

# The Bluegrass Guard

Volume One, Issue One

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

Summer 1996

## National Guard Tuition Award Program up and running *Provides college, vo-tech education opportunities*

photo and story by Staff Sgt. David Altom

Attention, all would-be engineers, corporate CEOs, and physical therapists! Feel thwarted because the only thing between you and your dreams is that little something called a college education? Or maybe you missed out on a higher-paying job because you didn't have the right technical skills. Well, there's a cure for that, thanks to the people of Kentucky — and your good standing with the Kentucky National Guard.

Sponsored by Rep. Marshall Long and Sen. Fred Bradley and signed into law by Gov. Paul E. Patton, House Bill 137 marked an historical step forward for education in Kentucky, providing legal establishment of the Kentucky National Guard Tuition Award Program. In turn, the newly formed program provides full tuition assistance for qualified enlisted members of the



Gov. Paul E. Patton signs House Bill 137 into law, marking a new era in education for Kentuckians across the commonwealth.

Kentucky Army and Air National Guard.

That's right, *full* tuition.

According to Maj. John Roth, Education Services Officer, the new program follows through with the bill's intent to provide unprecedented

educational opportunities for Kentucky Guard men and women.

"Based on what the law says, enlisted members of the Guard now have the chance to attend schools that they might not otherwise have," Roth said. "This is something new for us, (cont. on page 7)

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## Free Tuition makes life with the Guard more appealing

by  
Staff Sgt. David Altom

"This is a godsend. With what we have now, we've virtually eliminated the competition when it comes to recruiting for the military."

That's the assessment of the new Kentucky National Guard Tuition Award Program by Maj. Freddie Waggoner, director of recruiting for the Army Guard.

"If a young person wants to join the military today, they have two choices," Waggoner said. "They can join the active army, leave home for four or five years and go to college when they get out. Or they can join the Guard, stay in their hometown and go to school ... right now."

Recruiting, however, is just part of the battle; keeping the soldiers and airmen currently in the Guard is just as important — if not more so.

Chief Master Sgt. Jay Lowe, of the Air Guard's 123rd Mission Support Flight, sees a noticeable change in the effects of the education bill.

"While we just had our best month ever in recruiting," Lowe said, "the biggest impact will be in keeping our young people in their units, keeping them on track and in focus. With the new tuition program, they're interested in keeping up their standing with the Guard, they want to stay in."



## Welcome to The Bluegrass Guard

It's been a while, but the Kentucky Guard finally has a state-wide publication of its own again. In recognition of the need to get the word out to the troops, *The Bluegrass Guard* has been reborn with the mission of educating not just the soldiers and airmen of the Kentucky Guard, but their families, friends and neighbors. There is so much that *isn't* known about the Guard mission, we figured it was about time to tell the story about what it is we do, and to show off the guardsmen and women who get the job done.

See something you liked? That's good. It means we did something right. Let us know, and maybe we'll get lucky and do it again.

See something you didn't like, or better yet, did you *not* see something that you think we ought to be covering? Then most definitely let us know; that's the only

way we'll be able to fill in the gaps and paint a truer picture of the Kentucky Guard.

Future editions will cover a wider range of issues and subject matter, from benefits and pay to a guided tour of the new Air Guard base in Louisville (for you green-suiters out there who didn't know there was such a thing). We'll talk about annual training and overseas deployments, pass along tips and hints on living the good life in the field, and follow the progress of things like the effect of the new education bill on recruiting and retention.

So, next time you're at drill and you happen to think to yourself, "I wish people knew about this," remember that there is a way they can find out. This is, after all, your publication, and with your input and support the Kentucky National Guard story can be told.

## The Good Samaritan

photo and text by  
Staff Sgt. David Altom

### Army Guardsman recognized for heroism

For most of us being in the Guard means more than making a little extra money on the weekend; it often means adding a bit of variety to our lives, whether it's planning an ambush in the middle of the night at Artemus or flying humanitarian airlifts in times of disaster. There's usually plenty of opportunity to get your adrenaline going if you're on duty with the Kentucky Guard.



Withrow (right) with his platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Clarence Compton

Of course, if you're like Sgt. Robert Withrow, Co. B, 206th Engineer Battalion, just *coming* to drill can be an adventure.

Take that morning last fall when Withrow saw a pickup truck flip over an embankment and into a ditch near Owingsville. The next thing the combat engineer knew, he was in the stream where the capsized truck had settled and was getting the trapped driver out of the cab and to safety.

As it turned out, the victim of the accident, Jerry Bohn, a local businessman, was an acquaintance of Withrow's.

"I didn't even realize it was Jerry until I got him out," the Guardsman said with a grin. "I've known him for years. I was pretty surprised."

After pulling Bohn to safety, Withrow went for help.

"It made me late for drill," he recalled wryly, "but nobody gave me a hard time over it. I'm just glad I was there to help."

For his efforts Withrow was awarded the Kentucky Medal for Valor. In making the presentation, Col. Jack Williams, Assistant Adjutant General for Army, commended Withrow's efforts.

"Everyone in the Kentucky Guard makes sacrifices at one time or another, and this young man's willingness to risk himself to help a neighbor is a reminder of the lengths we all may be called on to make one day."

## The Bluegrass Guard

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# Air Guard Deployment a matter of Life and Death

story by Staff Sgt. Dale Greer  
photos by Master Sgt. Terry Lutz  
KYANG

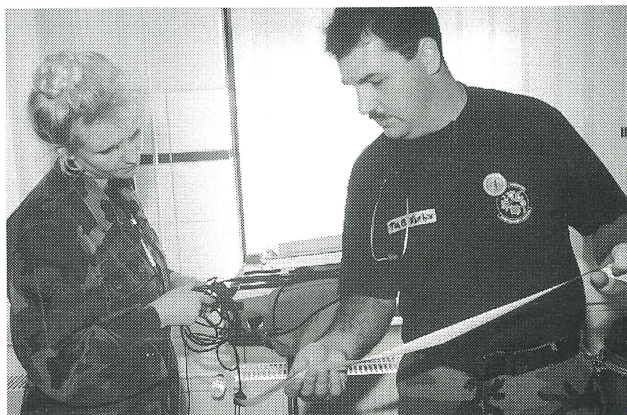
Field training is seldom a matter of life and death, but that's exactly what some Guard members faced last month when the 123rd Medical Squadron deployed to Ramstein Air Base, Germany.

The two-week exercise placed 45 Kentucky Air Guard medical personnel in jobs throughout Ramstein's 86th Medical Group clinic, the largest of its kind in the Air Force.

Guard members worked side by side with their active duty counterparts, treating patients and performing the kinds of real-world medical duties necessary in a busy outpatient clinic.

"We had people in every section," said Lt. Col. Karl Dick, clinic administrator for the Kentucky Air Guard. "Our optometrist was doing eye exams, our med techs were working in the acute care clinic — we just jumped in and did what they did."

That participation wasn't limited to exams. At least two of Kentucky's personnel were responsible for saving a little girl's life after she stopped



A member of Ramstein's 86th Medical Group watches as Tech. Sgt. William Harin examines a patient's heart rhythms.

breathing in the clinic's emergency room. Capt. Bill Adkisson was working in the family practice section of the clinic when he saw a father enter with a child in his arms. The six-year-old girl, Cathryn, was slumped on her father's shoulder, and her eyes were unresponsive, Adkisson recalled.

Adkisson, a physician's assistant, rushed her to the acute care clinic, but Cathryn had stopped breathing by the time they arrived.

Working quickly to resuscitate her, Adkisson and Tech. Sgt. William Harbin, a Kentucky medic, inserted a breathing tube to reestablish her airway. Cathryn then was stabilized with intravenous fluids and transferred to Landstuhl Army Medical Center five miles away.

After a few days in the hospital, Cathryn recovered fully — an outcome Dick attributed to Adkisson and Harbin's speedy response.

Harbin, who is an emergency medical

## When *training* for the "real-world" becomes *reality*

technician for the city of Louisville, said he was just doing his job, but the result gave him a tremendous boost.

"It was probably the most rewarding thing I've done as a physician's assistant because of the circumstances and the outcome," he said.

Opportunities like these are unique, he said, because most of the work he does here and in his civilian career at the University of Kentucky hospital are more pedestrian.

"We don't see things like this on our normal drill weekends, and I seldom see it in my civilian practice because I work in orthopedics and sports medicine," he said. "To be able to get this kind of exposure on active duty really helps prepare us for the kinds of things we would face if we were called up."

That kinds of exposure, officials say, give Guard personnel invaluable training.

"Our focus at the Guard base is to ensure that folks are worldwide qualified," said Col. Charles Bruce, 123rd Medical Squadron commander.

"We're very limited in terms of treating problems. But this kind of deployment gives us the chance to see the other side of medical practice and broaden our training base.

"That's why we do these missions: to ensure that we can deploy successfully and integrate seamlessly in an active duty setting."

By all accounts the active duty team did, receiving kudos from top officials.

"We were just basically told that we were the best Guard unit they've ever had over there," Dick said. "They were really pleased with us."



Capt. Bill Adkisson talks with a patient at Ramstein's Family Services Clinic.



# Who's going to benefit most from the new Kentucky National Guard Tuition Award Program? Well, that's kind of hard to say. Let's take a look at the likely suspects ....

**The soldiers and airmen (and women) of the Kentucky Guard** Okay, that's an easy one. As put forth by the Kentucky National Guard Tuition Assistance Act, all enlisted members (of either the Kentucky Army or Air National Guard) in good standing are eligible to receive support to any of the 81 vocational/technical schools, 14 community colleges or 8 universities supported by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. This, by the way, includes participants in the Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP) as well as all NCO's. "In good standing" means that height/weight standards and physical training test requirements must all be compliance. Also, drill and annual training attendance must reflect no AWOLs or unsatisfactory performances, and the applicants records cannot be flagged for at least 12 months.

**Commanders of Kentucky Guard units** Surviving on the modern battlefield calls for using everything from global-positioning systems to laser-guided weapons, and tomorrow's soldier is as likely to armed with a pentium computer molded into his body armor as with a titanium-coated entrenching tool. If your unit is going to succeed in its mission, you're going to need soldiers who are smart, educated, and eager to learn new things. Also, because of the eligibility standards set by the program, you're guaranteed to see improvement from your troops in the areas of physical training, compliance with height/weight requirements, attendance and performance.

## A notable promotion

*Meet the Kentucky Army Guard's newest Sergeant Major!*

*by Staff Sgt. David Altom*

"This is an historic occasion for the Kentucky Army National Guard and it opens a path for many more female soldiers to follow."

With those words Adjutant General John R. Groves promoted Lee McSpadden, a twenty-four year member of the Guard, to the rank of sergeant major, making her the first female in the Kentucky Army Guard to hold such a position.

Beginning her career in recruiting and retention, McSpadden recently came full circle after assuming the duties of the Sergeant Major in the Recruiting Force.

"You have to decide what it is you want to do and where it is you want to go," she says when asked about achieving her goals. "Then you have to follow what I call the three 'A' concept: you have to have the aptitude and attitude to get the job done, and then you have to take action, or else it's all for nothing."



*Newly promoted Sgt. Maj. McSpadden with two of her mentors: 1st Sgt. Ross T. Cotton (left) and 1st Sgt. Harold McSpadden, both formerly of the Kentucky Army Guard.*

### **Employers of Kentucky Guard members**

Just think, you're running a business and you've got a couple of employees who joined the Guard. Besides being physically fit and drug free, now you find out that one of them is taking classes in accounting at the local community college and the other is brushing up on his machine shop skills. And it's not costing you a dime! What a deal ....

### **Families of Guardsmen and women**

Let's face it, as we near the 21st century most of today's employment opportunities are largely affected by technology, and a high school diploma just doesn't cut it even if you are "self-taught." Whether you manage a fast-food restaurant or work for a fledgling corporation, more education most often translates into more dollars, and whose family wouldn't benefit from a plumper paycheck?

### **Local businesses and communities**

One of the great things the Kentucky National Guard Tuition Award Program is that it makes education available not

only to people who might not have had such opportunities, but it brings those opportunities to towns and cities that don't normally have them.

**State-supported schools** New students — and guaranteed tuition payments — in a competitive market can only bring good news to education administrators.

**The tax-paying citizen** When it comes right down to it, the ultimate beneficiaries of a tuition assistance program for the Kentucky National Guard are the people who supported and approved it. Just about everything listed in the previous paragraphs applies to the citizens of Kentucky, from improving the quality of life in the community to being served by quality soldiers and airmen. The Guard has always been there when the call came to help those in need, and now it seems that Kentuckians have returned the favor — with dividends.






  
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# TORNADO



The summer of 1996 will be long remembered for the chaos brought on by mother nature; it will also be used as a model for measuring the ability of the Kentucky Guard to respond to the needs of the community. Despite the tragic losses suffered by many, the spirit of teamwork prevailed, and formed bonds where none previously existed.



## Taking the boss to task

*text and photos by Steve Bullard, Ky ESGR*

As a group of employers sipped water purified by the 217th Quartermaster Detachment by a lake at the Western Kentucky Training Site, one nodded his head toward Sgt. First Class Charles "Ronnie" Barnes, saying, "That man darn sure loves what he does. I'll bet he knows every nut and bolt in that machine and can take it apart and put it together blindfolded."

"Yep," nodded another. "I'm glad we have people like that in our National Guard."

Such were the comments and impressions made during the annual

## 103rd FSB treats employers to a day in the field



bosslift held by the Kentucky Guard's 103rd Forward Support Battalion. In addition to briefings and tours of unit facilities in the field, employers such as Jeanette Davis (left) were teamed up with employees — in this case Spc. Staci Godbey — while other visitors, like Deborah Stevens (above), sampled government issue cuisine.

"We enjoyed the spirit of the soldiers here," said Davis, owner of Ad-Mart International in Danville. "They do it from the heart and soul."





# ENGINEERS TAKE RIVER BY STORM

story and photos by  
Cpt. Ben Singleton,  
133rd PAD

An angry and swollen Ohio River was no match for members of the 206th Engineer Battalion as they loaded their equipment on river barges at the Dayton Power and Light power station near Aberdeen, Ohio. The engineers had decided that the best way to get their equipment to Ft. Polk, Louisiana for Annual Training was on the river. However the river and weather weren't going to make it easy.

Soldiers from Alpha Company in Maysville arrived at the power station early Wednesday morning, May 29th to load their equipment onto two barges from the Canal Barge Company of New Orleans. The equipment would be taken downriver to the Mississippi River and once in Louisiana, up the Red River to the Port of Alexandria. From there it was only a few miles to Ft. Polk and the Joint Readiness Training Center where most of the 206th would be performing their Annual Training.

The first obstacle the engineers encountered Wednesday morning was Mother Nature. Rain fell from an iron gray sky and the chill in the air felt more like early March than late May. It was the kind of morning where the snooze button gets hit on the alarm much more than once...Unless you're an engineer with a mission to accomplish.

"We're engineers," said Sgt. William Berry, a member of Alpha Company's motor pool. "It has to be rainy or snowy, sloppy and muddy or we start to feel like we're not really working."

The second obstacle to confront the engineers was the Ohio River which lapped eagerly at her muddy banks. Trees normally several feet from the water's edge, stood four and five feet deep in the murky river. Much higher than average rainfall had resulted in a river that was struggling to take in as much new territory as possible, including the dock from which the equipment was to be loaded.

"When we saw that the dock was underwater we knew we'd have to improvise in order to accomplish the mission," said Sgt. First Class Harry Lewis of Alpha Company. "But being engineers, improvisation is our middle name."

"We just used one of our bulldozers that we were loading and some railroad ties and built our own dock," Lewis stated. "We've gotten used to overcoming obstacles."



PFC Joseph Hiatt secures the line that holds the barge in place during the loading procedure.

Using the makeshift dock, the soldiers loaded the equipment quickly and efficiently, despite the rain and slick conditions. Barge Supervisor Sean Smith of the Canal Barge Company oversaw the loading.

"We've had the opportunity to work with the military before," Smith said. "And these guys know how to get a job done."

The engineers had decided to send their equipment by river barge, partially because it's relatively easy to load equipment on a barge as opposed to a railroad car.

"This is much easier for us than loading on rail," Sgt. First Class Lewis said.

"We've been able to load the same amount of equipment in a couple of hours that it would have taken all day to do on a rail car."

The downside is that it may take a little longer for the equipment to arrive at its destination. Smith estimates the journey will take from 10 to 12 days.

"It will probably take a little longer than normal," Smith said. The flooded river means it will take longer than normal to get through the locks and dams

on the Ohio and will make the Mississippi, which has no locks and many more curves, trickier to navigate."

Despite what Mother Nature threw at the engineers of the 206th, they can add taming the Ohio River to their list of accomplishments.



Members of Company A, 206th Engineer Battalion based in Maysville, Ky. load a barge with their equipment for transport to Ft. Polk, Louisiana, via the Ohio, Mississippi, and Red Rivers.



## Tuition *cont. from page 1*

and it opens up a lot of possibilities."

Roth explained that House Bill 137 provides money to send enlisted Guardsmen and women to any of the 81 vocational/technical schools, 14 community colleges or 8 universities which are supported by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. There are specific requirements that have to be met for eligibility, of course, as well as a procedure for prioritizing applicants. But the main message is, if you're enlisted in the Kentucky Guard and you want to go to school, you can.

All it will cost you is the price of your books, some of your time, and a little hard work.

Col. Ben Carr, assigned to help draw up the policies and guidelines governing the program, expressed great enthusiasm about its potential impact.

"I see this as a great program for all Kentuckians," he said. "Right now Kentucky has an average of about one college graduate for every eleven citizens. When you weigh that against the national average of one in five, there's definitely room for improvement. A program like this will help improve the quality of life for everyone in Kentucky."

Carr's excitement for the program is well-grounded; besides being a Guardsman, he's also the chancellor for the University of Kentucky Community College system, which gives him a unique perspective.

"The great thing about the new tuition program is that everybody tends to benefit from it," Carr said. "The bill provides the money — which is managed by the Kentucky Higher Education Assistance Authority — so there's no cost to the schools, and they love that."

Roth is quick to remind potential applicants that there are several standards that have to be met, not the least of which is a soldier or airman's good standing with the Kentucky Guard, as well as compliance with the school's academic policies. Also, applicants are prioritized on a first come, first serve basis, except in the case of those who already have degrees; first-time students will be placed ahead of those seeking additional or graduate degrees. Not being first on the list, however, isn't necessarily a bad thing.

"The great thing about the new program is that it's opening doors to other funding options," Roth explained. "In many cases we're able to combine money from the National Guard Tuition Assistance Program

## They came, they saw ... ... they **CONQUERED!**

by SSG David Altom

It's sometimes said that Great Britain and the United States are populated by people separated by a common language.

That wasn't necessarily the case this summer when 142 reservists from the British Parachute Regiment visited eastern Kentucky and took part in the Kentucky Army Guard's Boone Raider Course. Designed to sharpen soldiers' skills and

challenge physical abilities, Boone Raider also gave the British paratroopers the opportunity to work closely with their Kentucky counterparts.

"This exercise gave us each insight into who we are and how we get things done, and we

found that we were more alike than not," said Sgt. First Class Charles Jones, who helped run the course for the Kentucky Guard. An infantry platoon sergeant with Co. D, 1/149 Infantry, Jones explained that the training went beyond military tactics and physical endurance.

"We wanted to get to know them as much as they wanted to get to know us. It was actually fun breaking stereotypes."



with funding from the Montgomery G.I. Bill. That way we can make the most of each program."

"The program also helps," Roth added, "by putting the [educational] institutions in loop with the Guard, so they recognize us as a source of tuition assistance for their students. In essence, the schools become recruiting stations for the Kentucky Guard."

The deadline for turning in applications for the spring semester of 1997 is October 1, 1996

For further information regarding the Kentucky National Guard Tuition Assistance Program, talk to either your commanding officer or first sergeant, or contact:

The Adjutant General's Office  
ATTN: KG-DOP-ED  
Boone National Guard Center  
Frankfort, KY 40601-6168  
tel. 502-564-8550



## *The Bluegrass Guard*

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## Now it's time to get

Welcome to "In Gear," where you'll find tips and tidbits to make your life a little more comfortable in the field.

This time we'll look at parachute cord ... don't hang up, "dummy cord" is some of the handiest stuff ever assigned an NSN.

Aside from the obvious uses, i.e., making a lanyard for your Swiss Army knife, flashlight, compass, wallet or whatever (so you don't lose them when you need them most, *dummy!*), there are plenty of other little chores that precious green line can do for you.

Does your dog tag chain bother you? Maybe it's too cold or pulling those sensitive hairs on your chest? And that store-bought tube looks ... well, less than cool? Try this: cut a length of 550 cord a little shorter than the chain is long, pull the inside cords out and singe the frayed ends lightly with a match. Feed the chain through the dummy cord and replace your tags.

Comfortable, practical and *stylish* to boot!

## ***IN GEAR!***

with Sgt. First Class Steve Collier  
133rd PAD



How about those LBE suspenders that dig into your back?

Remove the metal hooks and replace with dummy cord. Take a hank of cord, singe the ends and tie a knot at one end, feed it through the grommet on your pistol belt where the suspender hook would normally attach ... thread it through the end of the suspender and then through the pistol belt grommet on the other side of the suspender, adjust for comfort (leaving some excess for seasonal variations in outer clothing) and tie another knot to hold everything in place.

A word of warning, however: you might not want to do this to your official go-to-formation-and-looking-good rig, only your go-to-war field kit.

Outta here ...

## The Last Word

"Hooah" had its origins with the 2nd Dragoons (today's 2nd Cavalry Regiment) in 1841 Florida, according to some military historians.

In an attempt to end the war with the Seminoles, a meeting was arranged with Chief Coacoochee. Afterward at a banquet, officers of the garrison made several toasts, such as "Here's to luck" and "The old grudge."

When the chief asked an interpreter the meaning of what they'd said, Gopher John explained, "It means, 'How d'ye do?' "

The chief with great dignity lifted his cup above his head and exclaimed in a deep, guttural voice, "Hough!"