New Jersey’s JTF Commander, Col. Stephen Hines, to identify ten core Military Support to Civilian Authorities (MSCA) tasks. Based on time and resources available to conduct the training, indoctrination into six of the ten were included in the syllabus for the basic course.

The actual training responsibility to make sure that the Air Guard team is ready fell to the NCOs of the first battalion of the 254th Regiment led by Sgt. 1st Class Paulo Amado. His team



Soldiers from the 254th Regiment train 108th Air Refueling Wing and the 177th Fighter Wing Airmen on how to respond to a variety of situations in the event of a state emergency. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA.

of instructors spent several months planning the curriculum leading up to the training exercise. Their expertise ensured that the ANG QRF is ready to respond to any MSCA event.

The first course was conducted on June 9-10. Fifty Airmen from the 108th Air Refueling Wing received hands-on training both in the classroom at the JT2DC and at a MOUT (Military Operations on Urbanized Terrain) site at Range 12 on Fort Dix. The other fifty from the 177th Fighter Wing were trained during their July drill.

Lt. Col. Daniel Rutkoski is the Officer in Charge of the 108th’s QRF. Normally, he commands the Logistic Readiness Squadron at the 108th, but during this June weekend, he was learning and practicing the skills thousands of his fellow guardsmen used in New Orleans after Katrina.

“Much of the training we have received this weekend is what we would need in any type of state response,” Rutkoski said. “We all remember the pictures of National Guardsmen conducting house-to-house searches in those areas of New Orleans devastated when the levees broke. If something of that magnitude happens in New Jersey, I know that my team will be ready to deploy and work seamlessly with the Army Guard on those very same types of missions.”

Super Wing has new General

Photos and story by Staff Sgt. Barbara Harbison, 108ARW/PA



Seeing stars. Newly minted Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff (center) has his stars pinned on by his wife Diane (right) and Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth (left), The Adjutant General of New Jersey, on Aug. 2.

Michael L. Cunniff, commander of the 108th Air Refueling Wing, was promoted to Brigadier General in a ceremony was held at The Club, McGuire Air Force Base on Aug. 2.

The Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, read the oath of office to the new general. Gen. Rieth was assisted by Cunniff's wife, Diane, pinning on the new rank. Daughters, Alecia and Lauren, and son, Christopher, pinned the star on his cap and put the epaulettes on his shirt.

The 108th Honor Guard posted the colors and brought the general his new one star flag. Wing members, Master Sgt. Rafael Jimenez and Tech. Sgt. Lisel White sang the national anthem.

The General is responsible for two flying units, the 141st Air Refueling Squadron, and the 150th Air Refueling Squadron, flying the KC-135E Stratotanker and he supports the 227th Special Operations Flight, flying the C-32B. Cunniff commands 19 support units with more than 1,300 members. The 108th Air Refueling Wing is a reserve component of the Air Force's Air

Mobility Command and one of only three "super tanker wings" in the Air National Guard.

His military education includes Squadron Officer School, Air Command and Staff College and Air War College. After receiving his commission from the Academy of Military Science at McGhee Tyson Airport, Tenn., General Cunniff received his pilot's wings at Columbus Air Force Base, Miss., in 1983. After attending F4-D training, he joined the 108th Tactical Fighter Wing at McGuire Air Force Base. When the 108th ARW transitioned to the KC-135E, the General attended Combat Crew Training School at Castle Air Force Base, Calif. Upon his return, Cunniff served as the 108th Operations Group commander, instructor and evaluator pilot, chief of training, the 150th Air Refueling Squadron operations officer, aircraft maintenance officer, flying safety officer, range control officer and exercise evaluation team chief.

Members of the Air and Army Guard, retired 108th and Air Guard personnel along with members of Gen. Cunniff's family attended the ceremony.

Members of the Air and Army Guard, retired 108th and Air Guard personnel along with members of Gen. Cunniff's family attended the ceremony.



Brig. Gen. Michael L. Cunniff receives his final set of stars from his children - son Christopher (left) and daughters Alecia (second from right) and Lauren (right).



AIRMEN HONORED AT FESTIVAL

Photos and story by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FWPA



Airmen from the 177th Fighter Wing were honored at the 21st Red, White and Blueberry Festival on July 1 in Hammonton.

Wing Airmen have served in Iraq, Afghanistan, Kuwait, Qatar, Yemen, Uzbekistan, Djibouti as well as other locations around the world. Nearly every military career field at the wing has been deployed in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom.

Led by Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, Brig. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson and Col. Randall S. King the Airmen marched to the Festival's grounds near the Hammonton elementary school. After listening to speeches by Congressman Frank A. LoBiondo, 2nd District, New Jersey and local officials, the Airmen spent the rest of the day enjoying concerts, displays, and of course blueberries.



Sharpshooters compete in TAG Match

Photo and story by Sgt. Shawn Morris, 444MPAD

For many Soldiers, being proficient with a firearm is a necessary task for keeping fit to fight. For some, it can be a daunting endeavor requiring hours of practice.

But for a select few, proficiency is only a starting point, and the hours of practice put in are needed not to meet the standard, but to blow it away.

Service members from this elite group of sharpshooters gathered at Fort Dix June 22-24 to compete in the New Jersey National Guard's 2007 Adjutant General's Combat Championships.

The event consisted of three matches: Precision Combat Rifle, Combat Service Pistol and Combat Service Pistol EIC (Excellence In Competition). Nearly three-dozen shooters aimed for perfection in a competition where a fraction of an inch could separate the winners from the losers.

Maj. Ken Kurtz, 108th Air Refueling Wing, placed first in the rifle match, while Tech. Sgt. Donald Smith of that same unit took first place in both the pistol and EIC matches and third in the rifle match. The 108th also won as a team for all three matches, aided by the contribution of 108th member Lt. Col. Andrew Kুক্তik, who took second place in the EIC match.

First Lt. Benjamin Stoner, 250th Brigade Support Battalion placed second in the rifle match and third in the pistol match. He credits his success to a lifetime of shooting.

"I began my familiarization with firearms when I was 10 and my father used to take me shotgun hunting after I completed the N.J. Hunter Education Safety Course," he explained. "My father took the time to show me the proper handling, operation, aiming and firing of a firearm."

"Good Army Marksmanship training, however, is what helped me to hone in on my skills and become a better marksman," he added.



Army and Air Guard marksmen participated in the New Jersey National Guard's 2007 Adjutant General's Combat Championships at Fort Dix on June 22-24.

For Stoner, this competition is one in a long line dating back to his youth. "My first shooting competition was a "turkey shoot" at the Moose Lodge in Jackson, where I beat all the adults and took home the turkey for Thanksgiving dinner," he recalled. "When I was 16, I competed in a National Police

Explorer Youth Pistol Competition in Boulder, Colo., where I placed sixth overall, and first in rapid fire, out of about 3,000 competitors."

The AG competition still presented a challenge. "Firing with a weapon not perfectly zeroed and dealing with the 10- to 15-MPH wind had to be the most challenging part of this competition," he said.

"Everything else went smoothly, thanks to the great efforts of the organizers, support staff, and guest instructors from the N.Y. Army

National Guard Marksmanship Team."

Rounding out the competition were Sgt. 1st Class Andrzej Ropel, who placed second in the pistol match, and Sgt. Donald Seymour, who took third in the EIC match.

Results at a glance

Precision Combat Rifle

- 1st: Maj. Ken Kurtz, 108th Air Refueling Wing
- 2nd: 1st Lt. Benjamin Stoner, 250th Brigade Support Battalion
- 3rd: Tech. Sgt. Donald Smith, 108th Air Refueling Wing

Combat Service Pistol

- 1st: Tech. Sgt. Donald Smith, 108th Air Refueling Wing
- 2nd: Sgt. 1st Class Andrzej Ropel, 2nd Battalion 113th Infantry
- 3rd: 1st Lt. Benjamin Stoner, 250th Brigade Support Battalion

Combat Service Pistol EIC (Excellence In Competition)

- 1st: Tech. Sgt. Donald Smith, 108th Air Refueling Wing
- 2nd: Lt. Col. Andrew Kুক্তik, 108th Air Refueling Wing
- 3rd: Sgt. Donald Seymour, 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation

Museum, school honor troops

By Carol Fowler, National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey

The National Guard Militia Museum of New Jersey and Belmar Elementary School participated in a special event as part of National Military Appreciation Month.

Museum Assistant Curator Carol Fowler explained to the students that "America Supports You," is a nationwide program recognizing citizen support for American military men and women at home and abroad.

The students seized the opportunity to show their appreciation by writing letters of appreciation and created a banner proudly declaring: "Belmar Elementary School Thanks You For Protecting Our Freedom."

On May 11, Fowler, accompanied by Sgt. Brad Trowbridge and Spc. Gabriela Pereira, met with the Belmar Elementary School fourth graders. The children enthusiastically greeted their guests and presented them their letters and banner.

Belmar Elementary School's Assistant Principal Paul Shappiro attended the ceremony and stated that the event was "...a tremendous way for our students to demonstrate their appreciation for all the Soldiers that put their lives on the line everyday to protect our freedom."



Spc. Gabriela Pereira (left) and Sgt. Brad Trowbridge (right) hold a packet of letters supporting American troops at home and abroad. The letters were presented by Belmar Elementary School fourth graders from Susan Smith and Patricia Monahan's classes. Photo courtesy of the Coast Star Newspaper, Manasquan, N.J.

SPOUSES PROMOTED TO SERGEANT MAJOR

Photo and story by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA



Ever since they married fourteen years ago the military careers of Lisa and Harold Homan have mirrored each other in rank and responsibility. And now these two New Jersey Army National Guard Soldiers share the rank of Sergeant Major as they were promoted together recently at the Guard's Joint Forces Headquarters on Fort Dix.

For this husband and wife having the promotion ceremony at Dix just added another chapter to their lives that seem to

revolved around the installation.

"The Guard gave me my husband. I don't have the hand receipt, but I am sure I will get one," quipped Lisa after having her new rank pinned on by the Brig. Gen. Maria Falca-Dodson, Deputy Adjutant General of New Jersey.

One might think with both being in uniform and First Sergeant's at the same time, Lisa handled the 21st Civil Support Team (CST) at Fort Dix and Harold was Top at 2-113th Infantry, would be tough on a marriage. For this pair it was a chance to succeed both personally and professionally.

"I believe it is that we are both in, we know what to expect and we both know the challenges and we each help each other deal with those challenges," said Harold.

Quickly Lisa adds with a laugh "We have NCOPD (Non-Commissioned Officer Professional Development) every night on our way home" as she talked about the pairs commute to and from Langhorne, Pa.

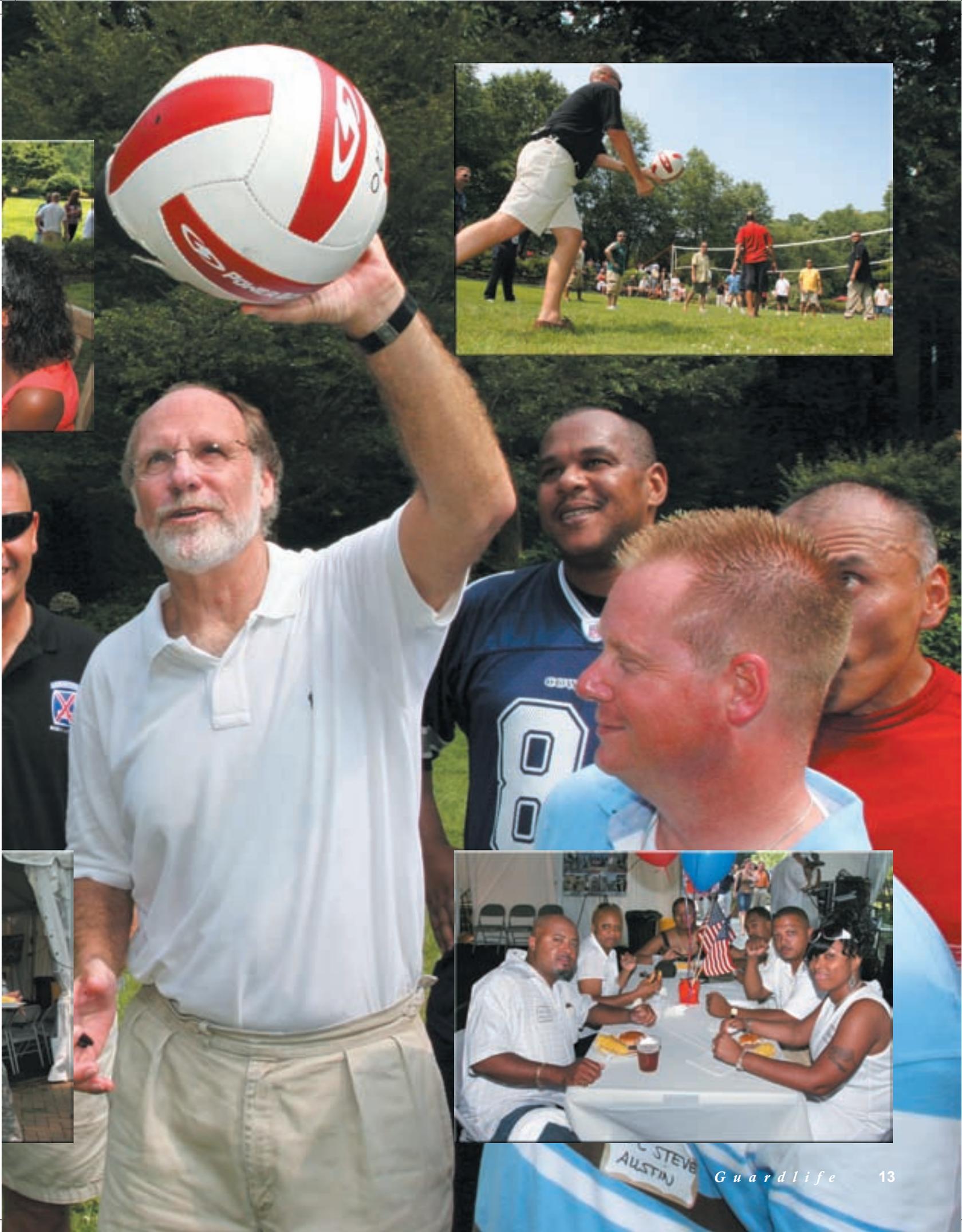
That drive to work is becoming a shorter after the promotions as both will be working in Lawrenceville, as Lisa is the Chief of Emergency Operations at the Homeland Security Center of Excellence and Harold is the Operations Sergeant Major for the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (BCT). 🇺🇸

Governor welcomes home Troops

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA

Maj. Michael A. Bobinis (left to right), Sgt. Brian S. Venerick, 1st Sgt. Raymond H. Hoffman, Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Vander Clute, Sgt. 1st Class Steven S. Austin, Master Sgt. Alexandro Estrada and Spc. David H. Gaines watch as Governor Jon S. Corzine, Commander-in-Chief of the New Jersey National Guard, holds aloft a volleyball following the game between the Soldiers and Airmen who deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq. Governor Corzine held a party for New Jersey National Guard Airmen and Soldiers who had deployed in support of Operation's Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, along with their families at the Governor's mansion, Drumthwacket, in Princeton on July 28. By the way, the final score was Afghanistan 22, Iraq 20.





Soldiers get feet wet in training session

By Staff Sgt. Joe Donnelly, 444MPAD

With 70 percent of the earth covered in water you would think that every state National Guard unit would have its own water treatment unit.

However, until the fall of 2006 the New Jersey Army National Guard was without a unit that could provide this staple of life.

A group of volunteers brought more than 100 years of civilian expertise in all things wet to the National Guard Training Center at Sea Girt to give the Soldiers of the 154th Water Treatment Company a head start in the training.



Michael Furrey (left), Operating License Instructor for the New Jersey Water Association explains checking for water quality to Soldiers of the 154th Water purification and Distribution Company at Sea Girt. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kryn P. Westhoven, 444tMPAD.

In the first of two weekend sessions, members of the New Jersey Water Association, (NJWA) based in Waretown donated their time to educating members of the new unit.

"These folks are our neighbors and they are protecting us so we are doing what we can to help them," said Rick Howlett, NJWA Executive Director.

Many of the 154th's Soldiers came from the Signal Battalion who originally "worked on phone lines and radios but now they are working with water," said Command Sgt. Maj. Howard Wright, 50th Finance Battalion, whose civilian field is related to water treatment.

Because the unit is in its infancy stage many of the troops are waiting to attend the 13-week course at Fort Lee, Va., to become MOS-qualified. In the meantime Soldiers are receiving "basics water operations skill", said Capt. Malinda Dake, Commander, 154th Water Treatment Company.

The training by the civilian experts was a real "eye opener" for the future Water Treatment Specialists noted Dake.

"Soldiers will come away knowing what they are getting their hands into."

"The training is in basic water sources, water treatment, water quality and safety," said Howlett, explaining the goals of the classroom lessons.

This water education weekend was delivered by five volunteer instructors who are no strangers to teaching as they have traveled the state instructing Public Health Officials, License Water and Waste Operators and Public Works managers.

The jump start that trainees received from the civilian experts will not only help them in preparing for their new military jobs but help every one that comes in contact with their finished product, H₂O. Soon you will hear call that the water is fine, drink up.

ROWPU - The Army's Water Prime Mover

Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Units (ROWPU), use raw water taken from rivers, oceans, lagoons or any other water source and puts it through four different filtration processes. The filtered water is then treated with chlorine to sterilize it in the final stage of purification before it is piped to storage containers for Soldiers' use.

PILOTS HONE COMBAT SKILLS

By Lt. Col. John DiDonna, Director of Operations, 119th Fighter Squadron

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Richard Mercado, 83rd Fighter Weapons, Tyndall AFB, Fla.

From Feb. 24 to March 3, 90 members of the 177th Fighter Wing including pilots, crew chiefs, maintainers, munitions and weapons loaders, deployed to Tyndall AFB, Fla., to hone their craft at Combat Archer 07-02.

“Forty-six sorties were flown during the week and not a single mission was canceled due to equipment problems,” stated Lt. Col. Yarko Sos, Commander, 119th Fighter Squadron. “This is a

true testament to the outstanding efforts of all the deployed personnel.”

During the deployment, pilots were able to fire live air-to-air missiles at drones. This training is critical because it provides pilots with the necessary weapon system experience, especially with an upcoming Air Expeditionary Force deployment.

In addition, the pilots fought in air combat training against F-15s to sharpen air-to-air skills and flew simulated homeland defense missions.

“For all involved, the Combat Archer deployment was an overwhelming success and a true reflection of the outstanding performers within the 177th Fighter Wing,” observed Sos.

108th JAG top Guard/Reserve JAG

By Staff Sgt. Barbara Harbison, 108ARW/PA

Maj. John F. "Jack" O'Connell, Deputy Staff Judge Advocate, 108th Air Refueling Wing, was recently named the recipient of the U.S. Air Force Award for the Outstanding Reserve/Guard JAG for 2006.

"It is a distinct honor to be receiving the Judge Advocate General's Reginald C. Harmon Award which honors the first Judge Advocate General of the Air Force," said Maj. O'Connell. "It is also a testament to all the dedicated members of the Air Force JAG Corps who are serving throughout the world and who are contributing to the fight in the Global War of Terrorism."

With a few twists to his story, Maj. O'Connell could be the model for Harmon Rabb, the character on the television show, "JAG." In O'Connell's previous life, he spent 10 years in the U.S. Navy as a pilot where he flew an F-14 Tomcat logging almost 1,000 hours and 200 carrier landings aboard the USS America and flying combat missions in support of Operation Desert Storm. Six years later he joined the 108th as a member of the JAG section.

O'Connell grew up in South Amboy and attended Christian Brothers Academy, Lindcroft. He did his undergraduate work at Seton Hall University and the University of Pennsylvania and got his law degree at the Seton Hall University School of Law. "I felt an obligation, a sense of duty, in the aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center and Pentagon on September 11," said O'Connell when asked the reason he came back into the military.

Since joining the Air National Guard he has been deployed to Guantanamo, Cuba and left again in May 2007 for his second deployment to Iraq. As an Air Guard JAG during his deployment to Joint Task Force-Guantanamo, he was attached to the 50th Brigade, New Jersey Army National Guard, 42nd Infantry Division. He served as the primary operational law advisor to the Joint Detention Operations Group Com-



mander and as the Officer-in-Charge (OIC) of the camp legal office.

Shortly after his return from Guantanamo, he deployed to Baghdad, Iraq, with the Multi National Forces – Iraq (MNF-I). There, O'Connell served as a Strategic Planner and Legal Advisor to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategy, Plans and Assessments. On his second Iraq deployment, he will again be serving as a Strategic Planner/Legal Advisor on Gen. David H. Petraeus' staff. When O'Connell is home in New Jersey long enough to rest his hat, his civilian job is as the in-house counsel for New Jersey Turnpike Authority.

O'Connell was nominated for the award by Maj. Gen. Kurt Cichowski, Deputy Chief of Staff for Strategy,

Plans and Assessment, MNF-I, his commander while deployed in Iraq. In the award nomination, O'Connell was cited for serving as the Strategic Planner and Legal Advisor on Multi-National Force Iraq Commanding General's staff in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, developed Desert Protector Strategy, which had an immediate and significant impact on counter insurgency operations and was the Deputy Chief of Staff's go-to guy on the ever-evolving Iraqi Constitution.

In between OEF and OIF deployments, he completed the six-week AOC Course at Air Force Special Operations Command graduating in the top of his class with a 98.5 average. O'Connell has been a leading advocate for a state bar association sponsored legal assistance program for deployed military members as well as members stationed in CONUS.

Col. Michael Cunniff, Commander, 108th Air Refueling Wing stated, "There is no one better to represent the wing than Maj. O'Connell on the War on Global Terrorism. I am extremely proud and honored that he has represented the 108th on numerous deployments during these past three years and all that hard work has proven itself with this prestigious award." 🇺🇸

Engineers head from Jersey Shore to Belize

By Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA

For members of the Army Guard's 110th Engineers Utilities Detachment (EUD) based in Tuckerton, their annual training might have sounded like a government funded vacation. Their two weeks in Belize was certainly exotic, but was far from a vacation as one could get.

In just two months one of New Jersey's newest units sent 27 Soldiers in two rotations to support Operation Tradewinds-Belize to provide build-up, operational and carry-on engineer support for the annual multinational exercise.

It was New Jersey's mission to make the training facilities better in the coastal nation south of Mexico for the participating military forces from Antigua-Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Bermuda, Canada, Dominican Republic, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad-Tobago and United Kingdom, to name a few.

The training to combat transnational threats, in counter drug operations and conducting a disaster response was coordinated by Marine Forces South and U.S. Army Southern Command.

Participation in Operation Tradewinds was a first for the unit which features a cross section of engineering skills such as carpenters, plumbers, electricians and heavy equipment operators. The remote annual training provided an opportunity to build unit cohesion and practice newly acquired engineer skills. "A lot of guys got a chance to show what they can do as well as learn from the experts in the unit," said Sgt. 1st Class Donald Brandinelli, 110th EUD NCOIC.

The engineers used their two Bobcats and assorted power or hand tools to make the military home improvements in weather that makes the hot, humid days on the Jersey Shore easy to take.

Besides the stifling environment the engineers had to deal with an existing infrastructure that was quite antiquated.

"Years of wiring and rewiring, and transition from the European to American Voltage standard made the utilities part of the project especially challenging," noted Brandinelli as he talked about the electrical work on the former British colony. The varied projects kept the electrical section busy with several crews in multiple buildings.

"But as far as a pure physical challenge; the construction of the tent city on nearby Hattieville range took the cake,"



Soldiers from the 110th Engineers Utilities Detachment prepare an area for tents during Operation Tradewinds-Belize. Photo courtesy 110EUD.

explained Brandinelli.

The tent city was built from the ground up and included 24 barracks, an Ammo Supply Point (ASP), medical, and a pair of dining facility tents complete with platforms, tables and electrical lighting. The power generation was provided by an on-site generator and the electrical distribution network was custom built and buried during the tent city phase of the project which was completed in just five days.

Follow on support for the operation included earthmoving operations, furniture construction, plumbing repairs, logistical support and construction of an emergency barracks to quarantine a group of visiting military that developed cases of chicken pox.

"The guys out here really gave their all and impressed me with just how far they were willing to go to accomplish the project within the allotted time," said Capt. George Fedorczyk, 110th EUD commander.

Despite the difficult working conditions, and the challenges presented by both a tight deadline and shifting project requirements, the 110th EUD showed determination and skill in accomplishing the mission for this Caribbean nation of 300,000 people. 🇧🇪

G-RAP

GUARD RECRUITING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

As a member of the Army National Guard you have answered your nation's Call to Duty. As a Recruiting Assistant you can be rewarded for helping to achieve STRENGTH FROM WITHIN. The current recruiting environment is the most challenging we have faced in the history of the all-volunteer force. The Army National Guard is only as strong as it should be when we remain a fully-manned, flexible and vibrant force. Get started earning valuable additional income today as a Recruiting Assistant and help BUILD YOUR TEAM.

“We launched the Guard Recruiting Assistant Program to establish a position of strength.” – LTG Clyde Vaughn

WHAT IS THE GUARD RECRUITING ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AND HOW DOES THE PROGRAM WORK?

Q&A

The Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP) is a contracted program designed for individuals who voluntarily apply online at www.GuardRecruitingAssistant.com to become eligible to serve as a part-time Recruiting Assistant (RA). The RA applicant will be verified and hired by a contractor, not the ARNG.

Each RA will cultivate quality potential Soldiers from within their individual spheres of influence. Once a potential Soldier is identified and pre-qualified, the RA will facilitate a meeting engagement with their local Recruiting and Retention NCO (RRNCO). The triad of RRNCO, RA, and potential Soldier will then work closely to process the potential Soldier and move them towards accession.

Upon enlistment, the RA will receive an initial payment of \$1,000, with a second \$1,000 payment upon successful shipment to Basic Training.

Note: exact payment timelines vary depending upon prior service/non-prior status and availability of training seats.

GOALS AND PURPOSE:

The Guard launches the Guard Recruiting Assistant Program (G-RAP) to establish a position of strength from which the Guard can achieve its accessions mission of 70,000 enlistments, and meet the Guard end-strength goal of 350,000.



WHAT ARE THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RECRUITING ASSISTANT (RA)?

The responsibilities of a RA are to identify individuals within their sphere of influence, to develop potential Soldiers, promote the benefits of service in the Guard, input potential Soldiers' profile data into the G-RAP web site to begin the application process, arrange a meeting between the potential Soldier and the RRNCO, accompany the RRNCO and potential Soldier at a parental consent meeting for potential Soldiers under 17 years of age, and work with the RRNCO to prepare the potential Soldier for the MEPS and ASVAB appointment.

News Guard Families Can Use

Compiled by the Guardlife Staff

Family Readiness Grant Program

From the New Jersey State Family Readiness Council

Family Grants are available to New Jersey Guard members who have been mobilized longer than 90-days within a one-year period, and their families must be experiencing financial hardship.

Business grants are available to New Jersey Guard members who have been mobilized longer than 90-days also within a one-year period and were self-employed business owners at the time of being mobilized.

The State Council has supported family activities, welcome home events and has awarded grants in excess of \$200,000.

For more information on grant criteria or to apply for a grant contact a Family Assistance Center or the Family Readiness Group nearest you (see boxed list below).

Correction

On page 21 of the March 2007 issue of Guardlife in the caption for the photo "108th gets new Command Chief" incorrectly stated that Command Chief Master Sgt. Vincent P. Morton was the first African-American command chief master sergeant in the history of the New Jersey Air National Guard.

In fact, Chief Master Sgt. Albert Williams also from the 108th was the first African-American Command Chief Master Sergeant.

Further, the first African-American Senior Enlisted Advisor (this position later became the Command Chief Master Sergeant) for New Jersey was Chief Master Sgt. Matthew Vaughn.

Family Assistance Centers

108th Air Refueling Wing

3327 Charles Blvd.
McGuire AFB, NJ 08641
POC: Laura Forrest
laura.forrest@njmccgu.ang.af.mil

Jersey City Armory

678 Montgomery Street
Jersey City, NJ 07306-2208
POC: Janis Shaw

janis.m.shaw@us.army.mil

Lawrenceville Armory

151 Eggert Crossing Road
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-2897

POC: Jane Hackbarth
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Morristown Armory

430 Jockey Hollow Road
Morristown, NJ 07960-0499
POC: John Hales

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Pomona NJNG FAC

400 Langley Road
Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234
POC (Air): Joan Searfoss
joan.searfoss@njatla.ang.af.mil
POC (Army): Michael Hughes
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Somerset Armory

1060 Hamilton Street
Somerset, NJ 08873
POC: John Hales
john.a.hales@us.army.mil

Teaneck Armory

Teaneck & Liberty Roads
Teaneck NJ 07666-0687
POC: SSG Joe Collery
joe.collery@us.army.mil

Toms River Armory

1200 Whitesville Road
Toms River, NJ 08753
POC: Maria Morro
maria.morro1@us.army.mil

Woodbury Armory

658 North Evergreen Avenue
Woodbury, NJ 08096
POC: Heather Altman
heather.altman@us.army.mil

Our TollFree Number is 1-888-859-0352

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Real world training



New Jersey National Guard Provides Support To Civil Authorities

Story and photo Sgt 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA

A 1-104th Services and Support Battalion UH-60 Blackhawk deposits a Middlesex County Special Operations Reaction Team in the middle of the Rutgers University New Brunswick campus

during a hostage scenario. The exercise involved numerous state and local law enforcement teams, which may be called upon to work together on short notice during a real terrorist threat.

NEW BRUNSWICK, N.J. - “There are two of them. One has a bald head and a grey T-shirt, and the other guy has a dark hat on.”

The man in the blue striped shirt spoke between deep intakes of breath as he crouched between two Rutgers University policemen as all three took cover behind the patrol car. Men carrying guns had invaded the idyllic scenery of this central New Jersey university campus and fired off a number of shots at students, teachers and children attending summer camp, including the man now shielded by the cops, who had managed to elude the gunmen’s grasp before they were able to take a number of hostages.

The cops were in touch with their command post which was monitoring the campus via aerial shots provided by a Oh-58 Kiowa observation helicopter, which was hovering overhead.

Minutes later, two New Jersey National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopters swooped in to deposit members of the Middlesex County Special Operations Reaction Team (SORT) right in the middle of the New Brunswick campus. The SORT immediately fanned out and advanced on one of the student buildings. Gunshots follow.

Under different circumstances this would be the beginning of a frightening situation reminiscent of what took place at the Virginia Tech campus several months ago. But this was not a real hostage situation, just an exercise that involved numerous state and local law enforcement and emergency services agencies. The goal of the exercise was to solidify the cooperation between agencies which may be called upon to work together on short notice during a real terrorist threat.

“Our specialization in Homeland Security is providing support to law enforcement,” explains Lt. Col. John Sheard of

the New Jersey National Guard. “So primarily from the aircraft side of the house, [support] with the lift aircraft is to bring the Special Operations teams to a location so they can deploy more rapidly and with a show of force.”

While transporting law enforcement reaction teams is important, knowing where to transport them is just as important. “With the reconnaissance aircraft, we have the capability of taking photos from the air, day or night, video downlink technology, from the tactical side of the house, to vehicles at the site, and strategically, we can send that signal throughout the state, to the Adjutant General’s office and to the New Jersey State Police office, which is where this all centralizes from,” notes Sheard.

Helping to provide that signal is Chief Warrant Officer Jerry Steber of the 2-104th Service and Support Aviation Battalion. Steber, who manages the equipment that receives the video signal from the helicopter, has worked with law enforcement before. “Most of the law enforcement agencies that I’ve had a personal interface with really look to us for the support that they don’t have,” says Steber. “It’s a definite asset for them as far as visual and electronic information being provided to the task force commanders and the command posts when they’re doing these types of operations.”

With the help of the New Jersey National Guard, this exercise ends well according to Detective Douglas Sprague, Deputy Task Force Commander of the SORT.

“We had information that there were three active shooters somewhere in the building, we assembled the SORT into 20-man assault teams, and we cleared four floors of the building and took the bad guys down outside the building.”

All in all, a good day for the good guys, with a little help from the New Jersey National Guard. 🇺🇸

SHORT ROUNDS

CONCERTS, WAVES, DIVERSITY AND YOUTH CAMP



Jammin' at SG

Members of the 63rd Army Band sax section jam during an evening of music on July 6 at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt. Under the baton of Chief Warrant Officer 2 Durinda Garrison, the 37 Soldiers filled the evening with music ranging from standards to rock. The Soldier-musicians rearranged themselves into everything from a full orchestra to a Motown R&B band.. Photo by Lt. Col. James Garcia, NJDMAVA/PAO.



Splish, splash

Capt. Jason Halvorsen, a pilot with the 177th Fighter Wing, uses his mirror to signal for help during water survival training at Six Flags Hurricane Harbor in Jackson on July 17. The United States Coast Guard water survival specialists along with wing pilots trained at Hurricane Harbor because the wave pool gave a greater degree of realism to the training than a swimming pool. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA.



Unity Day serenade

Spc. Jacqueline Rivera-Buie (left), 250th Brigade Support Battalion is serenaded during the Unity Day celebration on June 14, at the Joint Training & Training Development Center on Fort Dix. This year's event, "Many Cultures, One Flag" highlighted the different ethnic and special emphasis groups represented in the New Jersey National Guard to enhance cross-cultural awareness harmony among all members of the New Jersey National Guard. Photo by Airman 1st Class Jason Hilliard, 108ARW/PA.



Pre-flight brief

Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Sodimon (left), 2-104th Services Support Battalion, explains the controls of a UH-60 Blackhawk to camper Jelisa Torres during the 13th Annual New Jersey National Guard Youth Camp at the National Guard Training Center in Sea Girt on Aug. 2. Photo by Spc. Mark O'Rear, 444MPAD.

New Jersey National Guard

NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

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David J. Stillwagon

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 NATIONAL GUARD**

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**Congratulations
 To All!**
**Compiled by Master Sgt.
 Daniel J. Calderale
 (Army)
 and Master Sgt.
 Paul B. Thompson, Jr. (Air)**



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**LAST ROUND -
CAVALRY ARRIVES
AT GOVERNOR'S
MANSION**

Sgt. Joseph M. Schorno, 102nd Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Target, Acquisition poses with his son Justin during the party at the Governor's mansion, Drumthwacket, on July 28. The party, which was hosted by Governor Jon S. Corzine, Commander-in-Chief of the New Jersey National Guard, welcomed home Soldiers and Airmen who had supported the Global War on Terror. Photo and story by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

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