

# The Bluegrass Guard



Volume Eight, Issue Eleven

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

September 2004



**Expert Infantry  
Second to None!**

# New Joint Operation Center critical to homeland defense

On August 15, the Kentucky National Guard took one more giant leap forward in the protection of our Commonwealth by standing up the Joint Operations Center.

The JOC, because of its structure and integrated nature, will help our organization communicate with any governmental agency at any time of the night or day, no matter the crisis and that translates directly into saving lives and protecting our communities.

While those who wish to do us harm continue to explore more sophisticated methods, we have done an outstanding job making sure that the Guard can respond quickly and effectively to any threat to the citizens of our great Commonwealth.

The JOC represents another initiative that showcases our abilities to work in a joint environment.

Since Oct. 1, 2003, when we integrated the Air, Army and State Headquarters under one structure, we have done an excellent job of working together in a positive and collaborative method.

The successful implementation of the JOC once again proves the



joint concept is critical for us to master. We are a dual mission organization that not only works with other military entities but also with local, state, and federal agencies to coordinate and assist the Commonwealth in times of emergency. This is a job we do very well.

As the hometown defense force, the Kentucky National Guard stands as the last line of defense in the War on Terror. We have done and will continue to do all we can to protect the citizens our

Commonwealth and this nation from all enemies, foreign and domestic. It is the oath we all took, and I have never been prouder of organization and its response to the call to arms.

Our organization will continue to evolve as the mission requirements change. It is my hope that our adaptability sends a clear message to our enemies that will not falter or relent until the job is done and our citizens are safe.

I appreciate the flexibility and willingness that the men and woman of the Kentucky National Guard continue to display with every mission. You Soldiers and Airmen are great patriots! It is a true pleasure to serve with you. *Fight as Kentuckians!!!*

Donald C. Storm  
Major General  
The Adjutant General

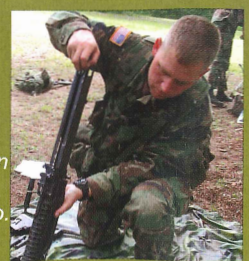
## The Bluegrass Guard

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Staff Sgt. Danny Page field strips an M-60 as part of the test that earned him an Expert Infantry Badge. See story on page 3. Photo by Sgt. Mario Cima, Co. B, 1-149th INF



# Kentucky Guard activates Joint Operation Center

Frankfort, KY - The Kentucky National Guard is now an integral resource in the national response to acts of terror and natural disasters.

The National Guard Bureau (NGB) and each of the 54 state and territory Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) now maintain Joint Operation Centers (JOCs), which are trained, equipped and ready to execute Homeland Defense/Security operations at the request of the Governor or President.

Kentucky's JOC became fully operational on August 15. Located on Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort, the JOC is able to operate 24 hours a day/seven days a week and is capable of receiving and responding to classified messages, executing command and control operations of Guard forces in the state and providing for the information needs of local, state and federal authorities.

"This is an information gathering and sharing body," said Brig. Gen. Norman Arflack, deputy adjutant general. "It will play an integral role in providing synchronization with our state, federal and local authorities in responding to a disaster or emergency. We had a smaller cell in the state emergency operations center that everyone is familiar with. This is a new venture at this magnitude."

The JOC is an adaptable and flexible resource that can maintain and disseminate intelligence and information to local authorities, coordinate military crisis response, as well as provide routine assistance to civilian authorities. When necessary, it can be expanded to meet any challenge and coordinate any operation where National Guard forces may be called. JOC members are highly trained and qualified Guard members individually selected based on their experience and the critical skills they bring to the mission.

"I'm glad the National Guard is doing this," said Erwin Roberts, director of Kentucky's Department of Homeland Security, which coordinates the government response in event of a man-made or natural disaster. "They are better equipped than many civilian agencies and have the experience to maintain something like this."



**Lt. Col. R.P. Watson and Lt. Col. John Pope (above) monitor a briefing by the Florida JOC during a teleconference call regarding hurricane threats in the Southeast. Erwin Roberts (below), director of Kentucky's Department of Homeland Security talks with Maj. Gen. Norman Arflack about the JOC activation. The JOC enhances the Kentucky Guard's role in homeland defense of the nation and the Commonwealth.**

"This is a big part of being prepared," said Roberts. "To either prevent an attack or respond to one that has already occurred."

Lt. Col. Bob Hayter runs the JOC. "In any event, man-made or natural, we're here and ready," said Hayter. "We've got the

manpower, training and equipment to apply to any situation."

"Knowing the JOC is here 24/7 puts my mind more at ease," said Lt. Col. John Powell. "It allows us to respond in a much quicker time frame than if the JOC was not in place. I get a lot of personal satisfaction from that."



# Expert Infantry Badge program sets new standards with troops

Story by Staff Sgt. David Altom  
Photos by Sgt. Mario Cima,  
Co. B, 1-149th Infantry

The 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 149<sup>th</sup> Infantry (Mechanized) made Kentucky Army Guard history last month with the completion of their inaugural Expert Infantry Badge cycle.

Prized by infantry troops throughout the U.S. military, the EIB represents the best of the best when it comes to assessing a Soldier's combat skills.

Five Soldiers received EIBs as a result of the Kentucky program.

"I've talked to people who've received both the EIB and the Combat Infantry Badge," said Lt. Col. William Denny, commander of 1-149<sup>th</sup> during the EIB cycle. "Many of them said they prized the EIB just as much as the CIB. The only difference between the two was getting shot at."

To earn an EIB an infantry Soldier has to endure five days of gruelling hands-on tests, including the U.S. Army Physical Fitness Test, Day/Night Land Navigation courses, 12-mile ruck march and establishing himself an expert with the service rifle.

In the case of a no-go, candidates are allowed a single re-try. Those who complete the tests without a single failure are recognized as "True Blue."

Only those with an 11 Infantry or 18 Special Forces series MOS are eligible to test and earn the EIB.

"This isn't something we had to do," said Denny. "We wanted to do this. The EIB is a symbol of excellence in the infantry community and those who earn it are looked upon with respect by their peers."

Denny relinquished command shortly after awarding the EIB to his soldiers. He hopes, however, the legacy will continue long after his departure.

"We now have a cadre and five examples to the other Soldiers that this can be done," he said.

Earning the EIB is no small matter for the Soldiers that receive them. Just qualifying for the program is a screening process in itself.

Staff Sgt. Danny Page (right) puts his knowledge of camouflage to work.

The Expert Infantry Badge (below) is prized by soldiers though the Army.

Sgt. Mathew Kelley demonstrates proper individual movement techniques.

Spc. Jeremy Garland deploys a grenade in fine Kentucky style.

## The 2004 EIB recipients include:

**Capt. Bryan Howay  
(True Blue)**

**Staff Sgt. Danny Page  
(True Blue)**

**Sgt. Tony Duncan**

**Sgt. Matthew Kelley**

**Spc. Jeremy Garland**

"At first I didn't think I would get anywhere with it" said Spc. Jeremy Garland, the 1-149<sup>th</sup>'s junior recipient of the EIB. "But I had my mind set to do it as I made it a little further and a little further. And what do you know ... I made it!"

While Garland's pride is well-earned, he doesn't take himself too seriously.

"I'm already taking on new responsibilities. My officers and NCOs are expecting a lot out of me," the twenty year old Soldier said. "That makes me a little humble."



# Kentucky wing selected as the AFA's 2004 Outstanding ANG Flying Unit

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell  
Cargo Courier Editor

The Air Force Association has named the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing as its Outstanding Air National Guard Flying Unit for 2004, based in part on the wing's exceptional performance last year while participating in Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terror.

During the award period, which encompassed all of 2003, the wing deployed hundreds of



**Forty-eight members of the 123rd Civil Engineers Squadron board a Kentucky C-130 as they prepare to deploy to Iraq last November. The troops spent four months at Baghdad International Airport. (Photo by Senior Airman Phillip Speck/KyANG)**



**A Kentucky Air National Guard C-130 taxis into Ramstein Air Base, Germany, following an airlift sortie. Hundreds of Kentucky airmen deployed to Germany in support of the Global War on Terror last year. (Photo by Senior Airman Phillip Speck/KyANG)**

aircrew members, maintenance troops and support personnel to multiple locations in Southwest Asia, Europe and Africa, where they flew missions into dozens of countries while supporting a broad range of military operations.

Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, said he was honored for the unit to be chosen for the award.

"I'm really proud of the men and women of the 123rd for having been named the outstanding flying unit in the Air National Guard for 2004," he said.

The colonel attributed the wing's success to the hard work, dedication and professionalism of its troops during the extremely high operations tempo of the past few years.

"Their wartime performance is nothing short of stellar, and it continues today. We haven't slowed down much; we've just changed direction — out of Europe now and soon into South America" as the wing prepares for an upcoming Air Expeditionary Forces mission to provide airlift services from Puerto Rico.

"Selection for this award only validates the dedication and professionalism that I see in our folks day to day, and it's an honor to serve alongside them."

The award recognizes the wing's total performance in 2003, including its support of state and local events.

# Alerted units use annual training to prepare for possible mobilization

Story and Photos by Capt. David B. Page  
Deputy Public Affairs Officer

The convoy commander makes the call on the radio that it is time to move out. Each Soldier's heart races with the uncertainty about the path ahead.

As the convoy moves, the Soldiers scan the area, looking for threats. After a short distance an explosion is heard from the front of the convoy. An Improvised Explosive Device has detonated, damaging the vehicle and possibly wounding its crew... but for these Soldiers, today is their lucky day because it is just a training exercise.

For the Soldiers of the 617<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company, 940<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company and 2113<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Medium), the scenario above could be a very real situation soon. These units are on alert and just completed their annual training at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center. Each unit went through a 96-hour external evaluation to assess their knowledge of both technical and tactical tasks.

"We have several new Soldiers, so we were able to evaluate our strength and weaknesses," said Staff Sgt. Carl A. Skinner with the 2113<sup>th</sup> TC.

"We learned more and more each day from the Opfor (Opposing Forces) during their part of the After Action Report," said Private First Class Ray D. Weatherspoon from the 2113<sup>th</sup> TC.

Each unit also has the advantage of working



**2113<sup>th</sup> Transportation Company (Medium) members Spc. Ryan S. Donescik (driver) and Sgt. Tommy G. Gamble (ground guide) back their truck up on line.**



**Sgt. Justin R. Myers with the 940<sup>th</sup> MP Company completes insurance paperwork during a Soldier Readiness Processing session held at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center during the unit's annual training.**

with lessons learned from units currently in the combat theaters.

"We receive new tactics weekly from Iraq," said Capt. Todd M. Lindner, commander of the 617<sup>th</sup> MP Company.

"We are training on the most current knowledge about what MPs in the theater are doing."

The 2113<sup>th</sup> TC has a tremendous resource in Iraq as well. Members of the 2123<sup>th</sup> TC from the Kentucky Army National Guard are currently deployed and communicate their experiences directly to the 2113<sup>th</sup> said 1st Lt. William M. Serie, commander of the 2113<sup>th</sup> TC.

"We use the information from the 2123<sup>th</sup> to adjust our training."

With the alert status, the focus of the Soldiers seems to be more intense said Lindner.

"This AT was key to getting ready," said Skinner. "Our Soldiers don't just feel like they are truck drivers, but infantry Soldiers as well."

"I have learned more on this AT than I have since I have been in," said Weatherspoon.

As of the beginning of September, the members of these units are awaiting official word about possible deployments.

# Armor, artillery battalions conduct change of command ceremonies



Maj. Haldane Lamberton (right) receives the flag of command for 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry (Mechanized) from Maj. Gen. Donald Storm during ceremonies conducted at the Barbourville National Guard Armory on August 13. Haldane takes command of the battalion from Lt. Col. William Denny.



Maj. Todd Thursby (right) receives the flag of command for 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery from Col. Lonnie Culver during ceremonies conducted at Fort Knox on August 28. Thursby takes over command of the battalion from Lt. Col. Rod Hayes. (photos by Staff Sgt. David Altom)

## Tax breaks available for employers of activated personnel

*Spc. Charles L. Westmoreland*  
133d MPAD, Kentucky Army National Guard

Many National Guard Soldiers have relinquished their normal wages at civilian jobs upon activation for lesser military pay. As a result, many families have undergone financial stress. Thanks to a tax break by the Internal Revenue Service for employers of Guard members, life might be getting easier for many.

According to the Internal Revenue Service website, employers wishing to either pay the full salary, or the difference between an employee's regular wage and active duty pay, can do so without paying standard taxes.

The IRS website states that upon activation for military service the "employment relationship between the employee and the company [is] terminated." Therefore, any sum of money dispersed from the employer to the employee is no longer considered a wage for "services performed."

The payments made to the former employee are not subject to taxes imposed by the Federal Insurance Contributions Act, the Federal Unemployment Tax Act, or the

Collection of Income Tax at Source on Wages, states the IRS website. In short, while payments made to the employee are still subjected to Federal and State income tax, social security and Medicare tax are no longer deducted throughout the period of active service.

Senator (R) Bill Farmer, Fayette County Representative and proprietor of HTI Tax Service, advocates that employers support their civilian-soldiers being called up for active duty.

"It shows a great deal of support for the Soldiers and an overall commitment to the Reserve forces," Farmer said. "It also shows the soldier that their employer expects them back."

Farmer reported that the groups who financially struggle the most while activated are those paying child support and also single-income families.

If a Soldier has had Medicare or social security tax deducted while receiving supplemental income from an employer, IRS Form 843 can be filled out to apply for a refund.

For more information the "Employer's Tax Guide" can be found at <http://www.IRS.gov/pub/irs-pdf/p15.pdf>.

## MP Batt. holds Freedom Salute

The 198th Military Police Battalion held a "Freedom Salute" ceremony Sunday, August 15<sup>th</sup> at the Louisville Buechel Armory. The 198th mobilized in October 2001 in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. After mobilizing,



the 198th deployed for ten months to provide post security for the 82nd Airborne Division located at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

**Capt. Brandon Yarbrough presents a print of the U.S. flag to Tammy Buechele, family readiness group**

**leader, in recognition for her dedication and sacrifice to the Soldiers and families of the 198th Military Police Battalion.**



**During the ceremony, Soldiers signified the person who supported them most during the deployment with a pinning ceremony. Left, Maj. William Walker clasps a pin on the collar of his wife, Stacey.**

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## KyARNG honors OCS graduates



The Kentucky Army National Guard's 238th Regiment held ceremonies for its Officers Candidate School graduates on August 21 at the State Capitol Building. The sixteen graduates represented the newest second lieutenants in the Kentucky Guard.

The 2004 graduating class included (first row): Charles L. Biddle, Renee M. Whitelow, Marcus Cammuse, (second row) Bronson M. Sapp, Martin L. Schafer, Carmel C. Osborne II, Jeremy S. Sharlow, (third row) Shane P. Studer, Joshua G. Grace, Calvin L. Lopez, Tremayne Meyer, (fourth row) Brian S. Mitchell, Matthew B. Nunn, Joseph W. Sloan, Bazie Dulen, and Larry D. Combs

Formerly known as the Kentucky Military Academy, the 238th Regiment (based at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville) has served both the Army National Guard and the Army Reserve since 1959 by providing leadership training for more than one thousand new military officers. (Photo by Staff Sgt. David Altom)