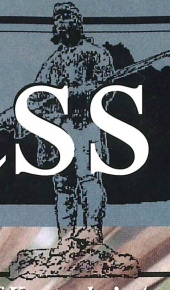


The Bluegrass Guard



Volume Eight, Issue Ten

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

August 2004



**MPAD shoots
more than photos**

Are you legally prepared for mobilization?

The role you play as a member of the Kentucky National Guard is founded upon the idea of a well-trained citizen-soldier ready to respond to the call of duty whenever the needs of the state or country dictate. Part of our responsibilities as Soldiers and Airmen in the Kentucky National Guard is to be prepared to respond to the call whenever it may come. While it is impossible to always have everything ready for your departure, there are steps that you can take now that may help alleviate some of the problems and headaches associated with deploying. Let's take a look at some of the challenges that you may encounter during mobilization and the possible solutions for meeting those challenges.

GET YOUR FINANCES IN ORDER

Don't go to war without taking care of your finances! Make arrangements for direct deposit, electronic banking, automatic debit withdrawal for reoccurring bills and bill paying online. Do you have a family to care for? Are you the owner of a business? Set them up for success by getting the proper paperwork together and you'll have less to worry about when you're away.

PREPARE APPROPRIATE LEGAL DOCUMENTS

A power of attorney can provide the legal authority for a family member, friend or a business associate to handle certain matters in your absence. A general power of attorney permits an individual to legally represent you in almost all of your affairs. This is a very powerful document and should only be given to someone in whom you have immense trust. A special power of attorney grants an individual the authority to represent you only in specific matters. It may be appropriate, and is often required, when buying or selling real property or personal property that requires a



title transfer and when performing transactions with the Internal Revenue Service, Defense Finance and Accounting Office and other financial institutions.

KNOW YOUR SUPPORT OBLIGATIONS

If you have family members in your care, you have responsibilities to provide for their support. By regulation, these ethical and moral responsibilities become legal responsibilities if you are called to active federal service. Know what your support obligations are prior to your departure and make the appropriate arrangements to ensure that your dependents receive the financial support they entitled to receive during your deployment. A failure to provide this support can result in disciplinary action under the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

AVOID LONG-TERM CONTRACTS

Service members should consider the impact of a mobilization before entering into service contracts. A two-year lease on a mobile phone or a five-year lease on a new truck may not be a good deal if you are deployed and unable to use them. The Service Members Civil Relief Act provides limited rights and

protections in such situations but there is no guarantee that the exercise of your rights and protections will be timely, inexpensive or ultimately successful. Keep in mind that a salesperson may give assurances that you can cancel at any time, but always remember that their sole purpose is to make the sale. The only real guarantees are those that you receive in writing that are made by an individual with the actual authority to bind the business. If you have any questions about a contract, seek the advice of your MACOM JAG before signing.

SEEK HELP

Each major command has a Judge Advocate that is assigned to provide legal support to the subordinate commands. While this Judge Advocate is limited to providing generalized legal assistance, they can provide valuable insight and guidance on how to handle most of the legal situations you will encounter upon mobilization. Talk with your first sergeant or your unit commander for information on how to contact this Judge Advocate so that you can speak with them during your drill weekend.

I cannot emphasize enough that financial and legal readiness is as much a responsibility of the Soldier or Airmen as is physical fitness, tactical awareness and job proficiency. Take charge of your affairs before you mobilize and you'll be one step closer to a successful deployment and happy homecoming.

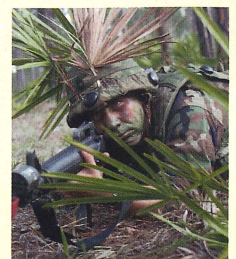
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Master Sgt. Robert Michaud with the 133rd MPAD blends into the natural foliage of the Camp Bland surroundings. (Photo by Spc. Matthew Wester, 100th MPAD, TXARNG)



Public Affairs Soldiers are 'Soldiers first'

Story by Spc. Matthew Wester
100th MPAD

CAMP BLANDING, Fla. – A photographer crouches in the sand along a line of Soldiers shooting M-16 rifles. He focuses and struggles to get just the right shot. The Soldiers are members of the Army National Guard... so is the photographer.

The 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, which includes Army National Guard photojournalists and broadcast journalists from Kentucky and Tennessee, traveled to Camp Blanding to cover the annual training of the 48th Brigade Combat Team of the Georgia Army National Guard.

Soldiers assigned to public affairs detachments take photos, write stories, shoot and produce video packages, and act as liaisons between civilian media and the military. Their main objective is to tell the Army's story.

However, journalism is not their only mission. The 133rd also participated in an exercise evaluation that tests common soldiering skills.

"We're out here doing common task training as well as covering our public affairs assignments," said Spc. Emily K. Slusher, journalist from the 133rd.

"It is a challenge to do both, but we are hoping to find a happy medium and learn more about each one," she said. "At Camp Blanding we're rolling around in the dirt, talking to people that do this everyday, and getting a good idea of what our job is going to be when we deploy."

Deployment is a possibility for almost any National Guard unit including public affairs detachments.

"This is very practical," said Capt. Daniel L. Graves, executive officer for the 133rd. "We all expect to be deployed."

The unit was responsible for occupying an operations site, defending the unit's area of operations, and conducting tactical road marches, Graves explained.

He said the 133rd is being evaluated by four observer-controllers who assess the unit's tactical skills.

"We've surprised the observer-controllers with our proficiency," Graves said. "We have a wealth of soldiering knowledge in our unit."

Four members of the 340th Training Support Battalion, U.S. Army Reserves, based in Louisville, Kentucky, posed as enemy insurgents and tried to attack the 133rd's camp.

All members of the MPAD wore electronic Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) gear that uses a system of lasers and sensors to register whether they had been hit by laser-simulated enemy fire.

The opposition forces from the 340th encountered more than they bargained for when they attacked.

"We set up a perimeter with early warning devices that would whistle or rattle to give us prior warning to a potential enemy threat," said Master Sgt. Robert F.A. Michaud, public affairs chief of the 133rd.

In addition to fancy booby traps, the MPAD Soldiers constructed two fighting positions and camouflaged their unit's



Spc. Emily K. Slusher scans the wood line for approaching "enemy" troops. (Photo by Spc. Matthew Wester, 100th MPAD)

vehicles with netting, Graves said.

They spent a total of 96 hours in the field living like "grunts".

"This is not like what we normally do," said Sgt. 1st Class John W. Kibler, the senior broadcast non-commissioned officer of the 133rd. "It reminds us we are in the United States Army and that we are Soldiers."

Capt. Graves agrees.

"We wanted MPAD Soldiers to be soldiers again," he said. "We're all soldiers first."

Tuition forms due for Spring term

The Education Services Office is now accepting applications for the **Spring term (January through May 2005)**. Please remind unit members who plan to attend a "state-supported college/university or vocational school" and are eligible to participate in the Kentucky National Guard Tuition Award Program, applications (AGO Form 18-7) must be received by the Education Office **no later than Oct. 1**.

ANA depot office construction

By Staff Sgt. Kelly McCargo
Office of Military Cooperation, Afghanistan

KABUL, Afghanistan—As the Afghan National Army's ranks continue to swell, so does their need for office and housing space.

Reliable, inexpensive buildings are in demand, and U.S. military officials are already planning ways to accommodate such a rapidly expanding organization.

A Kentucky National Guardsman deployed here said he has the solution.

"In about 15 days we could have a 3,000-square foot structure erected," said Command Sgt. Maj. Greg Armstrong, 123rd Training Site Support Battalion, Ky. "Which includes a concrete floor and electricity for the lighting."

Armstrong is responsible for constructing the ANA warehouse depot office.

The M.I.C. Industries' 120, Automatic Building Machine generally costs about US \$9 per square-foot opposed to the conventional concrete building structures which run about \$100 for the same square-foot, Armstrong said.

"Since the building material is coming from America it's going to be about \$12 to \$15 a square foot but that's still cheaper than most alternatives," Armstrong said. "But considering what we're getting out of it, it's a real bargain."

The finished product, the Continuous Span Shelter is the replacement for the 1940 Quonset Hut temporary shelter. The CSS comes with a 50-year guarantee against metal deficiencies such as rusting.

"I encapsulated several steel caissons in concrete which are going to anchor the building to the foundation," Armstrong said. "Once that is set this structure will be able to withstand the (average) seismic activity in Afghanistan and up to 100 mph winds."

Aside from the low cost, the ease and speedy construction makes the CSS a viable investment.

"In 2000, I trained a Tennessee



Command Sgt. Maj. Greg Armstrong oversees the construction on the Afghan National Army's Warehouse Depot Office Building in Kabul, Afghanistan, April 1. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Kelly McCargo released).

National Guard unit to build (a CSS structure) in about 15 days. There was one day of classroom instruction and then we went out to the field and built a structure which took 14 days," Armstrong said.

Those same Guardsmen have since erected 14 CSSs throughout Tennessee, Armstrong said.

"These are almost as easy as putting up a tent," Armstrong said. "And what you construct is only limited to your imagination. I've built bunkers, fighting positions, or re-roofed old buildings. At the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center (Kentucky) we built an indoor shooting range, a range electrical shop, and vehicle maintenance shops.

There are four main steps in constructing a CSS, according to Armstrong.

First, described as the longest process, is encapsulating the steel caissons in the ground or foundation of the structure.

"Once you have caissons set you can start tack-welding the building's frame to it," Armstrong said. "Then you start forming the steel frame sections into the arches. The last process is pouring the (concrete) end walls and the floor."

"I can train anybody given they have the knowledge and methodology of

the finished product," Armstrong said.

Several Guardsmen stationed at Bagram Air Field who are learning the process for the first time agreed with Armstrong.

"This has been a relatively easy process," said Spc. Keith Weber, B Company, 926th Engineer Battalion. "Since we had great teachers, I would have no problem setting one of these things up without them."

"This process is a whole lot easier than laying and pouring concrete," said Spc. Stephen Powers, B Co., 926th Eng. Bn. "When working with concrete you get some lime burns on your hands."

The Afghan Ministry of Defense proposes having a 70,000 strong national army by 2010.

An average of 2,400 ANA Soldiers are graduating each year, and already Kabul Military Training School officials are experiencing housing shortages from the volume of Afghan recruits, and Armstrong is confident he can train ANA Soldiers to build these structures.

Ultimately ANA officials will have the final say whether the structure meets their requirements, but given the cost and speed of construction one Guardsman is convinced the CSS is a viable solution to meet their needs.

Kentucky airmen deploy to Germany for 3rd Joint Forge rotation this year

By Capt. Dale Greer
Wing Public Affairs Officer

Seventy-two members of the 123rd Airlift Wing deployed overseas June 25 aboard two Kentucky C-130s in support of Operation Joint Forge.

The steady-state mission, which has existed in various forms under a variety of names since the mid-1990s, provides airlift services for U.S. military forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina and other locations across Europe.

The Kentucky airmen, who include pilots, navigators, flight engineers, loadmasters, maintenance personnel and other support troops, will be based at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, through July 24.

The deployment marks the third major rotation of Kentucky airmen to support Operation Joint Forge this year.

Two Kentucky C-130s and about 70 Kentucky Air Guard members were based in Germany for various lengths of time between April 15 and June 6 as part of earlier rotations in support of the ongoing mission.

Joint Forge highlights the wing's continuing role in military operations around the globe despite the fact that most Kentucky Air Guardsmen are no longer serving on active duty, said Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

In the wake of Sept. 11, 2001, the U.S. Air Force called 637 members of the Kentucky Air Guard to federal active duty to support missions ranging from homeland defense and the Global War on Terror to Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Master Sgt. Rich Martin walks a familiar path toward a Kentucky C-130 Hercules aircraft as he prepares to leave for his second deployment to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, this year. Martin and 71 other Kentucky airmen are scheduled to return to Louisville on July 24 after completing the wing's third Joint Forge rotation for 2004. (Photo by Senior Airmen Diane Stinnett/KyANG.)

Of the 637 Kentucky airmen who were federally activated, 454 deployed overseas for U.S. military operations in dozens of countries, including Iraq, Afghanistan, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Algeria, Bosnia, Croatia, Romania, Senegal, Serbia and the Ukraine.

Most of the wing's federalized troops were taken off active duty earlier this year, but about 150 continue to serve on federal active duty at home station and various locations around the world.

Additional overseas deployments are expected later this year as the wing supports airlift missions in Central and South America.

Other unit members will deploy as needed this fall to support the Air Force's global Aerospace Expeditionary Forces missions.

"I'm extremely proud of the dedication of our people, who selflessly continue to answer the call for service wherever they're needed around the world," Colonel Kraus said.



Members of the 123rd Airlift Wing drop off their gear at the aerial port squadron for palletizing and on-loading to the aircraft. (Photo by Senior Airmen Diane Stinnett/KyANG.)

1.3 million miles and counting...

2123rd TC-- more than just sweat and steering wheels

Spc. Karima L. Mares
13th Public Affairs Detachment

IRAQ—Imagine each day beginning with the prospect of long dusty roads and temperatures reaching 120 degrees Fahrenheit on an average summers day. Imagine shooters waiting for an opportunity to catch American Soldiers off-guard, mortars aimed at you and your comrades and realize, that in the midst of this, you have a mission to complete. You and your unit must haul equipment into Iraq for servicemembers on the front lines, and if you fail, lives could be lost.

The sand-filled horizons of Kuwait and Iraq are much different landscapes from the lush green grass, leafy trees and historical buildings that the 292 Soldiers from Kentucky's Heavy Equipment Transport (HET) National Guard unit out of Richmond are used to. But that's exactly what the 2123rd Transportation Company Soldiers have faced for nearly six months, since being activated and deployed to support Operation Iraqi Freedom.

To most, the daunting task of driving equipment back and forth between Kuwait and Iraq would eat away at them and they would be sick with anxiety, but for these unsung heroes, it's part of their everyday life and it's their job. For most of these Soldiers, the hardest part of it is being so far away from home. Still, they know what they are doing keeps their loved ones safe.

"I always told myself when I was in high school that I'd never join the Army, but here I am," said Spc. D. "Payten" Duke. "I'm doing my duty for my country, my dad did it, my grandpa did it and



Spc James Frisby takes the time to tie down his load on the trailer of his HET.

my sister did it. I think I should probably have to do it too," he said. "I'd much rather be over here doing this than other people in my family," Duke added.

"The main challenge is being away from my family," said Staff Sgt. Thomas Payton, a Frankfort, Ky., native.

Payton said that the next most difficult parts of the job are, not surprisingly, the heat and not knowing if they will be hit by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED), ambushed or mortared.

"I think the scariest thing that's happened to me since we've been here has been getting stuck in BIAP (Baghdad International Airport) for five days. We got mortared on the way in the gate," said Sgt. 1st Class Lester Adkins. "Once we got in we found out one of our other platoons had been there for seven days getting mortared, but you get used to it," he said. "If they (the mortars) don't get too close, you can sit there and not pay attention to them," added Adkins, who has 23 years of military service under his belt.

Although these Soldiers lives are in danger nearly everyday, active duty Soldiers tend to have the misconception that the National Guard is less qualified to do their job.

"I know that active duty does it seven days a week, and in the National Guard, we do it one weekend a month,

(cont'd top of page 7)



Sgt. Lafontaine Gustave controls the hydraulics on his HET trailer.

(cont'd from page 6)

two weeks out of the year," Payton said. "But in those two days, we accomplish our missions, not only quickly, but safely as well. I feel like the National Guard is trained-up more than the active duty," he explained.

According to the 2123rd Truck Master, Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Willis, the unit has approximately 1,300,000 miles of road under their tires, since arriving in theater.

Even though another common problem for National Guard Soldiers is that often times it is more difficult to gain the support they need, the Soldiers of 2123rd Trans Co. have, as said in the Army, "Sucked it up and drove on."

"We have several different kinds of skills coming into one unit from the civilian sector," said 1st Sgt. Michael Cash. "From doctors and lawyers to carpenters and plumbers, all of those different skills come together to make one unit. If we have a problem, there's

most likely someone out of the 292 Soldiers who can fix it, or knows someone who can."

"In our company, we all help each other," added Spc. Cheyanne Baker. "In a lot of units, if a truck breaks down or gets a flat, then it's just those people who fix it, but with us, we get down and help each other."

Although their main job is to haul equipment up north, the truckers have to be able to load their cargo onto the trailers and chain it down correctly. It may sound easy, but sometimes it takes brute strength and stamina, especially in this environment, where the Soldiers have to wear gloves, so the metal, which you could actually fry an egg on, doesn't burn their hands.

Even though these Soldiers have endured many different obstacles since coming into this theater, they are keeping their minds open and hoping for the best.

"I hope to become a better

person, and get a better view of the world," Duke said. "Being here in this situation makes you realize how fragile life is and gives you a greater respect for it. When you have that control of life or death in your hands; it really makes you respect it more."

With so many different personalities, one might think that there would be a lot of conflict within the unit, but that isn't the case. The Soldiers of 2123rd Trans. Co. are totally at ease with one another. Some of them have known each other most of their lives and couldn't imagine being in a unit where it was any other way.

"I love these guys and it helps to get through this deployment," Duke said. "They're a bunch of really good guys. I'd say my best friends are sitting right here with me now," he said. "I wouldn't want to be over here with anybody else, just a bunch of good ol' boys from Kentucky."

Field Artillery holds Freedom Salutes

The field artillery community honored Soldiers, families and their supporters during a series of Freedom Salute Ceremonies last month. Spc. Charley Hager (right) pins his wife, Marcia, while their children, Kyle and Brittany watch. Spc. Hager mobilized with the 138th Field Artillery Brigade last year in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

Brig. Gen. Norman Arflack (bottom right) presents a commemorative statue to Karen King of Keeneland Race Course. Keeneland provided outstanding support to 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery during its mobilization last year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Noble Eagle.

Lt. Col. Rondal Turner speaks before a colorful display built by the family support group in honor of 1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery (MLRS). Turner was commander of the 1-623rd during its mobilization last year in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. (Photos by Staff Sgt. David Altom, JFHQ, KYARNG)



Guard can seek reimbursement of medical, dental claims

Courtesy American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON, D.C. — National Guard and reserve members who paid their medical and dental bills and saved their receipts may now seek reimbursement from Tricare, officials of the military health care system announced July 23.

Officials said the system will begin processing medical and dental claims for Guard and Reserve members who meet certain eligibility requirements.

Only guardsmen and reservists issued "delayed-effective-date active-duty orders" for more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation, and their families, may be eligible to have medical claims reimbursed.

This temporary entitlement is part of the Defense Department's 2004 Temporary Reserve Health Benefit Program, which sought to enhance benefits for Guard and reserve members called to active duty.

Normally, under Tricare guidelines, Reserve and Guard members cannot be enrolled into Tricare until they reach their final duty location. The temporary entitlement gives them access upon receipt of activation orders, up to 60 days in advance.

All temporary provisions will end on Dec. 31, 2004.

Guardsmen, reservists and their family members must be registered in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System and be Tricare eligible to qualify for the temporary benefit.

In order to apply for reimbursement, eligible members must submit a Tricare (CHAMPUS) claim form, a copy of their itemized bill, an explanation of benefits, and proof of payment (if the bill was already paid) to their regional Tricare claims processor.

Claims processing instructions and a downloadable Tricare claims form, DD Form 2642, are available at local Tricare service centers or from Tricare regional contractors, or may be downloaded from the Tricare Web site, <http://www.tricare.osd.mil/>

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Chemical, Armor battalions have new commanders

Maj. Bob D. Hayter receives the 103rd Chemical Battalion colors from Col. Mike Richie during a change of command ceremony held July 11 at the battalion's headquarters in Owensboro, Ky. Hayter replaces Lt. Col. Curtis L. Dunn as commander of the battalion. The 103rd Chemical Battalion is made up of two units located in Owensboro and Louisville and has more than 150 members. Hayter works full time for the Kentucky Army National Guard as a Military Support to Civil Authorities project officer and has been a member for more than 31 years.

Outgoing Commander Lt. Col. Scott A. Campbell relinquishes the flag of command for 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor during ceremonies conducted at Fort Knox. Taking over for Campbell is Maj. Mike Farley, who has nearly 20 years experience in both the reserve component and the active duty Army. Farley works full-time as a Detailed Inspector General for the Kentucky Army National Guard. With more than 400 soldiers on its roster, 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor has units located in Benton, Bowling Green, Hopkinsville, Leitchfield and Marion.



Photo by Capt. David Page



Photo submitted by Capt. Christopher W. Cline