

Bluegrass Guard



Vol. 20, Issue 2 - March 2017

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



FIT QUALIFIED CONFIDENT

WHAT DOES IT TAKE?

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**FITNESS HELP
APPS TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH**

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**NEED AN ID CARD?
THERE ARE CHANGES
TO THE PROCESS**

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HOW TO IMPROVE AT THE RANGE

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AROUND THE



JFHQ - Members of the 41st Civil Support Team and Joint Force Headquarters competed in the National Guard Biathlon Championships at Camp Ethen Allen, Vt., March 6-9.



63rd TAB - The 1204th Aviation Support Battalion received the Meritorious Unit Citation for the unit's deployment to Iraq/Kuwait in 2011-2012.



75th TC - Members of the newly organized 101st Main Command Post-Operational Detachment participate in a patching ceremony welcoming the Guardsmen into the 101st Airborne Division family, Feb. 25 at Fort Campbell, Ky.



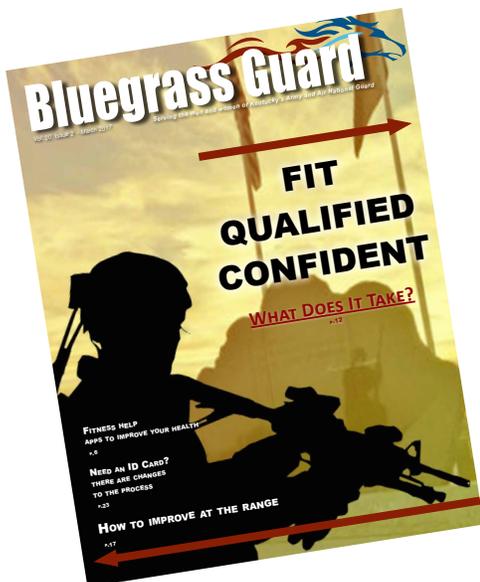
138th FAB - The 138th Field Artillery Brigade honored Col. Rob Larkin during a change of command ceremony in Lexington, March 12. Lt. Col. Dennis Hawthorne assumed command.



238th RTI - Soldiers with the 238th supported and participated in Warrant Officer Candidate School Class 17-001's 10k ruck march at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center, Feb. 25.

We wear our resume on our chest. Review the basics to see how to improve your record.

p.12



On the Cover:

Back to the basics can be thrown around a lot as a catch phrase, it's even used as a cliché. But for Soldiers to succeed, there are standards in place to ensure the U.S. military remains the greatest fighting force in the world. Every Guardsman must strive to become Fit, Qualified and Confident. (Photo Illustration by Sgt. Shanna Rice) (Background photo by Carter Gilbert)

E GUARD



123rd AW - Lt. Col. Bruce Bancroft took command of the 123rd Contingency Response Group, during a ceremony at the Kentucky Air National Guard base in Louisville, Ky., Nov. 5, 2016.

149th MEB - The 149th Military Engagement Team conducted a transfer of authority with the 116th MET during a ceremony in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, Jan. 9.

Bluegrass Guard

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Calling all trendsetters

Who will be the first female infantryman?

By Lt. Col. Eddie Simpson

Commander, 1/149th Infantry

Gender integration in combat arms units can be a controversial topic. However, the infantry has a standard that goes above and beyond the normal Army unit.

The OPAT is harder to get into combat arms, basic training or OSUT is more demanding, and road marches don't get any easier based on gender. That being said, I have been competitive in CrossFit for 8 years, and I have seen females that can lift, run, carry weight that most active Soldiers would dream of.

So if these women want to lead troops, then I would be honored to have them in my ranks.

Southeast Kentucky has 5 infantry companies in the area. For the most part, the positions available to fill are all 11B or infantry rifleman. This has excluded a significant number of females that could and want to serve their country.

Opening up some of these to females allows a broader base, and challenges females to be a part of history. At the present, a female can be a trendsetter and become what future females can emulate.

I became an infantry officer because my entire life I wanted to lead troops. Being able to have an impact on

our up and coming troops is a feeling of accomplishment that you cannot undervalue.

I was a ROTC Professor of Military Science at the University of the Cumberlands, and I have had some amazing officers come from that program. Knowing that I helped start their career makes me proud, almost as much as my own son.

Gender integration allows females to lead troops and advance through the ranks to have that feeling of accomplishment that I have been fortunate enough to have felt.

I have always said that the Army is not the organization that gives out participation trophies and this is never more evident than in a combat arms unit.

Failure is not an option, military schools Soldiers attend have high failure rates. Ranger, Pathfinder, Air Assault and others have higher than 50% failure rates. Infantry Soldiers must be the best that the Army has to offer, they are the first to

fight.

That challenge is now extended to females, if they want to pick up that baton and run with it, then I will gladly mentor, coach and lead the best and brightest Soldiers our future has to offer.



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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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 the Kentucky National Guard Personnel Services Branch at 502-607-1497.

Air Retirees should request changes through retired Chief Master Sgt. James Turpin at jturpin1945@gmail.com.

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The commander of the 149th Military Engagement Team presents the commander of the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army Central Command with a plaque Feb. 16, the final day of a military-to-military engagement between the U.S. and Jordan.

Partnership-building machine

149th MET making friends left and right in Middle East

By Capt. Desiree Dillehay
149th Military Engagement Team

Working together is valuable to our continued partnerships with the Jordanian people, said Lt. Col. Joseph Gardner during a military-to-military engagement with the Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army (JAF) Central Command Feb. 12-16.

Gardner is the commander of the 149th Military Engagement Team, a team of Kentucky Army National Guard Soldiers who deployed to Kuwait in December 2016 with the specific purpose of conducting military-to-military engagements with countries throughout the Middle East and Central and South Asia regions.

During the last two months, the 149th MET has conducted a number of engagements with the JAF of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, including two week-long information exchanges.

Six team members from the 149th MET, supplemented by Soldiers from the 29th Infantry Division and 30th Civil Military Operations Center, worked with Jordan Armed Forces Soldiers during a current operations integration cell information exchange Feb. 12-16.

During the engagement, more than 40 JAF officers and 13 U.S. Soldiers developed interoperability while exchanging information about division COICs. U.S. and Jordanian forces shared best practices and refined their staff skills through practical application opportunities during the COIC information exchange.

During a five-day engagement Jan. 21-26, three Soldiers from the 149th MET and 10 additional U.S. Soldiers from various units conducted a combat engineer, chemical and explosive ordnance device information exchange with the

Jordanian Royal Engineer Corps.

“We honor our relationships with our partners and are honored to have the opportunity to work with their Soldiers, from generals to privates,” said 1st Lt. Petrus Knight, 149th MET intelligence officer and an engagement team leader.

“This (engineer) engagement proved, yet again, that the language of combat engineers, EOD and (chemical) Soldiers is mutually understood between allies, regardless of native tongue,” he added.

Both exchanges increased interoperability, developed relations, and laid the foundation for future bi-lateral exercises and engagements between U.S. and Jordanian forces.



Jordan Armed Forces-Arab Army officers work with a U.S. Infantry noncommissioned officer from the 149th Military Engagement Team to develop a digital common operating picture during the culminating event of the mil-to-mil engagement Feb. 16.

RANGER HEALTH

1st Lt. Aaron McKannan
1st Battalion, 149th Infantry

How do you work out?

-I literally just run, do pushups and rowers. Occasional gym session is used with heavy weights. Some say my workouts are not good, but they helped me complete ranger school.

-I Run 20-30miles a week: At least an hour a day-every other day. Run once a week with a 25lb. vest.

To increase speed, I complete 15-20 wind sprints or hill repeats once a week.

-I understand a lot of Soldiers don't have that much time. But a good cardio workout for at least 30 minutes is recommended to be considered in good health.

-Pushups and rowers to muscle failure every other day. I use the Tabata app. I do push-ups in front of a mirror to make sure all my reps will be counted on the AFPT.

-10-20 pullups throughout the day. I have a personal pull up bar.

What's your motivation to stay in shape

-I rely on self-discipline to stay fit. But, I'm looking forward to running the Bluegrass Half-Marathon and GORUCK Challenge in Lexington with friends and family. What motivates me is excelling at my job and motivating others.

What about diet & nutrition?

-I don't drink sweet sodas. I started using MyFitnessPal app to manage calorie intake. The app is a free online food diary, calorie counter with a large food database. Also, it calculates calories burned by exercise. It's simple - the more consistently you track your food intake, the more likely you are to manage or lose weight.



The use of health apps improve your ability to track your progress and hold yourself accountable.



207th Engineers deploy overseas



Story and photos By Staff Sgt. Scott Raymond
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

A large crowd of friends and family packed the Perry County High School gymnasium to say farewell to the 207th Horizontal Construction Company Dec. 14. Approximately 160 Soldiers of the engineer unit are scheduled to deploy to the Middle East.

"I am confident the 207th will do us proud," said Brig. Gen. Scott Campbell, Kentucky's assistant adjutant general. "They are fully prepared for this deployment and they are the best we have to offer."

The 207th will conduct construction operations in the Middle East, Central and South Asia in support of U.S. Army Central Command. Their missions will focus on road and runway repair, base maintenance, drainage correction projects, and culvert installation. The 207th will conduct multiple construction missions across multiple countries simultaneously.

"We represent a place where hard work and strong character are still a part of the values that exist," said Capt. Brian Ladd, commander of the 207th. "We will continue to live those values as we go forward and represent our commonwealth and our country overseas."

The 207th will use its members' extensive military and civilian skills to execute complex construction projects in austere environments in support of ongoing military operations in the region.

Soldiers of the 207th last deployed overseas in 2005, so very few of the unit have mobilized before. Sgt. Jacob Hudson, a mechanic with the 207th is preparing to leave home and his wife and newborn for the first time. He described the moment as a wave of emotions, but is optimistic because of the Soldiers around him.

"I've worked with a lot of people both in and out of uniform, but this group of Soldiers is the closest knit I've ever been a part of, and that will help us accomplish our mission," he said. "We are ready as a team for this and are excited to get the job done."

The 207th will deploy with a lot of optimism, pride and community support. Sgt. 1st Class Adam Spencer is the unit readiness noncommissioned officer, and has lived in the area for 10 years. He has seen the unit change with the times and prepare itself for the next step.

"I've been in the Guard now for 15 years and I can personally say I have never seen a group of Soldiers work so hard than the ones of the 207th," Spencer said. "It's because of these Soldiers that the 207th is such a successful unit and is a great example of where the Kentucky National Guard will go one day."

The Soldiers will finish their training at Fort Bliss, Texas prior to deploying overseas.

Kentucky Airman receives Air Force Cross



Story By Lt. Col. Dale Greer

123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

A retired Airman from the Kentucky Air National Guard will receive the Air Force's highest honor for his extraordinary heroism during combat operations in Afghanistan, the Air Force announced Jan. 19.

Master Sgt. Keary Miller, a former pararescueman in the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, had initially been awarded the Silver Star for actions during a grueling 17-hour siege on a remote Afghan mountain called Takur Ghar in 2002. That decoration was officially upgraded to the Air Force Cross on Jan. 17 as part of a Defense Department-directed review of Air Force combat medals.

"Sgt. Miller's heroic and selfless actions during the Battle of Takur Ghar represent the very finest qualities of the Airmen of the Kentucky Air National Guard," said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Stephen R. Hogan, adjutant general of Kentucky. "He repeatedly risked his own life under enemy fire to render life-saving assistance to multiple wounded U.S. service members while distributing ammunition to Army Rang-

ers defending their position. It is entirely appropriate that Sgt. Miller is now being recognized with the Air Force's highest combat decoration."

The Battle of Takur Ghar was part of a larger effort named Operation Anaconda, which was intended to defeat Taliban forces hiding in Paktia province. On the third day of the operation - March 4, 2002 - a 17-hour battle was fought on what would become known as Robert's Ridge

Miller, in multiple acts of extraordinary courage, proceeded through rocket-propelled grenade, mortar and small-arms fire to re-distribute the ammunition to defense forces.

Shortly thereafter, another attack erupted, killing one pararescueman and compromising the casualty collection point. Miller braved the barrage of fire in order to move the wounded to better cover and concealment, according to his award citation.

Miller's courageousness and skill ultimately led to the successful delivery of 10 gravely wounded Americans to life-saving

medical treatment and the recovery of seven servicemen killed in action, the citation said.

The upgrade of Miller's Silver Star follows a review of combat medals conducted by the Department of Defense. It was one of nine upgrades approved by Air Force Secretary Deborah Lee James, who leaves office Jan. 20 with the outgoing administration of President Barack Obama.

"We recognize and celebrate our Airmen for their service, actions and sacrifices," James said. "These are people whose lifestyle includes going above and beyond the call of duty and exemplifying the Air Force core values of integrity first, service before self and excellence in all we do."

Miller's conduct during the Battle of Takur Ghar has been commemorated as part of a permanent exhibit on battlefield Airmen at the National Museum of the United States Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio.

■ More, Read full story at KentuckyGuard.dodlive.mil



A painting commissioned by the National Guard Bureau commemorates the 2002 Battle of Takur Ghar in Afghanistan, during which an Airman from the Kentucky Air National Guard was instrumental in saving the lives of 10 wounded servicemen.

198th MPs support Inauguration

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Raymond
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

National Guardsmen from every corner of the country descended on the nation's capital to support the 58th Presidential Inauguration, Jan. 20.

Nearly 300 Kentucky Guardsmen from across the commonwealth were among them. The majority of that number were from the 198th Military Police Battalion based out of Louisville, Kentucky, who augmented local law enforcement in the Capital region during the event.

"I'm proud to be here representing the Kentucky National Guard and our state," said Spc. Austin Willet with the 438th Military Police Company from Murray, Kentucky. "This is one of the first times I've been on a mission out of the state, and it has to be a highlight of my career."

The Kentuckians joined roughly 7,500 Guardsmen from 44 of the 54 states and territories in support of the inauguration. The District of Columbia National Guard oversaw the joint task force providing command and control from the D.C. Armory near the Capitol, while supporting units were staged in various locations around the city and in neighboring states.

The 198th were tasked as a reserve force and awaited any request from the D.C. Metro Police Department. Lt. Joseph Colin has served with the D.C. Police at several inaugurations, and said it was a privilege for him to swear

in hundreds of National Guardsmen as D.C. Special

Police Officers Jan. 19.

"This event is so special, to the country and this city, and to be able to work with so many agencies including the National Guard makes it that much more special and exciting," said Colin. "We're very grateful to have National Guard units from across the country here to assist us and I know we will be successful because of the good working relationship we have with the National Guard."

Regardless of their role, the MPs of the 198th were glad to be a part of such a event. Unit leadership all agreed that the mission was successful and was another feather in the cap of the battalion that takes the lead on such events as the Kentucky Derby and Thunder Over Louisville annually in Kentucky.

"We may not have played a large part, but we answered the call and supported the city and the nation as was needed," said Capt. Jacob Lee, operations officer for the 198th. "These young Soldiers can return home knowing they successfully supported the mission and an American tradition."

In addition to the 198th, the 149th Signal Company based out of Lexington, Kentucky, the 123rd Airlift Wing from Louisville and medical support personnel and members of the headquarters communications office from Frankfort, Kentucky were also on hand to assist.

"The Kentucky National Guard is proud to be a part of such a historical event," said Brig. Gen. Scott Campbell, Kentucky's assistant adjutant general. "The mission serves as yet another example of the unique role of the National Guard, our interoperability with civilian agencies and our unbridled service to the nation."



Soldiers with the 198th Military Police Battalion re-enlist during their duty in support of the Presidential Inauguration in Washington, D.C., Jan. 19, 2017.

Barriers are opportunities

Story by Stacy Floden

Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Thirty years and counting. That's what Col. Shontelle Adams has on his military resume and that is just the beginning. As he sits as the director of personnel, he is the senior African American Soldier in the Kentucky National Guard, but he has never thought of it that way. "I just come to work and try to figure out how I can help this organization. But at the same time, it shows opportunities are open for everyone. All you have to do is apply yourself."

Adams' military experience has given him a wealth of opportunities. He has been able to travel all over the world and create life-long friendships. The military has been a win-win for him.

"I have so many achievements I am proud of, too many to count," he said. "The company commander for the 223rd Military Police Battalion which deployed to Bosnia, the battalion commander for the 198th MPs which deployed to Iraq, and completing Senior Service College."

"But the feeling you get when you are responsible for such a precious commodity – a son, a daughter, a brother or a husband – having that responsibility of being entrusted with them is one of the biggest achievements you can have and just hoping you did well."

Equally important, are the things that make the military so very special. Things like diversity, equality and inclusion. Those are

just some of the traits that make America's military the strongest, finest fighting force the world has ever seen.

"African Americans have paved the way for this great country we live in, from the Revolutionary War to where we are today," said Adams. "African Americans have always played a part in the military. There are a lot of opportunities for anyone, but the military isn't for everybody. It does take a special type of person to put your life on the line, selfless service truly comes to mind."

Strength is not only in diversity, but in the ability to weave together people of different faiths, cultures and races who share common values like duty, honor, selfless service, loyalty and respect into a unified fighting force.

"To me it is about education. It is an opportunity to learn about our history. But, I also think it shouldn't be just about the month. The education should continue throughout a lifetime," he said. "We have to be able to venture out and better understand other cultures and ethnicities. Educate each other. The want and the desire to learn about other cultures and ethnicities, not outside the United States, but in our own backyard."

The military stands as a proud example of all that can be as a nation when everyone is welcomed and embraced. Not only during Black History Month, but every month. It is important to take the opportunity to diversify the ranks and realize the opportunities for everyone despite the difficulties.

"It is all about what you allow to become a barrier. I am more about finding the good in situations," said Adams. "Have there been challenges, yes there have been, but there are a lot of challenges today, but we just have to find out the best way to support each other. If you look at it as a barrier or obstacle, then that is what it is going to be. But, if you look at it as an opportunity then it takes on a different meaning."



Col. Shontelle Adams graduates from the United States Army War College in 2015. Adams currently serves as the G1 Director of Personnel.



Col. Shontelle Adams being promoted with help from his family.



Col. Shontelle Adams along side members of the Djiboutian Military in Djibouti, Africa, as part of Kentucky's state partnership program with the African nation, June 2015.

CBRNE...with ghosts

Guardsmen train in historic sanatorium

By Staff Sgt. Scott Raymond
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

To become experts in their fields, Soldiers train in all types of conditions and places. Even if those places are haunted.

For members of the 41st Civil Support Team, a recent training exercise was business as usual, another opportunity to hone their skills. But it was no ordinary duty location.

The 41st carried out a hazardous materials training at the historical Waverly Hills Sanatorium in Louisville, Feb. 7-8.

"This team has to train to go into places just like this," said Maj. Joseph Whitt, commander of the 41st. "These are the types of places bad guys would hide something or work out of, and if it's here or Rupp Arena, we are ready to go at a moment's notice to get the job done."

Although local law enforcement have used the building for training, this was a first for the Kentucky Guard. According to Staff Sgt. Eric Shackelford, the decontamination non-commissioned officer-in-charge with the 41st, the Kentucky landmark worked perfectly in the team's favor for the mission.

"To meet the requirements of our training, Waverly Hills is the ideal location for us," he said. "We need to train in low visibility, with limited communication, confined spaces, all in an unfamiliar place, we get all that here."

The fact the 41st must also conduct night training missions only added to the allure of the historically haunted building. Team members mostly agreed that while the nighttime mission checked the block for low visibility, it also raised the eeriness of the sanatorium.

"That's what we have to do, to train to go places others don't want to," said Whitt.

Team members were tasked with searching for and identifying a simulated biological threat in the five-story building. The mission of the CST is to assist, assess, identify and advise local agencies in collaboration to reduce the threat. Other team members played the roles of local agencies to ensure proper communications and execution of the training.

"This was certainly a unique assignment for us," said Sgt. Aaron Brady. "But regardless of our surroundings, which were definitely pretty creepy, we have to focus on our job to remain ready for anything."

Waverly Hills sits on a rise eight miles from downtown Louisville. The 180,000 square-foot building was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. During its time as a sanatorium, thousands of people reportedly died there from disease, creating stories of spiritual activity. Legends have persisted at the site with it receiving the billing as one of the most haunted places in the country.



Tina Mattingly owns the property and operates a haunted house, tours and hosts paranormal explorations on the site. After being approached by the 41st, Mattingly said she understood the complex nature of the CST and the draw of the sanatorium. She said Waverly Hills was glad to welcome the Guardsmen and to provide the suitable environment for the training.

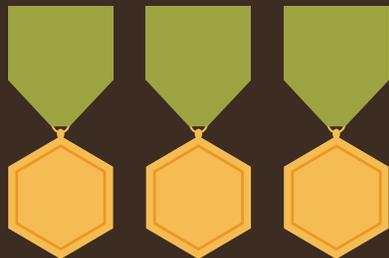
"We are a patriotic family, we support our country and our military. These guys need to train and we just want to support them in any way we can. This old building has had a rich and interesting history, and it has many uses still today."

Shackelford said no ghosts were seen during the mission and the team hopes to use the property again for future training and unit evaluations.

BACK TO THE BASICS



FOLLOW THE STANDARDS TO BECOME AND REMAIN
FIT, QUALIFIED AND CONFIDENT.



SOLDIERS CANNOT EXCEED THE STANDARD IF THEY DO NOT FIRST MEET THE STANDARD. HERE ARE THE BASIC STEPS SOLDIERS NEED TO SUCCEED.

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

- | MANY SOLDIERS OFTEN AT TIMES FALL BEHIND ON TASKS
- | THAT ARE NEEDED TO ALLOW THEM TO PROGRESS
- | THROUGH THE RANKS. IT IS MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER
- | TO TAKE CHARGE AND TRAIN, EDUCATE, AND PROMOTE.

AIM TO TRAIN

WHETHER IT IS PUTTING DOWN ROUNDS, LAPS, OR THE FORK, MAKE SURE YOU ARE MAKING THE CUT.

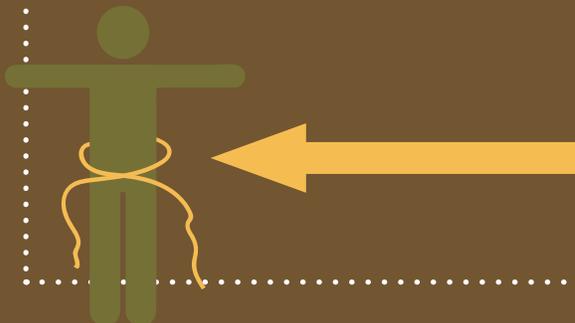
YOU HAVE HEARD IT BEFORE, THE ONLY WAY TO DO MORE PUSHUPS IS TO DO MORE PUSHUPS AND RUNNING IS A MIND GAME. STRIVE TO MAKE AT LEAST 60 POINTS IN EACH PORTION. REQUIRED ANNUALLY FOR M-DAY/SEMI-ANNUALLY FOR AGR, REGARDLESS OF WHEN YOUR UNIT SCHEDULES THE APFT

APFT



HEIGHT & WEIGHT

MEETING HEIGHT AND WEIGHT REQUIREMENTS IS DIFFICULT FOR SOME AND CAN BE A CAREER ENDER. THERE IS NO EASY WAY TO CUT CALORIES. BOTTOM LINE, FIND ANOTHER GEAR OR FIND ANOTHER CAREER.



EARN 23 OR HIGHER ON WEAPONS QUALIFICATION, ANNUALLY. IF YOU ARE HIGH-SPEED - GO FOR 40 OUT OF 40.

EDUCATE

BE PROACTIVE WHEN IT COMES TO ATTAINING YOUR MILITARY EDUCATION. THE KNOWLEDGE LEARNED AT YOUR NCOES WILL EQUIP YOU TO BE THE BEST SOLDIER YOU CAN BE.

SSD

COMPLETE EACH SSD RELATED TO EACH RANK/GRADE



SCHOOLS



PROMOTE

WITH GREATER RANKS COME GREATER RESPONSIBILITIES. MAKE SURE YOU ARE GOING TO THE RIGHT SCHOOLS AT THE RIGHT TIME.



GOOD YEAR

JUST SHOW UP & DO THE RIGHT THING
...IT IS THAT EASY.
MAINTAIN A GOOD YEAR OF 50 POINTS
BY ATTENDING DRILLS AND ANNUAL
TRAINING.
1 AT DAY = 1 MUTA = 1 RETIREMENT POINT



ASSESS FOR SUCCESS

COUNSELINGS, NCOER AND OER'S ARE A REQUIREMENT FOR THE FORCE. IT'S CRITICAL TO CONDUCT AND RECEIVE TIMELY COUNSELINGS. WITHOUT THEM IT IS DIFFICULT TO IMPROVE. MAKE THEM COUNT. E5 AND ABOVE ARE EXPECTED TO COMPLETE THESE REPORTS.



TRACK YOUR PACK

KEEP AN ACTIVE TRACK ON ALL OCIE AND CLOTHING THAT HAS BEEN ISSUED. THE AVERAGE KY GUARDSMAN CAN CARRY AN INVENTORY OF ROUGHLY \$2500



SO WHAT

FALLING BEHIND ON ANY OF THESE REQUIREMENTS IS A NO-GO AT THIS STATION. IF YOU WANT TO STAY IN AND SUCCEED, YOU NEED TO MEET THE STANDARD. PERIOD.



BARE MINIMUM

AN E7 WORKING FOR 20 YEARS
ATTENDING 12 DRILLS AND 1 AT A YEAR
(NOT COUNTING DEPLOYMENTS, SCHOOLS, ETC)

=

\$500 A MONTH
AT AGE 60

Unique skillsets on display

By Sgt. 1st Class Rebecca Wood

149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

Kentucky's Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) and the 41st Civil Support Team (CST) sharpened their skills in a unique environment from Nov. 30 to Dec. 2, at the Zussman Range on Fort Knox.

Zussman Range is located 40 minutes outside of the containment area of Fort Knox and according to National Defense Magazine is known as one of the most realistic urban training grounds in the nation since it opened in 1999. The 30-acre Eastern European style city is littered with old rusted vehicles, random broken household items and debris, which gives it a post-battle– or in the CERFP's case– a post-natural disaster feel to it.

The Kentucky CERFP Commander Lt. Col. James Hatfield said this exercise is unique for his Soldiers and Airmen for two reasons. First, the Kentucky CERFP has never trained with the Kentucky CST before, and secondly those who participated in the exercise were not given all the information up front.

“The Kentucky CERFP is a mature organization that has trained in many different scenarios,” said Hatfield. “We really have to start thinking outside of the box in training our Guardsmen and so in this scenario, they didn't arrive two days after an earthquake like in the past. Instead, they arrive almost immediately afterwards and work in more of a first responder role.”

The exercise kicked off with highly specialized personnel from the CST sent in, wearing protective suits and carrying a rebreather air tank, to detect and identify any CBRNE substances in the affected area. When finished going through every room of every building assigned to them, they advise local authorities, first responders and if activated, the CERFP and other mutual aid organizations on how to best respond and manage the situation.

“Once we make sure it's safe, we will fall in with the CERFP role when they start doing search and entry,” said Master Sgt. Scott Earl, the 41st CST Reconnaissance Noncommissioned Officer in charge. “If they encounter something outside of their personal protective equipment's (PPE) capability, then we will be able to go in as needed and help identify and mitigate the hazard so they can go back in and operate safely at the level of PPE they have.”

Earl also said when the CST isn't training, they work full time handling calls from the FBI, United Parcel Service and other agencies or organizations, which may have suspicious mail or



packages come their way. Any such work or training is viewed as an invaluable opportunity to hone their unique skillset.

After the CST, the CERFP sends out their Search and Extract Teams (S&E). The teams are divided into subgroups that do reconnaissance; loads and lifts; breach and break; and ropes. Their mission is to safely transfer the victims and casualties out of the affected area. All the team members are trained on the other teams' missions in case someone can't deploy with the CERFP in the six-hour emergency window.

When S&E finds a victim, they deliver them to the CERFP decontamination tent where they are checked in, triaged into ambulatory and non-ambulatory patients, washed, rinsed, redressed and logged out. Afterwards they are either released to go where they want or if needed transported to medical.

The Kentucky CERFP Decontamination Officer in Charge, 1st Lt. Justin Gilliam is from the 299th Chemical Company. On the civilian side, he is a police officer and understands how CERFP personnel and equipment can be great assets to first responders.

“If and when CERFP is activated, we are the incident commander and first responders to be used,” said Gilliam. “If we arrive on scene and they don't need medical, decon or search and extract teams—but maybe more numbers to help in a wide area search for victims, then we will not hesitate to link up with firefighters and police officers to conduct a search. We are there to plus up their numbers and equipment in order to benefit first responders.”

The Kentucky CERFP is one out of several CERFPs that stood up after 9/11 when Homeland Security saw a need to sync first responders and the National Guard into one reaction force. There is a CERFP in every FEMA region and in almost every state designed to plus up first responder's efforts in case of a man-made or natural disaster.

Zeroing-in on MARKSMANSHIP



By Capt. Josh Daugherty

133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Being an accurate shooter isn't a matter of good genetics or something you're born with. Granted, good eye sight and steady hands help, but most people can become good shooters by applying a few specific rules. For Soldiers, the ability to shoot accurately should be something we pride ourselves on, but for many, it's a foreign language we struggle to understand. If you dread going to the range to qualify, and shooting "Marksman" is the best you can hope for, there's a few things you can do to achieve Sharpshooter or even Expert with your M4/16 (or any weapon, for that matter).

- First, RELAX!

I can't emphasize the importance of forgetting the past and believing you can conquer the range. Shooting can be as complicated or as simple as you make it. It's not guesswork, it's science, the bullet will go where the muzzle points...every time. Past negative experiences on the rifle range imprint our brains to think "I'm just not a good shooter" and you cast aside shooting fundamentals thinking they don't apply to you before you even give them a shot (literally).

-ZERO YOUR RIFLE PROPERLY

Many times Soldiers rush through zeroing because they are in a hurry to get off the zero range; additionally, they don't apply the same attention to the fundamentals when they are qualifying. It is critical to apply all of the fundamentals found in FM 3-22.9 while zeroing and qualifying.

-MAINTAIN THE SAME SITE PICTURE

Acquiring the same site picture every time you pull the trigger can be tricky. Simply understanding why site picture is important is half the battle. One of the easiest ways to understand this concept is to do this simple experiment. First place your dominant hand (with all four fingers extended and together with your thumb against the palm like you are about to karate chop something) inside your other hand so that you are supporting your dominant hand with the other. Now, look down your index finger as if it were the barrel of a gun. Close your non-dominant eye and aim your index finger at something small on a nearby wall (a light switch is perfect). While not moving your hands, slowly move your head a few inches in different directions while still looking down your "barrel". You'll notice that even though your hand isn't moving, it looks like you are aiming away from the light switch. If you were to adjust your hand to realign it with the light switch based on the

new angle of your head, you are no longer aiming at the same point you were before; thus, only one of the views (site picture) had your barrel aiming at the target. So which site picture was actually aiming at the target? It depends on the view you used to zero, which is the whole point in zeroing: aligning the sights so that your sight picture has the barrel aiming at the intended target according to the unique placement of your head to the rifle. Inches matter, just as with this experiment, tilting your head an inch more or less than the previous shot will cause you to move your barrel an inch or more to accommodate and an inch adjustment will have caused the bullet to move many feet after it has traveled a couple hundred meters; enough movement to cause you to miss most of your targets on a 300-meter qual range.

- ENSURE THE SAME CHEEK WELD

While waiting to get on the range, or during BMI/PMI, practice placing your head against your rifle the same way over and over. Note the distance of your nose from the charging handle and place a piece of double sided tape on the butt stock so you can feel the tape touching your cheek in the same place each time.

Though there are other aspects to consider before you call yourself an expert shooter, maybe these were some missing links to help get you moving in the right direction. If you want to read more on other shooting fundamentals, check out FM 3-22.9 or search for tips online. I didn't grow up shooting guns and I don't own an AR-15. The only time I shoot on a range is at drill once or twice a year and I'm lucky if that allows me to pull the trigger more than 60 times. Despite my lack of trigger time, I have developed into a consistent 38, 39, or 40 out of 40 shooter. Key word: *Developed*.

- APPLY THE FUNDAMENTALS

Same site picture, pulling the trigger while exhaling, squeezing the trigger in a smooth motion and pausing before I released it, steady stance and posture, etc, and my confidence continually grew as did my scores. I'm living proof that anyone can become a good or expert shooter, if they will just relax, forget the past, and take the time to understand and apply the fundamentals.

From CSM to warrant officer of the year

By Staff Sgt. Scott Raymond
Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Chief Warrant Officer Victor Blair has been named the 2016 Warrant Officer of the Year in the Kentucky National Guard. Blair was presented with the award during the National Guard Association of Kentucky annual conference in Louisville, Kentucky, Feb. 11.

The award recognizes individuals who exemplify the Warrant Officer Creed and have contributed significantly to the image and reputation of the Warrant Officer Cohort in ways that stand out in the eyes of the recipient's seniors, subordinates, and peers.

"It is an honor to just be a warrant in the Kentucky Guard, but to be the warrant officer of the year is awesome, because you are part of an elite group of Soldiers," Blair said.

Blair currently serves as the full-time surface maintenance supervisor at the Field Maintenance Shop in Jackson, Kentucky and as the Construction Equipment Repair Technician with the 201st Forward Support Company out of Ashland, Kentucky.

State Command Chief Warrant Officer Dean Stoops said he has heard from numerous Soldiers that Blair was the right choice for the award.

"It makes my job of representing the Warrant Officer Cohort easy when we have such outstanding examples as CW2 Gordy Blair," said Stoops. "Relying on his 35 years of military experi-

ence which included 4 years in the rank of command sergeant major, he has a long history of superior performance and exceeding standards."

Originally enlisting in the Army in 1980 to further his maintenance education, Blair joined the Kentucky Guard six years later as a Track Vehicle Mechanic. Over the next 30 years, Blair would use his

knowledge and experience to become a subject matter expert and a perfect candidate for a warrant officer.

In order to extend his time in service and to allow Soldiers under him the chance for advancement, Blair decided in 2014 to make the jump from enlisted Soldier to warrant officer. He admits that it was a challenge going from a command sergeant major to a fresh warrant officer, describing it as "starting all over again."

"It has given me the opportunity to further my career and the chance to continue to coach, teach and mentor other Soldiers," he said. "I think the years of experience and great opportunities the Guard has offered me, I have managed to transition quite well."

Blair's advice for Soldiers considering becoming a warrant officer. "I would say give it your best shot, it can and will be a challenging and rewarding career, and to be called a quiet professional and part of an elite group of Soldiers, the Warrant Officer Cohort is an honor within itself."



More. Read full story at KentuckyGuard.dodlive.mil

Neighbors in the air

Kentucky, Missouri Airmen train for future deployments

Story By Master Sgt. Phil Speck
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Multiple aircrews and maintainers from the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing recently joined with Airmen from the Missouri Air Guard's 139th Airlift Wing to perform annual training in Savannah, Georgia, in preparation for future deployments.

This isn't the first time the two wings have flown together, according to Lt. Col. Matthew Quenichet, director of operations for Kentucky's 165th Airlift Squadron. Both units have deployed overseas together several times, and they expect to do so again in the future. Kentucky contributed four C-130 Hercules aircraft for the Georgia training, which was held Jan. 6-12, while Missouri sent five.

"It's good team building," Quenichet said of the training. "We get a jump on our annual training by going down there. You get everyone away from home so they can focus on annual requirements, airdrops and large-formation flying. We did two formation sorties each day, where crews air-dropped training loads, and we flew three 123rd Special Tactics Squadron members so they could practice High-Altitude, Low-Opening parachute jumps."

New aircraft commanders and loadmasters also received intensive training.

"During events like this in the past, we've trained aircraft commanders that came up from being co-pilots on C-130s, but this year we had five pilots who were previous aircraft commanders on different airframes," Quenichet explained. "They got a lot of good training in Savannah."

Quenichet had high praise for the units' aircraft maintenance personnel, who attained extremely high mission-ready rates throughout the event.

"They had airplanes ready for us every time we needed them, which is exactly how it is in the desert, where a mission is almost never canceled for maintenance because they have guys climbing all over the planes 24 hours a day."

According to Senior Master Sgt. Chad Chamberlain, production superintendent for Kentucky's 123rd Maintenance Group, the flying effectiveness rate was 100 percent — which means they didn't miss a single scheduled flight.

"This was a great training opportunity for our younger maintainers," said Senior Master Sgt. Morgan Bramer, flight chief for the 123rd Maintenance Group. "We have a lot of young guys, and for



Photos by Senior Airman Sheldon Thompson / Missouri National Guard



some of them, this was the first field exercise they've ever been on."

On the event's last day, both wings flew all their aircraft in a nine-ship formation, taking off together, flying in formation and landing as a group.

Chamberlain and Bramer agreed it was fascinating to see.

"I still get goosebumps seeing that," Bramer said "That was the highlight of the training."

First Formation

Kentucky Guard welcomes new Soldiers

Story By Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Bidwell

Kentucky Recruiting & Retention Command

New privates stand in formation in front of the adjutant general and the state sergeant major for the first time. This is now a monthly occurrence in Frankfort, Kentucky. Next month at drill, the new Soldiers will be doing the job they were trained to do and working alongside fellow Citizen-Soldiers in the Kentucky Army National Guard.

They have completed the first and most challenging steps in becoming the Soldier they have worked so hard to be and now, in recognition of this accomplishment, they are at their First Formation.

As the newest Soldiers in the Kentucky Guard return home after completing their Initial Active Duty Training, they are welcomed to the team in a way. Since the inception of the Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP), these Soldiers would return to their RSP drill sites and attend what was called Gold Phase, or battle hand off.

“I learned a lot from basic training. This is going to give me better opportunities. Now I am applying for citizenship to

become a U.S. citizen. I came out as a better person,” said Pvt. Gabrielle Rondina of the 138th Field Artillery Brigade. “I am on top of my game now and I am very active, where I used to just sit at home. Now I want to keep in shape.”

Over the past few months, these newly forged Soldiers have returned to attend First Formation. At the two-day event, the goal is to gather the Soldiers from across the state who are returning from AIT to ensure they are administratively and medically ready to be handed off to their parent units. The Soldiers will complete a physical health assessment, be issued the equipment required to perform in their MOS by the Central Issuing Facility, and receive an administrative review. The event culminates with a patching ceremony where the Soldiers are welcomed by the state senior leadership, their brigade leadership, and representatives from their units.

“I feel like I can do anything now after completing basic training,” said Pvt. Autumn Dunaway with the 63rd Theater Aviation Brigade. “I am getting promoted today. I didn’t think that would be possible. It is bittersweet that I have even made it this far.”

First Formation is the newest step in the mission of RSP, providing the warriors the means to be successful.

“By taking the time to make sure these Soldiers are administratively correct, we feel like we are preparing the Soldier to hit the ground running,” said Maj. Noy Boriboune, the Recruiting and Retention Battalion’s operations officer. “Also we are trying to assist the unit Readiness and Supply NCOs as they integrate the new Soldiers to their units.”

During the patching ceremony, the distinguished honor graduates and honor graduates from BCT and AIT are recognized by state leadership.

“The patching ceremony is a great way to welcome the Soldiers to the Kentucky Guard,” said Boriboune. “It really shows them their service to our country is appreciated from the top down.”



All for the love of family and country

Guard wife named Kentucky Military Spouse of the Year

Story by Stacy Floden

Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

She's a wife, mother, volunteer, student, a children's minister and also the Kentucky National Guard Spouse of the Year. Robin Pruitt juggles many hats on a daily basis and wouldn't change her roles for the world.

"I do not know how I would do it without Google calendar! That thing is my lifeline! Our oldest is off to college, but the younger three keep us busy! Every night of the week and Saturday mornings," said Pruitt. "I love my husband and want to support him and his Soldiers. This title has nothing to do with me. This title is just a platform to be able to make a difference."

Pruitt, who has been married to her Soldier, Staff Sgt. Anthony Pruitt for ten years, volunteers as the Kentucky National Guard's RSP (Recruit & Sustainment Program) Family Readiness Group (FRG) leader, serving approximately 700 Soldiers and their families. Being involved with the Guard has given her a sense of pride and accomplishment.

"She is incredible. She goes above and beyond and makes sure we are all taken care of. She takes care of these Soldiers' families just like she takes care of her own family," said Anthony Pruitt. "She is my hero. She does an extraordinary job for the Guard. I have no idea how she does it all. I couldn't do it without her. She is well deserving of the Spouse of the Year award."

"When my husband was deployed, his unit was four hours away so I was not able to be involved with the Family Readiness Group or the get-togethers that the spouses had," Robin recalled from 2012. "I was completely miserable and alone. My family and friends tried to help, but they had no idea what I was going through. I often heard, 'I know how you feel, my husband goes out of town for work a lot' or 'you knew what you were getting into when you married a Soldier.' But the Guard is a completely different breed than active duty. We don't live on a military post, have resources in the gated community we live in, and don't have other military families that understand the lifestyle living next door."

With experience as both a National Guard and active duty spouse, Pruitt has come up with some creative initiatives to help Soldiers. "I found out there were several Soldiers not receiving care packages from family. At the time, I was a senior director with a direct sales company that shipped packages in big pink boxes. I thought it would be funny, so I sent my husband a great big pink box with goodies to share. It was a huge hit. I then developed 'Operation Pink Box' where directors in the company all over the country were adopting Soldiers to ship packages to."

Robin's innovative style of ensuring deployed Soldiers knew their families were thinking of them hasn't gone unnoticed. Kentucky Guard leadership understands and appreciates the hard work and impacts of FRGs.



"Robin is the embodiment of the Guard family," said Brig. Gen. Ben Adams, Kentucky's Land Component Commander. "Her efforts in serving not only her own family but military families across the commonwealth is truly inspiring and simply outstanding. She has a special kind of dedication and compassion that represents us well as the Kentucky National Guard Spouse of the Year."

When stationed at Fort Rucker, Alabama in 2013, Pruitt was involved in PWOC (Protestant Women of the Chapel). She attended Bible study and served on the outreach team preparing and delivering meals to families after hospital stays. "I organized 'Operation Rucker Cheer' where lower enlisted families could apply to be adopted by other families to provide Christmas to their children. My husband and I delivered Christmas to 22 families who otherwise might not have had it."

"Robin understands the sacrifices that military spouses and families make on a daily bases. Being the wife of a recruiter is not an easy assignment," said Lt. Col. Rosa Maynard, Kentucky Recruiting and Retention commander. "This takes long hours during the week as well as working several weekends a month and it is a high stress career. Due to this level of understanding on her part she is the perfect person to assist new families just starting out in the Guard. Again, the level of understanding she brings to this position is what sets her apart."

The award, started in 2008 by Military Spouse magazine, has honored military spouses nationally every year.

"I don't do anything different than any other wife and mom does. We all just love our husband and our kids, and do everything we can to support them," said Pruitt. "It's not any harder on me than it is on any other person."

Kentucky Thunder showing the way in Africa



Photos by Capt. Aaron VanSickle/ 2/138th Field Artillery

Staff Report

Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

Artillery experts from the 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery travelled to the Djibouti military base in Djibouti as part of Kentucky's State Partnership Program, Feb. 19-23.

The subject-matter-expert exchange was a follow-on event from Kentucky's last engagement with Djibouti in August, 2016.

The purpose was to assist the Djibouti Army (FAD) in expanding their current training courses in the basic principles of artillery fire. The FAD recently acquired several M-109L Howitzers and is eager to increase their expertise with this weapon system and develop an artillery program of instruction for their soldiers. Kentucky operates the M-109A6 which is similar.

"This assessment will build upon our relationship with the Djiboutians, support U.S. Security cooperation goals, and will give the Djiboutians a barometer reading on what they can do to improve their capability with the M109-L," said Maj. Jacob McKinney with the 2/138th.

"We are here to build relationships, they are critical to success of this partnership."

This assessment allowed the 2/138th to gain an understanding of the training and equipment that Djibouti has in order for them to begin working with the FAD to develop a plan for course development, principles of instruction, evaluation techniques, simulated training events, and safely conduct live fire exercises.

This engagement also focused on evaluating the status of the FAD artillery pieces, their maintenance procedures, and the ammunition that they recently received.

Leadership from both sides agreed the visit was productive and another positive step forward for the collaboration.

"This was a great event for the Djibouti military, but also for the Soldiers of the 138th," said Maj. Jamie Carta, Kentucky's State Partnership Program Manager.

"The overall goal of the State Partnership Program is to build and strengthen relationships, and that's exactly what happened here during this event."

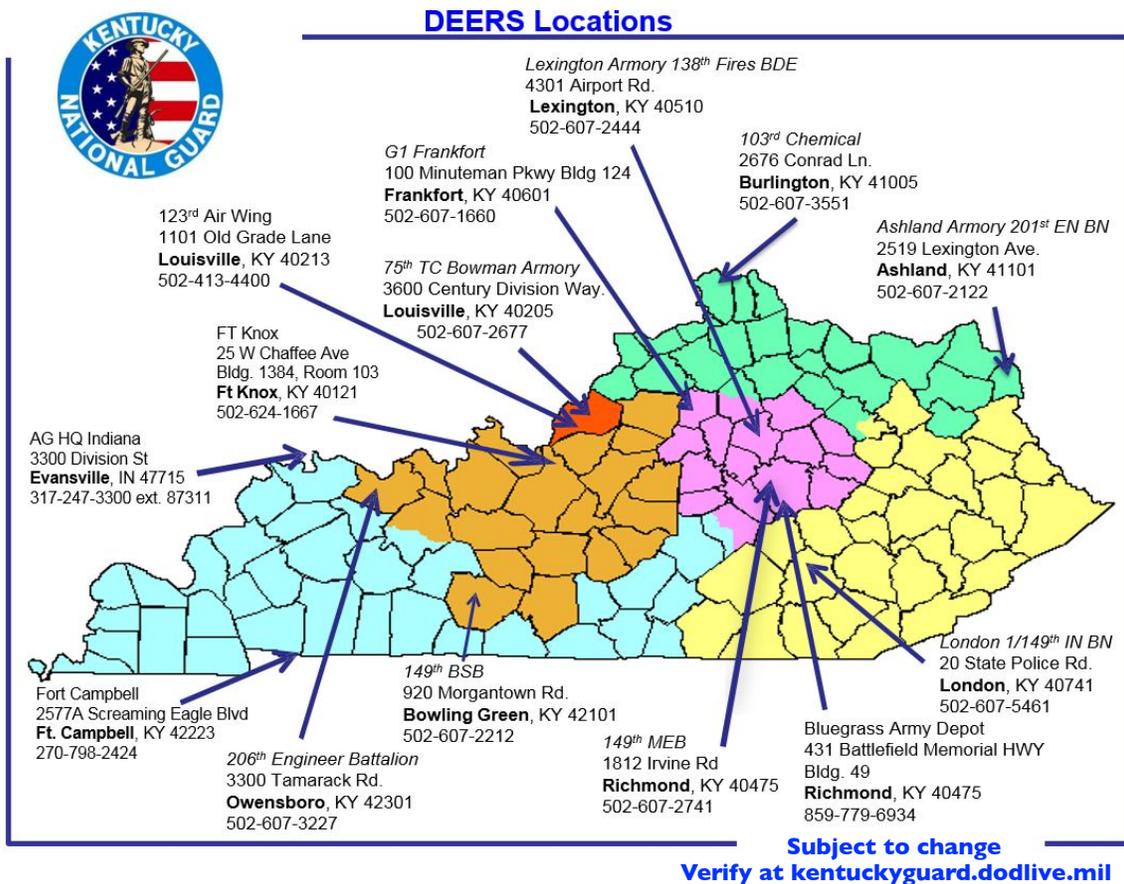


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