

The

# Bluegrass Guard

Vol. 15, Issue 4

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



## PTAE Perfection

Kentucky element trains Soldiers for war





**6**

## From Front Lines

*Special Tactics Squadron rallies for Irene*



**8**

## Green Report

*1204th deploys for Operation New Dawn*



**10**

## Into The Blue

*Air Guard's recovery team trains at Atterbury*

### Also Inside:

**5** *ESGR working for you*

**12** *Aviation photo essay*

**26** *First USO Homefront tour in Louisville*

### Cover Story

Cover photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hilier

*Read how the Kentucky Premobilization Training Assistance Element minimizes time spent at mobilization station by certifying Soldiers before they get there on page 14.*







**Kentucky NATIONAL GUARD**  
Unbridled Service

## The Bluegrass Guard

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Guardmembers and their Families are encouraged to submit articles meant to inform, educate or entertain Bluegrass Guard readers.

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## HELP ME SOMETHING CATCHY

Photo by Capt. John T. Stamm, U.S. Air Force

Capt. Ryan Adams tracks the planning and execution of aviation activity across Kentucky while participating in the National Level Exercise May 17 at the Louisville Air Guard Base. The exercise simulated response efforts following a major earthquake.



## Letters to the Editor Policy

*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.

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*Don't miss an issue*

All change of address requests should be made by the unit clerk using RCAS for all current Army or Air National Guardsmen. The Bluegrass Guard is mailed out via alert roster addresses at the unit level.

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

Air Retirees should request changes through retired Chief Master Sgt. James Turpin at [jturpin@fewpb.net](mailto:jturpin@fewpb.net).

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- 2nd** — Be ready for The Bluegrass Guard to arrive
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### Next Issue

*Photo by Senior Airman Maxwell Rechel/KyANG*

Senior Airman Micah Haddix, a loadmaster with the 165th Airlift Squadron, prepares to release himself from a parachute suspended in a training rig at Taylorsville Lake in Taylorsville, Ky., June 9. The rig is designed to help Airmen learn how extricate themselves from trees if they become entangled after jumping from disabled aircraft. Learn how the Air Guard conducts survival training in a metropolitan.



# ESGR works to find employment for Soldiers

By Retired Maj. Gen. Bob Silverthorn Jr.

Chairman, Kentucky ESGR Committee, [kirk.hilbrecht@us.army.mil](mailto:kirk.hilbrecht@us.army.mil)



Let's talk about the need for jobs for the service members serving in the Kentucky National Guard and the federal Reserves. Kentucky's Guard and Reserve had an unemployment rate of more than 20 percent this last summer.

That's right, more than 20 percent!

Some Soldiers and Airmen need jobs. Some don't, and still others want a better one. All these are understandable – especially if you're trying to make a better life for yourself and your Family.

For the past several months, our Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve committee here in the Commonwealth has been working hard, and in partnership with multiple other agencies, to find, promote and link troops with job openings. In this economy, as we all know, job searches are not easy. Through our program, known as the Employment Initiative Program, we have become the "Kentucky Business Partner of Choice" with those employers who want to work directly with our EIP team to identify employee candidates and participate in our Job Fairs.

We're posting job openings on our Facebook page just as soon as we get them. Just go to Kentucky Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (KY ESGR), and check back often as we post throughout the day.

Here's my take on the big picture: employers need trained, capable, reliable employees. As Guardsmen and Reservists, you are trained, capable and reliable. You've shown our Country that it can depend on you. Now, just give you an opportunity and you'll show employers the value you bring to the job.

Not only am I asking employers to hire Reservists and Guardsmen, I am asking Guardsmen and Reservists to make themselves eminently employable. That means making the right impression – everything from shined shoes, smiles and good haircuts – to competent responses to questions. The KYESGR can assist in resume writing that will convert a service member's military occupational specialty into civilian job skills that are understandable by employers.

At the Kentucky ESGR committee, we'll keep working hard to open the doors for you. It is up to you to sell yourself. Like the recruiting poster says, "There's strong and then there's *Army Strong*." Be the strongest job candidate you can be!

And we'll be there to help. 

## Deadline to apply for special 'Stop Loss' pay Oct. 21

### Army News Services

**WASHINGTON, Sept. 21, 2011** -- Only a month remains for eligible service members, veterans and their beneficiaries to apply for Retroactive Stop Loss Special Pay.


Officials extended a previous deadline to Oct. 21 to allow more time for eligible people to apply.

"The nation has rallied behind this effort -- the military services have been joined by the White House, Congress, the [Veterans Affairs Department], veteran and military service organizations, and friends and family members around the world," said Lernes Hebert, the Defense Department's director of officer and enlisted personnel management. "Despite these remarkable outreach efforts, some people may still not yet have applied. If you think you are eligible, and have not yet applied, now is the time to do so."

The special retroactive pay was established to compensate for the hardships military members encountered when their service

was involuntarily extended under Stop Loss authority between Sept. 11, 2001, and Sept. 30, 2009, officials said. Eligible members or their beneficiaries may submit a claim to their respective military service to receive the benefit of \$500 for each full or partial month served in a Stop Loss status.

When the special pay began Oct. 21, 2009, the services estimated 145,000 service members, veterans and beneficiaries were eligible for the benefit. Because the majority of those eligible had separated from the military, officials said, the services have engaged in extensive and persistent outreach efforts, including multiple direct mailings, public service announcements, and continuous engagements with military and veteran service organizations, social networks and media outlets.

To apply, or for more information -- including submission requirements and service-specific links -- go to <http://www.defense.gov/stoploss>. 





# Fantastic fatherhood

## Soldier's first son born Aug. 18

Story and photo by Sgt. Paul Evans

310th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary), kypao@ng.army.mil

**JOINT BASE BALAD, Iraq**— For Sgt. Jonathan Patterson, a medic assigned to 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry Regiment, 77th Sustainment Brigade, 310th Expeditionary Sustainment Bde., Aug. 18 was not just another day in the desert, it was likely a day he will never forget.

NAME OF CHILD was introduced to the world at seven pounds, eight ounces. His mother, NAME OF WIFE, was a trooper through the delivery without her husband.

"She's always been a fighter, so she's doing pretty

“I’m excited it’s a boy, but it kind of sucks I can’t be there.

— **Sgt. Jonathan Patterson**  
Medic, 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry Regt.



Sgt. Jonathan Patterson, medic for 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry Regiment, 77th Sustainment Brigade, 310th Expeditionary Sustainment Bde., looks through photos sent from home by his wife while deployed to Joint Base Balad, Iraq. Patterson's wife, NEEDHERNAME gave birth Aug. 18, to a healthy baby boy - NAME who joins sisters NAME and NAME.

good," Jonathan said. "I think she's got it harder than me at home raising three kids."

It's just not quite the same when you're deployed in a combat zone on the other side of the world, but Patterson is just one of the thousands of Service members who have missed the birth of a child.

## Soldier maps out deployment for 149th MEB



Pfc. Fruquione Hervey prints a map of the 149th MEB's area of operation.

By Sgt. Scott Raper

149th MEB Public Affairs Specialist, kypao@ng.army.mil

**BAGHDAD** – Everything is changing in Iraq. For U.S. Forces in theater, staying aware of these changes is crucial.

With camps and areas closing or being turned over to the Government of Iraq, the boundaries on a map are always shifting. For up-to-date information, the Soldiers of the 149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade turn to Pfc. Fruquione Hervey.

As a Geographical Information Systems Operator, Hervey is tasked with

updating the maps used by command and Soldiers to continue the functions of Operation New Dawn.

"Without GIS, you are blind," he said. "Things here are changing every-day, so updates are necessary all the time."

Hervey also addresses any issues regarding distances and terrain analysis, and said he is excited about his job and his role in the deployment.

"I am making a difference in the Army, and contributing," he said.





# Air Base stages for Irene relief

By Maj. Dale Greer  
123rd Air Wing PAO, [kypao@ng.army.mil](mailto:kypao@ng.army.mil)

The National Guard Bureau placed 24 Kentucky aircrew members and two C-130 aircraft on alert Aug. 26 to 29 to fly relief missions across the East Coast in the aftermath of Hurricane Irene.

Meanwhile, more than 15 members of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron were slated to deploy to Joint Base McGuire-Dix-Lakehurst, N.J., on Aug. 28 to carry out water rescue missions as directed by state and federal officials.

Ultimately, the airlift sorties weren't needed, and the special tactics deployment was canceled just hours before the team was set to take off from Louisville, said Col. Greg Nelson, commander of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing.

"Thankfully, the damage along the East Coast from Hurricane Irene wasn't as bad

as initially anticipated, and officials in the affected states determined that they didn't need our assistance," Nelson explained.

"Nevertheless, the alert posture was good training for every Airman in the wing. As always, the Kentucky Air National Guard stands ready to answer our nation's call for assistance, any time, anywhere."


The wing's STS is trained in water rescue missions and emergency medical care.

The unit was instrumental in hurricane recovery operations following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, when the Airmen conducted rescue missions and operated a helicopter landing zone in New Orleans



Air Guardsmen load equipment onto a C-130 Aug. 26 in Louisville, Ky.

that airlifted more than 11,000 people to safety.

"We're always prepared to conduct a full range of rescue operations anywhere in the United States as directed by civil authorities," said Lt. Col. Jeff Wilkinson, the unit's commander. 



# Iraq-bound

## 1204th Aviation ready for Operation New Dawn mission

By Capt. Stephen Martin

Public Affairs Officer, [kypao@ng.army.mil](mailto:kypao@ng.army.mil)

**INDEPENDENCE, Ky.** — The Kentucky National Guard honored the 1204th Aviation Support Battalion with a departure ceremony Aug. 27 on the campus of Northern Kentucky University.

“Our morale is very high,” said Command Sgt. Major Tim Walton. “We’ve been training for this day since December of 2009 and we’re ready to go accomplish this mission.”

The Independence-based 1204th ASB will provide logistical, maintenance and signal support for the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade in support of Operation New Dawn, the U.S. Forces withdrawal from Iraq.

Spc. Matt Dornbusch, who’s been in the Kentucky Guard since 2007, has supported the unit in a full-time capacity for the last 18 months in order to assist Soldiers preparing for the deployment.

“I’m eager to finally get to do the mission we’ve worked so hard to prepare for,” said Dornbusch. “My wife is sad and excited for me at the same time.”

Dornbusch and his wife, Katie Elizabeth, got married less than a month ago and plan on taking their honeymoon after the deployment.

Katie also has a brother, Spc. Adam Stoppelwerth, who deployed with the 1204th.

The 1204th is made up of nearly 600 Soldiers from Kentucky, Alabama, Florida and Maryland. Approximately 325 of the Soldiers assigned are from the Commonwealth.

Lt. Col. Tom Roach, battalion commander for the 1204th ASB, said the unit is prepared for its mission.

“It’s an uncertain environment right now in Iraq,” said Roach, “but one of the great things about our robust, flexible organization is that we’re ready and adaptable to do our job where ever we’re asked to serve.”

The 1204th Soldiers spent time this summer at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center conduct-



Photo by Rank First Last/KYARNG or KYANG


THIS IS WHERE YOU WOULD PUT A CAPTION. YOU NEED AT LEAST TWO SENTENCES, BUT NO MORE THAN THREE LINES. THAT MAKES IT TOO CLUTTERED.



Photo by Maj. Ben Singleton/KYARNG

Jane Beshear, First Lady of Kentucky, addresses the Aviators and Families of the 1204th Aviation at the \_\_\_\_\_, Aug. \_\_ prior to the unit’s departure for mobilization training at Fort Hood, Texas. The unit will deploy to Iraq in support of Operation New Dawn.

ing pre-mobilization training. The first stop on the unit’s mobilization is Fort Hood, Texas where it will receive validation on mobilization training before departing for Iraq.

Since 9/11, nearly 14,000 Kentucky National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have deployed in support of the Global War on Terror. The Kentucky National Guard currently has more than 1,450 troops deployed worldwide 



# Engineers stay busy with BNGC projects

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Michael Oliver  
Public Affairs NCOIC, kypao@ng.army.mil

**FRANKFORT, Ky.** – If you drove by the Boone National Guard Center during August and September, you witnessed the Kentucky National Guard’s combat engineers hard at work on a collaborative annual training project aimed at improving wartime skills and BNGC.

With each bucket of dirt and graded out acre, Soldiers from the 201<sup>st</sup> and 206<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalions received valuable training on newly acquired equipment and imprinted the grounds of Kentucky’s headquarters with the legacy of dedication and discipline the Engineers are so widely known for.

“These projects give us the opportunity to road test our equipment operators and make sure they have all the necessary training to be licensed our unit’s equipment,” said Capt. Jon Gensley, 207<sup>th</sup> Engineer Company, 201st Engineer Bn.

“The biggest training benefit is we orchestrate and put all these moving pieces together to execute a mission,” he said.

Soldiers received instruction on the unit’s new 966H Wheel Loader – a top-of-the-line bulldozer with an auto level for the bucket and air conditioned cab.

“The backup camera and the automatic system make our work a lot easier,” said Sgt. Michael Gabbard, 207<sup>th</sup> Engineer’s non-commission officer of the year.

Gabbard said the Engineers can use the extensive training they receive and real-world experience from the annual training to



Pvt. John Law, 130th Engineer Support Company, 206th Engineer Battalion signals to the dozer operator as Spc. Sarah Setser and Spc. Joshua Smith of the 207th Horizontal Engineer Construction Company, 201st Engineer Bn., push rubble into the bucket.

benefit them on civilian construction sites.

Soldiers corrected drainage and soil erosion problems with an improved culvert outside the gate. They also prepped the land around the entrance for a new lane which will help with safety and security.

“It’s great seeing two battalions working together and everybody has a good morale about our project,” said Staff Sgt. Jason Coldiron, 207<sup>th</sup> Engineer Co. “I’m really glad my guys are part of this project and their thumb print will be left here.” 🇺🇸



▲ Sgt. Michael Gabbard, 207th Engineer Company, operates the unit’s new 966H Wheel Loader during annual training at the Boone National Guard Center in September.

◀ An aerial view of work conducted by the Kentucky National Guard’s Combat Engineers outside the Boone National Guard Center gate.





## Recovery mission

Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson/U.S. Army

Air National Guard Fatality Search and Recovery Team members collect a simulated casualty from a collapsed parking garage at Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex near Camp Atterbury, Ind., Aug. 18, as part of Vibrant Response 12. Kentucky Air Guardsmen Sr. Airman Kevin Woodward and Tech. Sgt. Brittany Ingram worked with Staff Sgt. Jeffrey Feliciano, Puerto Rico Air Guard and Staff Sgt. Jason Gallegos, Colorado Air Guard during the exercise.

# Disaster-Recovery Team a unique asset

By Maj. Dale Greer

123rd Air Wing Public Affairs Officer, [kypao@ng.army.mil](mailto:kypao@ng.army.mil)

A new disaster-recovery team from the Kentucky Air National Guard successfully demonstrated its urban-response capabilities for the first time during a major homeland-defense exercise held this summer in Southern Indiana.

The U.S. Army North exercise, called Vibrant Response 12, tested the ability of more than 7,000 Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and Defense Department civilians to respond to the detonation of a radiological device in a major U.S. city while providing a broad range of assistance to civil authorities, said Capt. Jason Rhodes, commander of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Communi-

cations Squadron.

A key component of that response was the Kentucky Air Guard's Fatality Search and Recovery Team, one of 17 such teams stood up across the Air National Guard late last year to locate and recover the remains of victims killed in hostile action or natural disasters, Rhodes said. Team members have special training and equipment that allow them to operate in a broad spectrum of dangerous environments, including those contaminated by nuclear, biological or chemical agents.

"This is a unique capability that only the Air National Guard has, and it's also

an essential capability," said Rhodes, who served as OIC of the Kentucky team during Vibrant Response. "Civilian authorities such as local coroners are likely to be overwhelmed in the event of a scenario like this attack, but the Air Guard's Fatality Search and Recovery Teams can deploy the resources necessary to recover victims quickly, with dignity and respect. It's the kind of capability the American people expect from their disaster-response forces."

Vibrant Response was staged at the Indiana National Guard's Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex near Camp Atterbury, Ind., a unique facility created on



the grounds of a former mental hospital. It features a robust assortment of training environments, including collapsed buildings and structures that can be set ablaze on command.

“Muscatatuck is a pretty impressive facility,” Rhodes said. “The disaster area has spouting flames, clouds of smoke, burning cars and buildings that have been reduced to piles of rubble. It’s about as realistic as you can get.”

It was in this environment that the Fatality Search and Recovery Team worked to extract casualties from Aug. 15 to 18, said Master Sgt. Krista Lindsey, NCOIC of the team. Because the disaster area was contaminated with simulated radiation, team members had to wear heavy protective gear from head to toe and process through a decontamination station prior to leaving the “hot zone” with casualties, she said.

While the protective gear includes a battery-operated air purification system, the suits themselves are not ventilated, and ambient temperatures during the exercise hovered in the mid-90s, Rhodes said, requiring careful management of work-rest cycles.

“By the time they finished donning their suits, our team members had about 20 minutes to work,” he said.” So that’s

20 minutes to get into the hot zone, do what you need to do, and come back out. The warmer it is, the longer it takes to recover remains. High temperatures make for a very time-consuming process.”

Senior Airman Megan Cuebas, one of seven Kentucky Air Guardsmen on the team, said the recovery process went extremely well, despite the heat and the fact that team members had just received the suits a few days before the exercise.

“We had never trained with the suits before, but we were able to don and doff them pretty quickly, and everyone was able to operate in them,” she said. “We also kept a close eye on each other, and no one fell out from heat exhaustion.”

Another challenge was the presence of simulated news media and ambulatory survivors, courtesy of more than 150 actors who were hired to add a dose of unpredictable realism to the scenario, Cuebas noted.

“We saw blankets hanging out of windows with messages from citizens asking for help, and survivors were coming up to us and yelling at our convoy as we drove in,” she said. “We’ve trained before on the search-and-recovery aspect of our mission, but I never thought about what it would be like to deal with the other things that go along with this

type of operation, like civilians trying to get help from you, or the news media putting cameras in your face.”

Lindsey agreed.

“This exercise really gave us a new realization of what we should expect in a real-world situation: We’re going to have news media and the civilian community watching us while we perform our mission, and some of those civilians are going to want and need help.”

For Cuebas and her Air Guard teammates, that kind of awareness may be the most valuable lesson learned during Vibrant Response.

“I feel like this training gave us a real foothold on exactly what our purpose is with respect to homeland defense, what kinds of people and agencies we might need to work with, and how intense it can get,” she said. “I know this scenario gave me an extra sense of purpose outside our normal military mission. If we can execute well in this kind of homeland-defense mission, I know we can feel real good about ourselves at the end of the day.”

The Kentucky Air Guard’s Fatality Search and Recovery Team was augmented during the exercise with nine FSRT members from Air Guard units in Puerto Rico and Colorado. 🦅



Wreckage, flames and smoke were the aftermath of a simulated 10-kiloton nuclear detonation at Muscatatuck Urban Training Complex near Camp Atterbury, Ind., Aug. 16. Part of Vibrant Response 12, the U.S. Army North conducted the exercise to prepare active and National Guard forces for their role in responding to a catastrophic chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear incident on U.S. soil.


Photo by Staff Sgt. Keith Anderson/U.S. Army




# Ready to roll

*By Spc. David Bolton, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

Guard elements from the Carolinas, Florida, Georgia and Pennsylvania assembled to create Task Force 151 in response to Hurricane Irene after the storm hit the East Coast Aug. 27.

The Kentucky Guard contingency included aviators and aircraft from Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment and Detachment 1, Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion 238th General Aviation Support along with the 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, and were stationed at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa. The Kentucky Guardsmen remained on standby to assist with recovery efforts and returned to the Commonwealth Aug. 31. 



Spc. Tom Harrington, Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment crew chief communicates with the UH-60 Blackhawk air crew while standing by to support Hurricane Irene relief mission Aug. 30.

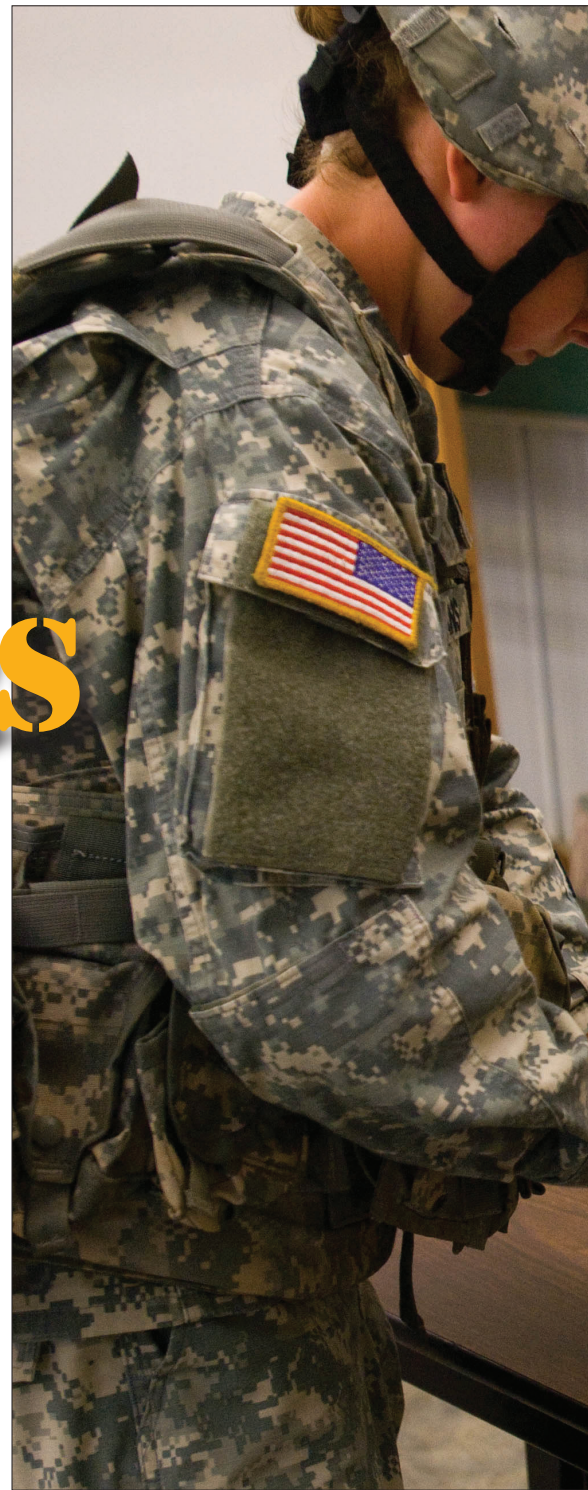
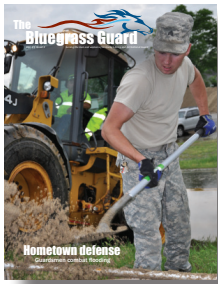




Kentucky Army National Guard flight crews assigned to Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment await orders to assist with Hurricane Irene recovery efforts on the flight strip at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., Aug. 30.







# MOB MASTERS

*Kentucky's PTAE gets units ready for war*

By Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, [gina.vaile@us.army.mil](mailto:gina.vaile@us.army.mil)

**M**obilization Station — for years it was a bad term.

A purgatory where Soldiers trying to move downrange on the Global War on Terror were stuck, training and certifying for months before even setting foot in a combat zone.

A place that kept Guardsmen away from their Family for even longer.

Until the Premobilization Training and Assistance Element stepped up to the plate and became known as the mobilization masters for Kentucky National Guardsmen.

“The PTAE program was designed to provide more ‘boots on ground’ time in theater by accomplishing the majority of the unit’s training prior to reaching the mobilization station,” said Col. Chuck Schneider, PTAE commander.

With the 1st Army standards for validating mobilizing units, the PTAE certifies nearly every Kentucky National Guard Soldier before he sets foot at Camp Shelby, Fort Dix or any other mobilization station.

“A PTAE representative accompanies the unit to their MOB site, and can hand deliver the validation paperwork,” Schnieder said. “This ensures the unit can focus on the mission requirements because their

traditional Army training is complete.”

Calling upon the depth of experience and expertise of the PTAEs XX members, Capt. Brandon Carlson, PTAE executive officer said Kentucky Guardsmen’s Family members can rest assured their Soldier has received the best available training.

“What we’ve done is developed a lane system where we’ve taken the 15 Army Warrior Tasks and four Battle Drills and tied them into four separate training lanes that can be accomplished in a three-day cycle,” he said.

“So when a unit comes down here to Wendell Ford, we develop a training plan based on the lane system and modify it







as necessary to meet the unit's specific training needs," he said. "It's a very effective system."

A system that has trained more than 1,800 Soldiers in the last two years. The 149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade and the 1204th Aviation Sustainment Brigade both utilized the PTAE prior to their Operation New Dawn deployment.

"You can just see that the PTAE team has experienced personnel," said Spc. Matthew Dornbusch of Headquarters Service Company, 1204th ASB.

"They've been there. They've done it in Iraq and Afghanistan and now they're teaching us. I know that what we're learning here will keep us safe when we deploy to Iraq," he said. 🇺🇸

## BY THE NUMBERS

**744** Soldiers assigned to the PTAE

**744** Time hack instructors get to training - X hours before the main element

**744** Hours spent developing training plans for battalion-sized elements prior to boots on ground at WHFRTC

**4** Lanes set up to teach 15 Army Warrior Tasks and four Battle drills





# Train to fight

Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiller/KYARNG

Soldiers assigned to the 1204th Aviation Support Brigade receive instruction from members of the Kentucky National Guard's Premobilization Training Assistance Element prior to a field training exercise at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center June 19. Training with the PTAE prior to mobilization cuts down the amount of time Guardsmen spend at the MOB site.







# A ride to remember

## Thunderous roll through Central Kentucky honors fallen Guardsmen

Story and photos by Spc. Michelle Waters

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, rmy.mil

More than 500 bikers converged on Lawrenceburg, Ky., Aug. 13 for the Ride to Remember, a charity ride to honor the Kentucky Guard's fallen Soldiers and Airmen.

The bikers, many current and former Kentucky Guardsmen, rallied at the Healing Fields and raised approximately \$28,000 for the Kentucky National Guard Memorial, a project that once completed, will honor those Guard Soldiers and Airmen who paid the ultimate sacrifice for the Commonwealth and our nation.

"I came here today to pay tribute to those that have gone before us and to show my support to the troops still serving," said Stephen L. McDonald, a retired first sergeant and avid motorcycle rider.

For Kentucky National Guard Command Historian, and Memorial Fund Chairman John Trowbridge, the turnout for the event was nothing short of amazing.

"Time and time again, Kentucky Guardsmen have answered the call of duty in time of war, civil unrest and natural disaster," he said. "Today her Veterans have again stepped up to the plate to recognize those who have died in the line of duty."

Trowbridge said the committee is researching records to compile an accurate listing of all Kentucky National Guard casualties and events where Veterans gather is a good place to get more information.

"This has been a great turnout. It has matched our wildest expectations," said Jason LeMay, secretary for the memorial fund.

But the memorial is still not paid for. It will cost approximately \$700,000. If you'd like to make a donation, send a check to Kentucky National Guard Memorial Fund, Inc., PO Box 5466 Frankfort, KY 40602-5466.



Bikers arrive at the Healing Fields in Lawrenceburg, Ky., Aug. 13. Riders from around the Commonwealth drove to the rally which raised money for the Kentucky National Guard Memorial.



# Small team, largely important



## 176th Engineer Firefighting Team deploys for OEF, first tour for unit

By Capt. Stephen Martin

Public Affairs Officer, [kypao@ng.army.mil](mailto:kypao@ng.army.mil)

**GREENVILLE, Ky.** — The Kentucky National Guard held a departure ceremony for the 176th Engineer Firefighting Team deploying to Afghanistan at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville, Ky., Sept. 11.

“Today is infamous as it is the 10th anniversary of the attack on our country,” said Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, Adjutant General of Kentucky. “This day is especially important as we honor these firefighters as they deploy to the combat zone where it all started, Afghanistan.”

“As we deploy these neighbors of Greenville overseas, know that we will watch over their families while they are gone,” said the Honorable Ed DeArmond, mayor of Greenville. “We wish these men all our best and God speed.”

The 176th Engineer Firefighting Team is made up of seven Soldiers led by Staff Sgt. Wesley LaFortune, a full-time firefighter for Fort Campbell Army Base.



Though Staff Sgt. Birgit Corriveau is a Soldier first, she is a mother always. Here, she poses for a photo with her son, Pfc. Ty Corriveau at the 176th EFT's departure ceremony Sept. 11. This is Ty's first deployment.

“This is a deployment led by NCOs who will achieve great things on behalf of our Nation,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Greg Armstrong, state command sergeant major for the Kentucky Guard. “These firefighters may be the first Troops and the last Troops deploying Soldiers will see from the windows of military aircraft on the airstrip in Afghanistan.”

These firefighting teams were formed in 2003 and have participated in multiple federal and state emergencies to include the 2009 Ice

Storm.

This will be the first overseas tour for the 176th Firefighting Team deploying in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Since 9/11, nearly 14,000 Kentucky National Guard Soldiers and Airmen have mobilized in support of the Global War on Terror. The Kentucky National Guard currently has more than 1,800 troops deployed worldwide.



# Summer serenade

*202nd Army Band rocks and rolls through Commonwealth on tour*

**By Maj. Dale Greer**

123rd Air Wing Public Affairs Officer, [kypao@ng.army.mil](mailto:kypao@ng.army.mil)

**I**t was a busy summer for the Kentucky National Guard's Frankfort-based 202<sup>nd</sup> Army Band.

The 42 Soldier musicians played at 18 separate performances for more than 28,000 spectators across the Jackson Purchase region. From concerts to parades, the 202<sup>nd</sup> had something to offer every music lover.

"The quality of performances by the 202<sup>nd</sup>'s Music Performance Teams were exceptional," said commander Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gregory Stepp, company commander said.

"The MTP members felt their mission was important, relevant and was appreciated by the thousands of attendees," he said.

The Kentucky Guardsmen delivered many different sounds during the tour including jazz, swing, country, rock, patriotic, Dixieland, Appalachia Traditional, Broadway and military marches.

The Kentucky Guard's Rockband, played a pre-game concert for hundreds of baseball fans at the Louisville Riverbats stadium June 24.

"Being able to represent the National Guard by entertaining people who come to our shows is a humbling experience," said Sgt. KJ Mcaleesejergins.

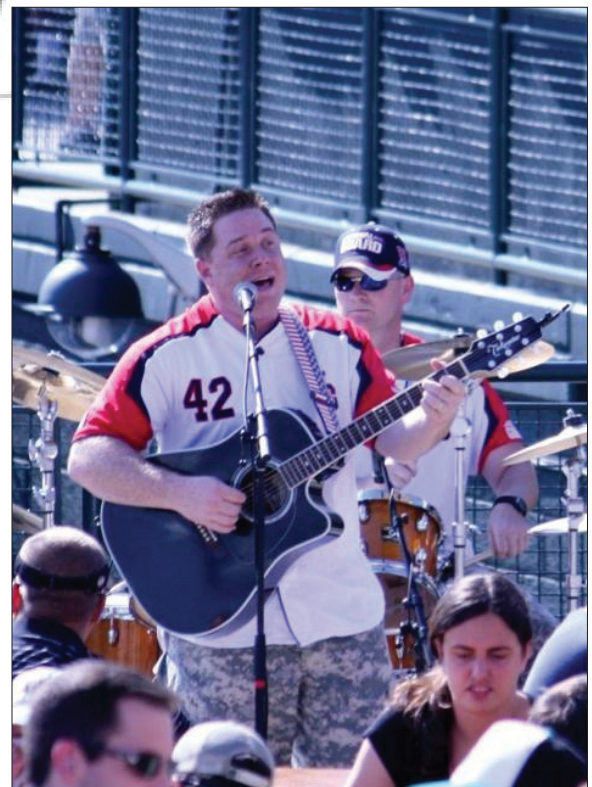


Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steve Baker/KYARNG

Sgt. KJ Mcaleesejergins sings to a crowd of Louisville Riverbats fans during a home game June 24, one of the 202<sup>nd</sup> Army Band's many summer performances. Mcaleesejergins also performed the national anthem before the game.

"You never know who in the crowd might have a loved one serving overseas.

"Being able to provide motivation and encourage patriotism to the citizens of Kentucky is a great motivation to perform at a very high level," he said.

Mcaleesejergins, who also performed "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the game said the 202<sup>nd</sup> is Kentucky's musical ambassadors. 🇺🇸



The 202nd Army Band plays at the Lake Barkley State Park Resort July 3, during the unit's 2011 Summer Concert tour.



Photo by Spc. Rebecca Thompson/KYARNG



Photo by Sgt. Spc. Jason Green/KYARNG



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steve Baker/KYARNG

The Woodwind Quintet plays for patrons as the Western Kentucky Veterans Center in Hanson, Ky.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Steve Baker/KYARNG

➤ The 202nd Army Band's Marching Band steps through Murray, Ky., during the 2011 Freedom Fest.

➤ The 202nd Army Band's Dixieland Band jazzes the crowd at the Freedom Fest in Murray Ky.





# Hiring Heroes

*ESGR energizes employers and Veterans for successful placement*

**By David Altom**

*Deputy Public Affairs Officer, kypao@ng.army.mil*

**LEXINGTON, Ky.** – It was standing room only at an employment workshop geared toward helping members of the National Guard Family find a job, build a career and get on the road to success.

Kentucky Employer Support of Guard and Reserve partnered with the Kentucky National Guard Aug. 8-10 in Lexington to present an Employment Assistance Workshop for unemployed and underemployed troops and their families at no cost for the participants.

“This is the first workshop of its kind for Kentucky,” said Phil Miller, Kentucky ESGR coordinator. “Early this spring the national focus of ESGR turned toward employment initiative. It is our intent to prepare Service members for employment and assist them in gaining employment.”

“This is in addition to ESGR’s traditional role of recognizing employers for their

support of the military and mitigating any issues that arise as a result of an employee’s membership in the Guard and Reserve,” he said.

Current National Guard civilian employment information data indicates a 14 to 20 percent unemployment rate for members of the Kentucky National Guard. Some Service members have returned from Iraq or Afghanistan to find the place where they worked is no longer in business, driving the need for assistance.



Photo by Tim Stinnett/KY ESGR

Spc. Joseph Elder, Headquarters Battery, 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery, was among more than 60 Reserve component servicemembers who participated in the Kentucky ESGR Employment Assistance Workshop Aug. 8 in Lexington.

Miller said the workshop was more successful than anyone imagined.

“We originally expected about 50 participants,” he said. “But when word got out we were flooded with requests. We managed to squeeze in about 62 in total.”

“We even had to give away some of the instructors’ reading materials to accommodate the troops,” he said.

The three-day event ended with a job fair. Lt. Col. John Bates, commander of the Kentucky Army Guard’s 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery, attended and was impressed.

“Every Soldier I talked to had two to three interviews lined up,” he said. “I went around the room to thank all the employers and it sounded like there were more jobs in the room than we had Soldiers.”



“They [the employers] were all excited to be there and commented several times on how they like the discipline and maturity a Soldier brings to their organizations,” Bates said.

The Employment Assistance Workshop is designed to help everyone, not just Soldiers and Airmen. While the promise of a secure job provides service members and their families with stability and peace of mind, it also ensures the stability of community-based National

Guard units, particularly when called upon to respond to state and national emergencies.

“National Guard personnel are disciplined and skilled workers who display pride, responsibility, professionalism and proven leadership in what they do,” said Miller. “They understand the mission of their civilian jobs and make it a priority to get results, all while displaying a strong work ethic.

“It not only makes good business sense

to hire a Guardsman, but is also essential to sustaining the all-volunteer force for the future,” he said.

Plans are now underway to have a similar workshop this fall in the Louisville area. Look for announcements on the Kentucky National Guard and ESGR KY Facebook pages.


Meanwhile, for more information on this and other employment matters contact Phil Miller at [phillip.k.miller@us.army.mil](mailto:phillip.k.miller@us.army.mil). 



Photo by Tim Stinnett/KY ESGR

Frank Casper, instructor for Employer Partnership for the Armed Forces, offers assistance to Service members during the Kentucky ESGR Employment Assistance Workshop Aug. 8, in Lexington.



Photo by Tim Stinnett/KY ESGR

More than 60 Veterans and Service members assigned to the Kentucky National Guard and Reserves throughout Kentucky attended the Kentucky ESGR Employment Assistance Workshop Aug. 8, in Lexington. The attendees learned tips for interviews and marketability and visited with prospective employers.

## Hiring Hints

-  Keep your résumé current and relative to the position you are applying for
-  Have a ready list of references available upon request
-  Set up a professional e-mail and voicemail for contact
-  Keep a business outfit available for interviews
-  Monitor [USAJobs.gov](http://USAJobs.gov) and look for Kentucky ESGR on Facebook



# Redlegs celebrate 20 years

By Sgt. Bryan Ploughe

1st Battalion, 623rd Field Artillery UPAHR, kypao@ng.army.mil

**A** 100-mile motorcycle ride, golf tournament and world class cook out was how the 623rd Field Artillery Battalion celebrated 20 years since the Redlegs mobilized in support of Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

It was a year long process to find Veterans of the 623rd. Using social media such as Facebook and networking between former members of the 623rd, the current leadership of the battalion found more than 400 people to participate.

“We developed a Facebook page, gathered together e-mail addresses and created a phone tree in every attempt to contact as many of these Veterans as we could,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Joey Simpson.

“The process started off slow, but once word got out and these Veterans started contacting some of their fellow Veterans, it was a flurry of incoming correspondence,” he said.

Once on ground, the former and current Guardsmen and their Families

shared old war stories and enjoyed each other’s company.

“This was an event that will be cherished for years to come by these fellow brothers in arms,” said retired Command Sgt. Maj. Freddie Joe Wilkerson.

“We celebrated a coming together of so many folks who have not seen each other since we returned,” he said. “We are celebrating the legacy that is left behind by our brethren that have since gone on to serve in our Lord’s army.”

Brigade commander, Col. Rondal Turner deployed with the 623rd as a battery commander during Desert Storm/Desert Shield.

“It is very humbling and an honor to have served with these Veterans, knowing that they all had the mind and skill set to accomplish any mission that was handed to them .

“This Brigade truly knows how to seize the opportunity in all that they do,” he said. 🇺🇸



Capt. Larry Gearlds and Sgt. 1st Class Scotty Turner prepare lunch for more than 400 attendees of the 2011 623rd Field Artillery’s 20-year Desert Storm reunion NEED THE DATE.




Veterans and Family members enjoy a golf scramble during the 623rd Field Artillery’s 20-year Operation Desert Storm Desert Shield anniversary.



# Training with the BSB

*A photo essay by Spc. Lauren Womak, Alpha Co., 103rd Brigade Support Battalion UPAHR*



Alpha Company, 103rd Brigade Support Battalion conducted its annual training at Fort Chaffee, Ark., in July. These photos were submitted by Unit Public Affairs Historian Representative Spc. Lauren Womak after the unit returned to home station. The photos document the training the unit received July 27 and 29. 







## First USO concert on US soil held in KY, honors Families and supporters

### Staff Report

Photos by Spc. Will Bolton/133rd MPAD, [kypao@ng.army.mil](mailto:kypao@ng.army.mil)

Service members and their Families stationed across the Commonwealth packed the KFC YUM! Center July 26, to watch two Kentucky boys sing about freedom, honor and Family during the first USO Homefront Concert.

Broadcast live on the Pentagon Channel to US military bases and ships around the world, the two-hour event hosted by LEEAN Tweeden, Poker After Dark star and wife of an Air National Guard pilot, included an opening act by Ray Scott and featured the sensational country duo Montgomery Gentry.

"It was a great concert," said Capt. Stephanie Fields. "I'm a big fan of Montgomery Gentry and they put on a great performance. We just loved it!"


Fields, deputy state surgeon for the Kentucky Army National Guard, brought her daughter Tori to the concert. She also took a few special guests, Lisa Whitaker and her daughters Meagan, Savannah and Jessica.

"Lisa and her daughters opened their home to my daughter for a year when I mobilized back in 2005. That was a huge thing she did for me and it meant so much knowing that Tori was in good hands. Bringing them with us made the concert even more special to us all."

Fields' gratitude reflected what so much of what was said throughout the evening.

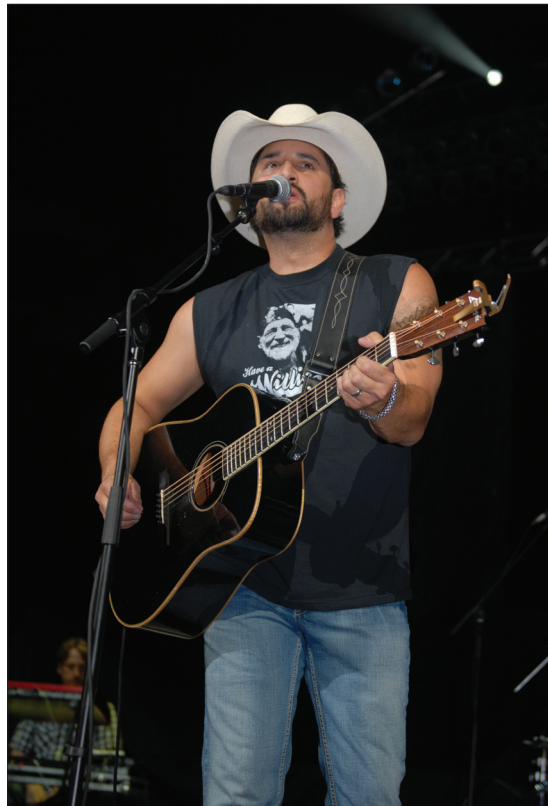
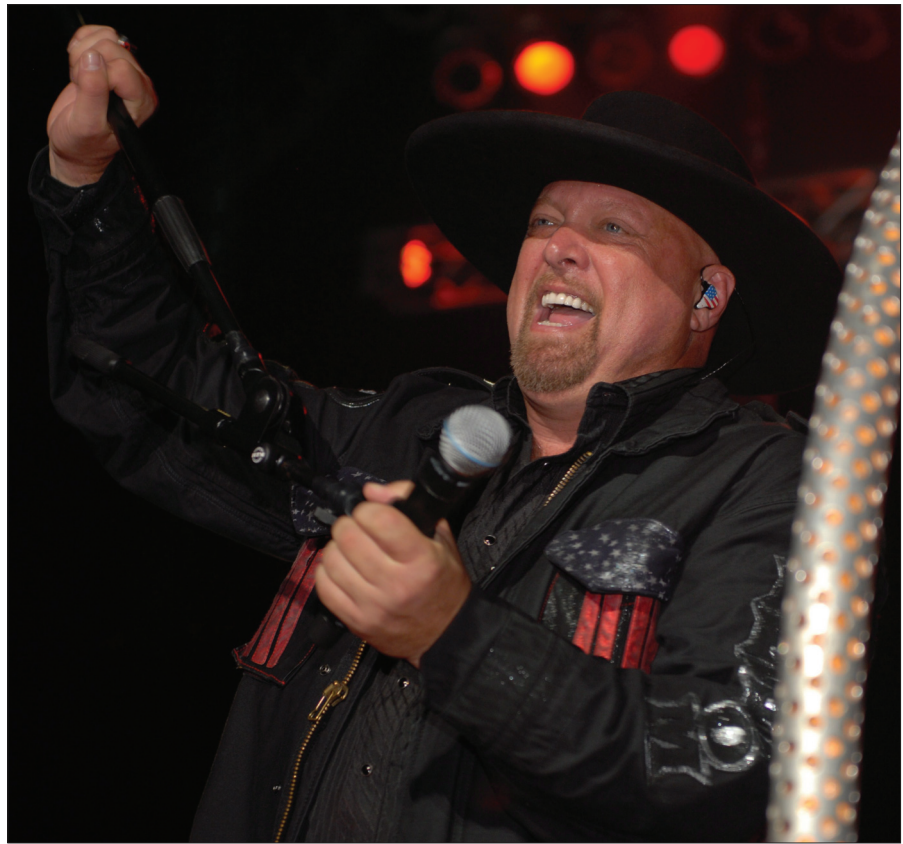
"When Soldiers are away from home life goes on for the ones you leave at home, knowing my daughter was well cared for made it much easier to focus on taking care of Soldiers.

"I was so impressed with USO Homefront Concert," she said. "The real heroes are the Soldiers' Families and friends that support us 365 days a year, so I was glad they were recognized and honored."

More than 1,400 volunteers attending the National Volunteer Workshop were provided VIP treatment and seats while thousands of National Guardsmen, Reservists and active duty troops and their Families were provided with free tickets for the event. 









# TBI Veterans encouraged to resubmit for Purple Heart

By J.D. Leipold  
 Army News Services , kypao@ng.army.mil

WASHINGTON (Army News Service, Aug. 19, 2011) -- Active-duty and reserve-component Soldiers, as well as veterans, who were denied Purple Heart awards for concussive or mild traumatic brain injuries, are encouraged to resubmit documentation for reconsideration of the medal.

With medical advances in the treatment and knowledge of concussion and MTBI injuries, the Army has been able to further identify the characteristics of the unseen wound and clarify guidance for entitlement to the Purple Heart, said Col. Tom Quinn, chief of Soldiers Programs and Services Division at Army Human Resources Command.

"In the past, concussion or MTBI injuries were very hard to diagnose," Quinn said. "Treatments varied and were not the same across the board and medical officers weren't always documenting that information in the Soldier's records."

To receive a Purple Heart, a wound has to be the result of enemy or hostile action and the treatment for that injury must be documented in a Soldier's official medical records by a medical officer, Quinn said.

For more information on how submission requirements is available at: <https://www.hrc.army.mil/awards>.



Veterans who were denied a Purple Heart for concussion or mild traumatic brain injury should resubmit paperwork through their chain of command.

Submission for reconsideration is not a guarantee of approval. Quinn said the Awards and Decorations Branch at HRC will make the final determination, then notify the Soldier or veteran in about 30 days on the board's decision.

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[www.kentuckyguard.com](http://www.kentuckyguard.com)



## This Issue:



13 — Kentucky rushes to Irene rescue



18 — Rally Ride for memorial

## Facebook Fan Page of the quarter



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