

BUCKEYE GUARD

**Ohio Governor Ted Strickland
awards Silver Star to
Sgt. 1st Class Mark Wanner**

Pages 8-9



LINEAGE LINK UP

1194th Engineer Company Chillicothe



MISSION:

To provide command and control of three to five vertical engineer platoons that construct base camps and internment facilities as well as construct, repair and maintain other vertical infrastructures in support of the corps or division and maneuver Brigade Combat Team.

DATE & PLACE OF BIRTH:

6 April 1892, Chillicothe, Ohio

PARENT UNIT:

Company H, 17th Infantry (Sill Guard)

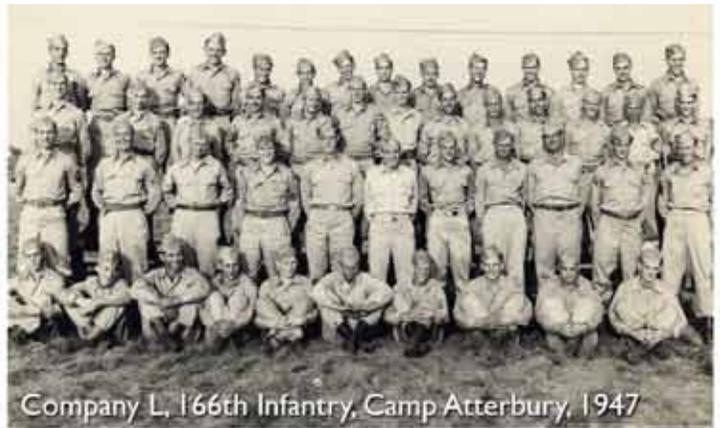
CAMPAIGN CREDIT:

WORLD WAR I - Champagne-Marne,
Aisne-Marne, St. Mihiel,
Meuse-Argonne, Lorraine 1918,
Champagne 1918

WORLD WAR II - Air Offensive, Japan,
Guadalcanal, Northern Solomons,

AWARDS:

Meritorious Unit Commendation,
Streamer embroidered IRAQ 2004



Company L, 166th Infantry, Camp Atterbury, 1947



Pvt. First Class Steve Wisecup, Company A, 216th Engineer Battalion guides sections of a pontoon-float infantry footbridge into place at Camp Drum, New York during annual training 1973.



Company A, 216th Engineer Battalion, 2004



Company H, 166th Infantry, Camp Perry, 1928

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Assistant Adjutant General, Air
Maj. Gen. Harry "A.J." Feucht

Assistant Adjutant General, Army
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ON THE COVER



Silver Star Medal recipient Sgt. 1st Class Mark A. Wanner speaks after being awarded the Silver Star medal. Inset Photo: Sgts 1st Class Mark A. Wanner and Sean Clifton of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, adjutant general of Ohio, and Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland, pose in the governor's office prior to a Silver Star Medal award ceremony Feb. 6 at the Ohio Statehouse. Wanner earned the Silver Star for his heroic actions on the battlefield May 31, 2009. (*Ohio National Guard photos by Spc Ryan Cleary*)

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and on the web @ <http://ong.ohio.gov>

The number one recruiting tool of the Ohio Air and Army National Guard is the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program (ONGSP). The program is a treasure and is directly responsible for the unprecedented levels of strength currently enjoyed within the Ohio Air National Guard (112 percent of authorized strength) and the Ohio Army National Guard (111 percent of authorized strength).

Today, more than 2,400 Ohio National Guard members are active participants in the scholarship program. Tens of thousands of our Guard members have received their college degrees and served the state of Ohio and the nation through this program. Because of their successes in college and experiences garnered through their military service, many of these men and women have gone on to play prominent roles across our great state.

At its inception, the Ohio National Guard Tuition Grant Program paid 100 percent of the cost of tuition at state-sponsored colleges and universities. In 1988, the Tuition Grant Program was reduced to 60 percent of tuition. It stayed at this level for the next 11 years, and the result was a degradation of readiness within both the Army and Air National Guard.

The decline in strength numbers in that period demonstrates the impact of the program. Strength in the Ohio Army National Guard increased from 82 percent in 1978 (the first year of the program) to a peak of more than 101 percent in 1983. The strength remained between 95 percent and 100 percent for the next five years. When the program reduced its coverage to 60 percent of tuition, the strength dropped from more than 95 percent in 1988 to 84 percent by 1990. Over the next decade, the highest level that strength would reach was 93 percent, with most years hovering between 85 percent and 90 percent strength.

The number one recruiting tool of the Ohio Air and Army National Guard is the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program.

It continues to thrive because of the efforts of the current leadership.

The impact is even more readily apparent when you examine the Ohio Air National Guard's strength numbers over the same period. The Ohio Air National Guard's strength has been over 100 percent for 16 of the 28 years since 1982. The only years that strength has been less than 100 percent were those during the period of 60 percent tuition. In fact, the strength of the Ohio Air National Guard was less than 100 percent each year between 1988 and 1999.

In 1999, Maj. Gen. John Smith went to the Ohio General Assembly and was successful in reinstating the 100 percent scholarship benefit. The resulting impact on readiness was both immediate and dramatic. When the program reset to 100 percent tuition in 1999, strength in the Ohio Army National Guard quickly climbed, increasing by five percentage points to more than 96 percent by 2001. The strength of the Ohio Army National Guard has been near or over 100 percent since then. Again, the relationship was even more strongly evident in the Ohio Air National Guard strength numbers. Strength surpassed 100 percent in 2000, just one year after the reset, and it has remained solidly over 100 percent since then. This data leaves no doubt that the Tuition Grant Program has a huge impact on the readiness of the State.

So now you know why the scholarship program is significant to the end strength of both the Air and Army National Guard and that the program has played a momentous role in enhancing readiness. I would now like to share with you the genesis of this

The ONGSP and its impact on our readiness

Maj. Gen. Matthew Kambic
The Assistant Adjutant General for Army

great program.

The program was primarily created as a response to the adversity our organization was facing in the mid 1970s. This was during the post-Vietnam and post-Kent State periods when military service in general, and Ohio National Guard service specifically, was not considered to be "cool" in the minds of a great number of our citizens. The specific catalyst was the disestablishment of the Reserve Office Training Corps (ROTC) program at Ohio University. Brig. Gen. Jim Abraham, who was both a World War II veteran (who participated in the landing on Normandy Beach) and an Ohio University graduate, was the assistant adjutant general for Army at that time. He endeavored to reverse the Army decision as it pertained to disestablishing ROTC at Ohio University.



Abraham gained the support of the new Ohio University president, Dr. Charlie Ping, in an effort to save the ROTC Program. Ping demonstrated this support by providing one hundred tuition grants to Abraham to be distributed to members of the Ohio National Guard who attended Ohio University and pursued a commission through ROTC.

The next step was to gain the support of the Army. Lt. Gen. Vern Webber, chief of the National Guard Bureau, played a critical role in this endeavor by arranging a meeting for Abraham and Ping with the Secretary of the Army. Abraham and Ping were successful in garnering the support of the Army for implementation of an experimental program to be executed at Ohio University.

During this period, Rep. Vern Riffe, speaker of the Ohio House of Representatives, called Abraham and asked the general to come see him. The speaker was interested in saving the engineer company located in Portsmouth and was soliciting the general's support. In this meeting, Abraham shared his vision for saving both the noted engineer company as well as the ROTC program at Ohio University while also increasing the readiness of the entire Ohio National Guard. Abraham asked the speaker to support a scholarship program for the Ohio National Guard. The speaker promised to support the initiative if Abraham was successful in establishing the pilot scholarship program at Ohio University.

When the Army agreed to support the pilot program, Riffe worked to establish the full, statewide scholarship program. The legislation moved through the House in a very short period of time.

The next hurdle came in the form of opposition to the initiative in the Senate. Abraham received a phone call advising him the initiative was in jeopardy. The general called the president of the Senate, Sen. Harry Meshel, to ask for his support. Meshel advised Abraham that he would have the legislation approved by

Continued on page 12

Program continues to build upon first year achievements

The Ohio National Guard (ONG) Alumni Affairs Program passed the one year mark this past January. It has been a very good year with many opportunities to renew acquaintances, share information and build relationships with alumni and alumni groups around the state. As we start the second year, I would like to reflect a bit on our 2009 activities and share our goals for 2010.

We have developed an electronic alumni database that is used to distribute the ONG Alumni Newsletter, currently being published twice a month. Our mailing list also includes a number of links to other retiree and alumni databases for further distribution. Due to the nature of the Internet, we don't know precisely how many ONG alumni actually receive the newsletter; however we have received responses from Europe, Africa, Asia and most of the 50 states. Suffice to say, we are getting the alumni message out. The content of the newsletter is flexible and will continue to be adjusted as alumni needs and desires change.

In the last edition, I reported on the ONG alumni reunion held at DSCC in Columbus on Saturday, Sept. 19, 2009. This year, with the assistance of the recently established Alumni Advisory Committee, we will be planning an event in September. We are considering hosting the reunion at Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base this year which will provide a great opportunity to visit both Air and Army facilities and equipment. There is interest in adding a social event the evening before the retiree reunion and possibly a golf outing. Look for additional information in upcoming editions of the newsletter.

Much of the first year's activities included conducting meetings and briefings while working with alumni groups around the state to build mutually beneficial relationships. We will continue to work on sustaining these important relationships. We will also work toward providing linkage to encourage and enable alumni to reconnect with former units, as well as to support our current Airmen and Soldiers.

In December we conducted a review of the program via an online assessment in which more than 250 alumni participated. The vast majority of respondents indicated they were pleased with the effort, while offering many suggestions for improvements, as well as suggestions for program enhancements. Key results were:

- Ninety-eight percent rate the newsletter good or excellent.

ONG Alumni Reunion planned for September 18 at Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base, Columbus

Plans are in-progress for the annual ONG alumni reunion. The final agenda is incomplete, however it will generally follow the format of last year's event held at DSCC in Columbus.

The morning will include update briefs from senior Army and Air leaders, while the afternoon will include tours of Air and Army equipment and facilities, as well as opportunities to have one on one meetings with VA, TRICARE, and other representatives.

*The full agenda and registration materials will be posted on the ONG alumni webpage at:
<http://www.ong.ohio.gov/AlumniTest.html>.*

Alumni News Update



staying connected >><< COL (Ret.) James Chisman

- Ninety-six percent felt the newsletter meets their informational needs about the ONG.
- Ninety-four percent have a good to excellent impression of the alumni program.
- Ninety-three percent rate the website good to excellent.
- Ambassador Program - 64 percent are familiar, 6 percent are currently ambassadors and 39 percent are interested in becoming an ONG Ambassador.

Based off of the much appreciated feedback this past year, our 2010 goals include:

- Continue to liaise with unit and wing associations and alumni groups to provide information and assistance.
- Increase alumni support and assistance to our current units, Airmen, Soldiers and Families.
- Increase the number of alumni in the database who receive the alumni newsletter.
- Increase attendance at the Adjutant General's Alumni Reunion.
- Increase the number of alumni who serve as ONG Ambassadors.

I would also like to add a personal request for every alumni to consider for 2010. If you haven't attended a unit or wing Call to Duty, Welcome Home Ceremony or a regional ISFAC meeting, please plan to do so. Event information will be announced in the Alumni Newsletter. Your Ohio National Guard wants and needs your continued support. **86**

Retired Col. James H. Chisman is a federal government contractor serving as the Ohio National Guard alumni affairs coordinator. He can be reached at james.chisman@us.army.mil or by phone at 614-336-7336.



- Judy Newton Hartley** Without all of you protecting us, who knows where we would be now. Thank all of you so much.
January 9 at 10:03am · Flag
- NurseBannon** @OHNationalGuard thanks for your service and sacrifices you have made to serve.
8:36 AM Feb 2nd via Twittrific
- TheMarcoWall** @OHNationalGuard Of course, it's always great to see a proud soldier return home healthy.
9:18 AM Apr 14th via Tweep in reply to OHNationalGuard
- ZachVeach** There were @OHNationalGuard on my flight, headed to Iraq, Afganistan. I wish them a safe return and thanked them for what they are doing!
11:24 AM Apr 26th via mobile web
- TheNatiGuard** @OHNationalGuard gets remotely piloted MQ-1 Predator aircraft mission <http://bit.ly/a89vLk>
#NationalGuard #military #news
10:18 AM May 13th via web

Outreach is a “team sport”

Every day, most of us “reach out” to others as a normal part of our personal or professional lives. We do this because it is enjoyable to meet new people, learn new things, helps us meet goals and affect others in a positive way. When we reach out in the spirit of the common good, we typically see great teamwork and results!

The Ohio National Guard Office (ONG) of Community Outreach was established as a focal point of office of collaboration working toward facilitating a proactive and purposeful organizational approach to outreach. We have prioritized establishing and developing relationships with employers, educators, women, minorities and alumni. To effectively do this, we need the support and teamwork of everyone involved.

Every Soldier and Airman has an important role to play in educating employers about the Ohio National Guard and cultivating other key community ambassadors. We appreciate you inviting your employer to joint employer events, call-to-duty, welcome home and yellow ribbon post-deployment events.

Thanks to the support of commanders, we have dedicated personnel, equipment displays and time to host annual “hands-on” educational events. Major Subordinate Command personnel officers, wing executive support officers and outreach staff participate in monthly outreach collaboration meetings at Beightler Armory. Our goal is to work together on local and state outreach activities. Other ONG offices that do outreach, Family Readiness, Recruiting, Diversity, and Counter Drug, also participate in a monthly meeting to maximize the benefits of existing outreach efforts. The positive responses and great team work of these groups is making a difference.

The Adjutant General led the way in gaining the support of Ohio citizens. One of his earliest initiatives was creating OHIOCARES, a network of behavioral health providers and other community-based agencies that provide services to support positive transitions from active duty to civilian life. He further engaged Ohioans by hosting 13 statewide town hall meetings with Family Readiness to educate the public and find meaningful ways for them to support service members and their families. Family Readiness then adopted the town hall and Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (ISFAC) approach into the Regional Inter-Service Family Assistance Committee (RISFAC). Each of these team building initiatives has made a significant impact on the well being of our members.

The Ohio National Guard also reaches out to professional associations. Strong relationships exist with the Ohio Broadcaster’s Association, Ohio School Board Association, National Association of Social Workers, Ohio Psychological Association, Ohio Association of County Behavioral Health Authorities and the Ohio Council of Behavioral Healthcare Providers. With the support of subject matter experts like Col. Duncan Aukland, Col. Jill Faris and Col.

reaching
to communities to employers
OUT Lt. Col. Kathy Lowrey



Steve Markovich we are now reaching out to lawyer and healthcare provider associations. We hope to expand pro bono services and the number of TRICARE providers. In the future, we anticipate reaching out to business, educational, psychological and ministerial associations. In every case, the association’s welcome reception and willingness to partner has been outstanding!

We could not perform our missions without the support of our employers. In 2009, NetJets and Ohio Department of Public Safety received the nationally prestigious Employer Support of Guard and Reserves (ESGR) Freedom Award. There were also 833 ONG employers nominated for ESGR Patriot Awards. Also a reflection of employer support, the Ohio Employer Support of Guard and Reserves Ombudsmen program resolved about 82% of their consistently declining number of employer-employee cases. Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services and Ohio AMVETS are significantly supporting employment related issues by providing job search capabilities on their websites. The teamwork of these partners helps keep our Ohio National Guard team strong.

Over the past several years, we have been fortunate to have the support of other significant partners. The USO’s of Central and Northern Ohio, Ohio Patriot Guard Riders and The Ohio State University football and basketball teams have supported service members and families in many creative ways. Many others have also been supportive of the Ohio National Guard team.

Clearly, the Ohio National Guard is strong today because of the solid teamwork of our members and partners. We need to sustain this teamwork to maintain readiness and maximize public trust. Every one of us is an important part of our team. Thank you for your support. **OG**

Lt. Col. Kathy Lowrey is the director of community outreach for the Ohio National Guard



legislative look

with johann klein



Ohio Veteran Bonus Money Coming Soon

In November, Ohio voters passed state Issue 1, a constitutional amendment allowing the state to borrow up to \$200 million to pay cash bonuses to all Ohio Servicemembers who served in the Persian Gulf, Afghanistan and Iraq. This includes those serving in current conflicts in those areas, plus veterans involved in Operation Desert Storm in the early 1990s.

Veterans of the conflicts are eligible to receive up to \$100 per month, up to \$1,000, for time served in those areas. Those serving in the military at the time but in other locations will get \$50 for each month served up to a maximum of \$500. Families of veterans who died in action will be eligible for a \$5,000 death benefit.

The Ohio Department of Veterans Services (ODVS) is creating an application process for veterans to request the bonus. At this time there is not an established timeline for the application process and the mailing of the first checks. Based on the experiences of other states, ODVS hopes to be mailing the first checks this fall.

ODVS is also working to ensure that the application process is user friendly for Ohio veterans and that all eligible veterans receive their bonus. ODVS will use the news media, their web site and other communications vehicles to tell eligible veterans when the agency is ready to receive their bonus applications. Look for additional information in this column when more guidelines are in place for submitting bonus applications.

President's Signature Boosts Veteran Health Care

Earlier this Spring, President Obama signed the Caregivers and Veterans Omnibus Health Services Act of 2010 into law. The law improves health care for veterans by expanding mental health counseling and services for Iraq and Afghanistan veterans, including reserve-component service members.

The law increases support for veterans in rural areas with transportation and housing needed to reach VA hospitals and clinics. It expands health care for women veterans to meet their unique needs, including maternity care for newborn children, and it allows the VA to launch a pilot program to provide child care for veterans receiving intensive medical care.

The legislation also eliminates copayments for veterans who are catastrophically disabled and provides a stipend to caregivers to care for a severely injured veteran from Afghanistan or Iraq.

TRICARE for 'Gray Area' Retirees in October

Retired National Guard and Reserve personnel may be able to buy TRICARE health coverage as soon as Oct. 1. The legislation enabling "Grey Area" Retirees to purchase TRICARE was part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010.

Until this became law, reserve-component retirees did not have the option of TRICARE coverage until reaching the age of 60. After the start-up date, retirees under 60 may purchase TRICARE Standard and Extra coverage. The law requires premium rates to equal the full cost of the coverage. This differs from TRICARE Reserve Select for reserve members, who pay 28 percent of the cost of coverage. Premium rates are not yet available. For more information, go to www.tricare.mil 

Command profile



Lt. Col. Gene W. Hughes, Jr.
123rd Air Control Squadron

NAME: Lt. Col. Gene W. Hughes, Jr.

AGE: 45

FULL-TIME OCCUPATION: 123rd Air Control Squadron Commander

HOMETOWN: Union, Kentucky

FAMILY: Wife, Marjory; Daughter, Danielle; Sons, Jacob and Xaden

WHEN I WAS YOUNGER, I WANTED TO: Be a professional race car driver

MOST RECENT ACHIEVEMENT: Getting my unit members home safely and completing Air War College in three months while on my third deployment to Iraq

THE LAST GOOD MOVIE I SAW WAS: Avatar 3-D at an IMAX theater, the effects were phenomenal

THE BOOK I'M READING IS: Rule Number 1 by Phil Town

MY FAVORITE RECREATIONAL ACTIVITY IS: Anything in the Caribbean or riding my Honda CBR1000rr

THE ONE THING I TREASURE MOST: My family, nothing is a close second

HEROES: My father who inspired me to join the military but unfortunately passed on without seeing most of what I accomplished; my mother who let me find my own boundaries while helping me stay within reach of my faith and what is right; my wife and kids for keeping me grounded when life and my job become chaotic

NOBODY KNOWS I'M: A diehard Kid Rock fan and that I was lucky enough to be able to hang out with him for a couple hours after a concert

I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO MEET: My paternal grandmother who passed away when I was less than a year old

MY BIGGEST PET PEEVE IS: People who are late for work

THE THREE WORDS THAT BEST DESCRIBE ME: Dedicated, loyal, ambitious

IF I COULD LEAVE TODAY'S GUARDMEMBERS WITH ONE PIECE OF ADVICE IT WOULD BE: Your career in the Guard is what you make of it. The Guard offers a myriad of opportunities that those who do not serve will never be afforded. I have seen the world, its people and their cultures in lands and ways I would never have experienced if it were not for the Guard. Beyond travel it offers endless opportunities to be a leader or part of a world class team. As is the case with most of life's opportunities, you have to seek them. Your career in the Guard is what you make of it, choose to lean forward so the sacrifices you make while serving are worth the rewards you receive along the way.

Johann Klein is legislative liaison for the Adjutant General's Department

In the presence of greatness: Ohio National Guard Soldier honored for courage under fire



Story by 2nd Lt. Kimberly Snow
Ohio Adjutant General's Office, Public Affairs

COLUMBUS, Ohio—Sgt. 1st Class Mark Wanner prefers the label Soldier to hero, although the quiet professional graciously humors those who insist on the latter.

The Ohio Army National Guard Special Forces medical sergeant stood unassumingly on a stage Feb. 6 in the Ohio Statehouse atrium to receive the Silver Star Medal—the nation's third highest medal for valor in combat. Despite the season's worst snowstorm, several hundred people, including his fellow Green Berets from the Columbus-based Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group, family members, friends and dignitaries traveled to Central Ohio from as far away as Utah to attend the event honoring Wanner for his actions during a firefight last May when he saved the life of a fellow Green Beret.

Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland and Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general, were on hand to present Wanner with the medal. It is the first such award for an Ohio National Guard member since the Korean War.

"We are in the presence of greatness today," Strickland said. "Many people live their entire lives wondering if they've made a difference. But Sergeant First Class Mark Wanner never has to worry about that, does he?"

Sgt. 1st Class Sean Clifton, a Dublin, Ohio-resident, was also on hand, along with his fellow Soldiers from Company B to honor their friend and teammate. Fighting back tears, Clifton recounted the day he almost lost his life after being shot mul-

tiplle times during a raid on a Taliban compound in eastern Afghanistan.

"I'm standing here today, alive, because of the heroic and competent actions Mark performed on the night of May 31, 2009—Memorial Day," Clifton said.

The previous week, Clifton and his "A-team," Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) 9224, had received word that a known Taliban leader would soon be meeting with about a half dozen Taliban fighters at a known location in a nearby village. After waiting for five days with what Wanner referred to as "tactical patience," the ODA received word that their target was in position. The team had been training with their Afghan counterparts for nearly five months and the plan was to allow the Afghans to take the lead and follow shortly behind. But when

the ODA approached the village, the Afghans were already in trouble and the situation was deteriorating quickly. They had expected five or six Taliban fighters; there were at least 30. They reacted immediately.

"I led some guys into a doorway and that just happened to be the room that had 80 percent of the threat," Clifton said. "I knew something wasn't quite right. Then I got hit."

Clifton had taken at least four rounds. The first entered his pelvis just below his body armor, the second impacted the chest plate of his body armor, the third shattered his left forearm and



the last round hit his helmet, knocking off his night vision goggles. When he saw his arm and realized his rifle had dropped down in front of him, he knew he was in trouble.

He headed back out and almost immediately ran into Sgt. 1st Class Matt Sheaffer, a team medic. Wanner, the team's senior medic, realizing Clifton was hit, immediately ran to assist Sheaffer. Rounds splashed the ground around them as they began working on their wounded comrade. Realizing the danger to their patient, they quickly drug him around to what they assumed was the safer side of the building.

As the two medics continued to work on Clifton, Wanner began to realize the extent of his wounds. He knew they couldn't move their patient unless they had a stretcher, so ran to the vehicle to retrieve one. As he returned, they began receiving

fire from a window about 15 feet away, forcing them to press up against the wall of the building. As he continued to work on Clifton, Wanner coordinated suppressing fire on the window and told Sheaffer to grab the fragmentation grenade Wanner kept on the back of his body armor and toss it into the room from which they were taking fire. The tactic worked. It subdued the enemy long enough for them to race Clifton to a vehicle for evacuation. Wanner continued to provide life-saving care as they bounced across the desert to a medical evacuation site, avoiding the main routes they knew to be laced with roadside bombs. When the medical evacuation helicopters arrived, Wanner boarded the one carrying his Soldier-turned-patient and didn't leave his side until Clifton was transported to the U.S. Army hospital at Landstuhl, Germany, three days later.

"He was there every step of the way, ensuring I was receiving the best possible care," Clifton said. "He assisted the flight surgeon in the medevac, the trauma surgeons in the OR (operating room) and even helped out a wounded Soldier that lay next to me. That's Mark—

always going over and above the call of duty."

Wanner, a North Dakota resident, spent nine years in his home state's National Guard before joining the Ohio National Guard in 2000 when he accepted a job as a researcher with the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine. In 2003, he left his job at the university to begin two years of Special Forces qualification and specialized language and medical training. When he moved back to North Dakota, he did not even consider leaving his Ohio National Guard Special Forces unit.

"I find it remarkable that he travels every month to train with these men right here," Wayt said. "That speaks to the brotherhood that exists inside this unit."

Throughout nearly 20 years of service, Wanner has worked in several military occupational specialties, training initially as a vehicle mechanic, then as a carpentry and masonry specialist and combat engineer in the North Dakota National Guard before joining the Ohio National Guard and earning his Green Beret. He earned a bachelor's degree from North Dakota State University in 1996 with a major in microbiology and minors in chemistry and biotechnology. Wayt referred to Wanner as a "fixer" who epitomizes the spirit of the Silver Star Medal.

"If you have mechanical trouble, you call Mark. If you have a house problem and you want something built or fixed, you call Mark," Wayt said. "And as Sergeant Clifton can attest, he fixes life-threatening injuries as well."

Wanner, who currently works building custom homes in North Dakota, shrugged off the praise.

"I was just the closest person to him that day. The real heroes are the whole team, our Afghan counterparts," Wanner said. "The whole team's a hero because everyone did their part."

Nonetheless, Clifton credits the medic who never left his side, ensuring he made it home to his wife and two young sons—the modest and gracious man who shrugs off praise and rejects being labeled a hero.

"I've thanked Mark several times since that day and his response is always the same," Clifton said. "Ah, you would have done the same thing. I was just doing my job." **86**



Facing Page: Ohio Gov. Ted Strickland awards the Silver Star Medal to Sgt. 1st Class Mark A. Wanner of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group during the Silver Star Medal award ceremony Feb. 6 at the Ohio Statehouse. A photo shows the medal and the accompanying certificates. (Ohio National Guard photos by Spc. Ryan Cleary) Above: A crowd of several hundred Soldiers, friends, Family members and dignitaries, stand and applaud as Sgt. 1st Class Mark A. Wanner of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group is awarded the Silver Star Medal during a Feb. 6 award ceremony at the Ohio Statehouse. Wanner is the first Ohio National Guardmember to be awarded the Silver Star Medal since the Korean War. (Ohio National Guard photo by Spc. Sam Beavers).

New missions announced for Air



Former U.S. Rep. David Hobson speaks Friday, May 14, at the Springfield Air National Guard Base. Officials say new missions will allow the base to retain 866 jobs and could create 200 to 400 more jobs. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Joseph R. Stahl, 178th FW)

Story by Maj. Lindsay M. Logsdon
178th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

SPRINGFIELD, Ohio -- The 178th Fighter Wing (FW), Springfield, Ohio will no longer be an F-16 Fighting Falcon training base. As announced May 7 the U.S. Department of Defense and the Air Force have decided to assign the base new missions as a ground control station for the MQ-1 Predator and an extension of the intelligence analysis mission from the National Air and Space Intelligence Center.

The 2005 BRAC Commission removed the flying training mission from the 178th FW and declared the mission to end no later than 2010. In the interim, through the Foreign Military Sales program, the base was able to obtain another training mission with the Royal Netherlands Air Force. Knowing the American training mission would be ending soon, the base pursued another foreign military training mission with the Singapore air force. However in 2009 it became apparent that mission would not be coming to Springfield due to economic limitations.

"There is much to be happy about," said Maj. Gen Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general. "In 2005, the Air Force and the Base Realignment and Closure Commission nearly shut down this base, and now, we are establishing cutting-edge missions that should ensure the viability of this base long into the future."

On May 14, following the announcement of the new missions, a coalition of political delegates who championed bringing the new missions to the wing gathered to celebrate with the base. Those present were General Wayt, Governor of Ohio Ted Strickland, U.S. Rep Steve Austria, former U.S. Rep. Dave Hobson, State Sen. Chris Widener, Ohio Rep.

U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Caleb Force, right, an MQ-1 Predator unmanned aerial vehicle sensor operator, assists 1st Lt. Jorden Smith, an MQ-1 pilot in locating simulated targets during a training mission. Both are assigned to the 11th Reconnaissance Squadron at Creech Air Force Base, Nev. As the 178th Fighter Wing begins its mission as a ground control station, this type of training will be a part of operations. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Nadine Y. Barclay) Background photo: A U.S. Air Force MQ-1 Predator aircraft assigned to the 11th Reconnaissance Squadron (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Scott Reed)



Attendees stand while Staff Sgt. Felitia Rowe of the United States Air Force Band of Flight sings the national anthem at the beginning of the 178th Fighter Wing new mission celebration. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Joseph R. Stahl, 178th FW)

Robert Hackett, Ohio Rep. Ross McGregor, Springfield Mayor Warren Copeland, as well as numerous other area representatives.

General Wayt stated, "This is the beginning of a new era for the 178th. These new missions you're receiving are solid missions."

In his address to the 178th FW, Governor Strickland thanked the coalition of political advocates for their efforts.

"With the future of the base uncertain, federal, state and military officials along with area business leaders and political leaders worked side-by-side in pursuit of a new mission," said Governor Strickland.

Congressman Austria seconded the governor's accolades of the delegation stating it was a team effort.

"This has been an effort from the White House to your house," he said.

"After so much uncertainty it is good to be able to finally move forward knowing that we have a long-term and relevant mission here," said Col. Mike Roberts, 178th FW commander. "The 178th has had an awesome history flying single-seat single-engine fighters for 60 plus years."

For those pilots remaining at the 178th FW, they will convert to fly the MQ-1. Maintainers of the F-16 and other positions affected by the change in mission will have to retrain into one of the other Predator system positions or into intelligence in support of the NASIC mission.

Retraining for the new missions will begin this summer. Training locations and duration will vary depending on the



National Guard in Springfield



178th FW commander, Col. Mike Roberts speaks at the new mission celebration at the 178th Fighter Wing, Springfield, Ohio May 14. The 178th FW will receive the MQ-1 Predator mission as well as analyze information for the National Air and Space Intelligence Center. (Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Joseph R. Stahl, 178th FW)

position requirements. The equipment involved in accomplishing the MQ-1 mission is expected to be delivered to the base some time in 2012.

The MQ-1 Predator is not merely an unmanned aircraft but a complete system. An operational MQ-1 system consists of four aircraft with sensors, a ground control station, a Predator Primary Satellite link along with operations and maintenance crews. The 178th FW has been assigned the role of the ground control station within the MQ-1 system. From the base, a Predator crew consisting of a pilot, sensor operator and mission intelligence coordinator, will conduct interdiction or armed reconnaissance missions in other countries via an extended communication link. The actual aircraft will be flown and maintained at another location.

"From this very soil decisions will be made, aircraft will be guided that will transform what is happening in the war-zone in a way that will keep our soldiers safer, will make our military even more effective and it's possible because of the work you will be doing at this facility," said Governor Strickland.

According to the U.S. Air Force Remotely Piloted Aircraft and Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Strategic Vision document, The MQ-1 Predator, armed with the AGM-114 Hellfire missile continues to be one of the military's most requested systems, assisting in the execution of the global war on terror by finding, fixing, tracking, targeting, engaging, and assessing suspected terrorist locations.

"All relevant organizations must adapt to new realities; and here, the reality is an insatiable demand for UAS-borne [unmanned aerial system] capabilities, and an evolving relationship between people, machines, and the sky," said General Norton Swartz, Chief of Staff of the Air Force, at the UAS Beta test class graduation Sept. 25, 2009, Creech Air Force Base, NV.

"The MQ-1 is a very relevant mission right now," said Lt.

Col. Joe Schulz, 306th Detachment commander. "As a training mission we've had an indirect contribution to the war because we were training other people to go and we were not deploying ourselves. This new mission will be a more direct operational contribution to the war for us."

In addition to the MQ-1 mission the 178th FW will also be supporting an extension of the NASIC mission. NASIC is headquartered at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base not far from the Springfield base and the wing already has an intelligence squadron working with the center.

"They [Springfield Guardsmen] will work with NASIC in creating intelligence to make sure the nation is at the cutting edge of understanding foreign threats to US Air and Space operations," said James Lunsford, chief of Public Affairs for NASIC.

According to Mr. Lunsford NASIC intelligence products span air, space and cyberspace domains and are in use every day. The President, members of Congress and the most senior military leaders rely on NASIC analysis to form US defense policy decisions.

"NASIC products are used in places like Iraq and Afghanistan to make military operations safer and more effective and are used to prepare the nation to combat future air and space threats," said Mr. Lunsford.

"The combatant commanders on the ground are dependent on what's going on inside of NASIC," said General Weyt. "[178th FW members] are going to be saving lives of those on the ground in Iraq and Afghanistan because you're going to be the eyes and ears for those commanders on the ground."

"From the P-51 to the F-16 this unit's outstanding work has marked it as one of the top fighter units in the country," said Colonel Roberts. "We're going to take on the new mission with the same professionalism dedication and patriotism that we have everything else we've done in the past." **AG**

RAVENNA, Ohio—The students walked single-file through a receiving line, shaking hands and taking their diplomas. The ceremony represented the culmination of the hard work of not only the students, who endured a grueling two-weeks of intense training, but also the instructors, the support personnel and the senior leadership of the 147th Regiment (Regional Training Institute), who spent more than a year making this event possible. While the event may have resembled many other graduations, Warrior Leadership Course (WLC) class 10-201 was making history.

The Ohio National Guard celebrated the graduation of 40 students from its first WLC April 23, 2010, at the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center. The course is historically significant, as it is the first mission-ready WLC for Reserve component Soldiers, taught by National Guard Soldiers.

“There is a real need for this course within the state and nationwide,” said Sgt. Maj. Andy Duch, operations sergeant major and deputy commandant of the 147th.

“Having WLC in Ohio is huge,” Duch said. “We are able to provide the cornerstone of NCOES (noncommissioned officer education system) for the junior NCOs in command.”

The 15-day course trains Soldiers in the fundamentals of leadership and awards graduates the NCO Professional Development Ribbon upon completion. It is non-specific to military occupational specialty (MOS) and taught in an NCO academy live-in environment using small group classroom instruction with practical application, followed by hands-on, performance-oriented training in a field environment, culminating with an extensive situational training exercise.

The need for a Reserve component course became apparent as reservations for the active-duty courses grew scarce and NCO academies could not keep pace with the growing number of NCOs and future NCOs eligible for the training.

“Each year, there are thousands of students who are not trained. That includes Soldiers who have already been promoted and need WLC to maintain their current rank,” Duch said.

In response to the increased training demands, the 147th developed its own certified WLC, which will conduct seven courses during the 2010 training year, providing NCO professional development for up to 480 Soldiers.

“Starting a course from scratch is very difficult, it’s labor intensive,” said Sgt. 1st Class Marco L. Schmitz, general studies battalion operations sergeant.

Though the courses have just begun, they are set to expand to 960 training seats available in 2011; 500 will be reserved for Ohio Soldiers.

“It’s a tight timeline and I realize it’s difficult, but I have every faith we’re going to kick it off with no real issues,” Schmitz said.

Staff Sgt. Christopher Dean, the assistant course manager for Ohio’s first WLC, said their success can be attributed to the hard work of the instructors.

“My instructors put in long, long hours away from their families and it’s hard, but they’re doing great,” Dean said. “I could not have asked for a better set of instructors.”

Each instructor must complete five weeks of combined training as an assistant instructor and primary instructor before receiving certification from the United States Sergeants Major Academy. Many of the instructors are also certified in teaching the RTI’s military police, motor transport operator and engineer school courses.

“The instructors are on it,” Dean said. “They know exactly what they need to know to run the missions and do what they need to do.”

Sgt. Corrie Bigelow, a student of WLC class 10-201 and a Pennsylvania National Guard member, said the instructors were both professional and proficient

“They have all the leadership skills to train Soldiers and make them leaders,” Bigelow said. “They helped me realize I can lead people. The course kind of brought more of the leader out of me.”

Sgt. 1st Class Nancy Kary, a WLC instructor, said her students want to be there and want to learn, which makes her job much easier.

“By day nine, you watch them start building that team cohesion and they start working together, picking up on each other’s strengths and weaknesses. Any time you take Soldiers and train them to be leaders, it’s very rewarding,” she said.

Ohio National Guard Sgt. Erin Bell, a WLC student, said she was glad to attend the course in Ohio and learned a lot.

“Whether you’ve been an E-5 for ten years or ten months, everyone gets on the same page,” Bell said. “There’s always something that WLC brings that you didn’t know before and no one can know too much.” **AG**

147th RTI Warrior Leadership Course graduates its first class

Story and Photos by Sgt. Sean Mathis
Ohio National Guard Public Affairs

Captions read top to bottom across the page starting with the background photo:

Soldiers patrol along a road en route to a destination they have plotted on a map during a field training exercise.

Sgt. Joshua Cravens shoots blank rounds providing suppressive fire with the M249 Squad Automatic Weapon on April 20, 2010, while his fellow squad members attempt to maneuver and flank the attacking enemy. Cravens and his team are conducting a Situational Training Exercise during Ohio's first Warrior Leadership Course.

Commander of the 147th Regional Training Institute Col. Dana McDaniel holds a briefing with his staff on Feb. 7, 2010 sharing his vision of the Warrior Leadership Course in Ohio's RTI.

The first student to arrive on the first day of the Ohio National Guard's first Warrior Leadership Course, Sgt. Corrie Bigelow, has his height and weight measured by Staff Sgt. Douglas Dunwald of the Youngstown based 838th Military Police Company during the in-processing .

Spc. Jeremiah Provo attempts to escape a smoke grenade simulating mortar fire on April 19, 2010, while conducting a Situational Training Exercise during Ohio's first Warrior Leadership Course in the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center.

Command Sgt. Maj. Albert Whatmough, Ohio's state command sergeant major, presents an army commendation medal to Sgt. Albert Riens during their April 23, 2010 graduation ceremony at the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center, for earning distinguished honor graduate during Ohio's first Warrior Leadership Course.



National Guard air defense units protect nation's capital



Pfc. Trevor Gaston, a Soldier with the 2nd Battalion, 263rd Air Defense Artillery, demonstrates an FIM-92 Stinger MANPADS (Man-Portable Air-Defense System) at Bolling Air Force Base April 14, 2010. Air Defense units from South Carolina and Ohio have been on rotating deployments to the National Capitol Region to support homeland defense as part of Operation Noble Eagle. This continued operation began in 2001, just days after—and in response to—the 9/11 terrorist attacks. (Photo by Spc. Darron Salzer)

By Air Force Master Sgt. Mike R. Smith
National Guard Bureau

WASHINGTON (4/21/10) – Although you don't see them, Soldiers from the 174th Air Defense Artillery Brigade of the Ohio National Guard see you anytime you fly into the nation's capital.

"What we bring to the fight is a ground-based, air defense capability that didn't exist on 9/11," said Col. Paul Craft, commander of Task Force Phoenix. "Along with our partners in the Air Force, we provide a 24-hour-a-day defense of our nation's capital."

The task force, which is headquartered here at Bolling Air Force Base, is one of the largest missions under Operation Noble Eagle and charged with defending 2,500 square miles of air space over the District of Columbia and its surrounding communities.

"What a great opportunity to be able to come to our nation's capital as National Guard Soldiers and know that we are providing a layer of defense to our national leadership," said Army Capt. Luke Fedlam, the personnel officer for the Joint Air Defense operations center. "A lot of people don't know about the National Guard playing a role in homeland defense. They know a lot about the overseas missions and providing disaster relief, but to be able to provide that day-to-day national defense of our nation's capital... what a great opportunity."

Craft said the unit uses standard Army air defense artillery equipment, including Avengers, Stingers, MANPADS and Sentinel radars - things that would be associated with an Army air defense mission.

Ohio provides command and control for the task force and Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 263rd Air Defense Artillery

Brigade, South Carolina National Guard man the posts.

Soldiers described the numerous checks that aircraft have to follow to enter the air space, which can tip them off to violations. They also demonstrated the powerful radar systems, which allow them to look at air traffic in a very detailed manner.

"It picks up helicopters, fixed wing, rotary wing, cruise missiles... just about anything," said Spc. Daniel Waddell, also of the 263rd. "It's a big responsibility, but we trained up pretty hard for it, and we know the equipment."

Both units said they are proud to be selected for this mission as the first and possibly last line of defense against another airborne attack on this city.

"We have a very unique group of individuals that came together with very diverse backgrounds, very diverse skills sets, that really put together an absolutely winning team," said Fedlam.

The ONGSP and its impact on our readiness (continued from page 2)

the end of that week and on the desk of Gov. James Rhodes by Monday morning. The governor promptly signed the scholarship bill into law.

Abraham was also successful in getting the Army to agree to allow Soldiers in the Ohio Army National Guard to contract into advanced ROTC and retain their membership in the Ohio Army National Guard. This too was part of the initiative to save ROTC at Ohio University, and the result was the birth of the Simultaneous Membership Program. The program was soon implemented Army-wide, and is credited with commissioning more than 45,000 officers into the active Army, Army Reserve and National Guard.

We should always remember the names of these leaders who played such a prominent role in making the Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program a reality. Our program was created through a true bi-partisan partnership that included Rhodes (Republican), Meshel (Democrat), Riffe (Democrat), and Abraham (Republican).

The Ohio National Guard Scholarship Program continues to thrive because of the efforts of the current leadership—Maj. Gen.

Gregory L. Wayt, the adjutant general; Governor Ted Strickland, commander in chief of the Ohio National Guard and the Ohio General Assembly. In 2005, Wayt and his team secured sufficient legislative support to establish a reserve account for the National Guard Scholarship Program, providing a funding cushion should the appropriated funds in any given year prove insufficient to the demand for the program. As a result, the Scholarship Program enjoys the most stable funding it has had since its inception, despite the extraordinarily challenging economic and budgetary climate.

By the way... the Ohio University ROTC Program is alive and vibrant, and was selected as the 2009 recipient of the Brig. Gen. James Abraham Best ROTC Program Trophy for providing the best support to the Army Guard. **AG**



178th Fighter Wing graduates last pilots

By Maj. Lindsay Logsdon
178th Fighter Wing

The 178th Fighter Wing (FW), Springfield, Ohio, graduated its final American F-16 Fighting Falcon Basic Course class at a formal banquet at the Hilton Cincinnati Netherland Plaza.

Capt. Christopher Behrens was recognized with the distinguished graduate award. Six of the graduates will go on to assignments in the active-duty Air Force, and one will fly with the 132nd Fighter Wing, Iowa Air National Guard.

“As with all of the fighter pilots we have sent to the Combat Air Forces from the 178th Fighter Wing, we are extremely proud of this graduating class in their completion of this stage of training,” said Col. Mike Roberts, the 178th FW commander.

The Basic Course, or B-course, is for students who have never flown a fighter aircraft, but are graduates of Air Force Undergraduate Pilot Training. Students are inducted into an eight-and-half month rigorous training regimen, including academics, simulators and flying training. This graduating class began training March 30.

The 178th FW training mission began September 2000 and has graduated 77 pilots through the B-course and a total of 350 pilots. The total number includes both graduates of the transition course, which is for experienced fighter pilots transitioning to fly the F-16 and training for pilots upgrading to operational or formal training instructor pilot status.

Lt. Gen. Mark A. Welsh III, the C.I.A. associate director for military affairs, was the guest speaker at the banquet. The general began by reminding the new fighter pilots of the rigors of the duty they have been trained for and he also urged them to keep an eye on the milestones that lie ahead of them.



An F-16 from the 178th FW in Springfield on a training mission over Ohio skies. (Photo by Douglas Nicodemus/ONG)

It is of significant note that General Welsh as the next U.S. Air Forces in Europe commander will soon be the boss for three of the graduates headed to Spangdahlem Air Base, Germany, and Aviano Air Base, Italy.”

The American F-16 training program will no longer continue at Springfield ANG base as the mission was ended under the 2005 Base Closure and Realignment Commission. The 178th FW was one of three formal training units for the F-16. The Springfield aircraft will be distributed to ANG units across the country.

“We’ll especially remember these guys; they’re the end of an era for the 178th Fighter Wing in the training of American pilots,” said Col. Roberts.

“However, we won’t get too sentimental as we look forward and move into new missions to replace our current American jets.”

Ohio Air Guard assists Haiti earthquake relief

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AFNS) -- As many stood poised around the country ready to answer the call, officials with the Ohio Air National Guard’s 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield already had two C-130 Hercules cargo aircraft providing assistance to Haiti.

Airmen from the 179th AW had deployed to Puerto Rico Jan. 9 during a planned rotation in support of Operation Coronet Oak, a U.S. Southern Command theater airlift support mission. Three days later, the

magnitude 7.0 earthquake hit neighboring Haiti. The same evening, SOUTHCOM officials placed three aircrews from the 179th on alert. Early on Jan. 13, the first aircrew was activated and was airborne within three hours.

The C-130 flew to Florida to collect search and rescue teams and communication crews and deliver them to Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital. Soon after, a second aircrew was alerted and airborne.



Airmen from the Mansfield-based 179th Airlift Wing load bottled water onto a C-130 "Hercules" cargo aircraft, Jan. 19, at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida, during relief efforts following a magnitude 7.0 earthquake, Jan. 12, that devastated the capital city of Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The Airmen, who were deployed to Puerto Rico in support of Operation Coronet Oak, a theater airlift support mission, were immediately diverted to conduct relief efforts. (Courtesy photos)



The first aircrew arrived in Port-au-Prince as the sun was setting and landed successfully, despite challenging terrain and a downed communication tower. The C-130 was the first such aircraft to land in Port-au-Prince. The second aircrew arrived after sunset with three pallets of communication materials to improve departure and approach communication at Port-au-Prince airport.

Three Puerto Rico Air National Guard aircraft were tasked to the 179th Airlift Wing for this operation to pick up and deliver additional supplies and personnel. **Captain Nicole Ashcroft/JFHQ**

Annual RSP Warrior Challenge prepares Soldiers both physically and mentally

Story by Spc. Sam Beavers/196th MPAD



COLUMBUS, Ohio—Whether climbing over a 10-foot wall, rappelling into a ravine, or crawling through a mud pit, it was not the average drill weekend for about 100 Soldiers who competed in the third annual Ohio Army National Guard Recruit Sustainment Program Warrior Challenge April 24-25 at Camp Sherman and Camp Lazarus.

The challenge started April 24 at Camp Sherman in Chillicothe, where Soldiers tested their proficiency of basic tasks such as land navigation, evaluating a casualty, donning a protective mask and assembling an M-16 A2 rifle. The two-day event continued April 25 with a grueling 2-mile obstacle course at Boy Scouts of America Camp Lazarus in Delaware.

“This is the capstone event for RSP,” said Lt. Col. Daniel Shank, Ohio Army National Guard Recruiting and Retention Battalion commander. “It builds esprit de corps and encourages working together as a team to help each other.”

Warrior Challenge is an opportunity for new Soldiers to build confidence as well as a chance for leaders to assess how ready they are for the rigors of Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training, Shank said.

“It helps make basic less of a shock,” said Pvt. Jacob Kenworthy, who has already completed BCT and is drilling with his RSP unit until he begins his advanced training.

Kenworthy’s parents agreed and said the challenge is a great event.

“It prepares you mentally and physically,” said Brenda Kenworthy, Jacob’s mom.



Above Left: The Ohio State University football coach Jim Tressel presides over the conclusion of the day’s activities. (Ohio Army National Guard photo) **Above Right:** Soldiers participate in the Kettering-based Company G, Recruit Sustainment Program Warrior Challenge April 25 at Camp Lazarus in Delaware. (Ohio Army National Guard photo) **Below:** Soldiers assigned to the Recruit Sustainment Program pushed through eight obstacles including the mud crawl during the RSP Warrior Challenge April 25 at Camp Lazarus in Delaware, Ohio. (Ohio Army National Guard photo below left by Spc. Ryan A. Cleary and below by Spc. Sam Beavers)



The Ohio State University photo below left by Spc. Ryan A. Cleary)

Physically and mentally



Tressel greets and congratulates recruits on their completion (photo by Spc. Sam Beavers). Above: Soldiers assigned to the RSP program endured "shark attack" by cadre during the event in Delaware, Ohio. The RSP program prepares new recruits for basic training (photo by Spc. Ryan A. Cleary)

After a severe thunderstorm forced challenge organizers to close down the obstacle course early, RSP Company F, based out of Newton Falls, emerged victorious among RSP teams, earning the title "Top Team" based on total points accumulated from physical fitness tests and Stripes for Skills testing which took place on Saturday. The Ohio State University Reserve Officer Training Corps team, competing as a guest competitor along with two teams from University of Cincinnati ROTC, earned top ROTC team honors.

Covered in mud and filled with enthusiasm, RSP Company A was named "Top Company" since the combined total of both its teams resulted in the highest overall score. Led by First Sgt. David Hunt, the competing Warriors were presented the Spc. Joshua J. O'Bannon Memorial Trophy by Maj. Gen. Matthew L. Kambic, Ohio's assistant adjutant general for Army and Ohio State football coach Jim Tressel, who acted as an honorary battalion commander for the day's events.

"It was tough, but it was a blast," said Pfc. Amanda Green of Company A, Recruiting and Retention Detachment.

Another fellow Company A member agreed with visible excitement.

"This was a great experience," said Pvt. Lukas Blanton. "There were so many activities - it was such a rush."

Tressel also promoted numerous Soldiers following Sunday's event and told each of them how much he appreciated their service. Following the ceremony, Tressel stuck around to sign autographs and to participate in several 'O-H-I-O' pictures.

"It was nice that Coach Tressel supported the RSP and the National Guard; it was definitely a morale boost," said Cadet Elizabeth Mikulka, who is in her second year of ROTC at The Ohio State University. "It was even better because we were representing our college as well as the Army."

The Ohio Recruit Sustainment Program was created in 2006 to better prepare new recruits to handle the mental and physical challenges of basic training. The program ensures new enlistees are properly prepared to ship and successfully complete basic training. On average, for every 100 enlistments into the Ohio Army National Guard, 94 successfully ship to their basic combat training course. Of those, 89 successfully complete the training.

All 54 states and territories have RSPs, which are tracked by the National Guard Bureau. Since its inception, the Ohio Army National Guard's RSP has continued to rank in the top two percent among all National Guard Bureau programs. **AG**

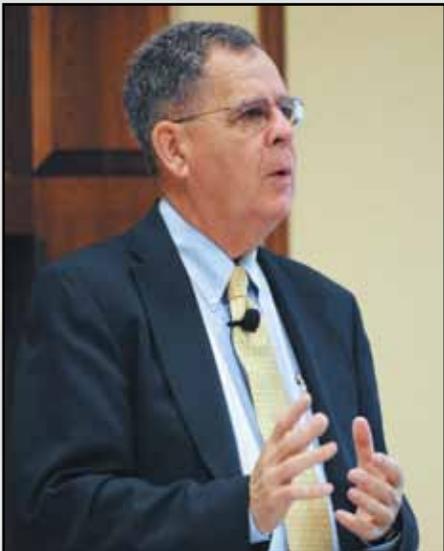


Ohio State University football coach Jim Tressel takes time to be a part of an O-H-I-O with a group of Soldiers. (Ohio Army National Guard photo by Spc. Ryan A. Cleary)

2010 family readiness conference brings groups together, builds relationships

Story and photos by Sgt. Sean Mathis
Joint Force Headquarters—Ohio, Public Affairs

DUBLIN, Ohio—Woody Johnson, host of 92.3 WCOL's Woody and the Wake-up Call morning show, made his way around the dancing banana, the walking Wheaties box, Dr. Phil, and an assortment of nurses, pro wrestlers, joggers and other athletes. As he reached the other end of the crowded conference room, he handed a microphone to a young woman who was singing into her fork. In the spirit of competition, she took it and sang along with hundreds of elaborately dressed Soldiers, Airmen and Family members.



The Ohio National Guard held its 2010 Family Readiness Conference April 9-11, at the Columbus Marriott Northwest Hotel, starting Friday evening with a wellness-themed costume party, replete with fun and games. The weekend's events also included awards, recognition and planning for Ohio's Family readiness groups (FRG).

Lt. Col. Robert Bramlish, state Family programs director, said the purpose of the annual conference is to build "relationships among FRGs, unit leadership and organizations committed to supporting our troops and families."

FRGs provide a support network that assist military families during hardships while loved ones are deployed. FRGs work closely with the leaders of deployed troops and organizations that support troops to solve issues that military Family members face while their loved ones are away.

More than 800 Family members, Soldiers and Airmen of the Ohio National Guard attended the three-day conference.

Designed to help foster relationships between troops and FRGs, the first night of the conference was designated with a wellness theme and attendees dressed in related apparel, including medical scrubs, athletic clothing, and even healthy food costumes. Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general, dressed as Olympic gold medalist and professional snowboarder Shaun White, donning plastic gold medals, a long, curly, red-haired wig, a black toboggan, aviator sunglasses and a snowboard under his left arm.

"There is tremendous leadership at the top of both the Ohio Army and Air Guards," Johnson said. "For General Wayt to dress up like Shaun White... you want to serve a guy like that. I'm a civilian and I want to serve a guy like that."

Johnson, who is married to an Ohio Air National Guard member from the 121st Air Refueling Wing, understands the challenges facing military families.

"If I can support their commitment by giving them mine, then I'll be there for them. It's kind of my way of saying thanks," Johnson said.

On Saturday, conference attendees broke into smaller groups designed to focus on specific issues and allow for some individual attention.

"Some of these classes may contribute to improved FRG programs in units, while others may focus on maintaining the wellness of all our FRG volunteers, as well as commanders and senior NCOs who, in spite of all which is on their plate, continue to give even more to troops and Families," Bramlish said.

Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Dennis McCarthy attended the conference on Sunday, commending the Ohio National Guard for the success of its Family Readiness Program and answering questions about future changes regarding Family programs in the military.

More than 160 children of military members also attended the conference. Fifty-six children between the ages of 6-9 learned the history of the United States military from volunteers dressed in uniforms from the War of 1812 to today's Global War on Terrorism. In some classes, children were allowed to wear some of the equipment and experience firsthand what their mothers and fathers wear. **AG**



Left and above: Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Dennis McCarthy speaks to more than 800 Ohio National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and Family members, along with representatives of other military and military support organizations, during the 2010 Family Readiness Conference April 11 at the Columbus Marriott Northwest Hotel in Dublin, Ohio. Background Photo: Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Mann, Ohio National Guard historian, teaches children of military members the history of the War of 1812 dressed as a Soldier from the era April 9, 2010, during the Family Readiness Conference at the Columbus Marriott Northwest Hotel in Dublin, Ohio. (Ohio Army National Guard photos by Spc. Sean Mathis)

First in, last out: Members of first RED HORSE squadron back in Iraq

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Darrell Habisch
407th Air Expeditionary Group

ALI BASE, Iraq (AFNS) -- Members of the 200th Rapid Engineering Deployable Heavy Operational Repair Squadron Engineer Squadron (RED HORSE) have arrived here to draw down the 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron from Iraq. As they complete the last construction and engineering projects and pack up their equipment and materials in the yard, they are part of the last RED HORSE rotation operating under Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2010.

Several civil engineers currently at Ali Base were part of the original 2005 rotation charged with constructing the infrastructure necessary to conduct and sustain operations throughout Iraq, including Ali Base.

In 2005, members of the 200th and 201st RED HORSE Squadrons from the Ohio and Pennsylvania Air National Guard were part of the 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron, which was the first RED HORSE squadron to stand up in Iraq.

"We were the first 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron in 2005, and we'll be the last ones leaving Iraq in 2010," said Chief Master Sgt. Richard Bressler, the Chief Enlisted Manager of the 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron.

A RED HORSE squadron is a self-sufficient group with its own headquarters, logistics and operations branches consisting mostly of members with civil engineering skill-sets including supply, vehicle maintenance, medical and finance members, cooks, security forces and even a chaplain.

"We're a huge construction company, including a full RED HORSE equipment package dedicated to the Central Command Theater of Operations," Chief Bressler said.

As the Air Force's military general contractor in Iraq since 2005, the 557th ERHS has constructed airfield parking ramps, roads, fuel berms, tactical operations centers, electrical distribution centers for power production and much more throughout the Iraq Theater of Operation.

At Ali Base today, a small sampling of the RED HORSE projects will include a new airfield lighting system, a post office relocation project, grading work sites for proper drainage, erecting large aircraft maintenance shelters and much more.

Although the Iraqi terrain remains the same, there are major differences in this deployment from the first deployment in 2005, Chief Bressler said.

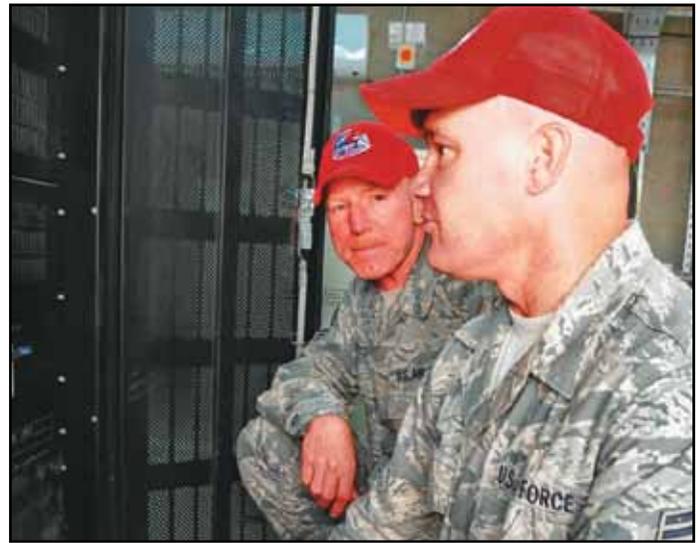
"Back then, we did our usual construction work and pulled extra duties like convoy operations, inspecting loads of crushed gravel delivered to the main gate, guard tower duty on the base perimeter and twenty-four hour dining facility security at entry points," he said.

Small-arms fire was not uncommon, with frequent mortar and rocket attacks every other day.

The differences between the two deployments are evident to the civil engineers, said Senior Master Sgt. Craig Boston, the site supervisor.

"In (2005), we worked alongside contractors and shared the base with the Iraqi military at Camp Taji, (Iraq)," he said. "And, they carried weapons too."

Tech. Sgt. Thomas Davidson, the pavements and construction craftsman, said he remembers well his first night in Iraq in 2005.



Chief Master Sgt. Richard Bressler, left, Chief Enlisted Manager, and Senior Master Sgt. Craig Boston, right, Site Supervisor, 557th Expeditionary RED HORSE Squadron, inspect power control panels for the Ali Base airfield lighting system May 14, 2010. Both Airmen are deployed from the 200th RHS, Camp Perry, Ohio ANG Base.

"I slept in an open bay billet with seven other guys," said Sergeant Davidson, who was a senior airman in 2005. "The first night, we didn't know if the indirect fire was incoming or artillery rounds going out, so we just slept in the bunkers."

Tech. Sgt. Clayton Heimert, another civil engineer, agreed.

"We went everywhere together back then: to chow, (to) the gym, we were very tight," Sergeant Heimert said. "Today, everyone has their own living space--most with internet access and other amenities. Now, we're more isolated during off-duty time. I don't like it as much."

Another difference between the earlier and current deployments is the amount of war materiel in the area.

"There were hundreds of Iraqi tanks and armored personnel carriers lined up in rows at Camp Taji in 2005," Chief Bressler said.

The chief also said that construction did not come without a cost.

"We had three purple hearts from convoy operations and two from indirect fire in our bed-down area," he said.

In spite of the hazards, RED HORSE members did their duty and continued to build throughout Iraq, handing the responsibilities from one RED HORSE group to the next, until the wheel turned back to the civil engineers from the 200th Red Horse Squadron, who are again a part of the 557th ERHS, operating on a hub and spoke configuration, with people working at multiple sites throughout the Area of Responsibility.

Chief Bressler said that today, the members of the 557th ERHS are drawing down and redistributing equipment sets and RED HORSE assets elsewhere in the AOR.

"When RED HORSE Guard, Reserve and active-duty members come together, we are extremely productive," the chief said.

Members of RED HORSE are a special breed, Sergeant Boston said.

"We all want to do something to leave a place better than we found it," he said. "Just give us some material to work with, and we're happy."

"It's nice to take part in so much progress, from everything we did back in (2005) to seeing how much the operating bases have changed for the better," Chief Bressler said.

"There are other places throughout Central Command (where) we're needed now," he said. **86**

Central Ohio chapter of Safari Club International honors Ohio Guardsman

Story by 2nd Lt. Kimberly Snow
Adjutant General's Department, Public Affairs

COLUMBUS, Ohio—For one lucky Ohio Soldier and outdoorsman, tracking exotic prey, breathing in the scent of wild-growing sage, and witnessing one of nature's most impressive spectacles – an African sunset – will soon be more than just a dream.

The Central Ohio chapter of Safari Club International honored the service and sacrifice of Sgt. 1st Class Rodney A. Randulic, who was wounded in action in Iraq in 2004, during the organization's annual banquet and fundraiser March 27 at the Aladdin Shrine Center in Columbus.



Col. Alfred C. Faber, Jr., Ohio National Guard chief of staff and decade-long SCI member, left, and Central Ohio SCI President Mark A. Wehinger, right, present Sgt. 1st Class Rodney A. Randulic with a plaque expressing the organization's gratitude for his service to his country and an all-expense-paid safari. (Courtesy photo)

Central Ohio SCI President Mark A. Wehinger and Col. Alfred C. Faber, Jr., Ohio National Guard chief of staff and decade-long SCI member, presented Randulic with a plaque expressing the organization's gratitude for his sacrifices in service to his country and an all-expenses-paid safari to South Africa.

"It was the right thing to do," Wehinger said. "We have a number of veterans within our organization and it was just the right thing to do."

The Central Ohio SCI, who donated Randulic's airfare along with trophy fees for up to six animals, enlisted the help of several other organizations as well. Sadaka Safaris donated the day fees, which pay for items including food, drink, camp set-up, guides and in-country transportation. North American Taxidermy

donated the mounting of all animals and Coppersmith Inc., an importer-exporter, donated all importation fees and shipping to get everything through customs and back home.

"I've always wanted to go to Alaska and Africa on a hunting trip, but I thought I'd never be able to afford it," said Randulic, a motor sergeant assigned to the Ohio Army National Guard's Akron-based 1484th Transportation Company. The avid hunter who has yet to hunt outside his home state said the trip, which is being planned for sometime next year, is "a dream come true."

With more than 60,000 members worldwide, the SCI is the premiere hunting rights organization in the world. "What the NRA does for guns, we do for hunting," Wehinger said.

Because Wehinger and other chapter members wanted to show their appreciation for the men and women serving the country and protecting their rights, they decided to honor a wounded warrior.

"They reached out to all the services and were just looking for the right person," Faber said. "Being in the military, they told me about it and I had the opportunity to connect them with Sergeant Randulic."

An Iraq veteran, the Ohio National Guard member from Kent was chosen from a group of nominees by the chapter's board. Some of the evening's fundraising efforts, including the auction proceeds from an M-1 Garand rifle, went toward their wounded warrior project. According to Central Ohio SCI board member James Friday, SCI member Jack Klein purchased the rifle for more than twice its value to help fund the trip.

Randulic was wounded March 9, 2004, during a combat patrol from his base near Balad, Iraq, to the Baghdad International Airport. A U.S. Army engineer patrol had spotted a roadside bomb and halted all traffic, including Randulic's convoy, as they prepared to blow it in place.

"I, unfortunately, was stopped about 30 feet from another one hidden behind a guard rail," Randulic said.

Although stunned by the blast, Randulic didn't realize he had suffered a severe concussion and three broken vertebrae in his neck. He and his assistant driver saw a medic in Baghdad where Randulic consented to a cursory examination, then requested to drive on with his troops.

"My mission was to stay with the convoy and see them through the mission; get them down and get them back to (Balad)," Randulic said.

That evening, he began to realize he might be in trouble. "My head felt like it was going to explode and I was throwing up every couple of minutes," he said.

Doctors told Randulic he was lucky - if he had broken the fourth vertebra, he would have died or been paralyzed from the neck down. As it was, brain fluid was leaking into his sinuses and out both ears. They told him his face had been shattered "just like taking a hardboiled egg and hitting it on a table." His body armor and gear prevented several other life-threatening injuries.

Randulic was medically evacuated the following day and only four days later, returned to his unit. Today, he says he is fully rehabilitated. In fact, the day the Central Ohio SCI called him to ask if he'd like to be considered for the honor, he was out hunting with his kids.

"He can really enjoy this opportunity and be able to endure some of the hardships because (a hunting safari) is a bit of a challenge," Faber said. "Sergeant Randulic is very physically fit and is back leading Soldiers as a sergeant first class in one of our formations, so he's more than up to the task."

Wehinger said the Central Ohio SCI is now considering offering similar trips on an ongoing basis. **SG**

MPAD prepares to deploy to tell soldiers story

Story by Ryan Morton
ASA-Dix Public Affairs

ARMY SUPPORT ACTIVITY DIX, N.J.—The 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) is mobilizing at Army Support Activity-Dix (ASA-Dix), conducting mock press conferences and preparing news stories for its upcoming deployment to Balad, Iraq, where it will support the 13th Expeditionary Support Command.

The organization, headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, is made up of 20 Army National Guard Soldiers. Some of the Soldiers in this unit will be telling the Operation Iraqi Freedom story for a second time. Previously, the unit colors were set in Tikrit, Iraq, in January 2004 until February 2005, supporting the 1st Infantry Division. The troops produced “Danger Television,” a monthly video newsmagazine, and “Danger Forward,” a monthly print news publication. Some of the Soldiers that deployed then are back for a second go-round as they will produce “Balad and Beyond,” a bi-weekly video newscast, and “Expeditionary Times,” a weekly 20-page newspaper, with their first-time deployed counterparts.

“I hope our younger Soldiers get as much experience as they can in public affairs such as setting up media operations centers, working the joint information bureau, media escorts and all the other tasks that don’t necessarily involve journalism as in shooting video and taking pictures,” said Sgt. 1st Class Steven Johnson, print team operations non-commissioned officer, from Columbus, Ohio, who deployed with the organization in 2004-2005.

“What I’ve learned from my experience is to pay attention to what the veteran Soldiers are doing. I try to tell my fellow Soldiers to keep their eyes open because the only way you can learn to be a Soldier is to pay attention to other Soldiers who are doing the right thing,” he added.

Sgt. 1st Class William Smith, broadcast team operations NCO, from Felicity, Ohio, was also in Iraq as a specialist and feels much more nervous this second time because of his added responsibility as a senior NCO.

“I’m responsible for my fellow Soldiers, so it’s completely different. I focus on making sure they’re prepared in every single way,” Smith said. “I let them know that the key to any deployment is flexibil-



ity. You may have to pick up and move or cover missions on consecutive days. You just have to be ready.”

The challenge for this new mission, said 1st Sgt. Steve Toth, from Columbus, will be to showcase Soldiers who do the less alluring jobs such as postal and administrative, rather than most of the jobs the public sees, such as infantry and armor.

“Our challenge is to take these types of missions under the sustainment umbrella and feature these Soldiers who do these jobs that may not seem as glamorous, but are still important to the overall success in Iraq or theater of operations,” Toth said.

While at ASA-Dix, the 196th conducted both public affairs and combat training, including M-4 weapons qualification, convoy training, improvised explosive device recognition, and mounted and dismounted patrols. As part of their public affairs training, they conducted a mock news press conference with ASA-Dix’s deputy commander for mobilization, Col. Larry Boyd, as the briefer. MPAD Soldiers

were assisted by the ASA-Dix public affairs staff. Trainers from the 72nd Field Artillery Brigade played the roles of cameramen and reporters, grilling Boyd with questions on the state of mobilization at ASA-Dix.

The Soldiers did very well according to the public affairs staffs of the 72nd and ASA-Dix, and expectations are high for these Soldiers when they head to Iraq. They are coming off a major victory for a newscast they produced back home in Ohio. They were named Keith L. Ware (KLW) winners for 2009 in the local television newscast category for a program they did called “Eye on Ohio.” The KLW is a major annual Army-wide competition which recognizes journalistic excellence for both Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians. The awards are given in many different categories including print, radio and television products. **86**

Above: Sgt. Michael Carden from Westerville, Ohio takes digital still pictures of Navy Cmdr. Jeff Cartwright (kneeling left), from Cabool, Mo., and Army Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Newkirk, from New Albany Ind., as they throw grenades during training at Army Support Activity-Dix (ASA-Dix). Below: Staff Sgt. Nicholas Pavlik (left), from Columbus, Ohio and Staff Sgt. Randall Carey, from Holland, Ohio document a press conference training exercise. Pavlik and Carden are assigned to the Ohio Army National Guard’s Columbus-based 196th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment(MPAD), which is preparing for deployment to Balad, Iraq. (Photos by Ryan Morton, ASA-Dix Public Affairs)



16th Engineer Brigade to present memorial sign to parents of fallen Soldier

Story by Spc. Heather Todd
1192nd Eng. Co., 16th Eng. Bde., USD-C

BAGHDAD – In October 2005, Company B of the Ohio-based 612th Engineer Battalion lost one of their own. Twenty-year-old Sgt. Jeremy Hodge, from Rushsylvania, Ohio, was killed in action when an improvised explosive device detonated near his humvee during a route clearance mission.

Over the past several years, the Task Force Iron Claw Academy (TFICA) has been conducting classes inside of a schoolhouse at Camp Liberty, named in memory of the Soldier: “Hodge Hall.”

Appropriately, TFICA was responsible for training U.S. and Iraqi Security Forces how to identify and safely respond to IEDs that are discovered on route clearance missions.

As the responsible drawdown of forces continues, and the ISF become capable of executing independent route-clearance missions, TFICA has closed its doors and the sign proclaiming it Hodge Hall has been taken down and will eventually be presented to Hodges’ family.

“I think it is important to honor him and his sacrifice,” said 1st Lt.

Craig Smith, former officer in charge of TFICA. “It also sent a clear message to the students, that they have a very tough and dangerous mission, and they had better take it seriously.”

Smith is honored to be presenting the sign to the Hodge Family. “The Hodge’s had to bear what no parent should have to. I would

hope that they realize that Jeremy has not been forgotten, nor the sacrifice that he made. Every U.S. Soldier that came through TFICA saw that sign and learned about Jeremy.”

Col. Robert Phillips, the commander of the 612th Engineer Battalion at the time of Hodge’s death, has deployed to Iraq again as chief of staff for the 16th Engineer Brigade.

“It was nice to see that after five years Hodge Hall was still being used,” said Phillips.

The Soldiers who were responsible for the removal and preservation of the Hodge Hall sign were keenly aware of its meaning and where the sign was headed.

“It was an honor to be able to have a part in getting the sign down,” said Spc. Scott Vaughan, of Belding, Mich.

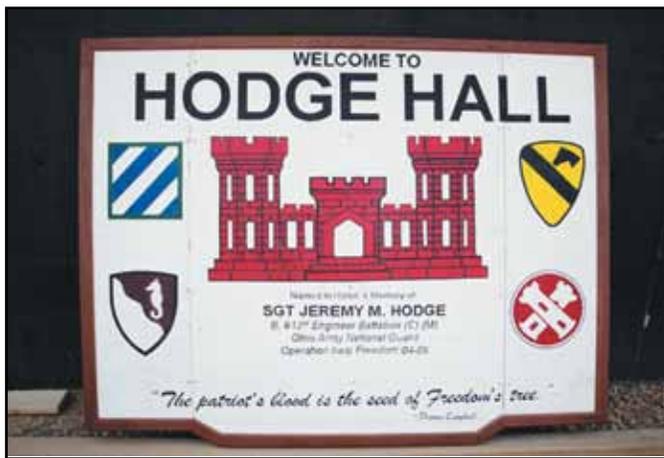
Once the 16th Engineer Brigade, Hodge’s former brigade headquarters, completes its deployment, the sign will leave Iraq and be presented to Hodges’ mother and step-father, Michelle and Steve Norris, during a fallen Soldier memorial service.

The idea for the personal exchange was suggested by Brig. Gen. Glenn C. Hammond III, the current commander of the 16th Engineer Brigade.

“We’re giving the family a memorial that they can put up somewhere ... It is an honor to take the sign

home with us when we leave here,” Hammond said.

Hodge Hall may no longer display Sgt. Jeremy Hodge’s name, but his legacy will continue on in the hearts and minds of the Soldiers who followed in his footsteps.



The Hodge Hall sign was removed from the Task Force Iron Claw Academy school house at Camp Liberty in Baghdad. A wood border was attached to protect it for its trip to Ohio with the 16th Engineer Brigade. The sign will be presented to the family of Sgt. Jeremy Hodge who was killed in action in October 2005, when an improvised explosive device detonated near his humvee while on a route-clearance mission. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dan George)

Civilian honored for service to Ohio National Guard

Spc. Beatrice Morgan, 2nd Battalion
174th Air Defense Artillery Regiment

MCCONNELLSVILLE, Ohio—Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general, and Brig. Gen. Rufus Smith, commander of the 174th Air Defense Artillery Brigade presented Bill Allen with the Ohio Meritorious Service Medal and several other awards for his decades of service to the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) during a Dec. 12, 2009, ceremony at the Clarence Miller Armory here.

Wayt commended Allen, who recently retired from the ESGR, for being a strong supporter of 2nd Battalion, 174th.

“It was Bill Allen’s vision to establish the ESGR as we have it today,” Wayt said. “He took it from its infancy and made it into one of the best programs in the whole United States.”

Allen contributed much to the McConnellsville unit. When the project to build military facilities in McConnellsville ran out of money before the armory could be completed, Allen contacted Sen. Clarence Miller, to assist. The armory there stands today

in part due to his assistance and it was especially fitting that he should be honored within in that facility.

The mission of the ESGR is to help create a positive relationship between Soldiers and their civilian employers to help ensure troops that their jobs will be there when they return from deployments. During his time with ESGR, Allen worked to help inform civilian employers of Soldiers rights as provided by the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act (USERRA). He also worked to help recognize those civilian employers who support the National Guard and Reserve.

Sometimes he was presented with issues outside the scope of his ESGR duties - like when a deployed Soldier’s spouse had contacted him upset because the family had not received the Soldier’s pay and had no food in the house. Allen responded by sending the family a personal check to tide them over, and then he was able to notify the proper authorities of the family’s plight to fix the pay issue.

“Assisting members of the Ohio National Guard and the Reserve and their employers was my personal contribution to those individuals and our country,” Allen said. “They are among the finest men and women I’ve ever associated with, and I really enjoyed working with them.”

Satellite NCOA gives Guard members another training option

Story by Staff Sgt. Jessica Q. Hill
Public Affairs Specialist

Most senior members of the military will agree that every Airman should attend at least one of their professional military education (PME) courses in-residence. When a member attends these courses, they receive a level of education and hands-on experience that cannot be duplicated by completing the alternative career development courses (CDCs). However, many National Guard members have difficulty leaving their civilian jobs and home life long enough to complete the weeks of PME in-residence classes.

Satellite courses were developed to help Guard members get an in-residence experience while training at their home base for the majority of their coursework. Recently, seven members of the 179th Airlift Wing attended the Satellite Non-commissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) by completing 12 weeks of training at the base twice a week, then completed their training at McGee-Tyson Air National Guard Base in Tennessee for two weeks.

Tech. Sgt. Nicole R. Wagoner, a recent NCOA graduate, said she decided to take the satellite course because she did not



Members of a recent Satellite Non-commissioned Officer Academy at the 179th Airlift Wing gather for a group photo in their dress uniforms. (Courtesy photo)

want to leave her family and did not feel she would have the time to devote in the CDC course. She said the satellite class gave her a chance to immediately use the course's management technique in her daily job. Wagoner said she believes the course provided a better experience and greater learning than what she would have received in-residence where she would have waited six weeks to practice the new skills.

Both Wagoner and classmate, Tech. Sgt. Lisa M. Athy, agreed that the networking opportunities they received at the 179th and McGee-Tyson were extremely valuable. Athy said the class bonded during their home station-training

block, then when they were split up at McGee-Tyson, they had an opportunity to bond with their counterparts from throughout the Air National Guard.

Another point that Athy and Wagoner agreed on was that the satellite course is not an easy way to complete the course, as is a widespread misconception. They said that the home station block added to the end of their regular work days and the training at McGee-Tyson was very fast paced with assignments due each day.

Both Airmen said that members considering the satellite course should speak with someone who has recently completed the training before committing to the course.

121st Airmen welcome new security forces and weather flight building

Story by Senior Airman Joel Tilson
121st ARW Public Affairs

A ribbon cutting ceremony for a \$6.4 million Security Forces/Weather Flight facility was held on April 17, 2010 at the 121st Air Refueling Wing, Rickenbacker Air National Guard Base. The building is an imperative addition to the 121st.

"The new facility will provide much needed space for the Security Forces and Weather Flight Airmen," 121st ARW Commander Brigadier General Tom Botchie said. "The space will greatly expand both these squadrons' mission capabilities."

The 21,137 sq. ft. facility will be home to the 121st Security Forces Squadron and the 164th Weather Flight. The building will include a weapons vault, state of the art central security control room, administrative space, Guardsmen training areas, computer training and testing areas, a weapons cleaning and maintenance room, a Fire Arms Training System room and a

mobility equipment area. As the future home of the 164th Weather Flight, the building will include administrative offices, a weather observation area and a mobility storage room.

"This new state of the art facility will allow the 121st Security Forces Squadron and Weather Flight to continue to provide both our Commander in Chief and Governor of the State of Ohio fully qualified mission ready Airmen capable of deploying in a moment's notice to support our nation's war on terror or any state wide emergency," said Lt. Col. Brian Truax, commander of the 121st Security Forces.

"With the additional space and facilities that come with our new building we will be able to monitor and respond to many newly enhanced security systems on the base to better protect our critical resources and personnel. In addition, with this state of the art facility we will be able to continue to provide fully qualified and mission ready security forces airmen to respond to

missions from our Commander in Chief as well as the Governor of the State of Ohio for type of natural disaster," said Truax.

The second phase of this project is the renovation of Building 875. This area will be renovated to house the 121st ARW recruiting and retention office and the environmental management section. This phase is scheduled to be completed July 1, 2010.

"The project will allow for geographically separated offices to be more centrally located allowing for a more cohesive campus feel," Botchie said.

"By Wednesday, we will be moving all of our weapons from our old armory into our new armory and finally have our entire operation under one roof. This state of the art facility is like no other we have seen and represents a signification commitment of tax payer money that we cannot thank our political as well as military leaders enough for. It will be put to good use by both the 121st Security Forces Squadron as well as the 164th Weather Flight," said Truax.

Francis promoted to 178th FW's first female maintenance Chief

Story and photo by Senior Master Sgt. Joseph Stahl
178th FW, Public Affairs



Chief Master Sgt. Michele Francis became the first female Chief Master Sgt. in Aircraft Maintenance in the 178th Fighter Wing.

SPRINGFIELD, Ohio -- "When I grow up, I want to be just like Ray," said then Staff Sgt. Michele Francis many years ago during a video interview with the public affairs office here. The "Ray" she was referring to was retired Chief Master Sgt. Ray Kidd, a highly-respected maintenance chief that many here at the 178th Fighter Wing remember well.

Chief Francis recently became the first female chief master sergeant in the male-dominated world of aircraft maintenance at the 178th Fighter Wing.

As a young Airman, Chief Francis never dreamed it would be possible to attain the rank of chief, especially in aircraft maintenance. Later on, after making technical sergeant she became more focused on leadership opportunities with the encouragement

of mentors in her life such as the aircraft maintenance's Chief Master Sgts. Denny Dyer, Steve Smith, Al Fenton and Kidd. They taught her the delicate balance of caring for her people and accomplishing the mission.

"She (Chief Francis) helped me to change my mind about women on the flightline," said Chief Kidd. "She always did a good job. She always pulled her own weight and could figure out how to get things done on her own without any help."

Chief Francis began her career as a crew chief. At that time women weren't very welcome on the flightline.

"I probably put a lot more pressure on myself to do the job--do the same job that they were doing, maybe even better. I was going to prove myself," said Chief Francis.

Later in her career, she worked in the Maintenance Operations Center and then was the phase dock supervisor for seven years.

"I started getting a bigger picture of what maintenance was all about, not just the flightline," said Chief Francis.

Now, she is in the Maintenance Operations Flight which runs the MOC; Plans and Scheduling, Training, Plans and Programs; Engine Management; and Analysis.

She was selected as chief Dec. 1, 2009. Chief Francis' former mentor, Chief Kidd, saw the ability to achieve long before Francis was named Chief.

"She never disappointed me. She was always willing to work and go the extra mile to get the job done," said Chief Kidd.

Chief Francis does not take her new rank for granted. She feels the extra weight and responsibility that the eight stripes command. As a Chief, she has to deal with all the big issues that she never had to deal with before.

"It's a learning process, more stressful," said Chief Francis of her new responsibilities. "I want to live up to the title of chief, and not just the grade, E-9," she said.

Being a female chief in maintenance is not an issue for Chief Francis. Chief Francis believes that the proverbial glass ceiling no longer exists for women in the military.

"You are going to go as far as you want to go, you just have to put your mind to it," said Chief Francis about opportunities for women. "You might have to be willing to cross-train or go to a different shop, but it can definitely be done."

"Females are accepted, just prove yourself. Do the work as good as others and the sky is the limit," said Chief Francis.

Community outreach events calendar available on Ohio National Guard website

Community Outreach is pleased to announce that the Community Outreach Events Calendar is available for your review on the Ohio National Guard website at http://ong.ohio.gov/outreach/outreach_index.html.

Its purpose is to build awareness about and participation in community events.

Events listed include, but are not limited to: Job Fairs, Family Readiness Workshops, Open Houses, Military Appreciation days at certain venues, (zoo, OSU sports, etc), joint employer events, orientation flights, diversity-



oriented festivals in the Central Ohio area and the National Matches at Camp Perry.

Points of contact are provided on each listing for those with an interest in additional information about an event.

Unit representatives may contact SPC Kylie Perrine, the community outreach assistant, to place unit-sponsored community events on the Community Outreach Calendar. SPC Perrine can be reached via e-mail at Kylie.Perrine@us.army.mil or by telephone at (614)336-6000 ext 4135

Ohio Army National Guard appoints first female brigade commander

Story and photo by Spc. Ryan A. Cleary
Ohio National Guard Public Affairs

CAMP PERRY JOINT TRAINING CENTER, Ohio--Soldiers, family members, special guests and Ohio National Guard senior leaders filled the Camp Perry clubhouse Jan. 10 to witness a historic change of command ceremony for the 371st Sustainment Brigade.

Lt. Col. Maria E. Kelly, the brigade's deputy commanding officer, took the reins from Col. Daniel L. Tack, becoming the first female brigade commander in the Ohio Army National Guard.

"I am going to provide for you with unwavering leadership, with support, guidance and direction, strategic resources and a way forward," Kelly said to her new brigade troops. "Give your best to yourself, to your families, to your Soldiers and your duty."

Kelly, a West Jefferson, Ohio, resident, commanded the brigade's rear detachment for 18 months during the unit's 2008-2009 deployment to Iraq. She brings with her a wealth of command and organizational experience and knowledge including two combat deployments to Iraq, first in 2004 as a plans officer with the 371st Corps Support Groups and again in 2006 with the 237th Forward Support Battalion where she served as the base commander for Forward Operating Bases Marez and Diamondback and Mosul Army Airfield. She has also served as a public affairs officer, an Officer Candidate School instructor, detachment commander, battalion operations and training officer and battalion executive officer.

"Diversity is one of this organization's top priorities, and is an issue we've been committed to promoting for many years," said Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt, Ohio adjutant general.

Although Lt. Col. Kelly has only now become the first female



Maj. Gen. Matthew L. Kambic, assistant adjutant general of the Ohio Army National Guard, hands the guide-on to Lt. Col. Maria E. Kelly, commander of the 371st Sustainment Brigade, during the change of command ceremony in the clubhouse on Camp Perry.

brigade commander in the Ohio Army National Guard, Wayt said the organizational culture has been evolving for some time.

"You cannot just create a brigade commander, they have to be grown, nurtured and given opportunities over the span of his or her career," Wayt said. "But we recognize that by providing those opportunities to all of our members--women and minorities included--we allow the best the organization has to offer to rise to the top. It makes us stronger and the selection of Lt. Col. Kelly as commander of the 371st demonstrates the validity of this ideal.

"She may be the first," Wayt said, "but there are many powerful, intelligent women advancing in our ranks."

HHC 37th IBCT sweeps combat pistol championships AGAIN!

SPC Amanda Ketchum.
HHC 37th IBCT Unit Public Affairs Representative.

Repeating last year's performance to the letter, the pistol shooters of the 37th swept the 2010 Adjutant General's Combat Pistol Championship. They captured 1st place in every match during the intense 2 day competition conducted the 17th and 18th of April 2010.

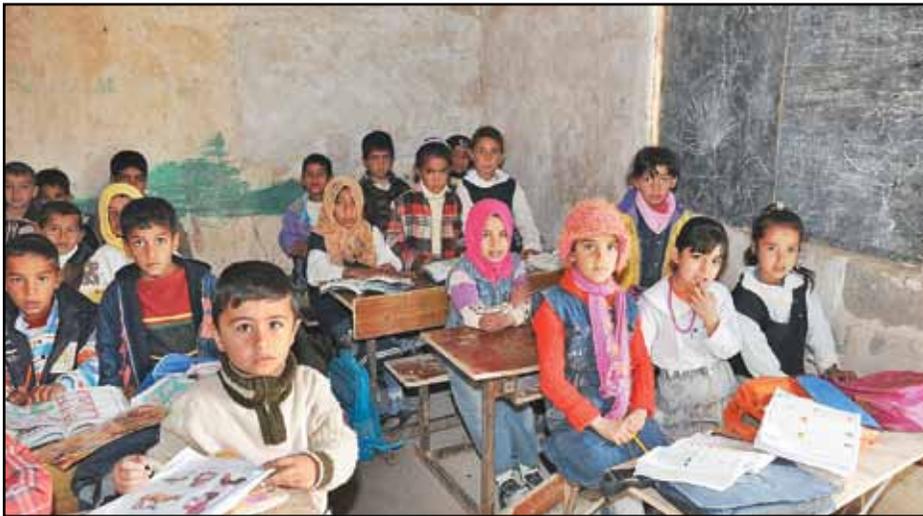
Held annually at Camp Sherman Joint Training Center, the event focuses on realistic combat scenarios. Soldiers and Airmen from across the state compete as individuals and in teams. They engage multiple targets under physically stressful conditions from a variety of positions.

The competition provides an opportunity for Soldiers to hone advanced marksmanship skills like rapidly drawing and shooting from the holster, shooting left handed from barricades and running and shooting as a fire team.

The 37th team prepared for the competition by training at New Albany's Aim High shooting range. Team members included MSG Don Hunter, SFC Chad Layne, CW2 Zachary Slate, SSG Jerry Cordle, SPC Brent Zimmerman and PFC Todd Beathard. This year's event marked the 12th consecutive top team finish for coach and organizer CPT Bret Gould.



The 2010 37th IBCT pistol team poses with their awards. Pictured left to right 1st row: CPT Bret Gould, SSG Jerry Cordle, SPC Brent Zimmerman, 2nd row: CW2 Zachary Slate, MSG Don Hunter, SFC Chad Layne, PFC Todd Beathard



Students in class at a local Baghdad school are momentarily distracted by a visit from Soldiers of the 16th Engineer Brigade and 17th Iraqi Army Division. The Iraqi and U.S. troops hope to improve the learning environment of children in two Baghdad schools by providing new school supplies for the 1,500-plus students, through the generosity of friends and family members in the States. (Courtesy photo)

Engineers partner with Iraqi Army, families to collect school supplies

Story by Spc. Heather Todd
1192nd Eng. Co., USD-C

BAGHDAD – Soldiers of the Ohio National Guard’s 16th Engineer Brigade, in partnership with the Iraqi Army 17th Division, recently identified two local Baghdad schools in critical need of school supplies.

The engineers decided to take a new approach: laying down hammers and backhoes and picking up telephones. They have widened their combined efforts to include friends and families back in the States.

“This is a different type of initiative because it allows our friends and families to get involved in our mission and help us to have a positive impact on the kids for years to come,” said Capt. Aaron Testa of Medina, Ohio, with the brigade Headquarters and Headquarters Company.

In an effort to improve the children’s learning experiences and alleviate the distraction of not having the right educational tools, the engineers are asking others to help them donate enough school supplies for the 1,500-plus students attending the two schools.

“We might not be able to do a lot of things that we’d like to but we can at least get the kids the supplies that they need,” said Maj. Nick Slupski, a school teacher

from Westerville, Ohio, and a construction project manager for the 16th.

Brig. Gen. Glenn C. Hammond, III, brigade commander, said he hopes to collect what he calls mission-essential supplies, such as backpacks, scissors, metric rulers, pencils, erasers, pencil sharpeners, colored pencils, notebooks and folders. Although the project has just begun, leaders say they are confident about reaching their goals.

“The support from back home is great,” said Col. Tris Cooper, deputy brigade commander from Marion, Ohio. “I’ve got about a dozen people who already want to help.”

Some involved in this unique approach to traditional engineering projects say this is turning out to be a labor of love for them.

“We are thrilled to be able to help these kids out and leave a positive impact on the lives of these Iraqi citizens. I’m just lucky enough to be involved,” said Capt. Chad Taylor, of Conesville, Ohio, also with the 16th.

Brigade leaders have placed a mark on the wall, saying they want to be able to accumulate the school supplies by May 15 in order to provide them and Iraqi Army soldiers enough time to distribute to the supplies to the students. They have also extended the invitation beyond their friends and families, Testa said.

“Anyone can donate. This is a great opportunity for our friends, families and employers back home who have been asking us all along what they can do to help,” he said. “Now is their chance.”

Ohio National Guard members march to remember Bataan survivors

By Capt. Don Flowers
371st Sustainment Brigade

WHITE SANDS MISSILE RANGE, N.M.—Seven Soldiers from the Ohio Army National Guard joined more than 5,700 military members and civilians here March 21 for the 21st Annual Bataan Memorial Death March.

Participants came from all 50 states and five foreign countries to honor the service and sacrifice of the Soldiers who defended the Bataan Peninsula during World War II. After the fall of the Bataan, those troops were forced to march through hot humid jungles for days with no food, water, or medical care. Many died along the way. Those who survived were assigned to prisoner-of-war camps where they further suffered for years afterward.

Twenty-two of the original surviving marchers attended the event and some shook hands with the marchers as they crossed the starting line.

“It is humbling to know that anyone could have been made to go through what they did,” said Warrant Officer Candidate Tasha Swartz, assigned to the Ohio Warrant Officer Candidate School.

The 26.2 mile memorial march is not a typical marathon. It starts on a paved road but most of the course is off-road on a sandy desert trail that winds around a small mountain and through the infamous “sand pit.” The course’s elevation changes more than 1,200 feet and reaches a maximum of 5,300 feet above sea level.

Military members who participated in the light division were required to wear their regulation uniform, boots and gear.

Both Staff Sgt. Joshua Brown and Spc. Christopher Myers, from the 211th Maintenance Company, had previously participated in the event, and this year marched in the “heavy” division with 35-pound rucksacks.





Above: Capt. Don Flowers (middle of photo), Warrant Officer Candidate Tasha Swarts and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Tina Best approach the first mile marker during the 21st annual Bataan Memorial Death March at White Sands Missile Range, N.M. Seven Ohio National Guard members participated in this year's event. Below Left: Chief Warrant Officers 2 Gwen Rencsok (from left) and Tina Best, Staff Sgt. Joshua Brown, Spc. Christopher Myers, 1st Lt. Kevin Kelchen, Warrant Officer Candidate Tasha Swarts and Capt. Don Flowers. (Courtesy Photos)

“When you’re on the march, you actually think about what the survivors went through,” said 1st Lt. Kevin Kelchen, executive officer for the 371st Signal Detachment.

Among the participants were 29 Wounded Warriors. Some marched with the help of prosthetics.

“It is truly inspiring to see how people can overcome so much. You learn that you can overcome anything,” Myers said.

“Knowing there were going to be survivors here made me want to research the Bataan Death March,” said Chief Warrant Officer Gwen Rencsok, of Joint Force Headquarters. “They’re living history.”

Rencsok researched 42 Soldiers from Port Clinton, Ohio, who were part of Company C, 192nd Tank Battalion and were captured during the fall of Bataan. They were prisoners of war for 3.5 years and more than half of them never returned.

Marchers also learned a lot about themselves.

“I’ve never done anything like this before,” Swartz said. “It was hard, but it was a good experience.”

Chief Warrant Officer Tina Best, signal officer for 73rd Troop Command, agreed. “You see how far you can actually push yourself. Those last three miles felt like they went on forever,” she said.

A World War II veteran thanked marchers crossing the finish line for honoring them by being there that day.

“It is very emotional when you finally cross the finish line,” Brown said. “You think about what the survivors went through and what they endured.”

“What we did was nothing compared to their suffering,” Myers said. “It was an honor to do this in their memory.”

Deployed troops hold Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure shadow run

Story by Capt. Aaron M. Testa
16th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs

BAGHDAD—Although 2010 marks the 18th year of the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure in Columbus, Ohio, it is the first time that Columbus will have a shadow race in Baghdad.

A group of Ohio National Guard Soldiers from the Columbus-based 16th Engineer Brigade who are committed to the cause is busy planning a Susan G. Komen shadow run, scheduled for May 15 at Camp Liberty.

“We contacted the Komen team in Columbus and they were delighted to work with us to sponsor the 5k run,” said Lt. Col. Jane Lengel, of the 16th Engineer Brigade and chairperson for the Baghdad event’s planning committee.

The committee has coordinated race T-shirts, bibs, online registration and do-

nation as well as marketing materials to help spread the word. Support from Camp Liberty Morale, Welfare and Recreation, the USO and people back home is a key factor in the success of the race.

“It’s been a great partnership and we are excited to have this opportunity to support the cause with our friends and family back home,” Lengel said.

The shadow race in Baghdad is being conducted in special honor of Stefanie Spielman, from Columbus, Ohio, who lost her battle with cancer late last year, Lengel said.

Lengel and so many others have been inspired by the tremendous impact that Stefanie Spielman made in her fight against breast cancer and decided to take action to support the Race for the Cure.

Staff Sgt. Shari Camper, also of the 16th, is on the race planning committee and hopes the event will help raise awareness of the seriousness of the disease.

The cause is particularly significant for Brigade Commander Brig. Gen. Glenn C. Hammond, III, who lost his own mother to breast cancer.

“Anything we can do to contribute to this cause, is certainly a step in the right direction. Clearly our engineer motto of ‘ESSAYONS, Let Us Try’ is quite appropriate,” said Hammond.

Lengel said the Susan G. Komen Race

for the Cure in Baghdad is one of the largest runs ever sponsored on Camp Liberty, drawing upwards of 1,500 runners from the Victory Base Complex area.



Above: Sgt. Jasmin Thompson (left) and Sgt. Maria Riser both under Special Troops Battalion, 1st Armored Division, proudly display their T-shirts after completing the Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure. Left: Two Soldiers assigned to 16th Engineer Brigade running on the course of the event. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Phillip Valentine)



Ohio Guard Civil Support Team trains with Department of Energy

CHICAGO—Imagine a radioactive source has been stolen and is suspected to be in a rural area in Allen County. Who do you call? Imagine a radiological dispersal device (RDD or “dirty bomb”) has been detonated in an Ohio metropolitan area. Who would respond?

You might be surprised to learn the answers: the U.S. Department of Energy’s Radiological Assistance Program (RAP) team and now, the Ohio National Guard’s 52nd Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction).

In November and December 2009, members of the 52nd trained with members of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Region 5 RAP team, the nation’s premier first-response resource in assessing an emergency situation involving radiation contamination. The RAP provides trained personnel and equipment to evaluate, assess, advise and identify a radioactive isotope, as well as to search for and assist in the mitigation of actual or perceived nuclear or radiological hazards. RAP teams have been implemented on a regional basis, with coordination between the emergency response elements of each state, federal and local agency. Regional coordination is intended to provide a timely response capability and to foster a working relationship between the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) and response elements throughout the country.

Survey team members from the 52nd trained on RAP mobile equipment in Cleveland, using real-world practical exercises on the city streets by monitoring the radiation levels in various parts of the city. Team members rode in unmarked vehicles and wore civilian clothes, in order to maintain a low profile and not alarm citizens.

“The equipment was so sensitive that we were able to pick up elevated levels of radiation from patients who have received certain radiological medical treatments like chemotherapy and stress tests,” said Capt. David R. Foster, 52nd Survey Team leader.

When elevated radiation readings are discovered, the RAP scientist is able to determine the isotope or type of radiation present.

“Even though we have the ability to identify isotopes with our organic equipment, sensitivity and reliability of the RAP equipment enhances our ability,” said Sgt. 1st Class Dustin Hartman, reconnaissance noncommissioned officer for the survey section.

“The collaboration between the city of Cleveland, DOE and the CST enhances Ohio’s preparedness and ability to respond to unanticipated events involving a radiation hazard,” said Capt. Alison Albers, deputy commander of the 52nd.

CST members were invited and traveled to Chicago to participate in the RAP certification training conducted at Argonne National Labs in Southwest Chicago. The team attended classes that covered basic radiation concepts, identification of isotopes and use of special radiation detection equipment to help identify radiation sources at a safe distance.

“The training was half classroom and half hands-on which makes it more practical, especially since the instructors had some extremely active sources,” Foster said.

Since completing the training, the CST is now able to assist DOE in domestic radiological incidents to include lost sources, unknown sources and high-visibility hazard assessment missions. **Story by Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Melvin, 52nd Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction)**



By Sgt. 1st Class Tyrone Walker
JMRC Public Affairs

HOHENFELS, Germany - In preparation for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan with Hungarian Soldiers, Staff Sgt. Timothy Harmon has given himself a crash course in the language.

Harmon and fellow Guard members recently completed Operational Mentor and Liaison Team training with their NATO counterparts at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center. The Minnesota National Guard also completed OMLT training with troops from Croatia, which is the country they are paired with in the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Harmon, a member of the Ohio National Guard, calculates that he knows more than 50 Hungarian words and has reached the point where he can engage in short, polite

conversations in the language with the Hungarian soldiers that he will serve with in Afghanistan.

“I just want to be able to be more effective communicating with those guys,” Harmon said.

In all, 13 countries from around the world participated in OMLT training at JMRC. The training exercise included military personnel from the United Kingdom, Poland, Belgium, Spain, Germany, Romania, France, Hungary, Norway, Croatia, Slovakia, Afghanistan and the United States.

The training exercise gave NATO countries’ troops a chance to experience mentoring, coaching and teaching actual Afghan National Army soldiers. At the same time, 65 ANA soldiers here got a chance to work with troops from other countries who will be part of counter insurgency operations in Afghanistan.

In Afghanistan, the OMLTs will coach, teach and mentor Afghan soldiers to take a leading role in defending their nation.

The upcoming deployment will be Harmon’s first to Afghanistan, although he has served a tour of duty in Iraq. It also will be the first time he will train, work and live with troops from another country in a combat zone.

The two weeks Harmon spent with Hungarians at JMRC along with the four months with them in Hungary has allowed him, not only to learn a new language, but it also has allowed him time to get to know his Hungarian comrades.

“They are adamant about learning about the different techniques and methods we use in the U.S. military,” Harmon said. “It makes our jobs a lot easier and instills confidence in us.”

1st Lt. Josef Tulipan of Hungarian Defense Forces said working with the U.S. troops at JMRC was a mutually beneficial learning experience. Most importantly, it gave Hungarian soldiers insight into how American’s react in particular combat situations, he said.

Lt. Phillip Patti of the Ohio National Guard said training with the Hungarians here at JMRC gave troops from both countries a chance to complete critical hands-on training using equipment, aids and other assets that weren’t available elsewhere.

“It was a good time to get [the Hungarians] in the driver’s seat of a Humvee and behind a turret,” Patti said.

Training time together at JMRC was critical in ironing out any problems that could hamper the troops from acting as a unified team.

“It’s one team one fight,” Baer said. “We have to act as one unit.”



Col. Brett Call, a field surgeon attached to the 16th Engineer Brigade, inspects the lymphoid glands of Joy Crapps, a contract specialist for the United States Army Corps of Engineers, during a Dec. 10 visit to the Witmer Troop Medical Center at Camp Liberty, Baghdad. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh, MND-B PAO)

Deployed doctor makes time to volunteer at clinic

BAGHDAD—“I volunteer because I remember what it was like when I was the medical provider in charge of a clinic,” said Col. Brett Call, the brigade field surgeon attached to the Ohio Army National Guard’s 16th Engineer Brigade.

Call volunteers at the clinic every Tuesday morning and Friday evening. When he first arrived, he was volunteering four to five days a week because the clinic was short two physicians due to redeployment process.

“It’s nice to get some relief, a way to give the docs a breather,” Call said.

When the Ohio National Guard doctor was in charge of a clinic during a previous deployment, Call said he would work 36 hours on, 12 hours off.

As the brigade field surgeon, he works at the brigade aid station, teaches classes, helps with sick call, prepares special staff reports and administrative documents, occasionally fills in as an ambulatory medic and still makes time to volunteer in support of the busy doctors in charge of clinics.

“We were short on docs and Colonel Call volunteered to come take a spot,” said Spc. Jason Anderson, a combat medic assigned to the Witmer TMC.

Anderson said several captains and lieutenants have volunteered, but he’s never seen a colonel volunteer before. After Call gets done with his patients, he sits down with the combat medics to explain the steps he took in each case, he added.

Field surgeons typically deploy every 12 to 18 months for 90 days. The three-month rotations are designed to prevent family practitioners called to active duty from losing their practice when they are deployed. This is Call’s fourth deployment, and he is already scheduled for a fifth tour to Afghanistan. He keeps his deployment packing list ready at all times.

In his civilian life, Call is an emergency room physician for the Berger Health System in Circleville, Ohio. BHS has been very supportive of his time allocated toward the military, Call said.

“I couldn’t do half of the things I do in the military or civilian life without the unwavering support and devotion from my loving wife,” he said. **Story by Sgt. Samantha Beuterbaugh, MND-B PAO**



U.S. Ambassador to Hungary Eleni Tsakopoulos Kounalakis talks with Soldiers from Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) 1.4 during a live fire mortar exercise at the Táborfalva Training Center.

U.S. ambassador to Hungary visits joint U.S.-Hungarian unit

TABORFALVA, Hungary—U.S. Ambassador to Hungary Eleni Tsakopoulos Kounalakis visited Soldiers from Operational Mentor and Liaison Team (OMLT) 1.4 during a March 25, 2010, live fire mortar exercise at the Táborfalva Training Center.

OMLT 1.4 is the fourth unit comprised of Ohio National Guard and Hungarian troops to mobilize and deploy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The OMLT program is a key NATO contribution toward the development of the Afghan Army. U.S. Army Col. Lawrence Kinde and U.S. Air Force Capt. Jeremy Ford, from the U.S. Embassy in Budapest, accompanied the ambassador during her visit. Brig. Gen. Gábor Böröndi, the 5th Hungarian Infantry Brigade commander, and Lt.Col. Róbert Rédei, OMLT 1.4 commander, also attended.

The troops had an early 2 a.m. wake-up to prepare to move to the training center for the day’s activities’ weapon systems and equipment for transport. They arrived at the training center shortly after sunrise where they were met by the brigade commander and base staff.

Kounalakis spent most of the morning on the range with the American and Hungarian troops watching the team fire mortar rounds at targets more than 1200 meters away. Ohio National Guard Capt. Nicholas Gibson of Cleveland escorted the ambassador during her visit. The Soldiers displayed their crew-served weapons to the ambassador, providing a hands-on tutorial of the weapons the team will use in Afghanistan.

The group spent lunch together with the Soldiers, discussing several topics including the benefits of the joint deployments and the developing relationship between Ohio and Hungary. Kounalakis and Böröndi exchanged gifts representative of their culture.

The team continued mortars training after lunch where Sgts. Robert Phalen of Fostoria, Ohio, and Matthew Carpenter of Wadsworth, Ohio ended the day by landing three consecutive mortar rounds precisely on target. **Story and photo by 1st Lt. Christian Kuntz, Team Signal Officer**



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Guard Snapshots



Sgt. Cleveland Wade (center) of the 1192nd Engineer Company, explains equipment features to Pvt. Amar Kamil Wash (left) and Lt. Ammar with the 6th Iraqi Army during training at Joint Security Station Constitution. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. April Mota, 101st Eng. Bn. PAO, 16th Eng. Bde., MND-B)



1st Lt. Thomas Race, a civil engineer assigned to 16th Engineer Brigade, Ohio Army National Guard, re-enlists Sgt. Daniel Henle and Spc. Thomas Rigo, also with the 16th, during an April 27 ceremony at Camp Liberty in Baghdad. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Garrison Ball)



Spc. Kyle Kelley (right) of Sugarcreek, Ohio; Spc. James Altomare (middle) of Norwalk, Ohio and Staff Sgt. Trevor Harlow (left) of Huron, Ohio, all of the Ohio Army National Guard's 1192nd Eng. Co, work to improve the safety of an ammunition storage area. The 1192nd is attached to the 101st Engineer Battalion, 225th Engineer Brigade. (U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Michael Lind, 101st Eng. Bn., 225th Eng. Bde., PAO)



Boy Scouts from the Youngstown, Ohio-based Troop 55 enjoyed a camp out at the Camp Ravenna Joint Military Training Center. At a tour of the 147th Regional Training Institute they learned about the equipment and missions of horizontal construction engineers during war and peace. A hike on post allowed participants to earn a merit badge.



Soldiers of Operational Mentor and Liaison Team 1.3 display the American flag they flew over Camp Kelaghai, Afghanistan, May 2, 2010, in honor of Master Sgt. Doug Reed, a teammate who was seriously wounded 11 Apr. 2010, during a firefight with Taliban forces. Reed is currently recovering at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. (U.S. Army photo by Chief Warrant Officer 3 Lee Scott)

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Teamwork



Company B Soldiers band together to ensure each team member finishes the obstacle course during the 3rd Annual Recruit Sustainment Program Warrior Challenge April 25th at Camp Lazarus, Ohio. See Page 14 for story and additional photos. (Photo by Spc. Sam Beavers)