

THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

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

Volume Thirteen, Issue Three

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THE COVER

Cover Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clint Wood/KYARNG

Ice-covered branches provide a fitting background as Staff Sgt. Erick Duncan, Company A, 149th BSB, walks down a street in Mayfield, Ky., Jan. 30, during a road clearing mission.



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.

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FROM THE FIELD

Thank You

I traveled to Bardwell, Ky., (Carlisle County), this past weekend to help out some family and friends. Thanks for having your guys out there lending a helping hand.

It seemed like every time i turned around they were within sight, working on something.

If you have time, could you forward me to the unit info for the Soldiers who came to this area?

I would like to, at least, send a thank you.

Alex Brackin - via Web request

Editor's Note: The unit identified in this thank you note sent to us via Web Request on our Web site is B Battery, 1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery based in Campbellsville, Ky.

Honoring our deceased Veterans

The Patriots Peace Memorial Committee is accepting nominations of deceased Veterans for enshrinement in the Patriots Peace Memorial.

Located in Louisville, Ky., the monument was built in memory of those men and women in the military service, who died during honorable service in the line of duty, under conditions other than those of declared hostile action after the Vietnam War.

Every service member trains and prepares physically and mentally to serve in combat if called upon. All stand ready to give his or her all in the cause of freedom. Some lose their lives before being called up.

Official documentation is required from the member's service to certify that a potential honoree was serving honorably at the time of his or her death and that it was not a result of misconduct or through some circumstance caused by the service member.

For more information, visit the Web site at www.patriotspeacememorial.org.

Tammy Wells, Majestic Eagle Productions, LLC - via Web request

The Bluegrass Guard values opinions

To comment, keep remarks under 150 words, include your name, rank and address and send them to:

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

Change of Address

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

Army retiree address changes should be made through Staff Sgt. Jason Pettit at the Kentucky National Guard Personnel Services Branch. He can be reached at 502-607-1613 or jason.pettitt@ky.ngb.army.mil.

Air retiree address changes should be made through retired Chief Master Sgt. James Turpin at jturpin@fewpb.net.

Commander in Chief thankful for work done by Guardsmen during ice storm

By Gov. Steve Beshear
Commander in Chief

Over the holidays, I had the honor of attending the Family dinners for deployed troops, where I got to meet several of the Soldiers, retirees and Families of the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard. I was impressed by the courage, patience, and dedication of the attendees.

Today, my pride and appreciation has multiplied a thousand-fold.

Once again, the Kentucky National Guard has come to the rescue.

The ice and snow storms that pummeled Kentucky in late January caused a lot of misery for families, misery that lingers even as I write this.

Many lost power throughout the state, but thanks to the dedication of thousands of Guard members, many of whom walked door-to-door in remote communities, we've delivered basic necessities like food and water to

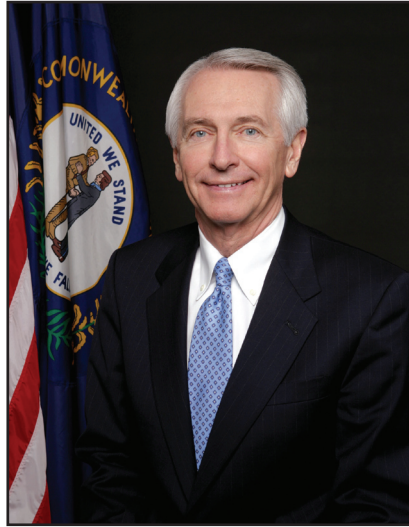
tens of thousands of people.

Those commodities, as well as the reassurance that someone is looking out for them, has meant physical and emotional survival to many in need.

I ordered an unprecedented call-up of Soldiers and Airmen to help in this emergency with full confidence, knowing all too well the Guard's long tradition of service and sacrifice dating back to the War of 1812.

As we enter the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln's birth and face difficult circumstances both on the home front and abroad, Americans are increasingly grateful for their freedom and security; cherished ideals that exist only because of people like you.

For all that you do, on the field of battle and in disaster areas here at home, I – as your governor and a fellow Kentuckian – say thank you to the exceptional men and women of our Kentucky National Guard.



VALUE OF THE MONTH: **Selfless Service**



Starting on Jan. 28, every Soldier and Airman in the Kentucky National Guard's commitment to selfless service was evident.

Soldiers and Airmen left their homes -- many of which were without power, flooded or damaged by fallen trees -- to come to the aid of our fellow Kentuckians.

You cleared roadways, removed debris, knocked on doors and distributed supplies. Some of you even saved the lives of others suffering from carbon monoxide poisoning or provided medical attention to victims of accidents on our icy roadways.

We are the Guard -- and we will be there to serve the people of our state anytime they call because we will always place the mission first.



Photo by Sgt. Fred Varney/KYARNG

Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, pins Joseph M. Richie with the rank of brigadier general during a ceremony held Feb. 8, at the Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort. Richie's father, retired Command Sgt. Maj. Herbert Richie also took part in the ceremony.

Kentucky promotes newest general

With 27 years service, Brig. Gen. Joseph M. Richie named Kentucky Guard's Land Component Commander

Sgt. Fred Varney

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FRANKFORT, Ky. -- Joseph M. Richie was promoted to the rank of brigadier general, and named as the Kentucky Army National Guard's newest Land Component Commander in a ceremony held Feb. 8 at the Boone National Guard Center Armory.

In his responsibilities, Richie will oversee all training and strategic planning in the Kentucky Army National Guard.

"I look forward to giving back to those Soldiers the same kind of effort they give me," said Richie.

"My next goal is to be the best leader I can be for the Kentucky Army National Guard," he said.

Richie joined the Kentucky Guard in 1981 and has held numerous command positions during his career. He mobilized in support of Hurricane Katrina operations in 2005, and most recently with the Kentucky ice storm efforts.

Richie lives in Indianapolis, Ind., with his wife, Roni, and has two daughters, Jenny and Jamie.

2009: Year of the NCO

Staff Report

With more than 200 years of service, the U.S. Army's Non-commissioned Officer Corps has distinguished itself as the world's most accomplished group of military professionals.

In recognition of their commitment to service and willingness to make great sacrifices on behalf of our Nation, the Secretary of the Army established 2009 as "Year of the NCO."

Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs, in conjunction with National Guard Bureau Public Affairs, is looking to highlight both Army and Air NCOs throughout the pages of The Bluegrass Guard and the Year of the NCO Web site.

To nominate an NCO for this project, submit a Web Request at www.dma.ky.gov/publicaffairs.



FRG official looks to recruit more Families

By Tech. Sgt. D. Clare
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The wing's new Family Program coordinator wants to create a network of support for family members before, during and after deployments.

With an Air Expeditionary Force deployment on the horizon in March, he's seeking a few good Family members to help lead the way.

"There are people in this wing who have been part of the military Family for 30 years," said David Rooney, the new full-time Family support coordinator.

"There are young people who have seen their military parent go away for a significant period of time. Our goal at this point is to identify our key leaders and create opportunities for our members to support one another."

Rooney said he is available at all hours to help Family members. He'll connect them with traditional support resources and provide a bridge during times of crisis. Yet, he believes a proactive, community-based approach is the best solution for wing members who understand the challenges they face as a result of military service.

"I want everyone in the wing to feel like they are part of a Family," he said. "I want to create leadership opportunities for our members and harness the natural creativity and talent that we already have in our organization."

At the heart of Rooney's philosophy is his belief that all wing members benefit when unit spouses and children spend time together and network.

To that end, he is devoted to hosting quarterly events for military Families. He's also strongly encouraging youth involvement.

A youth council is being formed at the state level. He is looking for young teen Family members to become charter members of a wing youth group that will send representatives to statewide events.

"At the heart of it all, we need our Family members to understand the critical role they play in the wing's mission," said Rooney, who is a retired active-duty master sergeant.

"We need to be there for our fellow Family members whose military members are deployed. We need to develop relationships with one another in good times and bad and be



Photo by Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG

Tech. Sgt. Jon Mundell of the 123rd Airlift Wing Safety Office holds his daughter, Josie, during a Family Support Office function. Jon's wife, Capt. Amy Mundell, is a member of the Air Guard's 123d Medical Group. Officials say involvement of spouses and youth are a key way to grow social networks and support initiatives in the base Family Programs.

there for each other all the time."

Rooney hosted his first Family Readiness Group meeting Jan. 30, at the Family Readiness Center in the Base Annex. Follow-up meetings will be held monthly on a regular basis.

All interested Family members are encouraged to participate in the meetings and quarterly events. He is seeking members with special and unique talents to organize social groups and support networking opportunities.

"Organic, grass roots initiatives are going to be more effective and better supported than anything we'll get out of a brochure," he said.

"Everyone has something they can contribute for our community. My job is to support and help our Family as we support and help each other."

Rooney can be reached during working hours at 502-413-4647, on his cell at 502-425-8653, and via e-mail at david.rooney@kyloui.ang.af.mil.

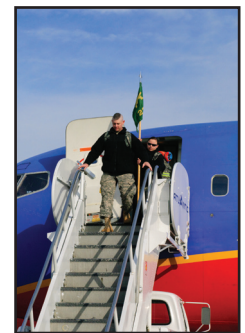
223rd MPs return from OIF tour



Kentucky National Guard Spc. Kyle Geoff kisses his daughter after returning home from Iraq with the 223rd Military Police Company, Feb. 15.



Young Isaiah Kimmel runs to embrace his father, Pfc. Jeffrey Kimmel of the 223rd Military Police Company upon his return Feb. 15, from serving in Iraq.



Staff report

More than 150 Soldiers from the 223rd Military Police Company were welcomed home Feb. 15 at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base.

Based in Louisville with a detachment in Bowling Green, the 223rd Military Police Company deployed to Iraq in April 2008.

The Guardsmen performed force protection missions, guarded military installations, manned security checkpoints and were assigned to personal security details that protected coalition forces. They are credited with playing a significant role in providing security during last year's major elections.

This was the second deployment to Iraq for the 223rd Military Police Company, which took part in the invasion of Iraq in 2003.

Spirit of the Bluegrass

Guard's Unbridled Service shines through devastation

By Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson

Editor

Slick ice-covered tree limbs and blistery cold temperatures crippled the Commonwealth Jan. 27, after a major winter storm blanketed hundreds of miles of bluegrass.

A steady snowfall continued Jan. 28, and as flakes began to clear, the evidence of Mother Nature's destruction was left behind on Kentucky's roadways. Gov. Steve Beshear quickly called upon 500 troops that morning to assist with relief efforts.

Three days later, Beshear ordered an unprecedented total call-up of the entire Kentucky Army and Air National Guard.

"It was indeed a monumental effort," said Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general for Kentucky.

"Never before have we mobilized so many troops for such an important cause. From Hazard to Paducah, Kentucky was dealt a major blow with the winter storm and it caught a lot of people unprepared," he said.

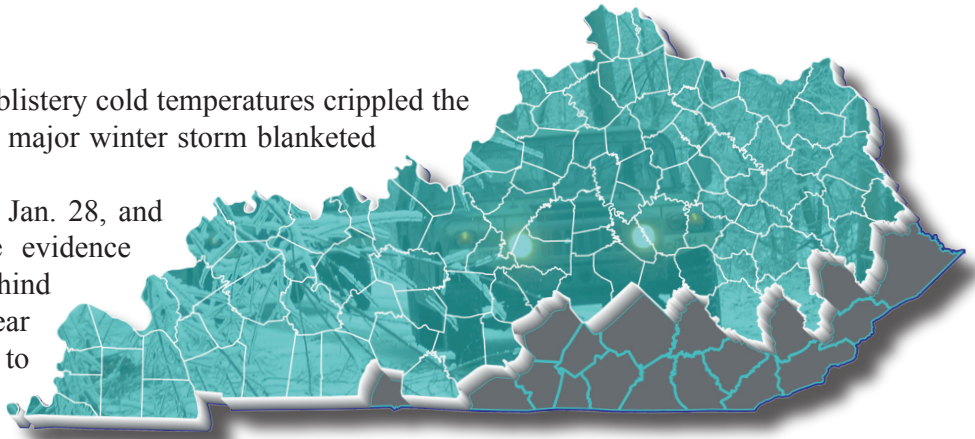
Mission priorities included assisting with the restoration of electric power to water plants, communications facilities and homes. Troops cleared routes for emergency response vehicles and utility crews to reach rural areas.

Soldiers and Airmen went door-to-door in many Kentucky communities conducting wellness checks which saved the lives of several Kentuckians who were in need of medical attention due to pre-existing conditions or exposure to severe temperatures and carbon monoxide. Distribution centers were set up at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center and other sites in Western Kentucky where Kentucky Guardsmen delivered more than 1.3 million meals and 2.1 million bottles of water to citizens throughout the state.

The storm is blamed for 36 deaths, and at its peak, more than 700,000 Kentuckians were without power.

Cost estimates as of press time exceeded \$61 million and were expected to climb.

Read more about the joint efforts of the Kentucky Guard to bring relief to the citizens we serve in the pages ahead.



Graphic design by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiler/KYARNG

After a winter storm blanketed the Commonwealth, 102 Kentucky counties and 87 cities declared states of emergency. President Barack Obama granted Gov. Steve Beshear's initial request for an emergency declaration Jan. 28, paving the way for immediate federal assistance for relief efforts. The president granted a second request Feb. 5, declaring the Commonwealth of Kentucky as a major disaster area.



Soldiers in Company A, 103rd Brigade Support Battalion work to clear roadways in Mercer County following the storm.



Staff Sgt. Anthony Tudor directs Spc. Derek Tharp while clearing debris off East Main Street in Danville Jan. 30. The two Company A, 103rd Brigade Support Battalion Soldiers assisted the community with making roads passable for residents following the ice storm Jan. 27. (Photo by 1st Sgt. John Kibler/KYARNG)





Staff Sgt. Shannon K. Ambrose, a Soldier in the 207th Engineer Company, slices into a tree that had fallen over a roadway making it impossible for residents to get to their homes in Campton, Ky. (Photo by Spc. Michael Pfaff/KYARNG)



Spc. Vernon E. Olson, Pfc. Gary V. Walton and Sgt. Craig E. Greer, all cooks with the Service Battery, 2/138th Field Artillery, Kentucky National Guard, serve Kentuckians lunch at a shelter in Livermore, Ky.

Guard viewed as Heroes

Soldiers assist woman with medical needs, feed community

By Spc. Michael Pfaff and Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

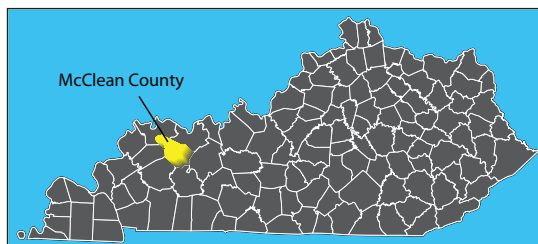
From patrols to chow lines, Soldiers in Service Battery, 2/138th Field Artillery quickly became heroes to the community of Calhoun, Ky., located in McLean County, following January's ice storm.

"It's what we do," said Sgt. Craig E. Greer, in a slick southern drawl. "We're here for the state."

"You're just out there doing your job," said Spc. Cory P. Dupin. "I do feel good about myself. It feels good to be able to help people."

And helping is exactly what the two Soldiers did Feb. 1, during a wellness check of homes in this Western Kentucky town -- helping to possibly save a life.

Their patrol brought them to a house that appeared to be inhabited. The drive was barricaded by fallen limbs and trees, the house was dark and there was no sign of movement inside. Neighbors called out that no one was home, but the Soldiers checked to be certain.



Graphic Design by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiller/KYARNG

"Somebody could have been trapped or hurt," Dupin said. "We just wanted to make sure that if anyone was in there, they were okay."

It turns out an elderly woman was inside, cut off from the rest of the world. She happened to be a diabetic and needed ice for her insulin.

After getting her ice, Dupin and Greer headed back and notified the McLean County judge executive office, and several contractors were sent to the residence. It turned out this woman was in dire need of medical attention.

"The Soldiers played a significant role in saving that woman's life," Larry Whitaker, the McLean County Judge Executive said. "Through their diligence, they were able to make

contact with the woman so that we could respond.

"Without the National Guard helping us make contact with some of these people, they might have been overlooked by local efforts," he said.

According to Whitaker, the Soldier's discovery of the elderly woman alerted emergency officials to include the

house among others on a list to be checked on regularly until the disaster relief rescinded.

Greer and Dupin, both cooks for Service Battery, added to their own list other missions besides patrols.

Operating out of a middle school converted into a shelter, Greer, Dupin and other Soldiers provided hot meals to citizens who were living at the shelter.

Soldiers fed hundreds of Kentuckians housed in at least two shelters in the region.

"If it hadn't been for the National Guard, I wouldn't have gotten the supplies I needed," Karl Bradley, a Red Cross volunteer at the Livermore Community Center, said. "They have been our life support, and I do mean life support. We had one couple who were only eating dry cereal with no milk. We brought them MREs and they just broke down and cried."

Many Soldiers with the Kentucky National Guard have found that after the state-wide ice storm, many civilians and government officials are proclaiming them as heroes.

"Every Soldier out here is doing the same kind of thing and

working just as hard," Greer said. "If someone has considered me a hero, everyone out here should be considered a hero."

Dupin and Greer aren't the only Soldiers who have saved someone's life during this disaster. Many Soldiers around the state have helped people who were exposed to lethal levels of carbon monoxide, people in need of medical aid, and even helping local police with automobile accidents.

Whitaker's gratitude for the Soldiers out in the field is overwhelming.

"The National Guard is doing so much more than just wellness checks," he said. "They are Kentuckians, and this is their place, being here and helping citizens. They've been working to direct traffic, patrol with local police, conduct debris removal, giving food to people at the shelters, using their trucks to help emergency services and anything else we could ask for."

"Their presence alone has given as much hope to the people as some warm weather might."

Engineers provide relief to Leitchfield residents, bring food, water and smiles

Story and Photos by Spc. Michelle Waters
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LEITCHFIELD, Ky. -- Twenty Soldiers from the Kentucky National Guard's A Company, 206th Engineers conducted health and welfare checks on the citizens of Leitchfield Jan. 29, after the ice storm left residents there stranded.

"We assisted with opening up shelters in the community and delivered food and water," said 1st Sgt. William Hayes.

Soldiers also removed debris along roadways to make them passable and provided transportation for citizens who needed rides to area shelters.

"We did everything we could with what we had. I just wish we could've done more," Hayes said.

The storm left an estimated 10 to 20,000 residents without power, but according to some of the engineers, spirits were still high in the area.

"I would say that the residents here really pulled together during a time of need," said Sgt. Stephen Stewart.

"This is my hometown and I'm really proud of them," he said.

Grayson County High School was transformed into a shelter for displaced residents. At the peak of the storm, nearly 500 people occupied it.

With a staff of roughly 10, including a nurse and a field medic, officials said they couldn't have operated without the assistance of the National Guard.

"The National Guard Soldiers have been a huge support in this area. Everything that we have asked for or needed have been provided for the shelter, said Bryan Hammons, incident commander for the shelter.

"I'm really proud of these guys," he said.



▲ Soldiers in A Company, 206th Engineers checked on Grayson County residents, providing them with water and setting up a shelter after the storm.

FRG warms Soldiers with

Story and Photos by Sgt. Cassandra Groce
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

It was a cold, blustery day following the power outages across Northwestern Kentucky, but the 307th Maintenance Company was staying warm with hot vegetable soup provided by

their Family Readiness Group.

When the county lost power Jan. 27, FRG President Cindy Shanks and her husband Gary Shanks rushed over to their friend's house to cook soup on their gas stove.

"We heat with electric and cook with electric," Cindy explained. "So I went

to a friend's house that had gas and said, 'I want to borrow your stove; I got to cook for the armory!'"

Cooking for the armory is not a novel occurrence for the Shanks family and readiness group members. During the tornado disaster that hit numerous counties in February 2008, the FRG cooked meals for the armory and local residents.

"One night we fed 360 people not counting Soldiers," Cindy said. "We fed all the KU power plant workers, tree trimmer people and Comcast which provides cable and internet."

During the 307th Soldiers' 2008 state active duty tour, Cindy was at the armory for seven days acting as a liaison with civilians who came to the armory, and she slept on a small cot in her office.

"I was the first Family Readiness [leader] to have an office... and it's a broom closet," Cindy related, laughing.

The military creed that "prior planning prevents poor performance" has extended into the actions of the 307th company's FRG as well. The Shanks' make sure their Soldiers are always prepared with necessities during a state activated deployment.

"I keep supplies here like tooth brushes, combs, wash rags, towels and blankets," Cindy said. "I set all that up in the classroom, so when [the Soldiers] come in they know I'll take care of them."

While Cindy stayed at the armory for seven days during the aftermath of the February tornadoes, she didn't expect to do so this time. With the armory out of



Family Readiness Group President Cindy Shanks serves up some homemade vegetable soup to Soldiers at the 307th Maintenance Company Armory. She cooked the meal on a friend's gas stove to bring to Soldiers during the January ice storm.

meals



Gary Shanks serves a steaming bowl of soup to Pfc. Dakotah Bradley.

power supply -- their generators to hospitals and assisted living homes -- the FRG couldn't cook for workers.

However, she and Gary still planned on stopping in routinely throughout the day.

"We just like to give back what little we can to the Soldiers who protect our freedoms," Gary said. "They put it all on the line for us, so every little bit we can do we are more than glad to."

Cindy also wanted to encourage other FRGs throughout the state to support their Soldiers as much as possible.

"You get back more than you ever give," she said. "If you just send your Soldier off to drill, and not know what they're doing then you don't really feel proud."

"But if you go and see how hard they're working and see what they're doing - like during the tornado they were here forever it felt like -- then you'll see how they protect their country and protect their town and county. It's a lot to be proud of."



Gary Shanks plays ball with Tibby, a Jack Russell Terrier mix, on the drill hall floor. The pup reports to the armory during disasters and weekdays.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

Kentucky Air Guard Staff Sgt. Thomas Moses and Staff Sgt. Jason Scharf identified two Hardinsburg citizens, during a door-to-door wellness check, as possible carbon monoxide poison victims. The two NCOs alerted the Hardinsburg Fire Department, and were able to get the couple medical treatment.

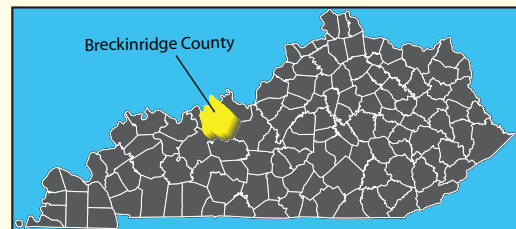
Airmen save couple from carbon monoxide poisoning

1st Lt. Kyle Key and Capt. Dale Greer
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

HARDINSBURG, Ky -- Kentucky Air National Guardsmen, working in conjunction with local fire officials, saved an elderly couple from carbon monoxide poisoning Feb. 1, during a door-to-door "wellness check" in this Breckenridge county community.

Staff Sgt. Jason Scharf, a chaplain's assistant in the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing, and Staff Sgt. Thomas Moses of the Louisville-based 123rd Maintenance Squadron, knocked on the door of an elderly couple's residence to determine if they needed assistance following the severe ice storm that blanketed the Commonwealth Jan. 27.

While speaking with the Airmen, the wife appeared confused and disoriented. She also mentioned that her husband had been complaining of nausea. After she provided an incorrect address for her home, Scharf and Moses suspected possible carbon monoxide poisoning and asked Hardinsburg Fire Department firefighter Darren Voyles to conduct a



Graphic Design by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiller/KYARNG

carbon monoxide test.

According to Jerry Martin, chief of the Hardinsburg City Fire Department, the test confirmed a positive reading of 72 parts-per-million of carbon monoxide in the couple's home. Martin said that even 35 parts-per-million can be a lethal amount.

"I don't think they would have lived if we hadn't found them," said Martin, who attributed the poisonings to a faulty gas furnace. "That's a pretty high carbon monoxide level."

The couple was taken by ambulance to Breckenridge Memorial Hospital where they were treated for carbon monoxide poisoning and released.

"It's a great feeling to know that we may have saved some lives," Moses said.



Photo by Spc. Michael Pfaff/KYARNG

Recruiting and Retention NCOs from the 2nd Battalion 75th Troop Command helped out with the Winter Storm '09 relief. From left to right: Sgt. Adriane M. Healey, Staff Sgt. Kristofer M. Serna, Spc. Adrian D. Wallace, Sgt. 1st Class Runyaro G. Goss, Staff Sgt. Brian J. Mangum, Staff Sgt. Kenneth R. McGrew.

Recruiters take to streets, assist citizens

By Spc. Michael Pfaff
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

It's not uncommon to see Army National Guard recruiters out in communities throughout the state showcasing to young people what the military has to offer, but for the last two weeks, they could be seen doing something else entirely; clearing roads, going door-to-door to check on residents, and helping with food and water distribution points.

"It definitely sets us apart from some of the other service recruiters," said Sgt. 1st Class Runyaro G. Goss, a recruiter with the 2nd Battalion, 75th Troop Command.

Goss explained that while recruiters are many times detached from the normal Guard experience because they are working with civilians on a day-to-day basis, when the call to service comes, they are Soldiers just like any other service specialty.

"It definitely sets us apart from some of the other service recruiters."

Sgt. 1st Class Runyaro Goss, recruiter

In fact, being called up to assist in the disaster relief throughout the state has given many recruiters, including Goss, a fresh perspective on their recruiting efforts.

"I think it helps us tell the story better because we have the actual experience of the average Soldier on a daily basis when they are called up to duty," he said.

Other recruiters around the state agreed with him.

"Going away from the recruiting side and being with a unit, you actually got to feel like a down-to-earth Soldier again," said Staff Sgt. Brian J. Mangum

from Harrodsburg, Ky.

"With recruiting, you're dealing with civilians every day, you kind of get away from what being in a unit atmosphere is like – being with

the guys and putting in a hard day's work of manual labor."

Sgt. Adriane M. Healey from Lawrenceburg, Ky., said that being called to State Active Duty allowed her to see more of what the Guard experience was like, giving her more insight in how to express that to civilians.



Graphic Design by Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson/KYARNG

"It's good because sometimes we get separated from the unit," said Staff Sgt. Kristofer M. Serna from Louisville, Ky. "For them to see us come out and take an active role in not only our mission, but helping complete theirs, it puts a different light on us. We're still Soldiers and not lost on just recruiting. We still have to maintain everything – qualifying weapons, physical training, and participation when the state needs us."

While going door-to-door and checking to see if locals needed anything, the recruiters didn't have a chance to get any recruiting time in, but most of them do see it as a positive marketing experience for the National Guard.

"Unless there is a disaster or something, you normally don't get to see what the National Guard does," said Spc. Adrian D. Wallace from Lexington, Ky. "You hear 'citizen-Soldier,' but you don't get to see what we do. Seeing us out doing our jobs is in itself recruiting."

Staff Sgt. Kenneth R. McGrew from Lexington, Ky., said that the impact the Guard has made during the disaster will be embedded in most people's memories.

"When we go to high schools and talk about the National Guard, one of the things we hit pretty hard on is community service," he said. "At times like this, it's a good thing because for the next few years when we talk about community service, they'll say 'yeah, I remember when the National Guard came to my town,' and they'll be able to identify with that."

Most of the citizens the recruiters were helping didn't know they were even recruiters.

"As we were checking around, people asked what we did and we told them we were recruiters, and they were like, 'hey, they got you guys out here too?'" said Goss.

"We're all National Guard Soldiers, so when incidents such as this arise, we all participate."

High fives for lending a helping hand ...



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

Master Sgt. Karen Fulton, from the Kentucky Air National Guard, 123rd MPF, shares a light hearted moment with an ice storm victim's dog, exchanging high fives at the LaCenter, Ky., relief station.



Photo by Tech Sgt. Dennis Flora/ KyANG

Senior Master Sgt. Wade Zinsmeister prepares Kentucky Air National Guard members to deploy to Hardinsburg, Ky., for a storm-relief mission. The Kentucky Air National Guard deployed 173 Airmen to Hardinsburg as part of statewide efforts to assist more than 700,000 Kentuckians who were left without power following the devastating winter storms of January 2009.



Photo by Tech Sgt. Dennis Flora/ KyANG

Kentucky Air National Guard Tech Sgts. Monique Yuill, Gene Jones and Airman 1st Class Windy Wagner, gather meal kits and bottled water to distribute to needy residents of Bandana, Ky., during ice storm relief efforts.

One team, one fight

Troops and equipment from six states assist with efforts

**Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson
and Sgt. 1st Class Clint Wood**
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

In the aftermath of the Commonwealth of Kentucky's worst natural disaster in recent history, National Guardsmen from six states, both Army and Air, joined together to provide the citizens of this state with the 'Unbridled Service' that is expected from Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen on the home front.

Within days of Gov. Steve Beshear's activation of the entire Kentucky National Guard, our sister-states began flooding the Commonwealth with their own relief assets.

Units in Indiana, Ohio and Tennessee loaned 180 humvees to the Guard to support door-to-door wellness checks and other relief efforts.

"It was a huge team effort on the part of everyone involved," said Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general for Kentucky.

"In many cases, our own troops had been hit hard by this disaster, but that didn't slow us down. We had everyone on board – from aviators, military police, special forces, infantry, logistics and dozens of other military professions, and troops from other states – hard at work to bring Kentucky out of the darkness," he said.

FLORIDA

The Florida National Guard deployed six Regional Emergency Response Network (RERN) vehicles to the hardest hit areas in Western Kentucky.

"We were lost for four days," said Webster County Judge Executive Jim Townsend.

"For four days we could not get out. We could not get in touch with Frankfort," he said.

But then the Florida National Guard rolled into Dixon, Ky., and with the RERN, was able to provide communication to the city in the form of phone, internet and other communication



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Clint Wood/KYARNG

Spc. Harmon Bell, 115th Engineer Company, West Virginia National Guard, tests the backhoe of a truck during a Preventive Maintenance Checks Services mission in Clinton, Ky.

capabilities that citizens usually take for granted.

"We can roll into any environment and set up communications using a satellite," said Tech. Sgt. Marianne Whelan.

Whelan, along with 23 other Airmen from the Florida National Guard's 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron, deployed just days after the ice blanketed the state.

She traversed along the western side of the state, surveying and working in some of the hardest hit areas.

"I was really impressed with how the people from Kentucky worked together and really looked out for each other," she said. "When we came to town, people were asking us if we needed anything. I couldn't believe how neighborly everyone was to each other and to us."

Kentucky's neighbors to the east, the West Virginia National Guard, also answered the call to support the Bluegrass after the storm.

WEST VIRGINIA

Sixty-three Soldiers from six different units volunteered for missions to support the Kentucky National Guard in its response to the storm. Some of these Soldiers also are set to begin mobilization training early this summer at Fort McCoy, Wisc., in preparation for a deployment to Iraq.

The contingent cleared more than 1,000 tons of debris from primary and secondary roads and checked all water basins in Ballard and Hickman counties in four days. They traveled to Kentucky in a 30-vehicle convoy, including 12, 5-ton dump trucks, from Huntington, W. Va., and an estimated distance of more than 850 miles one way.

1st Lt. Adam Speece, officer in charge of the Task Force Mountainair and a former noncommissioned officer, said he was very proud of the Soldiers.

“Some of these folks had less than four or five hours notice so I couldn’t feel better to be the leader of this outfit right now supporting this emergency crisis we’ve got down here,” said Speece. “We’re a community based organization, we’re all one family.”

Pfc. Melanie Sturm, who will deploy to Iraq this summer, said she volunteered to “help out another community.”

The trip didn’t come without some hardships. Speece said several vehicles had mechanical breakdowns.

“It was a challenge, but the people along the way have been nothing but grateful,” said Speece.

The Soldiers were from the 115th Engineer Company of Clarksburg, W. Va., Det-1, 115th Engineer Company of Kingwood, W. Va., the 601st Engineer Company of Buckhannon, W. Va., the 821st Engineer Company of Weston, W. Va., the 193rd Embankment Support Platoon of Moundsville, W. Va., and the Forward Support Company, 1092nd Engineer Battalion of Point Pleasant, W. Va.

WISCONSIN

Fifty-three members of the Wisconsin Army National Guard’s 157th Mechanized Enhanced Brigade joined the ranks of more than 4,000 Soldiers and Airmen already on ground Feb. 6.

The Soldiers brought with them dump trucks and front-end loaders to assist with the debris clearing mission in Western Kentucky.

“We welcomed the support we received from these other states,” Tonini said. “Kentucky is usually sending troops to help others. This time was our turn to receive the assistance, and for this, we are extremely grateful.”



Florida Air National Guard Tech. Sgt. Gamillo D'Sa, system administrator for the 290th Joint Communications Support Squadron talks with Col. Dan Nievinski, chief information officer for the Florida National Guard, in Dixon, Ky.

Photo by Spc. Michelle Waters/KYARNG



▲ Wisconsin National Guard
▲ sent 53 Soldiers, along with equipment, to assist with debris removal. (Photos submitted)



A Kentucky Army National Guard Blackhawk takes off from the Capital City Airport in Frankfort, Ky., Feb. 2, in support of the largest state activation of the Kentucky National Guard. More than 4,600 Army and Air National Guardsmen were activated following an ice storm that hit the Commonwealth Jan. 27. Read more inside, starting on page 7. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiler/KYARNG).



THE BLUEGRASS GUARD



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