

Bluegrass Guard

Vol. 27, Issue 3 Aug/Sept 2024

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



**Kentucky Hosts
Region III Best Warrior
Competition p. 8**

**Field Kitchen Company
Brings Home
National Award p. 11**

UNSTOPPABLE

HOW THE BEST

STAYS THE BEST

AROUND THE GUARD



ON THE COVER - Spc. Jackie Zheng, an armorer representing the Central City-based 307th Maintenance Support Company, Kentucky Army National Guard, sprints to the finish line of the final event of the Region III Best Warrior Competition hosted by the Kentucky National Guard at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville, Kentucky, April 18, 2024. (Photo by Sgt. Destini Keene)



JFHQ - Family and friends of Lt. Col. Todd Reed, Inspector General for the Kentucky Guard, celebrated his retirement in a ceremony at the Wellman Armory auditorium and honored his 37 years of service to the military March 1, 2024. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Crane)



149th MEB - During their training in Alaska in June, four Soldiers from the 201st Engineer "Workhorse" Battalion renewed their commitment to the Commonwealth and our nation with Col. Brandy Williams officiating. (Courtesy photo)

BLUEGRASS GUARD

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138th FAB - After 43 years, 10 months, and 2 days of military service, Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Render retired June 18, 2024. He is the longest serving Soldier in the Kentucky Army National Guard's modern history. (Andy Dickson)



63rd TAB - Soldiers of Bravo Company, 2-147th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 63rd Theater Aviation Brigade, perform a helocast demonstration as a part of the Thunder Over Louisville's Air Show in Louisville, Ky., Apr. 20, 2024. A helocast is a helicopter technique used to insert personnel into an area by jumping from a helicopter into a body of water, or pulling them from a body of water using a rope ladder. (Photo by Sgt. Caleb Sooter)



75th TC - Chief Warrant Officer 4 Brian Piatt's last day in the office. The KYNG Property Book Owners had a going away party June 27. He was in the first WOCS Class for Kentucky and was great mentor that will be missed by many. (Courtesy photo)



123rd AW - More than 200 current and former members of the Kentucky Air National Guard pose in front of a 123rd Airlift Wing C-130J Super Hercules aircraft at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base on June 28, 2024, during a luncheon to celebrate the unit's heritage. The event represented more than 3,000 years of aircraft maintenance experience. (Photo by Phil Speck)



238th RTI - Kentucky officer candidates in Class 62-25 with 2nd Battalion, 238th Regiment, participated in a 6-mile ruck march at Talladega Superspeedway during their Officer Candidate School's phase 1 held at Fort McClellan, Alabama. (Courtesy photo)

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A LETTER FROM THE ADJUTANT GENERAL



Throughout Kentucky's Air and Army National Guard, we have been recognized nationally for excellence in what we do as Kentuckians.

First, India Company, 429th Brigade Support Battalion, was awarded the 56th Connelly Award for professional Army food services by the Army National Guard. This award goes out to units who have the most dedicated Soldiers in the field of food services. It takes dedication and pride in what they do to be able to even compete for the award. These Soldiers are the ones supporting our force, with wake-up hours before everyone else and then bedding down hours after the rest of the team in order to provide outstanding dining experiences in a field environment. It's a significant honor to have India Company among our ranks.

Again, showing greatness among our ranks, SGT Robert Buck, from the 130th Engineer Support Company, 206th Engineers, represented Kentucky in the Region III Best Warrior Competition, winning the competition in the NCO of the Year category, right here at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center. Robert's performance is an outstanding testament to what our NCOs are capable of.

Speaking of Kentucky engineers, we have a rich history of being recognized nationally for the work they do, to include multiple Best Engineer Platoon Leader awards and multiple Itschner Awards for best engineering company. In April, the 201st and 206th Engineer Battalions were honored by their peers with a dedication plaque, at the heart of the engineer community at Fort Leonard Wood. This plaque symbolizes exceptional service, dedication to duty and commitment to excellence. Could not be prouder of those battalions.

This year was the 80th anniversary of D-Day, when Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy and Omaha. The 123rd Airlift Wing, with its legacy rooted in supporting worldwide events, played a unique part in this year's anniversary flyover. With their state-of-the-art C-130J painted in distinctive World War II invasion stripes, Kentucky Airmen flew over France and paid tribute to the 130,000 Allied troops that stormed the beaches while D-Day veterans, some at more than 100 years old, watched from the ground.

“ Our working force is not only ready but eager to take on any challenges that come our way. ”

In a very unique situation, the Airmen of the 123rd Airlift Wing were also called to Alaska for a serious domestic mission. Members of the 165th Airlift Squadron, with help from the 123rd Logistical Readiness Squadron, loaded home-building material to remote parts of Alaska and to the communities in need. Not only did this help our Airmen train for future missions, but it bridged the gap between Kentucky and Alaska and built a sense of community in one of our most remote states in the 54.

Last, I want to give a very special congratulations to two Soldiers who characterize who we are in the Kentucky National Guard. SFC Jeremy Lowe and SSG Ryan Hunter received the Kentucky Medal for Valor for their heroism during the 2022 flooding of eastern Kentucky. Jeremy and Ryan, put their lives on the line by hoisting down from Black Hawk helicopters to rescue Kentuckians stranded by the floods. The medals were presented by Lt. Gov. Jacqueline Coleman, at the State Capitol.

All of these examples are just the tip of the iceberg of why we are the best State National Guard among the 54. Right down to the readiness of each Soldier and Airman to take on any mission at any time. Our working force is not only ready but eager to take on any challenges that come our way. While we have many unforeseen missions in the future, there is no doubt that the Kentucky National Guard stands ready to take that call.

MAJ. GEN. HAL LAMBERTON ★ ★



U.S. SENATE REPUBLICAN LEADER MITCH MCCONNELL AND GOV. ANDY BESHEAR VISIT

Story and photos by Spc. Georgia Napier, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Haldane Lamberton, the adjutant general of Kentucky, and the Kentucky National Guard hosted U.S. Senate Republican Leader Mitch McConnell and Kentucky Governor Andy Beshear May 30, 2024, for a press conference at the Army Aviation Support Facility on Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort.

With helicopters staged as the back drop, courtesy of 63rd Theater Aviation Brigade, McConnell spoke about the federal funding provided to the KYNG for the construction of two facilities--one in Frankfort and the other in Burlington--as well as funding for a multi-purpose machine gun range at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville.

"Funding for preparedness is cheaper than funding for a war," said McConnell.

McConnell has been instrumental in securing millions in federal defense funding for the KYNG.

Beshear expressed his gratitude regarding the federal funding and praised the Kentucky National Guard for their dedication to the commonwealth.

"It's about the United States of America protecting our people, supporting our troops, and ensuring that the dollars are there for our Guard," said Beshear.

The purpose of this event was to inform the public on the federal funding secured for the KYNG's readiness and effectiveness when supporting both federal and state missions.



LETTER 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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Frankfort, KY 40601

E-Mail KYNG.PAO@army.mil

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

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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All change of address requests should be made by the unit clerk using IPPSA 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 Personnel Services Branch at 502-607-1497 or email ng.ky.kyarnng.list.ky-RaDiO@army.mil

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



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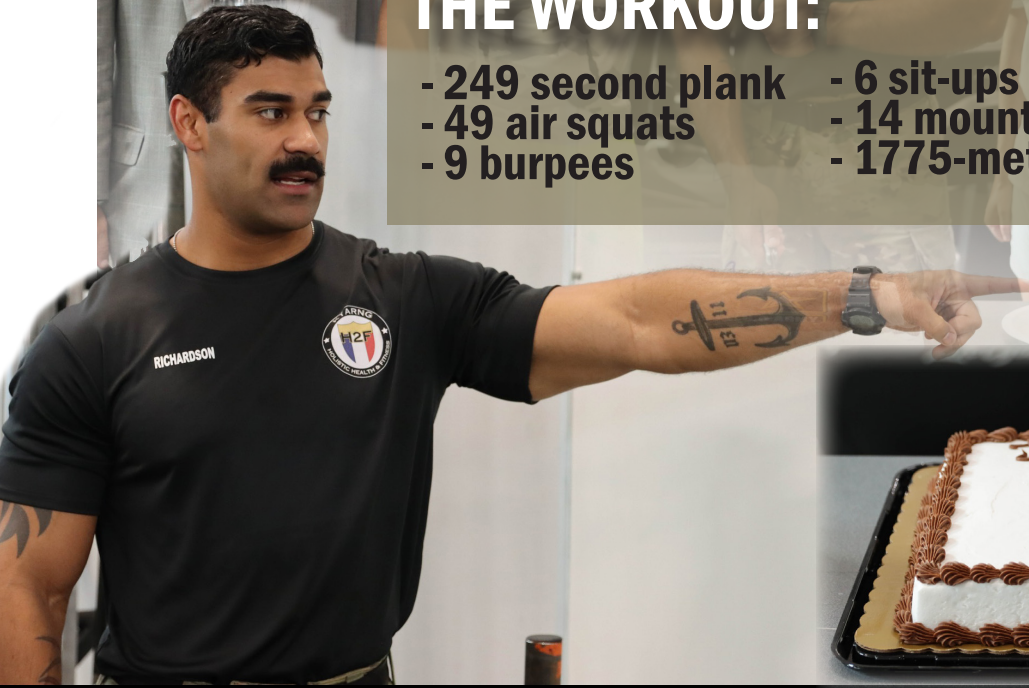
FITNESS CORNER

HAPPY 249TH BIRTHDAY, ARMY!!



THE WORKOUT:

- 249 second plank
- 49 air squats
- 9 burpees
- 6 sit-ups
- 14 mountain climbers
- 1775-meter run



**STEP UP TO SERVE.
LEAD WITH PRIDE.**

**JOIN THE KENTUCKY NATIONAL
GUARD AND BE PART OF
SOMETHING GREATER**





KENTUCKY NATIONAL GUARD SUPPORTS 150TH KENTUCKY DERBY

Story and photo by Sgt. Caleb Sooter, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

LOUISVILLE, Ky. – Soldiers of the Kentucky National Guard augmented Louisville Metro Police Department (LMPD) and Churchill Downs to assist with security and traffic for the historic 150th runnings of the Kentucky Oaks and Kentucky Derby at Churchill Downs in Louisville, Kentucky, May 4-5, 2024.

Military Police of the 149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade were positioned alongside LMPD Officers at more than 20 key intersections and checkpoints around Churchill Downs to assist traffic direction and provide additional safety, lightening the demand on local law enforcement agencies. With over 260,000 spectators in attendance, 149th MEB's presence at Churchill Downs eased the workload on local law enforcement.

“Working with the MPs is outstanding. They keep us from having to pull officers off the street. They’re all hard chargers, and they’re highly motivated,” said LMPD Lieutenant Butch Isbell. “I’m glad they keep coming back. It’s a good relationship.”

More than 100 Soldiers and Airmen assisted with the Kentucky Derby week through Oaks and Derby Day. A key part of the Kentucky Guard’s involvement is the decades-old tradition of guarding the Derby trophy.

“It really is an honor to be here and watch the trophy, the races, and meet all the people at Derby,” said Sgt. Scott Zelensky of the 940th Military Police Company. “It’s exciting that people are really happy to see us here. I’m really grateful for the opportunity.” Zelensky served as the NCOIC assigned to the trophy guard.

Soldiers assigned to the trophy detail escorted the trophy through Churchill Downs, allowing visitors to see the trophy themselves before escorting it to the winner’s circle, placing it on the podium until Governor Andy Beshear presented it to the owners of winning horse.

“It’s an honor to have the Kentucky National Guard here. We cherish that connection between Churchill Downs, the Kentucky Derby, and the soldiers of the 149th [MEB] here today,” said Mike Anderson, President of Churchill Downs Racetrack. “That’s part of our history. The fact that we can have their presence here guarding one of our most treasured assets that we give out to winners is just fantastic to us, and we look forward to doing this for a hundred and fifty more years with the Guard.”

2024 marks the 118th time the Kentucky National Guard has been involved with the Derby at Churchill Downs. The multiple agencies and organizations are confident the partnership and cooperation will only get better. The Kentucky Guard and the City of Louisville look forward to continuing the tradition at the 151st Kentucky Derby in 2025. 🍷



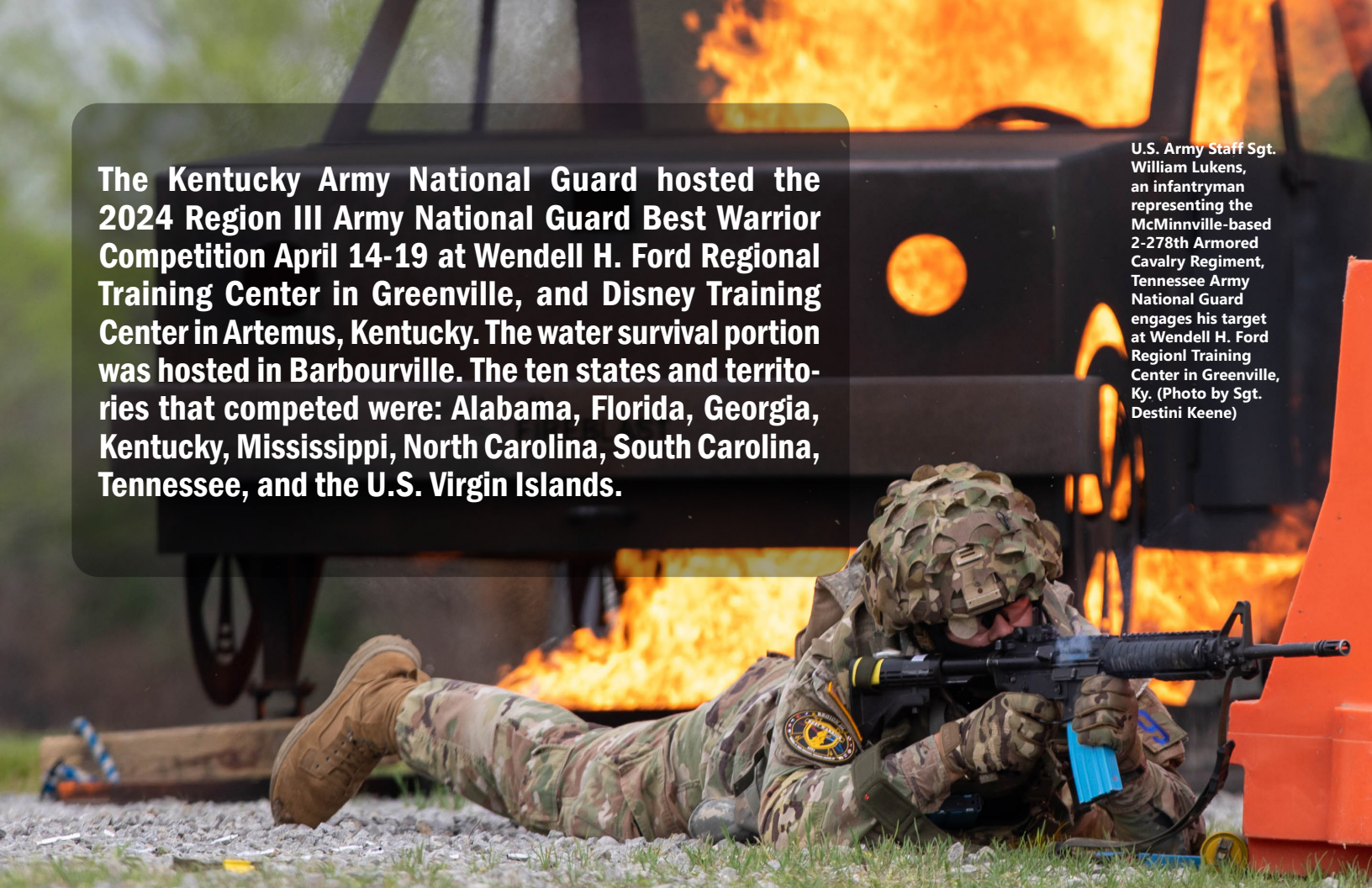
KENTUCKY GUARD FLIES IN THUNDER AIR SHOW

Story and photos by Dale Greer, 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

This year’s Thunder Over Louisville air show, held April 22 along the banks of the Ohio River, featured more than 20 military and civilian aircraft, including a C-130J Super Hercules from the Kentucky Air National Guard, which served as the base of operations for military planes flying in the show. Other highlights included the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy’s F-35 Lightning II Demonstration Teams, historic warbirds, and parachute demonstrations by the U.S. Army Golden Knights and the Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Special Tactics Squadron. 🍷

The Kentucky Army National Guard hosted the 2024 Region III Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition April 14-19 at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville, and Disney Training Center in Artemus, Kentucky. The water survival portion was hosted in Barbourville. The ten states and territories that competed were: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. William Lukens, an infantryman representing the McMinnville-based 2-278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard engages his target at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center in Greenville, Ky. (Photo by Sgt. Destini Keene)



KENTUCKY HOSTS REGION III BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION



U.S. Army Spc. Jackie Zheng, an Armorer representing the 307th Maintenance Support Company, Kentucky National Guard, demonstrates the Weaver obstacle at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center, Greenville, Ky. (Photo by Sgt. Cameron Boyd)

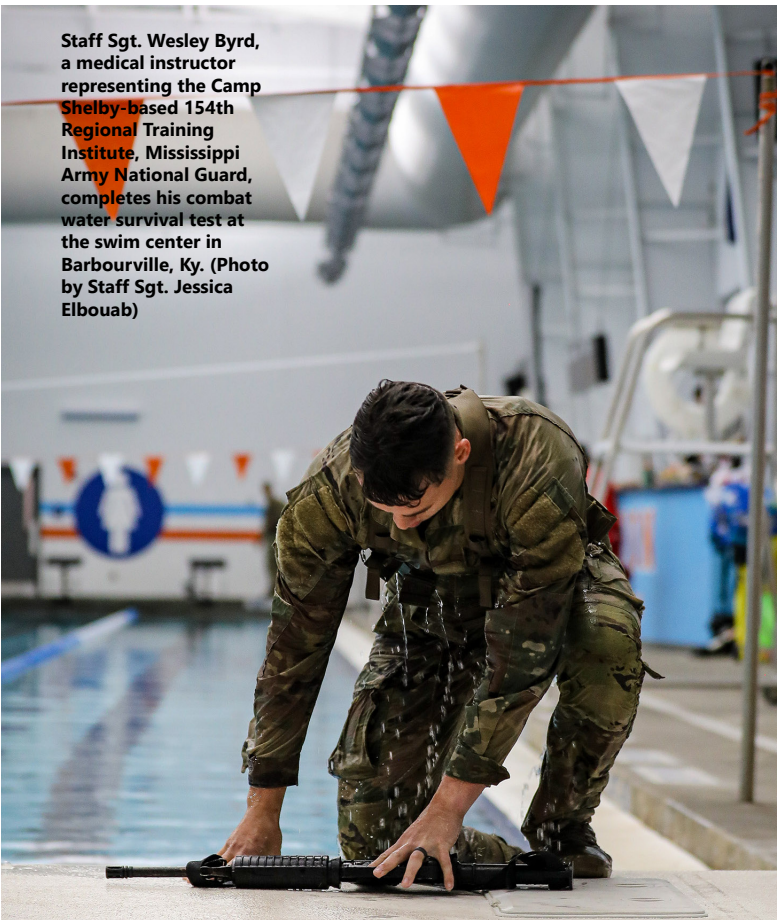


Spc. William Hillman, an air defense battle management systems operator representing the Newton-based 1-204th Air Defense Artillery, Mississippi Army National Guard conducts a series of skills with an M249 light machine gun at the Harold L. Disney Training Center in Artemus, Ky. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Elbouab)

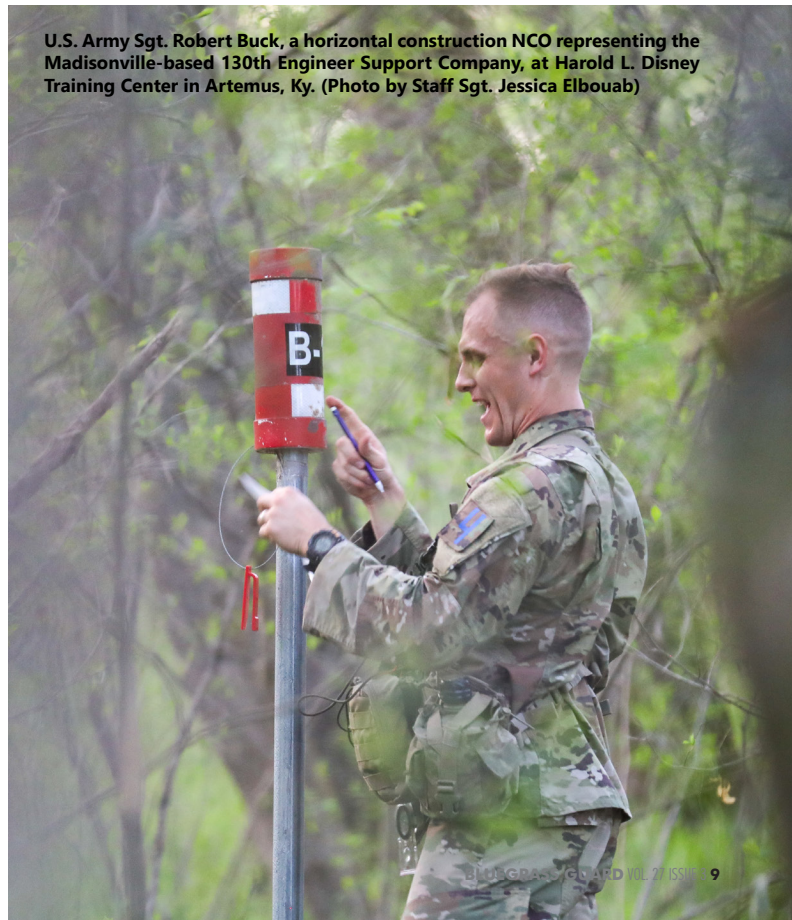
U.S. Army competitors participate in the zodiac event of the 2024 Region III Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition, at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center, Greenville, Ky. (Photo by Spc. Katlynn Pickle)



Staff Sgt. Wesley Byrd, a medical instructor representing the Camp Shelby-based 154th Regional Training Institute, Mississippi Army National Guard, completes his combat water survival test at the swim center in Barbourville, Ky. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Elbouab)



U.S. Army Sgt. Robert Buck, a horizontal construction NCO representing the Madisonville-based 130th Engineer Support Company, at Harold L. Disney Training Center in Artemus, Ky. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Jessica Elbouab)





KENTUCKY ALPHA TEAM COMPETES IN 53RD WINSTON P. WILSON SMALL ARMS CHAMPIONSHIP

Story and photos by Sgt. Destini Keene, Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

LITTLE ROCK, Ark. – Four Soldiers from the Kentucky Army National Guard competed in the 53rd Winston P. Wilson (WPW) national rifle and pistol marksmanship championship in Camp Robinson, April 27-May 3.

This event, hosted and sponsored by the National Guard Marksmanship Training Center and the 233rd Regional Training Institute Sniper Instructors, exemplifies the high-level training designed to enhance and ensure the National Guard is a lethal and ready force that is capable of addressing our nation's challenges.

There were 192 competitors that attended this year's event, making 48, four-man teams. They traveled from 44 states and territories and included U.S. allies from as far away as the Netherlands.

Throughout the week, there were 14 marksmanship events, and each marksman fired more than 600 rounds and competed on three weapon-systems.

Each team was evaluated on field firing, advanced marksmanship, and target engagement. Courses of fire tested the abilities of shooters in a number of scenarios based on both individual and team proficiency with the M9, M11, or M17 service pistol, the M16A2/A4 or M4/M4A1 assault rifle, and the M500/590 shotgun. This competition serves as a training tool for U.S. and Allied armed forces, teaching participants to maneuver and shoot in controlled chaos that mimics a battle-like environment. This setting helps teams hone their existing skills and develop new ones.

Additionally, U.S. military service members can earn Excellence in Competition (EIC) marksmanship badges and credit points toward their distinguished rifle and pistol designations in the EIC Matches during the event. The prestigious EIC Badge takes precedence over standard qualification badges.

The four Soldiers competing from Kentucky, considered 'Kentucky Alpha' team, included Sgt. 1st Class Edward Cole, Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Walton, Staff Sgt. Ben Harman, and Staff Sgt. Adam Brown.



During the 'know your limits' event, the members of Kentucky Alpha demonstrated remarkable agility and precision as they navigated through the challenge. Advancing from an undisclosed starting point to the firing line with determination, they adeptly adjusted to the unknown distances and swiftly adopted the required firing positions. Despite the time constraints and the pressure to engage their assigned targets within 60 seconds, the team remained composed and focused, showcasing their exceptional marksmanship skills.

Their strategic approach and proficiency led them to secure an impressive third place overall in the 'know your limits' event, showcasing their readiness and skill in high-pressure situations.

Brown and Cole received the Chief's 50 Marksmanship Badge for outstanding marksmanship abilities during the competition.

"I am surprised yet honored to have earned this badge," said Brown. "This is a great accomplishment for myself, and I can't wait to take back everything I have learned that earned me the badge and mentor my Soldiers."

Cole, captain of Kentucky Alpha and two-time honoree of the Chief's 50, shared his insights on the team's experience at the competition.

"Not only does participating in the WPW allow us (the team) the chance to dial in our marksmanship skills," said Cole, "but, each event provides us different feedback to take back to our state. This feedback is crucial for enhancing our training programs, and that increases our retention and lethality. Soldiers who excel in marksmanship often feel more valued and motivated to continue serving, leading to higher retention rates, and increased overall lethality for our state."



Soldiers with India Company, 429th Bridge Support Battalion, received the Phillip A. Connelly Award during an awards dinner at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago May 17, 2024. They joined other food service professionals from every branch of the military who were also receiving awards for being the top of their branch's food service units.

56TH CONNELLY AWARD GOES TO KENTUCKY

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st. Class Benjamin Crane, 75th Troop Command Public Affairs

CHICAGO – The Soldiers of India Company, 429th Brigade Support Battalion joined other food service professionals from every branch of the military for an awards banquet held at the Palmer House Hotel, May 17.

India Company's field kitchen Soldiers took home the Phillip A. Connelly Award as the Army National Guard's Field Kitchen winner for their excellence in Army Food Service.

Present during the ceremony was the commander of the 75th Troop Command, Col. Jason Penn, and the command sergeant major, Command Sgt. Maj. Benzie Timberlake.

The brigade's leaders were happy to be able to attend the dinner and show to support for their accomplishment.

"Competition is a critical component of Army culture," said Penn. "It drives individuals and units at all echelons to enhance their craft. The company's ability to compete and win the prestigious national Connelly Award is a testament to their willingness to move outside their comfort zone and ability to seek consistent improvement, as well as being evidence of their excellence."

The Phillip A. Connelly Program is the personification of food service excellence executed by culinary specialists resulting in the presentation of extremely gratifying dining experiences across all Army food service platforms in garrison and field environments.

"I am proud of what these Soldiers have accomplished, but I am even more proud to serve them. This wasn't easy for them, they had to get out of their comfort zone and take some risks. I was so amazed to see them go after the objective, trying new things and figuring out how to complete the task; These Soldiers are true warriors," said 1st Sgt. Casey Lindsay, first sergeant for I Co.

The same sentiments were echoed from the unit's commander.

"It is a profound honor to win this competition," said Capt. Nathaniel Brashear. "The dedication and hard work these Soldiers have demonstrated reflect their commitment to excellence. This competition has not only enhanced their



Capt. Nathaniel Brashear and 1st Sgt. Casey Lindsay, commander and first sergeant hold the Phillip A. Connelly Award that their unit had received at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago May 17, 2024.

proficiency but also significantly expanded their creativity."

"This competition has been a remarkable victory for I Co.," he said. "The cooks poured their hearts and souls into it, but the triumph belongs to all the Soldiers of I Co. This win would not have been possible without everyone's contribution. I am incredibly proud to serve alongside such an outstanding team."

The dinner is an annual event that is put on by the National Restaurant Association and this is the first time a Kentucky unit has won and attended the prestigious event.



The leadership team from the 75th Troop Command, Col. Jason Penn, and Command Sgt. Maj. Benzie Timberlake, pose with representatives from India Company and the Phillip A. Connelly trophy at the Palmer House Hotel in Chicago, May 17, 2024.

KENTUCKY AIR GUARD AIRLIFTS BUILDING MATERIALS FOR HOUSING IN THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

Story by Airman 1st Class Annaliese Billings, 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE ELMENDORF-RICHARDSON, Alaska - More than 20 Airmen from the Kentucky Air National Guard deployed in April to airlift 15 tons of home-building materials to the North Slope of Alaska to support communities in need.

The mission, which enables the construction of affordable housing in the Arctic Circle, was part of a Defense Department program called Innovative Readiness Training that provides service members with real-world deployment experience while offering lasting benefits to civilian populations, explained Maj. Nick Dobson, a pilot from Kentucky's 165th Airlift Squadron.

"Right now we're on track to save roughly \$1.4 million in transportation expenses for three building locations — a duplex in Nuiqsut, a duplex in Kaktovik and a single-family home in Wainwright," Dobson said.

Airmen from the Kentucky Air Guard began developing load plans in November, with aerial porters analyzing the composition of building materials to ensure they met military airlift requirements. Those materials — including insulation, bathtubs, electrical wiring and drywall — were then trucked from Palmer, Alaska, for staging before aerial porters from Kentucky's 123rd Logistics Readiness Squadron palletized the cargo in mid-April.

In the final step of the operation, aircrews from the 165th Airlift Squadron flew the cargo aboard a Kentucky Air Guard C-130J Super Hercules aircraft to Deadhorse, Alaska, where Kentucky aerial porters offloaded the supplies.

Master Sgt. Charles Wilding, air transportation superintendent for the 123rd LRS, said the mission was a valuable training experience for his troops.

"Opportunities like this ensure we have the time and missions to properly accomplish training," Wilding said. "Getting the chance to help villages on the North Slope was also extraordinary — definitely a highlight of my career."

Guard members of all ranks honed their skills during the mission, from cargo reception, palletizing and netting, to load planning, staging and uploading, said Senior Airman Colton Edlin, an air transportation specialist from the 123rd LRS.

One unique scheme used in Alaska was Combat Offload Method B, typically employed only in austere locations where specialized cargo-handling equipment like K-loaders are unavailable.

Using this method, Kentucky Airmen carefully rolled palletized cargo off the aircraft and onto steel barrels resting on their sides on the flight line. This technique requires precision, patience and communication between crew members, Edlin said, giving aerial porters enhanced expeditionary

skills.

"The fact that we flew with the cargo and we used method B offloading was what made the mission unique for the aerial port, because I had never done either of those things before," Edlin said. "I'm glad to have had the opportunity."

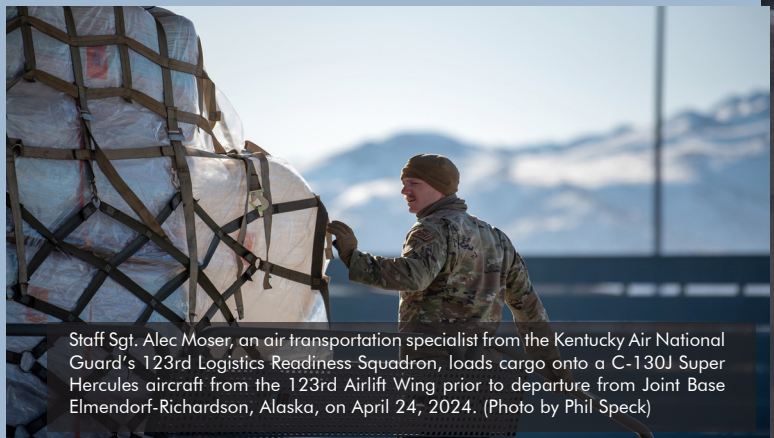
The mission proved equally valuable for aircrews, Dobson said. Pilots operated from austere locations and had to navigate a blizzard with significantly reduced visibility and severely high winds. That necessitated interaction with National Weather Service meteorologists to formulate a plan that allowed them to transport cargo while adapting to harsh conditions.

"Aircrew members got great training out of this because they were flying on gravel runways in remote locations while operating and performing combat offloads," Dobson said.

Innovative Readiness Training normally supports civil engineering projects or medical care, Dobson added. This mission, however, marked the first time that IRT was paired with Mission Readiness Airlift to transport goods for the civilian sector.

The effort was designed to help alleviate a shortage of affordable housing on the North Slope, where transportation expenses often account for 60 percent of the cost of a new home, Dobson said. The Tagiugmiullu Nunamiullu Housing Authority currently has a backlog of 430 single-family homes that can't be built affordably.

Master Sgt. Corey Ciarlante, an air transportation specialist with the 123rd LRS, said the IRT provided experience he couldn't get at home station, substantially enhancing his ability to perform his job in deployed environments for



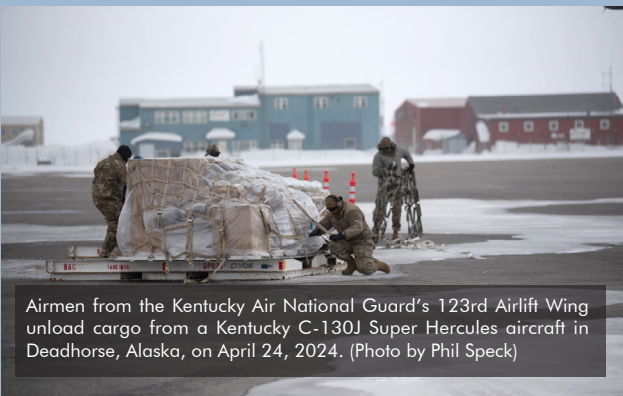
Staff Sgt. Alec Moser, an air transportation specialist from the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Logistics Readiness Squadron, loads cargo onto a C-130J Super Hercules aircraft from the 123rd Airlift Wing prior to departure from Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, on April 24, 2024. (Photo by Phil Speck)

real-world taskings.

"This IRT mission provided critical five- and seven-level training to members to ensure mission readiness and effectiveness while also enhancing our job knowledge and proficiency while forcing us to think outside the box to build up complex cargo," Ciarlante said. "This mission was unique for us as an aerial port due to all the limiting factors we faced, such as method B offloading, which I have never seen before in my 13-year career."

For Airman 1st Class Elijah Stansberry, the mission also provided a great deal of personal satisfaction.

"It feels great that we were able to help out people who are in need of homes, especially in such harsh weather," said Stansberry, an aerial porter with the 123rd LRS. "trip with the port, so this was something I've never done before, and I was honored to do it."



Airmen from the Kentucky Air National Guard's 123rd Airlift Wing unload cargo from a Kentucky C-130J Super Hercules aircraft in Deadhorse, Alaska, on April 24, 2024. (Photo by Phil Speck)

“OPPORTUNITIES LIKE THIS ENSURE WE HAVE THE TIME AND MISSIONS TO PROPERLY ACCOMPLISH TRAINING. GETTING THE CHANCE TO HELP VILLAGES ON THE NORTH SLOPE WAS ALSO EXTRAORDINARY — DEFINITELY A HIGHLIGHT OF MY CAREER.”

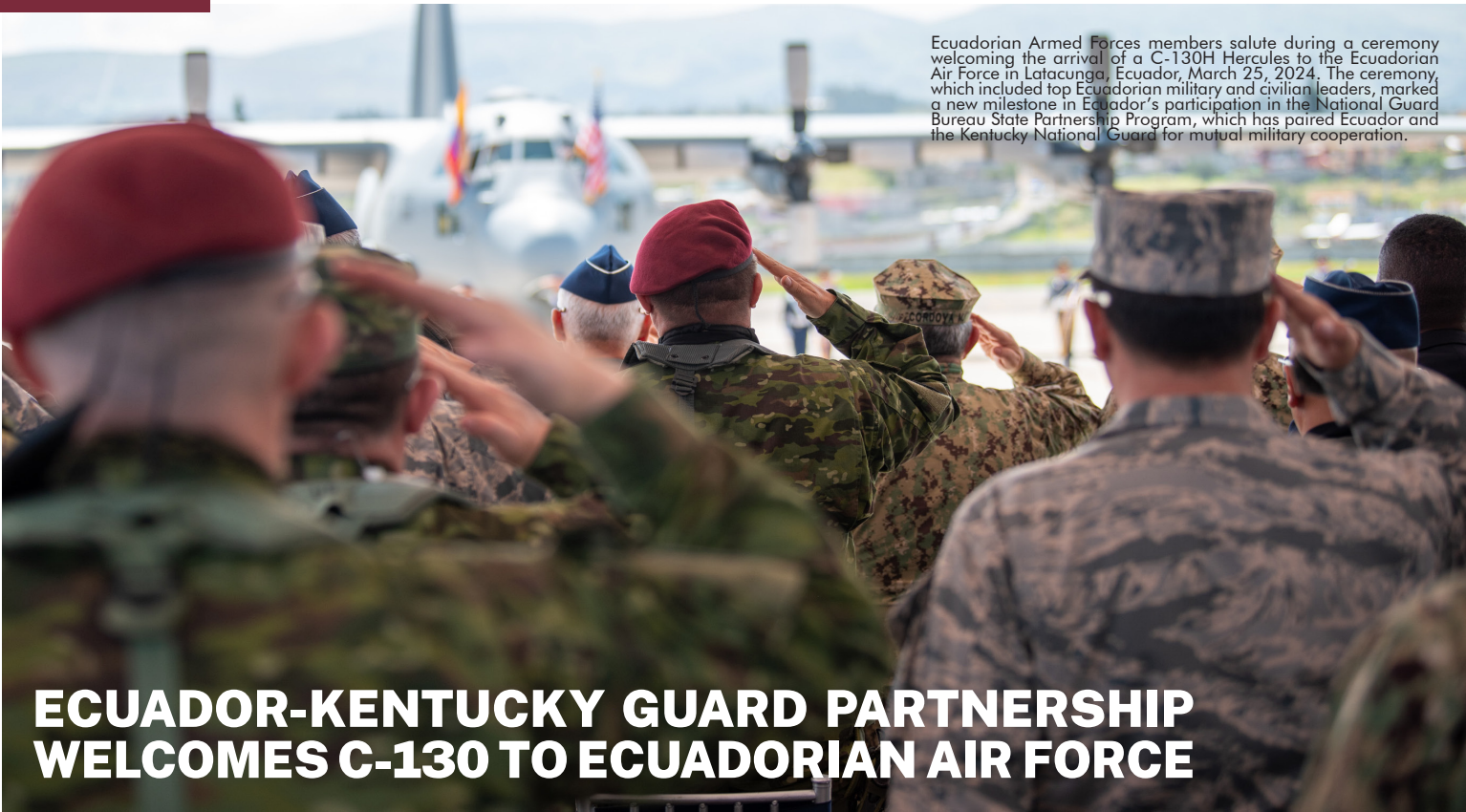
- MASTER SGT. CHARLES WILDING



Airmen from the Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Airlift Wing unload pallets of cargo under blizzard conditions during an engine-running offload from a Kentucky C-130J Super Hercules aircraft in Deadhorse, Alaska, on April 26, 2024. The cargo consists of construction materials to build homes for civilians as part of Innovative Readiness Training, a Defense Department program that provides service members with real-world deployment experience while offering lasting benefits to civilian populations. (Photo by Phil Speck)



Ecuadorian Armed Forces members salute during a ceremony welcoming the arrival of a C-130H Hercules to the Ecuadorian Air Force in Latacunga, Ecuador, March 25, 2024. The ceremony, which included top Ecuadorian military and civilian leaders, marked a new milestone in Ecuador's participation in the National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program, which has paired Ecuador and the Kentucky National Guard for mutual military cooperation.



ECUADOR-KENTUCKY GUARD PARTNERSHIP WELCOMES C-130 TO ECUADORIAN AIR FORCE

Story and photos by Phil Speck, 123th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

LATACUNGA, Ecuador -- The Ecuadorian Air Force welcomed a C-130H Hercules into its inventory here March 25 during a ceremony attended by leadership from the Kentucky Air National Guard, who were on hand to congratulate their State Partnership Program colleagues on the new capability.

The State Partnership Program is a cooperative military-to-military exchange effort administered by the National Guard Bureau that facilitates cooperation between U.S. National Guard units and foreign allies, fostering enhanced understanding across all aspects of civil and military affairs. The Kentucky National Guard has been partners with Ecuador since 1996.

"The arrival of this C-130H marks not only a tremendous increase to Ecuador's air mobility capability, but also a tangible representation of the commitment of the United States to a very close partner in pursuit of the values of democracy and the dignity of human rights around the world," said U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. David Mounkes, the Kentucky National Guard's assistant adjutant general for Air.

"We look forward to a continued strong partnership with Ecuador in the years ahead. I am very honored, at a professional and personal level, to be a part of this momentous event today. It is a pleasure to work with such a dedicated organization of the caliber of the Ecuadorian military."

Also in attendance were Ecuadorian President Daniel Noboa; U.S. Ambassador to Ecuador Michael Fitzpatrick; Ecuadorian Minister of Defense Giancarlo Loffred; Brig. Gen. Geovanny Espinel, commander of the Ecuadorian Air Force; and many other civilian and military officials.

1st Lt. Jason Sanderson, director of plans and requirements for the Kentucky Air National Guard, said Kentucky's partnership with Ecuador is a good match, especially in the area of airlift.

"The fact that our partner nation is receiving a C-130H, and we have a flying wing that also flew the C-130H, means we have subject matter expertise," Sanderson said. "One of the things I think we can help with, is using our experience from our scheduled maintenance programs and how to manage that along with a viable flying schedule."

The C-130H was delivered by a private company from Portugal and is a retired U.S. Air Force aircraft built in 1974. This will be the first C-130 for Ecuador, which currently flies the L-100, a civilian variant. The aircraft was part of the DoD's Excess Defense Articles program, which transfers unutilized equipment to foreign governments to help modernize partner

forces.

Ecuador plans to deploy the aircraft for domestic operations and humanitarian assistance, including counter-narcotics, control of illegal fishing, troop drops, and resupply missions employing aerial delivery to remote jungle settings.

Ecuador has its own aircrew and maintenance training program, but it also partners with the Colombian Air Force for training. Some Ecuadorian Air Force maintenance officers have attended the U.S. Air Force Academy and the maintenance officer course at Sheppard Air Force Base, Texas.



Scan here to read the rest of the story



Ecuador President Daniel Noboa speaks during a ceremony welcoming the arrival of a C-130H Hercules to the Ecuadorian Air Force in Latacunga, Ecuador, March 25, 2024. The ceremony marked a new milestone in Ecuador's participation in the National Guard Bureau State Partnership Program.

POLITICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES

FOR NATIONAL GUARDSMEN

CAN

Express your opinions and participate in peaceful **non-partisan** public demonstrations when **OFF-DUTY** and **NOT** in uniform.

CAN'T

Engage in **partisan political activity** or act in a manner that could imply military approval or disapproval of any political party, campaign, or candidate in a partisan election.

Actively participate in a public demonstration that is **organized by a political party, campaign, or candidate**.

Actively participate in a public demonstration that is **likely to become violent** or a breach of the peace.

MUST

Follow all orders and directives about specific activities that may be issued by appropriate civil and military authorities or found in the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

SHOULD

Review **Department Of Defense Directive 1344.10**, **Department of Defense Instruction 1325.06** and **Army and Air Regulations** for basic guidance concerning participation in protests and other political activities.

FOR GUARD CIVILIANS

CAN

Express your opinions and participate in peaceful non-partisan public demonstrations when **OFF-DUTY** and **NOT** wearing an official uniform or identifying badge.

CAN'T

Engage in a political activity in a manner that could imply Guard approval or disapproval of any political party, campaign, or candidate in a partisan election.

MUST

Follow all orders and directives that may be issued by appropriate civil authorities.

SHOULD

Review the provisions of the Hatch Act of 1939 (5 U.S. Code Sections 7321-7326) and Office of Special Counsel guidance concerning permitted and prohibited political activities.

SOCIAL

CAN

Traditional Guardsmen can share/retweet, but must do so when not in a duty status, and must not infer or otherwise convey military sponsorship, approval or endorsement. Recommend you clearly and prominently state the views expressed are of those of the individual and not of the DoD.

Donate money, sign petitions, and express your personal opinion when you are off-duty and not in an official capacity.

Be wise and remember you are representing the guard whether on- or off-duty.

CAN'T

Guardsmen may not comment, post or link to material that shows contempt toward a public official or candidate for public office, release sensitive information or unprofessional material prejudicial to good order and discipline.

THINK, TYPE, POST!

THINK about the message being communicated and who could potentially view it.

TYPE a communication that is consistent with Army Values.

POST only those messages that demonstrate dignity and respect for self and others.

RESOURCES

<https://osc.gov/Services/Pages/HatchAct.aspx>

<https://osc.gov/Documents/Hatch%20Act/Advisory%20Opinions/Federal/Social%20Media%20Guidance.pdf>

<https://www.esd.whs.mil/Portals/54/Documents/DD/issuances/dodd/134410p.pdf>

<http://www.army.mil/socialmedia/soldiers>

MEDIA

CAN

Post, share, or link to material from a partisan political party, group, or candidate, when off-duty and not in a government building, but not to subordinates.

Friend, follow, and like a political candidate when off-duty and not in a government building.

Identify a political affiliation on a personal social media profile.

CAN'T

Post partisan political articles, websites, or political cartoons, memes, or gifs while on-duty, leave, or using a government computer, including on a personal device, during your duty hours.

Refer to your official title or position while engaged in political activity on social media.

Suggest or ask anyone to make financial contributions whether on- or off-duty and whether or not using an alias.

Link to the political contribution page of any partisan group, or like, share, or retweet a solicitation, including an invitation to a fundraising event.

Engage in political activity on an account that is used for official business.

WELCOME HOME!!!

to the 138th Field Artillery Brigade

138th Field Artillery Brigade "Kentucky Thunder" came back from their nine month deployment to the Southwest Asia region and were welcomed home by family and friends at the Blue Grass Airport in Lexington, May 25, 2024.



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Wilhoit

LEADERSHIP PROFILE:

LONGEST-SERVING KY ARMY GUARD MEMBER RETIRES FROM MILITARY SERVICE

Story and photos by Andy Dickson, Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

A senior enlisted leader, with the 103rd Brigade Support Battalion 138th Field Artillery Brigade, recently retired as the longest serving Soldier in the Kentucky Army National Guard during a ceremony in Harrodsburg, Kentucky, June 18, 2024.

Command Sgt. Maj. Robert C. Render is officially set to retire on July 30, 2024, with 43 years and over 10 months of military service to include being a full-time technician since 2008.

Render began service in 1980, when most of his drill sergeants were all very “old school” in their mentality. Since then, he said he has seen a vast change in the people of the force.

“I’ve really enjoyed what I have done throughout my service,” said Render. “When I entered service in 1980, it was a completely different Army than what it is now. My drill sergeants were Vietnam veterans who are all retired now.”

Lt. Col. Esther Platt, the commander of the 103rd BSB, presented several awards to Render on behalf of the battalion.

As outgoing gifts and awards, Render was awarded the Kentucky Distinguished Service Medal, a framed coat of arms for the 103rd, a decorated command sergeant major



shadow box, and personalized barrel end in his honor.

Command Sgt. Maj. Darrell Brookins was on hand as the guest speaker for his retirement ceremony.

“On behalf of all the sergeants major across the Kentucky Army National Guard, we appreciate your many years of service as the longest currently serving Soldier, both officer and enlisted,” said Brookins.

“I have many people to thank, but I really want to thank my wife, Teresa,” said Render. “She has been through 37 years of this, always supportive.”

Render plans to spend retirement with his grandsons and move to be closer to them.





Lt. Col. Dale Greer captured this image of a C-130J Super Hercules assigned to the 123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, deploying flares as part of an aerial demonstration during the Thunder Over Louisville air show and fireworks display in Louisville, Kentucky, April 20, 2024. This photo was featured on the Department of Defense Facebook page and was voted top Guard photo from April with the most hits across platforms.

IN THE SPOTLIGHT



PHOTO BY LT. COL. DALE GREER

Ecuador's special forces unite with Kentucky Guardsmen in urban warfare exchange

Story and photos by Capt. Cody Stagner, Kentucky National Guard Public Affairs

LATACUNGA, Ecuador — In a demonstration of international collaboration and shared learning, four infantry Soldiers from the Kentucky Army National Guard recently engaged in a subject matter expert exchange with 18 members of the Ecuadorian special forces in Latacunga, Ecuador, from March 18-22, 2024.

This initiative, as part of the Kentucky National Guard State Partnership Program, aimed to enhance military tactics in urban environments through an interagency and international relationship-building effort.

Col. Gustavo Iturralde, the commander of the 9th Special Forces "Patria" Brigade (BFE) of the Ecuadorian Army, welcomed the 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry "Mountain Warriors" on their SPP engagement in Ecuador.

Iturralde conveyed to the U.S. troops, "There's a significant reason behind your visit here."

He explained that a recent security crisis led to military action at several prisons, including one at Cotopaxi, across from the brigade's base.

"This is not their typical mission," Iturralde said about their intervention at these prisons.

The BFE, based in Latacunga, is known for training their Army's airborne paratroopers that specialize as frogmen, commandos, operational free jumpers, snipers, dog guides, and those in mountain warfare operations.

Ecuadorian Capt. Israel Niveló, operations officer for the 25th Special Forces Group, explained the significance of urban operations in Ecuador.



Kentucky engineers host Djiboutian leaders during annual training

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class Andy Dickson, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

In a dynamic exchange of expertise and camaraderie and sponsored by the Kentucky National Guard State Partnership Program (SPP), engineers from the Kentucky Army National Guard welcomed their counterparts from the Djibouti Armed Forces (DAF) during the unit's annual training event at Camp Dodge, in May 2024.

The 206th Engineer Battalion, part of the 149th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade showcased how they set up a battalion-sized command post and conduct a field training exercise (FTX). The DAF officers, with aspirations to form their own engineer battalion, observed established practices of the Kentucky engineers while gaining insights on command and control, logistics, personnel accountability, operations, and communication.

In addition, the DAF officers met with U.S. Army Lt. Col. Jonathan Gensley, the commander of the 206th, to learn the purpose and responsibilities of the battalion commander and how a commander interacts with his staff.



Scan here to read the rest of the story



Joint Training Mission 'Real Deal'

Story and photos by Spc. Georgia Napier, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The Kentucky Army National Guard Bravo Co 2-147 Assault Helicopter Battalion (AHB), U.S. Marine Corps Reserves Alpha Company 4th Law Enforcement Battalion, and Kentucky Air National Guard 123rd Airlift Wing conducted Joint Training Mission 'Real Deal' in Frankfort, April 13, 2024.

The objective of the mission was to plan, train, and execute an air assault with a realistic ground force. Aviators from the KYARNG transported Marines on five UH-60 Black Hawks from the Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort, Kentucky, to Camp Atterbury - Muscatatuck in Edinburg, Indiana. Following the completion of their ground assault, the Marines were transported back to Boone Center by the aviators. The mission highlighted the coordination and operational capabilities of the units involved.

"We get to see their tactical advantage that they (Marines) want to do. It's good to learn that so we can use their tactical advantage with our helicopters to learn what other groups like to do as an assault company. We get to use the information for future training," said Sgt. Tanner Hamm, B. Co., 2-147 AHB.



FROM THE CHAPLAIN

LIFE SUPPORT

<p>Chaplain (Col.) Bill Draper State Chaplain KYARNG 502-607-1729 william.c.draper6.mil@army.mil</p>	<p>Chaplain (Maj.) Eric Honeycutt Brigade Support Chaplain KYARNG 502-607-1232 james.e.honeycutt.mil@army.mil</p>
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By Chaplain (Maj.) Greg Granderson,
63rd Theater Aviation Brigade

DEDICATION & DISCIPLINE

On June 24th, 2024, the Kentucky National Guard celebrated its 232nd birthday. As I sat amongst fellow Soldiers and Airmen in Louisville, Kentucky, at the Air Wing to commemorate this momentous occasion, looking back on two centuries of remarkable history; it dawned on me that the Kentucky Guard in late 2023 was awarded the Association of The United States Army Trophy for the best National Guard Command. Like a fine wine, the Kentucky Guard gets better with time!

From a humble but ambitious militia during the Civil War era, to the tenacious titan of state and national support and protection it is today, our old Kentucky home exemplifies excellence and what it means to be the best. But what does that mean exactly? And what does it take to be the best? It starts with comprehending our Army Values: Duty, Loyalty, Honor, Respect, Selfless Service, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Once these values are understood and absorbed within our mind, there are two ingredients to embody them within our character DNA, and they are personal dedication and discipline. These are what it will take to communicate these values consistently. It's one thing to know them, but it is something else entirely to demonstrate these values.

In addition, the Kentucky Guard as an organization communicates these values at the highest level. What this means, is there are a substantial number of individuals that have allowed these values to permeate throughout their lives, and this certainly takes tremendous dedication and discipline. Because it starts with us, it is important to encourage each other in remembering to execute these values to the best of our abilities. This makes us the best, the consistent reminder to find every opportunity to illustrate our values. The old saying, "practice makes perfect" resonates here.

We live in a culture where those values will be challenged, and the pressure to compromise is seemingly overwhelming. But this is the time to reach out to resources that will help us get back or stay on track. The Kentucky Chaplain Corp stands at the ready to meet you right where you are, encouraging the spiritual dedication and discipline it takes for you to continue to be your absolute best.

A thank you to all our Kentucky Guard and Airmen for your dedicated service and commitment to excellence. Congratulations on being the best and Always a Leader!

CHAPLAIN TATE SAYS!!!

BE BOLD AND COURAGEOUS IN THE PURSUIT OF EXCELLENCE. BE DEDICATED AND DISCIPLINED IN SUSTAINING YOUR MENTAL, PHYSICAL, SPIRITUAL AND SOCIAL HEALTH. SURROUND YOURSELF WITH PEOPLE THAT WILL KEEP YOU SHARP AND HOLD YOU ACCOUNTABLE.

GREG GRANDERSON PROVERBS 27:17



THE LAST WORD

TO READ THE FULL VERSION OF THESE STORIES, SCAN QR CODE OR GO TO KY.NG.MIL



Enhancing readiness, building relationships in Alaska

Story courtesy of the 201st Engineer Battalion

CORDOVA, Alaska – The 201st Engineer "Workhorse" Battalion made significant strides in enhancing their readiness and building valuable relationships through their participation in the Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program in Cordova, June 2024.

This initiative, spearheaded by the National Guard Bureau (NGB), allowed local communities and non-profit organizations to seek military support to address various needs.

This IRT program focused on medical and engineering missions. In it, the Soldiers of the 207th Engineer Construction Company (ECC) were tasked with building a road for the Native Village of the Eyak Tribe in Cordova.

The IRT mission proved beneficial for all parties. The Soldiers of the 207th ECC gained hands-on experience performing in their military occupational specialties (MOS), while the town of Cordova received a much-needed road to improve the infrastructure and quality of life for its villagers.

This mission highlights the impact of military service on community development and showcases the practical benefits of such collaborations.



It's missions like these that contribute to a higher job satisfaction among our Soldiers," said Sgt. 1st Class Arthur Fletcher, the 207th ECC readiness noncommissioned officer. "This AT has been great for morale, and I believe it has impacted the likelihood of Soldiers to extend."

According to Fletcher, this IRT opportunity boosted retention by providing their engineers with valuable experiences they will never forget. It fostered a stronger sense of purpose while helping a community just by doing jobs related to their MOS.

Amidst the construction efforts near Sheridan Glacier Lake, fourteen Soldiers from the 201st signed extension contracts.

Through their participation in the IRT program, the 201st exemplified dedication, hard work, military readiness, and community service.

Kentucky Guard Attends Leader Engagement with Djibouti



Story and photo by Maj. Michael Reinersman, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Kentucky National Guard senior leadership arrived in Djibouti to celebrate 47 years of Independence during a key leader engagement June 25-27.

Kentucky leadership attended Djibouti's Independence Day parade and met with Djiboutian and Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) leaders as part of the State Partnership Program (SPP).

"The parade was well organized and ran very smoothly. It was great to attend their 47th Independence Day celebration," said Army Maj. Gen. Haldane Lamberton, adjutant general of Kentucky. "I'm hoping other Guardsmen get the opportunity to attend the independence or the military day parade in the future."

Lamberton and Army Command Sgt. Maj. Jesse Withers met with both General Taher Ali Mohamed, Djiboutian Armed Forces (FAD) Chief of Staff, and Col. Fouad Elmi Waiss, Commander of Central Material, to discuss future military engagements between the two forces.

The meeting at the FAD International Relations Building allowed conversations for continuity of military-to-military events. They covered a range of topics, including crisis management response to flooding and earthquakes, Military Occupational Specialty functional area engagements and the development of a multiyear agenda. Additionally, they evaluated previous engagements and discussed the practicality of Guard units conducting Annual Training events with participants from FAD in Djibouti.

All leaders believe these discussions are crucial for enhancing military cooperation and preparedness.

"The Kentucky National Guard's State Partnership Program with Djibouti began in 2015 and has proven itself to be an efficient and economical program for developing partner capacity," said U.S. Army Maj. Eric Green, a bilateral affairs officer for the KYNG SPP.

CJTF-HOA operates under U.S Africa Command (USAFRICOM). The SPP supports combatant commanders and chief of mission security cooperation objectives and DOD policy goals.

"We want to build relationships at all levels," said Green.



Kentucky National Guard celebrates 232nd birthday

Story and photo by Dale Greer, 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs

June 24th marks the 232nd birthday of the Kentucky National Guard, which was formed by Gov. Isaac Shelby as one his first official acts in 1792. On Thursday, dozens of Soldiers and Airmen gathered here to celebrate the occasion and look back over the past two centuries.

"I think the greatest component of the U.S. military resides in the National Guard, and in particular, in our state's National Guard from across all the 54 states and territories," said U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Haldane Lambertson, adjutant general of the Kentucky National Guard.

Lambertson noted that the Army and Air National Guard are now essential components to America's military, playing a role in virtually every major operation undertaken by the Department of Defense.

"I'm proud to be a part of the Kentucky National Guard, and I very much salute each one of you for your service to the state and nation," he told the audience, gathered at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base.

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. David Mounkes, Kentucky's assistant adjutant general for Air, spoke about early limitations on National Guard units, which were federally mustered by Congress as state militias under the authority of the Militia Act of 1792.

The result was that, for about four months, Kentucky had two adjutant generals. Thousands of troops occupying Frankfurt were split into two groups — one loyal to Beckham, and the other loyal to Taylor.

Eventually, in May, Taylor conceded the election after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of Beckham.

Kentucky Wildcats host MREP Soldier

Story and photo by Capt. Kaitlin Baudendistel, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



Over the last few weeks, the 2nd Battalion, 138th Field Artillery Battalion hosted Lieutenant Andreas Märtson, a signal officer from Estonia, through the Military Reserve Exchange Program (MREP). Previously a professional basketball player in Estonia, Märtson got to visit the Joe Craft Center on the University of Kentucky's campus during the cultural outing day, June 20th.

while visiting, Märtson and the 138th Soldiers watched the Wildcats practice, met the team and head coach Mark Pope, and toured the facility.

During the meet and greet, Märtson connected with Kerr Kriisa, a player for the Kentucky Wildcats also from Estonia.

Märtson spoke on his experience with the 2/138th.

"This experience has been overwhelming, because everyone has been so great," said Märtson. "Basketball is what I love, and what my son loves, so I'm really grateful to be here today."

Lt. Col. Jeffrey Fugate, commander of the 2/138th, spoke on the importance of the MREP program.

"There's a lot of benefits to both us and our NATO partners. We've been able to learn from Lt. Märtson and him from us," said Fugate. "Over the course of the last two weeks, we were able to learn how the Estonians conduct their operations and how we might be able to incorporate that into our TTPs (tactics, techniques, and procedures)."

Fugate also spoke on the importance of partnerships and the significance of the day. "A big thank you to the University of Kentucky to allow us to watch practice and meet the team today. Not only was the experience incredible, but it was great to further build that connection and partnership."

MREP is a coordinated international exchange program with NATO militaries to help develop cultural understanding, regional expertise and language proficiency and interoperability.



Kentucky Guardsmen support 250th anniversary parade

Story and photo by Capt. Wesley Watkins, 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The Kentucky Army National Guard's 103rd Brigade Support Battalion, (BSB) out of Harrodsburg, proudly supported the 250th anniversary of Harrodsburg, Kentucky, by providing 71 Soldiers, four vehicles, a color guard, and marching during the parade throughout downtown on June 8, 2024.

The Sons of the American Revolution hosted the 250th anniversary of Harrodsburg being founded with a celebration parade and memorialization of some of the city's most notable patriots. The event started with an

opening ceremony at Old Fort Harrod State Park that paid tribute to the city's illustrious history while recognizing prominent service members tied to the community dating all the way back to the American revolution. Among those honored included Col. James Harrod, George Buchanan, William Poague, Paul Froman and Thomas Prather and their families' descendants, many of whom were present for the dedication.

U.S. Army Capt. Zachary Lambert, training officer of the 103rd stated "Once we found out the magnitude of this being the 250th anniversary of Harrodsburg's founding and the ties to honoring patriotism towards several veterans, we had to make sure we were a part of the event."

Lambert added that the community of Harrodsburg has been supportive of the unit over the years, that it was essential the unit repay their support with a large presence at such a monumental event.

Ky. Air Guard flies over D-Day observance in France with unique aircraft

Story by Dale Greer, 123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs; photo by Phil Speck

A crew of Kentucky Air National Guardsmen departed here for France last week aboard an aircraft emblazoned with distinctive World War II "Invasion Stripes" to mark the 80th anniversary of D-Day.

The aircraft, a Kentucky Air Guard C-130J Super Hercules, flew over France as part of scheduled D-Day observances, said Master Sgt. Lee Stanley, aircraft structural shop chief for Kentucky's 123rd Maintenance Squadron. His Airmen applied the historic livery in late May, adding black-and-white stripes, period-accurate roundels and legacy-inspired nose art using a combination of paint and decals.

The same stripes were applied to Allied aircraft in 1944 prior to the invasion at Normandy so the planes could be easily identified, avoiding friendly fire incidents.

The nose art, designed by Stanley with suggestions from other Airmen at the 123rd, features a unicorn and lightning bolt on a yellow field. It's based on the heraldry and squadron patch of the 368th Fighter Squadron, a World War II-era unit with ties to the Kentucky Air Guard, he said. The new version adds invasion stripes and a dark green field as tribute to historic fuselage markings on the 368th's P-51 Mustang aircraft.

The 368th was organized in 1943 and quickly entered combat, supporting the invasion of Normandy by patrolling the English Channel, dive-bombing and strafing bridges, locomotives and rail lines near the battle area, and escorting bombardment formations to the French coast, according to historical records.





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