

THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

Serving the men and women of Kentucky's Army and Air National Guard

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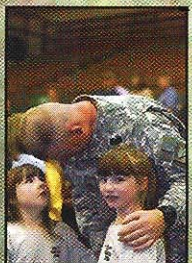
**1-149th Infantry
Battalion braves
the cold Japanese
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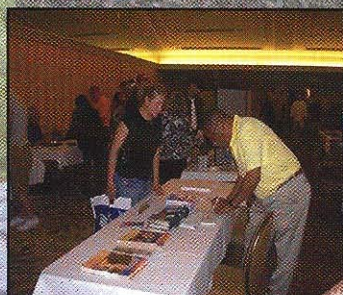
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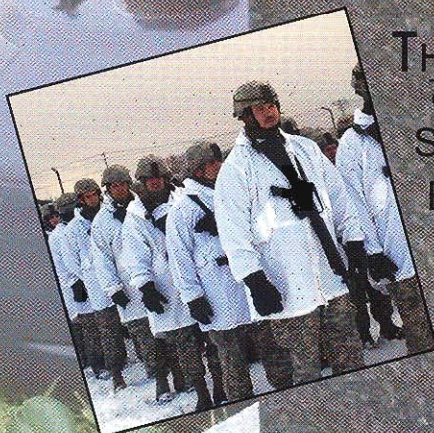
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THE COVER

Cover Photo courtesy of 70th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from the 1/149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade stand in formation in the blistering cold during the 2009 North Wind training exercise in Japan. The unit spent three weeks at Camp Makomani with the Japan Ground Self Defense Force. Read more on page 11.



THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

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The Bluegrass Guard is distributed free to all members of the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard and to other interested persons by request.

Guard members and their families are encouraged to submit any articles meant to inform, educate or entertain Bluegrass Guard readers. Send submissions, photos and correspondence to gina.valle@us.army.mil. Payment will not be made for contributions. Paid advertising will not be accepted.

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FROM THE FIELD

Thank You

We receive many military related magazines, but the Bluegrass Guard is one that is read from the cover to the back. I enjoy reading about National Guard units in the state, homecomings and events connected with the Guard.

Your reporting and coverage is great. Keep up the good work!!!!

My husband will retire later this year with 40 years of service in the Kentucky Army National Guard. I hope we will continue to receive the magazine.

Sincerely,

Ann Rice, wife of Sgt. Maj. Harry Rice

Change of Address

All change of address requests should be made at the unit level by the unit clerk.

Army retiree address changes should be made through Staff Sgt. Debbie Devine at the Kentucky National Guard Personnel Services Branch. She can be reached at 502-607-1497 or deborah.devine@ky.ngb.army.mil.

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The Bluegrass Guard values opinions

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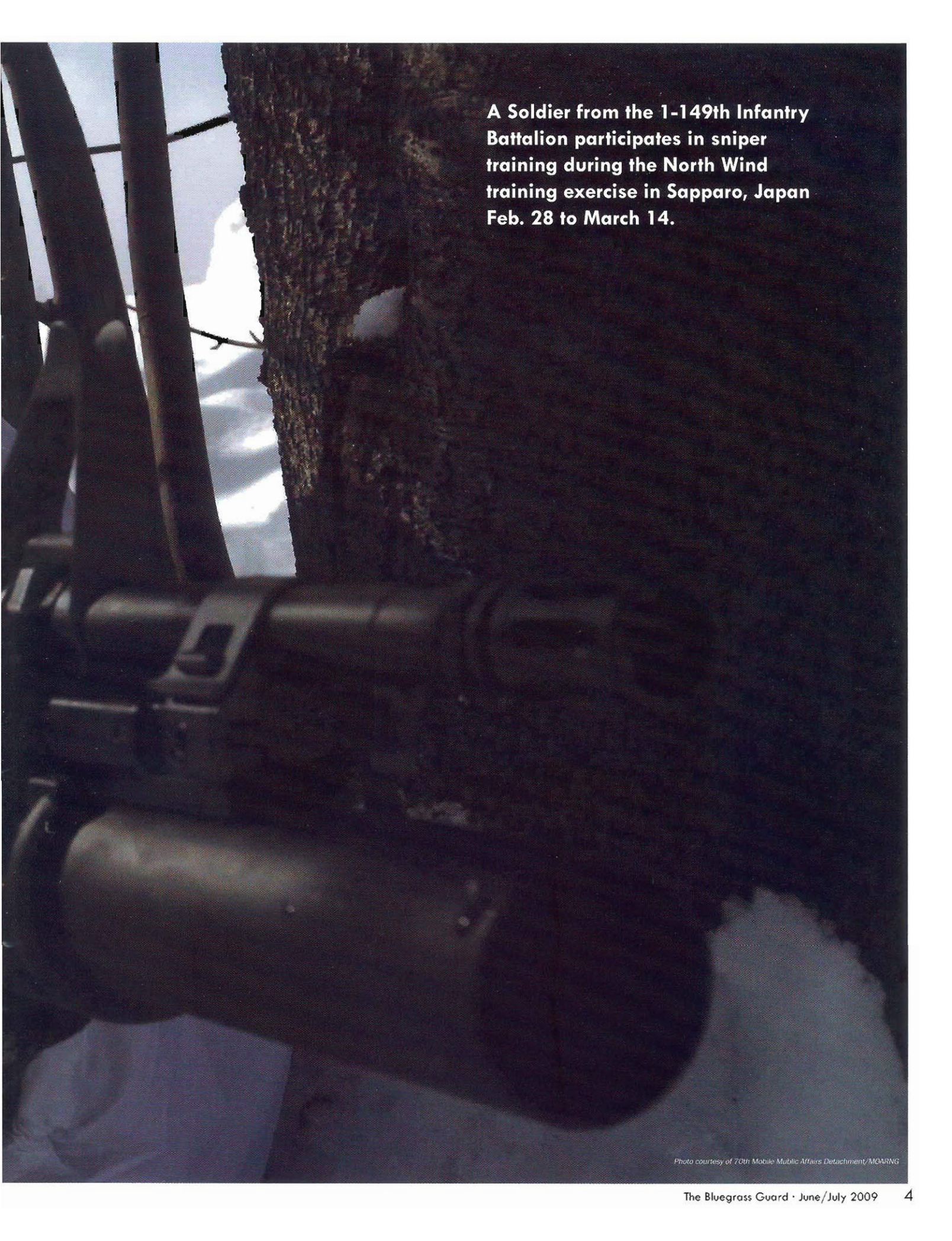
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We reserve the right to edit letters for tone, length, clarity and factual accuracy.

Background Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiler/KWARING





**A Soldier from the 1-149th Infantry
Battalion participates in sniper
training during the North Wind
training exercise in Sapparo, Japan
Feb. 28 to March 14.**

Photo courtesy of 70th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment/MOARNG



Soldiers and Airmen of the Kentucky National Guard practice for their duties as the Winner's Circle security contingent at Churchill Downs for the Kentucky Oaks and Derby horse races May 1.



State PAO: Welcome to 'New Media'

By Lt. Col. Kirk Hilbrecht
Director, Public Affairs Office

Hello Soldiers and Airmen of the Kentucky National Guard! I am your newest Director of Public Affairs and am humbled to serve you and your units in this capacity.

The joint public affairs team will continue to be your "voice" in print, broadcast and web.

Who are we?

We are the 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, the 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs/ Visual Information shop, the Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Office, the Army VI shop and the Unit Public Affairs Representatives throughout the Commonwealth.

Your PA team will continue to fulfill the Kentucky National Guard's obligation to keep the citizens of the Commonwealth and the National Guard readily informed. We will collectively help establish the conditions that lead to confidence in Kentucky's Guard and its readiness to conduct operations in peacetime, conflict and war.

The way we communicate has changed.

When Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates tapped Price Floyd to run the Defense Department's public affairs operation, he gave him two basic orders: Improve the way the department communicates, especially to young people, and solicit feedback in the process.

So, one week into the job, Floyd took a fresh look at traditional public affairs and strategic communications with an eye toward making them more responsive, relevant, inclusive and transparent. A strategy known as "social media."

What is social media?

Social media is a term that encompasses the platforms of new media, but also includes networks like Facebook, Myspace, Twitter and other media typically thought of as social networking.

Media is a channel of communication, like broadcast TV, radio or print. Social media would therefore be a social channel of communication.

This includes websites that interact with you while displaying information. This interaction can range from filling out an online survey or posting pictures and video on Youtube.

How does social media impact me?

Social media, as a channel and method of communication, is here to stay. It's been predicted that specific genres of social media may come and go, but the underlying properties are here for good. Social networking sites may be an ongoing fad, but new forms of technology will continue to leverage social networking as we go forward.

How is the military embracing social media?

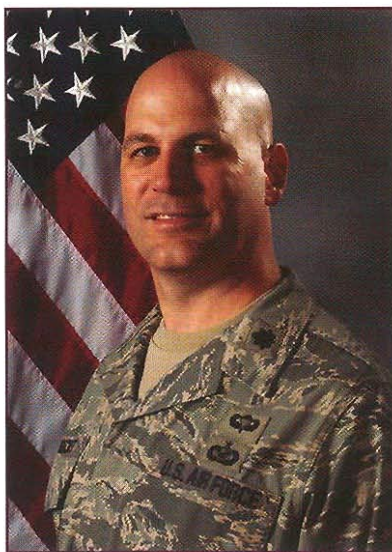
Army Public Affairs Chief Maj. Gen Kevin J. Bergner opened the 2009 Worldwide Public Affairs Symposium with the following statement:

"There is an opportunity to exchange information and ideas with your fellow professionals on current media trends, social media and information engagement," Bergner told his public affairs operators. "Our goal is that you come away better prepared to renew your public affairs efforts on behalf of the greatest Soldiers, Airmen and Families in the world."

FIN

I'm excited about what the future holds for our organization and Guardsmen. We're constantly evolving, growing and learning. We are improving our systems, our methods and ourselves. We communicate with each other in data streams, kilobytes and megapixels.

Social media defines the way the world now communicates. Your joint public affairs team will use this channel to be your "voice" and vehicle to continue to herald your "Unbridled Service."





2009: Year of the NCO

Spotlight on Staff Sgt. Lee Given

AGE: 28

POSITION: Equipment Supervisor
UNIT: 821st Horizontal Engineer Co.

LOCATION: Summersville, W.Va.

HOMETOWN: Flatwoods, W.Va.

YEARS OF SERVICE: 9 years

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clint Wood
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Staff Sgt. Lee Givens, 1092nd Engineer Battalion, West Virginia Army National Guard, said the way he looks at leadership is he wants Soldiers to grow up and be the best they can

This West Virginia Army National Guard staff sergeant's advice to noncommissioned officers is to live the Army values—Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage—every day.

"There are so many things there that contribute to everyday life, just be the best you can at whatever you do, no matter if you like it," said Staff Sgt. Lee Given who enlisted as a senior in high school. "The Army values are a great life lesson; if you just go with those, you will never go wrong. No matter if anybody is watching, if you do something right, you will never go wrong."

And you will be recognized. Case in point: Given's performance as a leader of an all-volunteer group of West Virginia Guard Soldiers who assisted Kentucky in its response to the Winter Storm 2009 in February. This ice storm that knocked out power to thousands of Kentuckians and created roads impassable because of broken tree branches saw the entire Kentucky Guard activated for the first time.

1st Lt. Adam Speece, Given's officer in charge of the West Virginia contingent named Task Force Mountaineer, said in the short time they worked together, Given showed him he is working at a pay grade much higher than he currently wears.

"He immediately stepped up, took charge with minor information on missions," said Speece. "He is one of those dynamic, flexible individuals who is

able to take a commander's mission and get straight to the point. Each phase of the execution he executes flawlessly," Speece said.

Given, who has been deployed to Iraq twice and responded to several state active duty flood missions, said observing both good and sub-par leaders has assisted him in being a leader. "I wanted to be the best leader I could be while I had Soldiers under me," said Given who was a squad leader in his latest deployment to Iraq with the 821st Engineer Company. "I hung out with them when I can talk with them about their Families. I made sure everything was going well with them. I know Soldiers are going to be Soldiers, so I make sure to discipline them when I can. I have always been told to praise in public and discipline in private. I award them whenever I can, however I can," Given said.

Given's wife has also been serving in the Guard the past eight years and will soon be deployed.

"The military is part of us and always will be," he said. "My goals are first sergeant and higher. I plan on being a lifetime Soldier," said Given.

Wing completes deployment to Afghanistan

Story and photos by Maj. Dale Greer
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Kentucky Air National Guard concluded its second major deployment to Afghanistan today when the final rotation of deployed Airmen returned home to a warm welcome from more than 100 family, friends and coworkers on the base flightline.

Waving flags, posters and homemade banners, the anxious crowd cheered as the Kentucky Air Guard C-130 taxied to a stop on the tarmac in front of the Base Fuel Cell Hangar. The scene that followed was punctuated by kisses, hugs and tears as family members rushed to greet the two-dozen returning Airmen as they stepped off the plane.

The Air Guardsmen were among 200 wing members who have been in Afghanistan since mid-March to provide airlift services as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. The Kentucky Airmen, all assigned to the 123rd Airlift Wing, began returning to the United States in rotations that started two weeks ago.

Today's group marks the final homecoming, said Lt. Col. Mark Heiniger, mission commander for the deployed airlift operation.

The Guardsmen flew more than 1,500 combat sorties during the deployment, delivering approximately 6,000 tons of cargo to forward operating bases or airdropping vital equipment and supplies to U.S. and coalition forces on the ground.

"You name it, and we hauled it," Heiniger said. "Everything from howitzers, Strikers



Maj. Dave Flynn, an aircraft commander in the 123rd Airlift Wing, greets his son on the flightline of the Kentucky Air National Guard Base in Louisville, Ky., on May 18, 2009. Major Flynn was returning from a two-month deployment to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom.

and humvees to food, water and mail."

The Kentucky Airmen also transported more than 20,000 Soldiers across the theater of operations, participated in the aeromedical evacuation on injured coalition forces and completed the first-ever sequential airdrop of heavy equipment in Afghanistan.

Using this process, multiple large items are airdropped in series from the rear cargo door of a C-130, Heiniger explained. The procedure requires perfect execution to avoid a mishap and ensure precise delivery to friendly forces.

Another unique mission involved the transportation of a United Nations employee who had been held hostage by a terrorist organization in Pakistan for two months.

"We got diplomatic clearance and approach plates to fly into a Pakistan air field, picked up the hostage, and flew him back as the aeromedics provided necessary

medical care," Heiniger said. "He was home on U.S.-controlled soil less than six hours after we were first notified of the mission."

A 25-year veteran of C-130 combat and support operations in Panama, Kuwait, Kosovo, Bosnia and Iraq, Heiniger described the Afghanistan deployment as "the most intense operational environment I've ever seen in the military," with a 24-hour-a-day ops tempo that demands the highest levels of military readiness.

The men and women of the Kentucky Air National Guard did not disappoint.

The unit's C-130 aircraft maintained a nearly perfect mission-capable rate at all times, Heiniger said, never missing a single planned sortie due to maintenance issues despite a challenging operational environment that included high-altitude navigation and night-time assault landings on unlit dirt runways.

"That's an incredible achievement," he said. "Our maintenance troops went above and beyond what is normally required to prepare the aircraft before our deployment, and they worked equally hard in Afghanistan. Those accomplishments allowed our mission to happen."

Heiniger singled out Maj. George Tomica and Chief Master Sgt. William Davis for exceptional leadership of the maintenance section during the deployment. He also praised Master Sgt. John Wardrip for his outstanding performance as first sergeant, calling him "the best first sergeant I've seen in my entire career."

"We don't know when the man slept, because he took care of everybody," Heiniger said. "You don't find people with that level of dedication very often, and I feel very fortunate to have had the opportunity to have worked with him."

The mission was rewarding in other ways, too, not the least of which was the satisfaction that came from making a tangible contribution to the war effort.

"We provided an essential lifeline to many of the troops on the ground," Heiniger said. "The terrain is unbelievable, with deep valleys and high

mountain peaks, so airdrop often is the only way to deliver food, supplies and equipment effectively.

"Overall, I'm very pleased with our mission performance. We assembled the A-team going over there, maintenance got the aircraft ready and we put our folks into positions in which we knew they would excel. They maximized every mission every time, despite a difficult operational environment."

Col. Greg Nelson, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, echoed those sentiments.

"The accomplishments of our deployed Airmen over the past two months demonstrate a tremendous amount of exceptional work under very austere conditions," he said. "They also demonstrate our commitment to do whatever is necessary for our nation's defense -- to deploy at any time, to any place -- and to perform with a level of excellence that is unsurpassed in the U.S. military."

This latest mission marks the 123rd Airlift Wing's second major deployment to Afghanistan since 2007 and its fourth major deployment to the Central Command Area of Responsibility since 2003. Previous missions sent hundreds of Kentucky Air Guard forces to multiple locations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, more than 10,000 members of the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard have deployed worldwide in the Global War on Terror.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Phil Speck/WYNG
Lt. Col. Scott Wilson hugs his family after returning from Afghanistan to the Kentucky Air Guard Base in Louisville May 12.



Photo by Maj. Dave Green/WYNG

Emily Watkins waits at the Kentucky Air Guard Base Fuel Cell Hangar for her father's return from Afghanistan May 16. Maj. Carl Watkins, a pilot, was among more than 200 members of the 123rd Airlift Wing who spent two months in Afghanistan flying airlift missions for Operation Enduring Freedom.



The Sapporo Kentuckian

Guardsmen train in Japan

Story and photos courtesy of Missouri National Guard
70th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from Kentucky National Guard's 1-149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade learned new and unique ways to apply their warrior training tasks, to include skiing, while participating in North Wind 2009, a bilateral exercise between U.S. and Japanese Soldiers, Feb. 28 to March 14 at Camp Makomani, Japan.

In the United States, skiing is a leisure activity enjoyed by millions of people during the winter months. But chilly, arctic weather and vast amounts of snow there make it imperative that members of the Japan Ground Self Defense Force learn the value of cross-country skiing.

As masters of the slopes, members of the JGSDF's



Japan Ground Self Defense Force members with the 18th Regiment, 11th Brigade, Northern Army, participate in Military Operations in Urban Terrain training with members from the 1-149th Infantry near Camp Makomanao, Japan Feb. 28 to March 14.



18th Regiment, Northern Army, taught their skills to the Kentucky Guardsmen.

In the crawl, walk then run fashion of the U.S. Army instruction the demonstrators from the JGSDF first showed the Kentucky Soldiers how to wear their boots locked to their feet and stand up.

Next, Soldiers were given instruction on how to use the ski poles they were issued and how the poles propel an individual across the snow.

Finally the Kentuckians were allowed to try their hand over vast tundra in the Hokudaiei Training Site. While some fell, most picked up the skill quickly and were soon piloting themselves around the area.

For many members of the 1-149th, the ski training was the highlight of the trip.

"When I heard we were coming (to North Wind), I was excited knowing that our Soldiers and theirs would have a valuable opportunity to share information," said 1st Sgt. Michael Mills, Headquarters Headquarters Company



Soldiers from 1-149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade follow their counterparts from Japan Ground Self Defense Force while participating in North Wind 2009 training exercise in Sapporo, Japan Feb. 28 to March 14.

1st Sergeant. "But I have been looking forward to this part of the mission a lot. I think it will be a lot of fun and a great opportunity to learn a new skill for my troops and myself," he said.

After learning how to move proficiently on their skis, the Americans were given a demonstration by their Japanese counterparts on the value and force multiplying potential of skiing. Members from the 18th Regiment were first pulled from a tether attached to a tracked vehicle called a Snowcat around a football sized field. Once in position, they dropped to a firing position.

The Kentuckians were given the same opportunity to be pulled and found out just how difficult it was, repeatedly losing their balance and falling over.

It wasn't all fun in the snow for the Kentucky Guardsmen though.

One of the tools in the arsenal of the infantry war fighter that transcends national boundaries is the ability to fight in an urban environment. With the nature of the enemy the United States military has engaged in both Iraq and Afghanistan, the traditional large scale battlefield has rapidly been replaced by small scale fights in cities and towns that add a three

-dimensional element and threat to the fight.

The Kentucky unit and their counterparts from JGSDF took part in Military Operations in Urban Terrain or MOUT training at a site near Camp Makomanai.

Training in the MOUT environment allowed both groups of personnel the opportunity to show the similarities

See North Wind 2009, page 13



Capt. Clyde "Tony" Dingess and Lt. Col. Michael A. Abell from 1-149th Infantry work with their counterparts from Japan Ground Self Defense Force while participating in North Wind 2009 training exercise at Camp Makomani, Japan Feb. 28 to March 14.

North Wind 2009

and differences that both forces utilize when faced with urban terrain. Furthermore, with the multilateral nature of the Global War on Terror, training with an international force also prepares members of both forces the opportunity to understand each other's tendencies and methods of communicating.

While the customs and courtesies between both forces differ in certain ways, one thing that transcended throughout the training was respect and understanding shared only by infantry Soldiers.

1st Lt. Christopher Jackson, commander of the Weapons Company of the 1/149th MEB said it was illuminating to see how members of a foreign ground force operate.

"You never know when and where you will be asked to fight and it is imperative that you train for any type of potential condition," Jackson said.

One of the most important facets of the bilateral training at North Wind 2009 is learning how to work hand in hand with Japanese Ground Self Defense Force and share the wealth of knowledge and experience that both forces are able to dispense to their counterparts, said Jackson.



Spc. Joshua Wirth from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-149th Infantry balances on snow skis while training with the Japanese Ground Self Defense Force during North Wind 2009 in Sapporo, Japan Feb. 28 to March 14.

Multi-million dollar check presented to KYNG

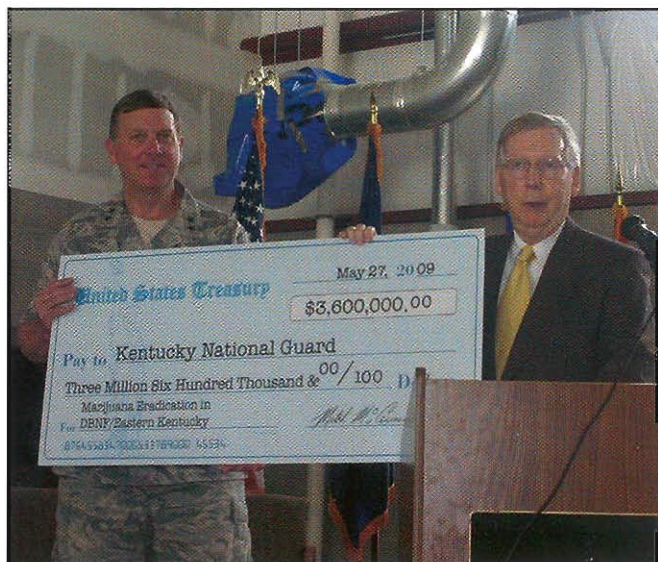


Photo by Dave Aitom/PAO

LONDON, KY. -- Adjutant General Edward W. Tonini accepts a check for \$3.6 million from United States Senator Mitch McConnell in a ceremony at the Kentucky National Guard's new Joint Readiness Center in London. The money will fund the Kentucky National Guard's counterdrug program. McConnell, a long-time supporter of the program, was the guest of honor at the dedication of phase two of construction at the readiness center.





Photo by Sgt. Walter Davis/KNARNG

Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy S. Emerson receives supply excellence awards from Kentucky National Guard Chief of Staff Col. Ron Turner at the J4 Logistics Conference in Greenville, Ky., May 11.



Photo by Lt. Col. Steven Hingray/KNARNG

1st Lt. Joseph Sloan receives the Engineer Platoon Leader of the Year award from Lt. Gen. Van Antwerp from the United States Army Chief of Engineers at Ft. Leonard Wood.

Honors in the Bluegrass

Outstanding Guardsmen presented with prestigious awards

By 1st Lt. Andi Hahn
Assistant Editor

Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy S. Emerson from Kentucky National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters received two unit and two individual supply excellence awards May 11 at the J4 Logistics Conference in Greenville, Ky. The awards were presented by then Chief of Staff, Col. Ron Turner, and honored Emerson's hard work during the Chief of Staff Army Supply Excellence Award Competition.

During the competition evaluation, Emerson received a coin from the Supply Excellence Award Team. Winning the Region III level earned him a national nomination where he competed against six other regions to see who would become the overall Army National Guard winner in the TDA Small Level Category. Even though Emerson did not win the overall Army National Guard Award for his category, he still goes home with the following awards: Supply Excellence Unit Award State Winner, Supply Excellence Unit Award Region III Winner, Supply Excellence Individual Award State Winner and Supply Excellence Individual Award Region III Winner.

By Maj. James B. Richmond
201st Engineer Battalion

1st Lt. Joseph Sloan was selected for the 2009 Engineer Platoon Leader of the Year Award by the United States Army Engineer Corps. The award is given to the top Engineer Platoon Leader in the National Guard, Reserve, and Active Army components each year and is presented at the Engineer Regimental Ball at Ft. Leonard Wood, Mo. Sloan served as platoon leader of Route Clearance Platoon Two, Bravo Company, 201st Engineer Battalion during his OEF 08-09 tour. His proficiency at troop leading procedures, equipment modifications, and dedication to the health, welfare, and well-being of his Soldiers earned him this prestigious honor.

The Kentucky Army National Guard and the 201st Engineer Battalion has had the honor of being awarded four regimental awards; Spc. Brandon Layne, Alpha Company 201st, winner of the Van Autreve Outstanding Soldier Award of 2006, 1st Lt. Terry Durham, Charlie Company 201st, winner of the 2007 Outstanding Platoon Leader Award, and Charlie Company 201st, winner of the 2009 Itschner (best company) Award.

Kentucky's Trifecta

Three units in three months deploy in support of OIF and OEF

By 1st Lt. Andi Hahn
Assistant Editor



Approximately 167 Soldiers from the Kentucky Army National Guard's 299th and 301st Chemical Companies were honored at departure ceremonies in Maysville and Morehead, Ky., May 3. The primary mission for both units is to conduct base security operations in Iraq.

The Kentucky National Guard has been busy deploying troops to Iraq and Afghanistan in support of the Global War on Terror, hosting three departure ceremonies in the past three months around the Commonwealth. Mason County High School and Rowan County High School in Maysville and Morehead, Ky., respectively, hosted two departure ceremonies May 3 for approximately 167 Soldiers from the 299th and 301st Chemical Companies. The companies will conduct base security operations in Iraq during a year-long tour. While this is the first deployment for both units, a large number of their Soldiers have deployed previously with other Kentucky National Guard units.

The Kentucky Agribusiness Development Team held their departure ceremony at Kentucky State University July 6. The ADT, comprised of 64 Soldiers and Airmen from several different units across the Commonwealth, will teach and provide Afghans the tools to improve their chances at feeding their Families. The years of constant war have ravaged the country and made raising a family almost impossible. By teaching Afghani farmers how to be self sufficient and provide sustainable methods to meet that end, they will be able to feed their families and have enough surplus to market.

Since Sept. 11, 2001 more than 10,000 Kentucky National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have deployed in support of the Global War on Terror.

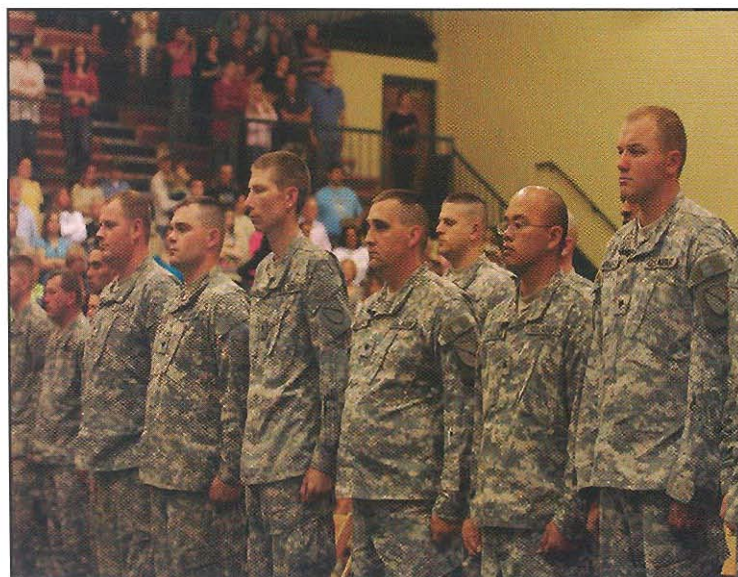


Photo by Staff Sgt. Fred Varney/KYARNG

◀ Soldiers from the Kentucky Army National Guard's 299th and 301st Chemical Companies were honored by Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, Kentucky's Adjutant General, and their commanders during departure ceremonies in Maysville and Morehead, Ky., May 3. The primary mission for both units will be to conduct base security operations in Iraq.

Soldiers from the Kentucky Agribusiness development Team bow their heads in prayer during a departure ceremony July 6 at Kentucky State University. ➤

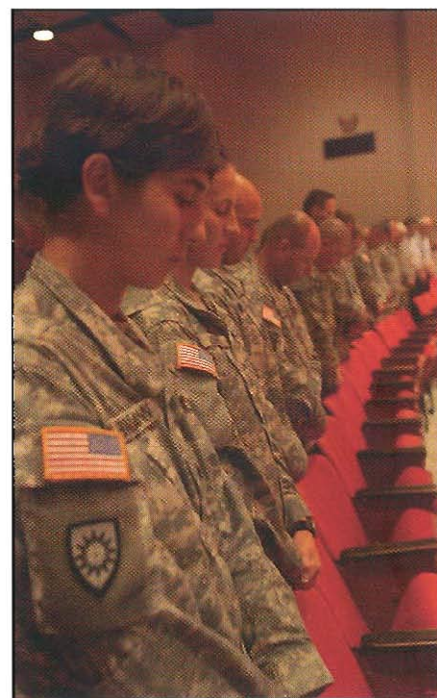


Photo by 1st Lt. Andi Hahn/KYARNG

Yellow Ribbon

Organization helps Soldiers and their Families adjust after deployments

Story and Photos by Spc. Michael Pfaff

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Soldiers from the 223rd Military Police Co. participated in the Yellow Ribbon Program in April after returning home from Iraq earlier this year.

The nationwide Yellow Ribbon Program, sponsored by the National Guard Bureau and designed to assist with returning deployment reintegration, is still in its infancy, just being passed into law by Congress in 2008. However, the program has made great strides in developing a sound strategy for giving Soldiers extra support after returning home from a combat zone.

"This is especially true for National Guard Soldiers who are not just going back to an Army base, but are going back to their Families and civilian life," said Njaga Jagne, a yellow ribbon support specialist.

"There's a period of adjustment when these Soldiers return. We have this training in hopes that it might help after they get back," Jagne said.

The training is designed around a flexible schedule that is intended to provide different training at three periods of time: 30, 60, and 90-days after the service members have returned. Each training period serves a specific purpose. This weekend, the 223rd is conducting its 60-day training.

Unlike a normal drill weekend, this one won't be spent in ACUs at an armory or out in the field. The military policemen, accompanied by their Families, have been invited to stay at the Crowne Plaza, an upscale hotel in Louisville, Ky.

"The Family members deal with these issues too," Jagne



said. "When Soldiers come back from deployment, the Family members are going to see these signs and symptoms. It's important that they familiarize with signs the Soldier might demonstrate. If the Soldier doesn't seek help, the family member might," he said.

Nicole Wise drove up from Bowling Green, Ky., with

her children to spend the weekend with her husband, Spc. Brian Wise from 223rd. She laments that her understanding of what her husband experienced up until now was limited.

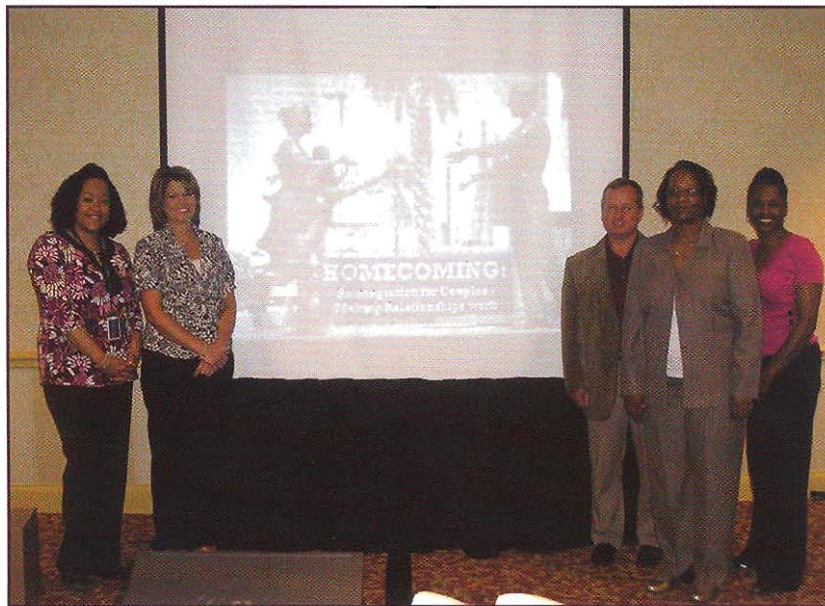
"Before, when he said he was going to drill, I didn't really know what that consisted of," she said. "But now I'm like 'ok this is what it's like.' I get to see things he's going through and it makes us closer as a family," Wise said.

Jagne explained this weekend's training isn't

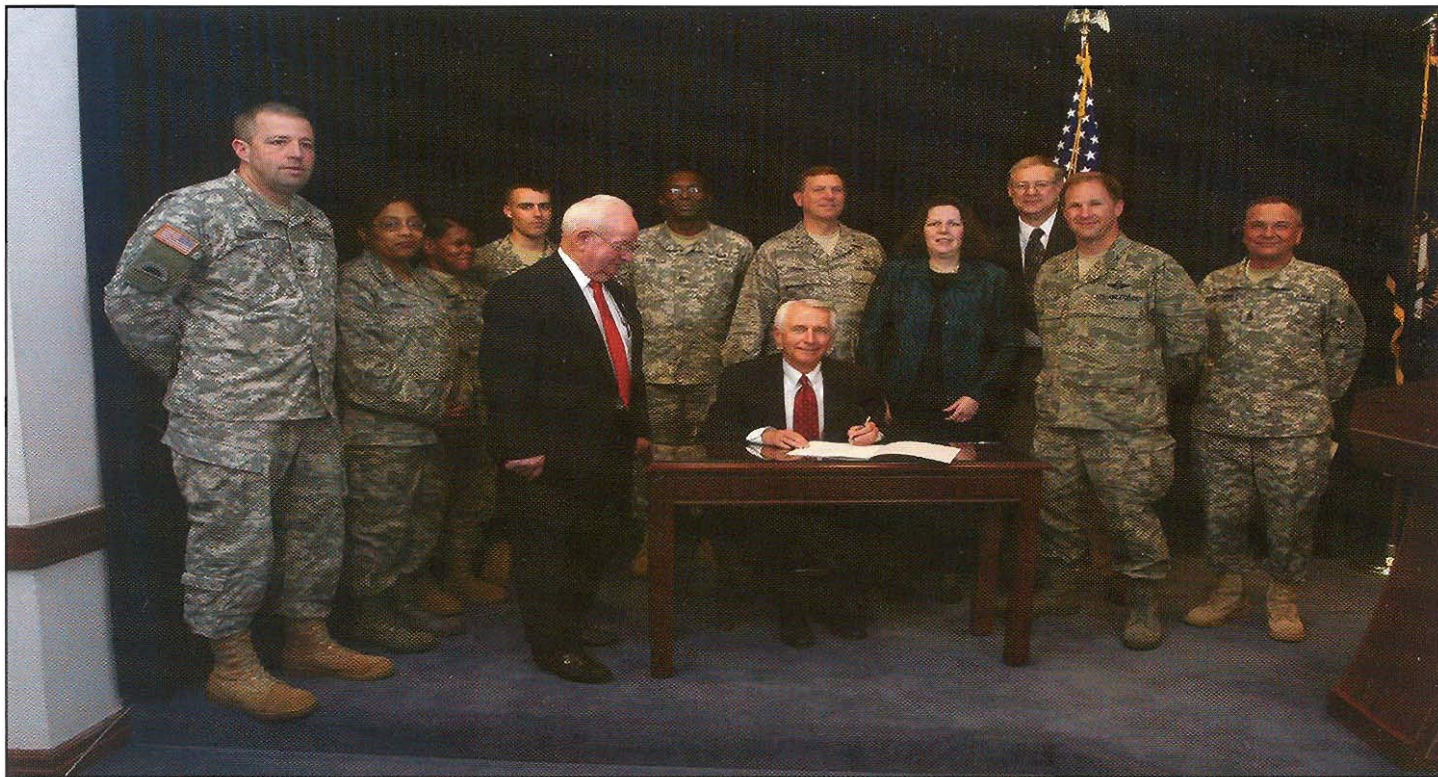
all that the Yellow Ribbon Program is attempting to provide for returning veterans. In addition, the team members work with local organizations to provide as many benefits to Soldiers as possible. Ultimately, he said, community support is integral to making sure combat veterans are looked after.

Barbara Fallis, another Yellow Ribbon team member, said their purpose is to reach whoever is in need at that point.

"If they don't feel the need today, then hopefully we've planted seeds on how to reach help and it comes back to them when they need it," said Fallis.



Yellow Ribbon team members and supporters work with returning units and provide resources and training to reintegrate combat veterans with their families and civilian lives. The 223rd Military Police Co. received this special training in April of this year.



Gov. Steve Beshear signs House Bill 541 authorizing Kentucky National Guardsmen to retain 100 percent of their military pay during rehabilitation period if injured on state active duty. Participating in the historic signing is (left to right) Lt. Col. William Denny, Capt. Latonia Trowell, Master Sgt. Janet Timberlake, Pfc. Mark Bell, Sgt. 1st Class Vincent Louis, Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, Rep. Tanya Pullin, retired Col. Mike Jones, Col. Steven Bullard and State Command Sgt. Maj. Greg Armstrong. Pictured in the front with Beshear is Rep. Charles Siler, sponsor of House Bill 541.

Gov. signs new bill for Guardsmen after ice storm

By 1st Lt. Andi Hahn
Assistant Editor

Gov. Steve Beshear was joined at the Capitol March 25 by members of the General Assembly as he signed into law a series of bills that will affect members of the Kentucky National Guard, military affairs employees and their families.

"The men and women who serve in our military and their Families make tremendous sacrifices to ensure that all of us can be safe and free," Beshear said. "We will never be able to fully repay that debt, but sometimes we can change the laws to lessen the hardships that military service sometimes creates. During this session we made such changes and I am pleased to sign these bills today."

Included in the bills signed was House Bill 541, sponsored by Rep. Charles Siler, which authorizes the Governor to retain on state active duty through their rehabilitation period Kentucky National Guard Soldiers and Airmen who suffered missed-time injuries or illnesses in the performance of state active duty service during the 2009 winter storm relief mission.

This legislation allows these Guardsmen to retain 100 percent of their military pay during their rehabilitation period, less workers' compensation pay benefits, affording them the same benefit they would have received if the injury or illness occurred on federal military duty. Without this change in law, under existing workers' compensation statutes, these

Soldiers would have only received two-thirds of their state active duty salary up to a maximum benefit of \$694 a week.

Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general of Kentucky, said they have to find a way to have equality for all Soldiers injured in the line of duty regardless of the status they are in.

"We asked Soldiers to do a job, put them in harms way, and based on whatever status they are in [active duty or temporary orders], they are treated differently," Tonini said. "That is not how we, as leaders in the military, ought to let things happen."

Tonini said that the ice storm that hit Kentucky in January and February, showed this is a short-coming nationally.

"As good as the legislation is that we just passed in Kentucky, it's only a band-aid that addresses the Soldiers hurt during temporary state active duty," said Tonini. "It's extraordinary to report to them [the Soldiers] and their Families, but the reality is that it's a national problem."

Tonini, along with Congressman Rogers and a coalition of governors and other state adjutant generals, are putting together a strategy to change the law in other states and help Soldiers across the nation get the same treatment.

New memorial in Frankfort

KYNG Memorial Fund honors those serving past, present

Staff Report
Public Affairs Office

A group of friends and former members of the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard have come together to raise money to design, build and maintain a memorial to all those who have served as citizen-soldiers and especially those who perished in the line of duty.

The Kentucky National Guard Memorial Fund, Inc. was created in October 2008 and granted tax exempt status as a public charity 501(c)(3) by the Internal Revenue Service in February 2009. All donations to the Memorial Fund are tax exempt as allowed by law.

The memorial will be built at the entrance to Boone National Guard Center, in Frankfort, Ky. The memorial will consist of a plaza with a bronze statue of Daniel Boone prominently placed on a pedestal in the form of an outcropping of Kentucky limestone. Water will flow from the outcropping into a small reflecting pool below. Behind the statue and plaza will be an upright granite wall in the shape of Kentucky.

The plaza will also contain panels depicting the history of the Kentucky Guard. There will be panels featuring the names of those members of the Kentucky Guard who have died in the line of duty. At this time



The new memorial to be built in front of Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort, Ky., will pay tribute to those who have perished and will also honor and recognize those who have and currently are serving in the Kentucky National Guard.

88 names have been identified but more research will be required, especially for the World War I and World War II periods. The memorial will focus on the modern KYNG beginning with March 1912 when the state guard became the Kentucky National Guard.

"Take for example, Sgt. Thomas J. Brown of Madisonville," said Memorial Fund Chairman John Trowbridge. "He drowned on January 23, 1937 at the age of 34 while on state active duty in Hopkins County. Brown's boat lost its stern from the vibrations of the outboard motor and sank almost immediately. He was last seen clinging to the debris in nine-foot deep icy flood waters before he sank from sight. Today, except for once sentence in a 1939 book, his name has also disappeared.

"We want to make sure twenty years or even a hundred years from now, no one will have forgotten these Kentucky Guardsmen," Trowbridge added. "Sgt. Brown and all those who have perished in the name of their nation and the commonwealth deserve better."

If you would like to learn more about the effort or make a donation are urged to contact the Kentucky National Guard Memorial Fund, Inc. at PO Box 5466, Frankfort, Ky. 40602 or e-mail at info@kynngmemorial.com.



The artist's design of the new memorial to be built in front of Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort, Ky., will pay tribute to those who have perished and will also honor and recognize all those who have and currently are serving.

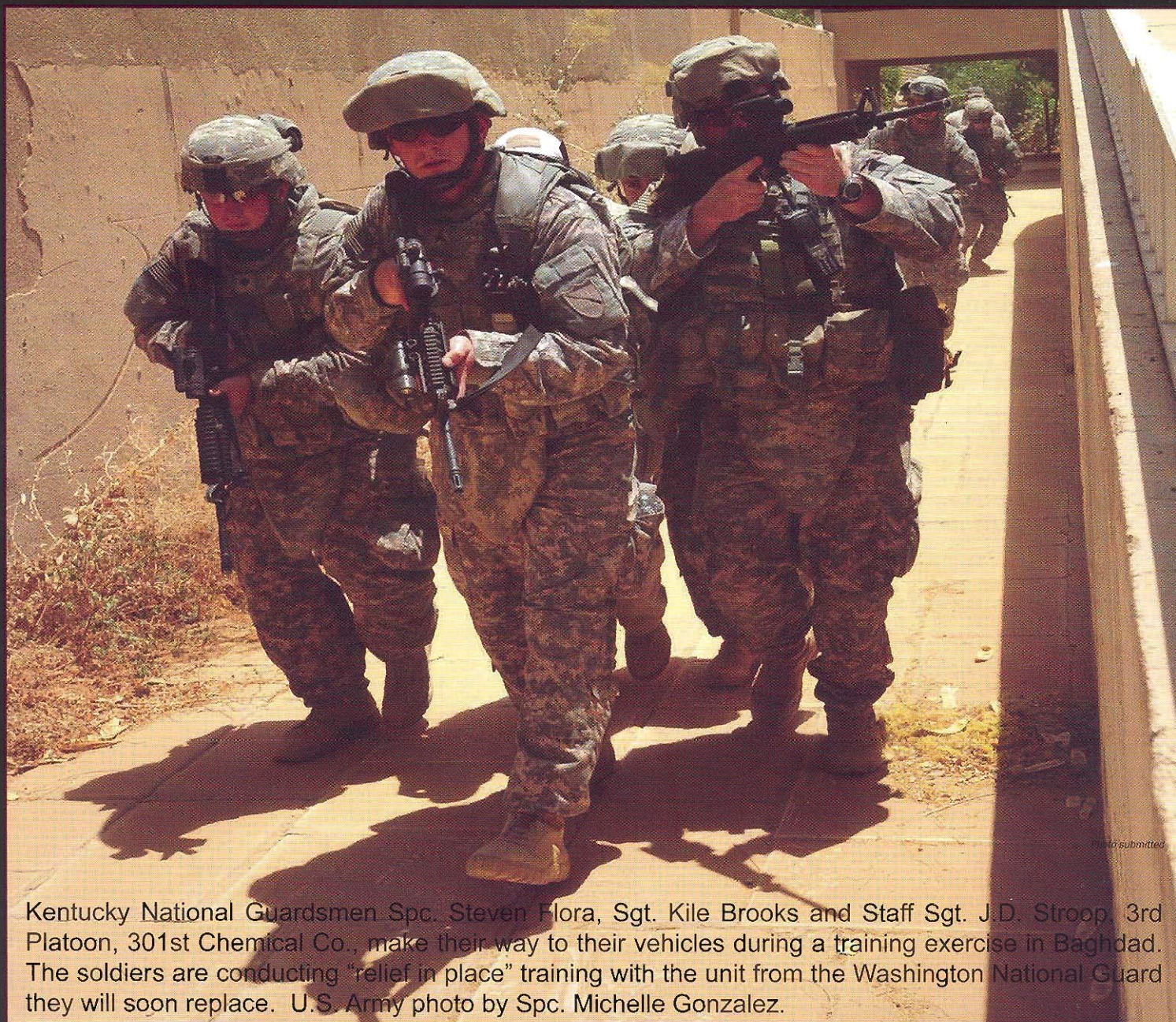


Photo submitted

Kentucky National Guardsmen Spc. Steven Flora, Sgt. Kile Brooks and Staff Sgt. J.D. Stroop, 3rd Platoon, 301st Chemical Co., make their way to their vehicles during a training exercise in Baghdad. The soldiers are conducting "relief in place" training with the unit from the Washington National Guard they will soon replace. U.S. Army photo by Spc. Michelle Gonzalez.