

THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

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

Volume Twelve, Issue Two
December 2007

Band celebrates 60 years



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THE COVER

The Kentucky National Guard's 202nd Army Band celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2007. Check the festivities on page 15.

A Tribute to the Kentucky Army and Air National Guard

Kentucky's Guardians

Steven Thompson

The musical score is written on five staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of one flat (B-flat), and a 4/4 time signature. The melody is simple and patriotic. The lyrics are printed below the notes, with some words in italics. The score includes a double bar line with repeat dots at the end of the first line of music.

We first served back in Fincastle County
Virginia's Western most frontier and
still we stand to protect our precious Commonwealth
Kentucky Home we hold so dear

Long Rifles fired at the birth of our Nation
Her people yearning to breathe free
Beacons of Freedom shine bright for all the world to see
Guardians of Liberty

Duty bound by Honor United We Stand like
Noble Eagles to defend and serve with
Moral Courage when disaster strikes
Kentucky Guardsmen until the end.

In Civil War our ranks were divided
As Rebs and Yanks we showed no fear
We fought with Honor and Courage for both North and South
still the Union persevered

In forty-two Philippines central Luzon
Sixty and three miles march did we

In Forty-five Zig Zag Pass did Mighty Cyclone blow
Bataan avenged for all to see
Duty bound by Honor United We Stand like
Noble Eagles to defend and serve with
Moral Courage when disaster strikes
Kentucky Guardsmen until the end.

In the jungles and skies of Vietnam
We fought and served on Eagles Wings
and though many were lost at Fire Base Tomahawk
sweet Lady Liberty still sings.

At Robert's Ridge and Salmun Pak Uncommon Valor
With Selfless Service and Loyalty
into the Fire flew the few for comrades taken
Heroic portraits of Gallantry.

Duty bound by Honor United We Stand like
Noble Eagles to defend and serve with
Moral Courage when disaster strikes
Kentucky Guardsmen until the end.

Farewell message from Maj. Gen. Storm

Four years ago I became your adjutant general. It was one of the greatest days of my life ... and one of the most intimidating. The responsibility of running an organization like the Kentucky National Guard is daunting, particularly in time of war.

Four years later I look back and I have to say that I am in awe of where we have been and what we have done. This is a world class organization with battle-hardened experience and charity in our souls. Our troops have fought the enemy in the mountains of Afghanistan and the streets of Baghdad. You have faced him up close in the prisons of Guantanamo Bay ... You have also held your hand to your brothers and sisters in the floodwaters of New Orleans and provided charitable support everywhere you've deployed.



The pride that I have for this organization is immense. I have trouble at times trying to put into words how exactly I do feel for this organization.

You've heard me say this on many occasions, but I do believe that there is no higher calling that to put the interest of others above oneself and to serve the greater good. That is what the Kentucky Guard does best.

I look for 2008 to be an even greater year for the Kentucky National Guard. Our training is like nothing we've ever experienced before. Our equipment is top notch. Our recruiting effort is setting a new standard. Above all else, our Airmen and Soldiers have proven themselves to be second to none!

And finally ... I want to thank you for allowing me to be your adjutant general. It was an honor to work so closely with the men and women of both the Kentucky Air and Army National Guard. It is truly a blessing to be part of the greatest organization in the United States military and I will continue to support you until I leave this earth.

May God bless you, the great Commonwealth of Kentucky and the United States of America!

Donald C. Storm
The Adjutant General



THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

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Tonini named Adjutant General



Official DA photo

Governor-elect Steve Beshear named Brig. Gen. Edward Tonini as the new Adjutant General for Kentucky.

Tonini, 61, most recently served as the Director of Your Guardians of Freedom program in the United States Air Force.

Tonini is a 1973 graduate of Bellarmine University in Louisville, where he received a degree in history. He is a career Air National Guard officer, who shortly after Sept. 11, 2001 was placed on active duty and brought to the Pentagon to direct Your Guardians of Freedom.

“Brigadier General Tonini has a stellar military career and I am confident his service as Kentucky’s Adjutant General will be similarly remarkable,” said Beshear.

Tonini is the first career public affairs officer in Air National Guard history to be appointed a state chief-of-staff and to attain the rank of general officer. His experience in dealing with local, regional, national and international media around the globe is extensive. He has produced news features and documentaries about the Kentucky Guard, and has been published in newspapers and periodicals around the world.

Read about the inauguration and events welcoming Tonini to his new position in the January edition of *The Bluegrass Guard*.

The Bluegrass Guard values opinions

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

The Bluegrass Guard
100 Minuteman Parkway
Frankfort, KY 40601

or: gina.vaile@us.army.mil

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

Corrections

Please report any corrections to:

The Bluegrass Guard
100 Minuteman Parkway
Frankfort, KY 40601
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Change of Address

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

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

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

Combatives key to battlefield survival

By Dave Altom

Public Affairs Office

Kentucky Army Guard Soldiers are adding another tool to their survival kit in the form of Modern Army Combatives Program (MACP).

Army Combatives development began in 1995 with the 2nd Ranger Battalion's search for a fighting style incorporating both hand-to-hand and weapons. A wide range of systems and instructors were tested and in 2002 the publication of FM 3-25.150 (Combatives) made it official. The US Army had its first official fighting system.

Based on Brazilian Ju-Jitsu with heavy influences from Judo and wrestling, boxing and Muay Thai (kickboxing) and Kali (stick fighting), MACP is not so much a martial art as a true fighting system designed to keep Soldiers alive on the battlefield, according to Maj. Mike Abell.

Abell, the 149th Brigade Combat Team's Training Officer, is well acquainted with MACP. In 2005, under the leadership of Lt. Col. John Luttrell, Abell was part of a team from Kentucky that competed in the U.S. Army Combatives Championship at Fort Benning, Ga. A lifelong practitioner of the martial arts, Abell finished fourth overall, winning four out of six matches and distinguishing himself among his fellow Soldiers.

After a yearlong deployment in Iraq, the Kentucky combatives team is getting back into competition and – most important – training fellow Guard members.

“Competition this year was tougher than I remember, which is good for the total force” said Abell. “Sgt. Floyd Branham and I both won two fights and lost two fights. We had wins over

Fort Riley, Fort Sill and 7th Special Forces Group fighters. All in all, we did very well, even in our losses, and we represented Kentucky to the best of our ability.

Abell named Sgt. 1st Class Chuck Schuff and 2nd Lt. Jason Spayd among Kentucky's top fighters. Staff Sgt. Jeremy Wurm is also a promising contender according to Abell.

“Many of the active duty competitors are full-time instructors,” said Abell. “All of our work is done in addition to regular duties. We do it on our own, the physical conditioning and PT, going to civilian gyms for training.”

As proud as he is of the team's accomplishments, Abell's true enthusiasm comes in sharing his skills with his fellow

Guard members. According to Abell, combatives is important to fighting counterinsurgency.

“In addition to being taught in Initial Entry Training and being included in the Warrior Tasks List, combatives has become a pre-mobilization task that must be evaluated for deployment,” Abell said. “Soldiers are often in close quarters, sometimes with just a sidearm. At any time you can suddenly find yourself in a lethal confrontation.”

With Schuff as the senior instructor for validation, Kentucky's program is already up and running. His first task was training and evaluating more than one hundred MPs for an upcoming deployment.

“We are getting the proper safety and training equipment sent by the combatives school at Fort Benning. Plus, there are more than a dozen level one and two instructors that will assist Sergeant Schuff in training units for mobilization.”

For more information on MACP or joining the Kentucky Combatives Team, contact Maj. Mike Abell at michael.abell@us.army.mil.



Photo by Sgt. Gina Valle/KYARNG

Major Mike Abell competes in the 2007 U.S. Army Combatives Championship at Fort Benning, Ga.

IDENTIFICATION CARDS



All Soldiers and retirees should have a current Military Identification Card, but do your dependents?

Who needs an I.D. Card?

Any dependent of a Servicemember or retiree over the age of 10-years-old, unless they do not live with the sponsor, then regardless of age they need to get an I.D. Card made.

I.D. Locations

Louisville - Air Guard Base
1101 Grade Lane
502-413-4210

Frankfort - Boone National Guard Center
100 Minuteman Parkway
1-800-372-7601 option 1

Lexington - Lexington Armory
4301 Airport Rd.
859-233-7772 x:2444
502-607-2444
Bluegrass Station
5751 Briar Hill Rd. Bldg. 139
502-607-2020

London - 1/149th Infantry BN
20 State Police Rd.
502-607-5464/5461

Bowling Green - 920 Old Morgantown Rd.
502-607-2214

WHFRTC - Bldg. 332
270-338-8900 x: 7990

Ashland - Ashland Armory
2519 Lexington Ave.
502-607-2122/2123

Why do my dependents need an I.D.?

If you are eligible and enrolled in TRICARE, you must have a valid Military I.D., for the PX and Commissary benefits as well as MWR privileges.

Where can I have one made?

See the info box to the left for locations and phone numbers. You do not need an appointment for the Frankfort location, but call in advance to any other location to be sure someone is there!

What should I bring with me?

Bring your sponsor; current or expired I.D. Card, a civilian picture I.D. (license), marriage certificate, birth certificates, social security cards, divorce decrees, court ordered paternity papers, power of attorney, Active Duty or Retired orders.

Two units to get new home by 2009

Officials break ground on new readiness center at Bluegrass Depot

By Sgt. Gina Vaile
Editor

Two Kentucky Army National Guard units and two United States Army Reserve Units will soon be moved to a new facility in Richmond, Ky.

The Bluegrass Armed Forces Reserve Center and Field Maintenance Shop will house the 2123rd Transportation Company and the 617th Military

Police Company from the Kentucky Army National Guard.

It will also house the Det. 1, 1151st Transportation Company and the 100th Division, Brigade Combat Team, Battalion from the United States Army Reserve.

Units and activities are consolidated from facilities in Richmond, Lexington and Maysville to occupy this new center. The tentative schedule for completion will be early spring, 2009.

The AFRC is approximately 65,000 square feet and will contain administrative, logistical and training areas for approximately 500 soldiers.

The FMS is approximately 25,000 square feet and will support the full time maintenance of Kentucky Army National Guard vehicles of units not only assigned to the AFRC but also to units within the immediate geographical region

Approximate construction cost is \$18.5 million.

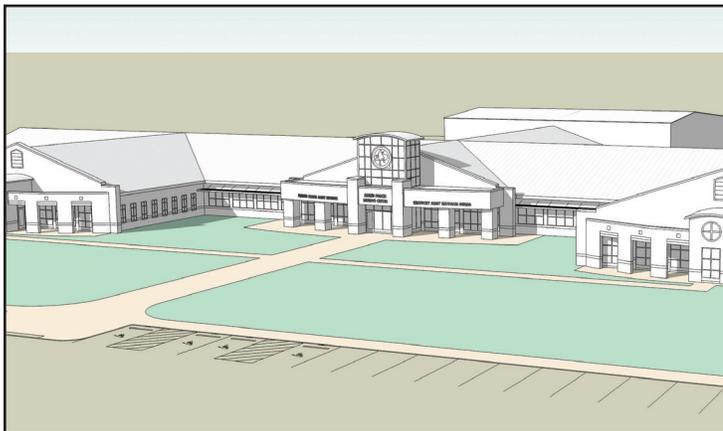


Photo Illustration

This photo illustration shows the new joint readiness center that will be completed by early spring of 2009.

Joint Readiness Center to open in London

By 1st Lt. Steven Martin
Deputy Public Affairs Officer

LONDON, Ky. - Major Gen. Donald C. Storm, Kentucky's Adjutant General, along with other dignitaries, broke ground Nov. 19, on the Kentucky National Guard's new Joint Readiness Center at the London-Corbin Airport.

The site was chosen because of its established Instrument Landing System, and a runway and aircraft parking ramp large enough to accommodate the Guard's C-130 Hercules transports, the UH-60 Blackhawk and CH-47 Chinook helicopters.

The new Readiness Center will serve as a launching point for military support to civilian agencies in times of natural disaster, and provide a rapid-response facility for search and rescue missions in conjunction with the Civil Air Patrol.

A new Drug Demand Reduction education



Photo by Sgt. Gina Vaile/KYARNG

Officials dig into the earth at the London-Corbin Airport, breaking ground for the new Joint Readiness Center on Nov. 19.

center will be housed at the facility, for use in educating the public -- especially youth and leadership groups -- about drug abuse.

"For many reasons, London was the location of choice for us to build the new Joint Readiness Center," Storm said. "In times of crisis, such as a natural disaster, or search and rescue missions, placing the JRC here allows us to more rapidly respond to the needs of the citizens of South Eastern Kentucky."

ESGR awards 5-Star ratings

Humana and UPS honored in Louisville, Ky. on Veteran's Day

By 1st Lt. Stephen Martin
Deputy Public Affairs Officer

Two of Kentucky's largest employers made a commitment in 2006 to become 5-Star employers under the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

In honor of Veteran's Day, UPS and Humana were recognized for achieving that goal.

According to David Orange, the Kentucky National Guard Liaison for ESGR, the 5-Star Employee Program seeks to educate and inform employers about their responsibilities and their rights when dealing with employees who serve in the National Guard.

"We want to recognize and reward those employers who go above and beyond the requirements of the law for their employees who are also serving in the Armed Forces," Orange said.

According to the ESGR Web site, for a company to be eligible for 5-Star status, an employer must sign a statement of support for their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve; review human resource policies to ensure compliance with the Uniformed Services Employment and Re-Employment Rights Act Law; promotes training for managers and supervisors to effectively manage their employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve; serve as an advocate for employee service in the National Guard and Reserves; helps promote the mission of ESGR, and adopt policies and programs that are above and beyond what is required by the USERRA law.

Lieutenant Col. Tim Moore, a Kentucky Airman and UPS employee said he is proud of his company receiving the 5-Star rating.

"I've experienced UPS' support of the citizen soldier first hand... and I stand before you wearing this UPS uniform just as proudly as any other," he said during the ceremonies.



Photo by 1st Lt. Stephen Martin/KVARG



Photo by 1st Lt. Stephen Martin/KVARG

▲ Employers from UPS and Humana sign the 5-Star statement of support for the Kentucky National Guard



138th celebrates St. Barbara in Baghdad

Photos and story by Spc. Elvyn Nieves
113th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP VICTORY, Iraq – The 1st Cavalry Division and the 138th Fires Brigade, Kentucky Army National Guard, conducted a traditional Saint Barbara’s induction ceremony at the Al-Faw Palace here, Nov. 23.

More than 130 Soldiers and guests attended the ceremony, a traditional among artillerymen, where 21 new members were inducted into the Order of St. Barbara. The effects coordinator for Multi-National Corps –Iraq, Brig. Gen. Mark McDonald, was the guest speaker.

“We’re fighting a Global War on Terror,” said McDonald. “Terrorists want to change the way we live. They don’t want your family to live free. Your efforts here are helping to keep our country free and families safe.”

Two fallen Soldiers, Pvt. Sammie Phillips and Staff Sgt. Delmar White, were posthumously inducted into the order and recognized for their performance and commitment.



▲ Soldiers toast to the United States of America as part of the traditional St. Barbara induction ceremony on Nov. 23.

➤ Colonel Billy Jack West, commander, 138th Field Artillery Brigade, tries the “artillery punch” to make sure it’s fit for consumption for the inductees.



Earthquake exercise planned for March

By Sgt. Gina Vaile
Editor

“We lived to make it to Pigeon Roost. We did not lose any lives but we had aplenty troubles. As much as I love my place in Kentucky – I never want to go back. From December to April, no man-woman or animal if they could talk would dare to believe what we lived through. From what people say it was not that bad here – they felt the ground move and shake but it did not destroy cabins and trees like it did in Kentucky.”

-George Heinrich Crist, Nelson County, April 1813

From 1811 to 1812, some of the largest earthquakes in North America’s History were recorded along the New Madrid Fault Zone along the Mississippi Valley. At least four catastrophic ‘quakes with magnitude estimates greater than 7.0 shook the grounds extending from Northeast Arkansas, through Southeastern Missouri, Western Tennessee and Western Kentucky along to Southern Illinois. Since then, more than 4,000 earthquakes have been recorded along the fault line.

According to Brig. Gen. John Heltzel, if a 7.0 magnitude ‘quake was to hit the fault today, “From Paducah west, we would see tremendous damage. Buildings would collapse, roadways and bridges would be damaged,” he said. “Essentially that part of the state could be cut off. We must have a plan to be able to get in there and respond to the needs of the civilians in those areas.”

Heltzel, who will head the 2008 earthquake preparedness exercise this spring, said the exercise will test the Kentucky National Guard’s ability to handle such a disaster.

“We will be so much better off if we already have an idea of what might happen and how to react to the disaster,” he said. “We don’t want to get down there and have to figure out what to do next.”

Lessons learned from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita has directly impacted the way that Kentucky and other states are preparing for “the big one” to hit.

“We won’t be able to get people out of there, so we need to know how to get resources in to support the cities and towns that would be affected by a high magnitude earthquake,” he said.

In March, the Kentucky National Guard will participate in the second-annual Seismic Exercise throughout Western Kentucky. Working with state and local officials, Kentucky troops participating in the exercise will set up communications systems using the Joint Incident Site Communications Capability (JISCC), and a Point of Distribution (POD) for residents to pick up food, ice, clothing and other supplies needed following a natural disaster. Troops will also refresh training on light urban search and rescue and medical lifesaving techniques.

“Kentucky Guardsmen always respond to and exceed the mission,” Heltzel said. “This exercise will prepare us to function more efficiently and quickly in the event of activity along the New Madrid Fault.”



Photo by Capt. David Page/KYARNG

Brigadier Gen. John Heltzel briefs Soldiers during the 2007 Seismic Exercise at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center. Soldiers were positioned around Western Kentucky setting up communications during the mock disaster.



Expert Shots

Combat Rifle Team shoots its way into the history books with 1st place finish

By Dave Altom
Public Affairs Office

The Kentucky National Guard's Combat Rifle Team made shooting history with a first place finish at the 2007 Winston P. Wilson Match. This is the first time the team has placed first in this competition.

Sergeant 1st Class Chuck Reed, coach for the Kentucky National Guard's Combat Rifle and Pistol Team, said he was proud of his shooters' accomplishments.

"This is the best we've ever done," he said. "Plus, three of our shooters, Sergeant First Class Dale Bailey, Staff Sergeant Joseph Scott, and Sergeant Jeff Ice, scored in the top ten percent overall."

The Wilson Match takes place each year at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. Kentucky was among 42 competing National Guard teams representing the various states and territories. In the final tally, Kentucky finished 12th place.

A Range called 'Apache Alley' is where the Kentucky rifle team won its first place victory.

"Apache Alley is the most realistic of all the matches because you're shooting at moving targets at up to three hundred yards. It's a very physical,

combat-oriented competition. The targets are camouflaged, you're in full combat gear, with your helmets, load-bearing gear, vests, canteens, all the equipment you'd wear in a real world engagement," Reed said.

Weather plays an important factor in the outcome of the match, and has been troublesome for the Kentucky team in years past.

"We were luckier this year than most years," said Reed. "Last year we had rain and snow. This year the weather was beautiful, which helped all the shooters. We didn't have to compete with the weather. Instead, we were truly shooting against the other shooters."

While other teams shot with M-16A4s, outfitted with optics, the Kentucky Team the Kentucky Team shot with the M-16A2 standard issue rifle.

"That says a lot about the skill of our shooters," said Reed. "They are able to improvise, adapt and overcome under real world conditions.

"If a Soldier in the field can shoot twice as good as the other guy in a real world situation, the odds for his or her survival likewise increase," Reed said.

Disney honored at Artemus

Training Site dedicated for retiring command sergeant major

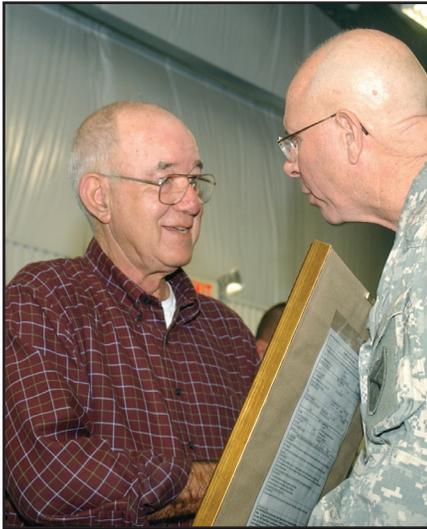


Photo by 1st Lt. Steven Martin/KYARNG

Command Sgt. Maj. Steven Disney accepts a plaque from Maj. Gen. Donald C. Storm. The Eastern Kentucky Training Site, located in Artemus, Ky., was named after Disney who has supported the site for more than 28 years.

Staff Report

After more than 28 years of service and dedication to the Kentucky National Guard, Command Sgt. Maj. Harold L. Disney was honored Nov. 19 when Maj. Gen. Donald C. Storm officially named the Eastern Kentucky Training Site in Artemus, Ky., after Disney.

Disney joined the Kentucky Guard in Barbourville in December 1963 and spent his entire career with the 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry. From 1974 until his retirement in 1997, was the driving force in the growth of the Training Center.

The training center was formed in April 1979. It is utilized as a local training area for the units in Eastern Kentucky, consisting of the Infantry, Chemical and Engineer Battalions. Disney was instrumental in acquiring the site for Kentucky National Guard use.

In May of 2006, Disney came out of retirement to run the site after it's full-timers deployed to Iraq with the 149th Infantry. During the year-long mission, Disney worked tirelessly to coordinate the construction of facilities that will house 160 Soldiers. Most importantly he supported the units in Eastern Kentucky to ensure they met their mission requirements and were prepared for deployments around the world.

Disney retired for the second time on Dec. 7.

NEXT ISSUE



Inauguration coverage



News from Iraq



How to prepare your family and house for an earthquake

DEADLINES

Now that The Bluegrass Guard is going monthly, write these dates down to have your photos and stories submitted to the editor!

February issue:

- Jan. 20

March issue:

- Feb. 20

April issue:

- March 20

May issue:

- April 20

Air Guard deploys to Germany

By Capt. Dale Greer
123rd Air Wing Public Affairs Officer

Two C-130s and 51 Guardsmen from the 123rd Airlift Wing deployed to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, on Nov. 26 in support of Operation Joint Enterprise.

The airmen will fly airlift missions across Europe, Africa and Southwest Asia, including sorties into Iraq and Afghanistan, said Lt. Col. Mark Heiniger, commander of the Kentucky Air Guard's 165th Airlift Squadron.

The deployment constitutes the first wave of Kentucky aircrews, maintenance personnel and support troops who are slated to participate in the mission through March 7, when the wing's role is expected to conclude.

Two additional Kentucky C-130s and six more rotations of Kentucky Airmen are scheduled to leave for Germany in the next three months, bringing the total number of deploying wing troops to about 360.

Each deployment rotation is scheduled to last approximately two weeks, Heiniger said.

Operation Joint Enterprise is similar to several other airlift missions supported by Kentucky Air Guardsmen in the past decade. It grew out of the now-defunct, Ramstein-based Operation Joint Forge, which was created in the mid-90s to fly troops and supplies into Bosnia-Herzegovina in support of U.S. military operations there.

That mission eventually expanded to support operations across Europe and, more recently, activities in Africa and the Central Command Area of Responsibility, which includes Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Kentucky Air Guard has now sent Airmen and aircraft to Germany more than a half-dozen times since the 1990s to support Operation Joint Enterprise and its predecessor campaigns, each time staffing the deployments with an all-volunteer cadre of troops, according to Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

The latest mission is no exception.

"Everyone who is deploying for this mission volunteered for the job," Kraus noted. "Some of our people will even be deployed over the Christmas holiday.

"I think that says something about the caliber of people we have in the wing. Our Airmen continue to step up and volunteer for missions any time they're needed, anywhere in the world. That's a truly remarkable level of dedication, and it's the right thing to do. I couldn't be more proud of them for their commitment to the mission," he said.



Photo by Sgt. Gina Vaile/KYARNG

The first wave of Airmen departed Louisville's Air Guard Base Nov. 26 for Ramstein Air Base in Germany. Airmen will participate in two-week deployments through March 7 in support of Operation Joint Enterprise.

Aviator's banner signed by Bush

Sergeant Daryl Casey receives replacement for stolen Kentucky banner

By Sgt. Gina Vaile
Editor

FRANKFORT, KY – Standing under the bright Kentucky sun, Kentucky National Guard Aviator, Sgt. Daryl Casey smiled at his Unbridled Spirit Banner.

“I never thought it would get this much attention until the (Lexington) Herald-Leader picked up on the story when my first one got stolen,” Casey said.

His first banner, Casey and other aviators of Bravo Company, 2/147th Aviation Battalion hung outside their Operations building while on deployment in Balad, Iraq in 2006. Brought back tethered and caked with Iraqi sand and dirt, it was stolen Sept. 1 during the University of Kentucky-Eastern Kentucky University football game at Commonwealth Stadium in Lexington.

His new banner is a 3-foot by 7-foot, very blue, very clean, very vinyl banner that is signed by President George W. Bush.

“It’s an honor to have the commander-in-chief sign a banner for the state I’m from,” Casey said. “And, it’s such a good feeling to know people out there are supporting us.”

It is the support of people like Chris Gilligan and the George Ward of the Commerce Cabinet in Frankfort, Ky., that Casey is thankful for. The two were instrumental in replacing the aviator’s banner and having Kentucky’s Governor, Ernie Fletcher, present it to him during the UK-University of Louisville football game Sept. 15.

“It’s the least we could do for a guy like Daryl,” said Gilligan, executive director of communications of the Commerce Cabinet. “We’re at home, safe and sound, while people like him are out risking their lives.”

The Unbridled Spirit logo is something that many National Guard Soldiers are proud to display in various ways while on deployment. It has been painted on concrete barriers throughout Iraq and flown on flags and banners outside Kentucky National Guard operations centers.

For now, Casey says this new banner will most likely hang at the hanger on the Boone National Guard Center in Frankfort as a constant reminder of the deployment. He said it will also be a good conversation piece to tell folks who didn’t hear about the hoopla.

“We’ll keep this one under armed guard,” Casey joked. “There’s no chance that this one is going to get stolen.”



Photo by Spc. Michael Pfaff/KYARNG

Sgt. Daryl Casey points to the signature of President George W. Bush on his new Kentucky Unbridled Spirit Banner. The banner was presented Nov. 3 by Commerce Cabinet Commissioner, George Ward, and Director of Communications for the Commerce Cabinet, Chris Gilligan. Casey’s first banner that he and aviators of Bravo Company, 2/147th Aviation Battalion had displayed in Iraq was stolen Sept. 1 during the University of Kentucky-University of Louisville football game in Lexington, Ky.

Celebrating 60 years



The Kentucky National Guard's 202nd Army Band celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2007. The year's events included a tour around Kentucky, making stops in Ashland and Greenville; the creation of the Kentucky National Guard's official song: "Kentucky's Guardians" and the promotion of the unit's first female first sergeant, 1st Sgt. Sharon Cates.

Take a look back at 2007 with the 202nd Army Band in these next few



Photo by Sgt. Fred Varney/KYARNG

Lead by Chief Warrant Officer Greg Stepp, members of the 202nd Army Band perform the new Kentucky's Guardians piece, written by Sgt. Steven Thompson during a concert Nov. 3, 2007 in Frankfort, Ky.

Guardsmen composes official song for Kentucky Guard

By Sgt. Gina Vaile
Editor

When the 202nd Army Band was approached by retired Col. Armado Alfaro to write a song for the Kentucky National Guard, Sgt. Steven D. Thompson volunteered to make sure the mission was completed.

Despite working on his PhD in Music Theory and other family and career commitments, Thompson spent countless hours researching the history of the Kentucky National Guard.

"I was truly amazed by all that I learned about the Guard in Kentucky," Thompson said. "The Kentucky Guard has a strong foundation historically, a foundation that was put in place by honorable people willing to defy the odds because their integrity gave them no other choice."

It was the stories he reading about the men and women of Kentucky who have been willing to make sacrifices for the greater good that inspired Thompson to pen the notes and the words of "Kentucky's Guardians."

"Coming up with the first verse of lyrics was not so difficult, but making each of the following verses fit the rhythmic structure of the first was challenging," he said.

Thompson, who has played trumpet since 1978, and who also plays the guitar, says music runs through his blood. Music is a passion for Thompson, as is serving his country and the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Composing "Kentucky's Guardians" was a way for Thompson to merge those two passions together.

The song was debuted Nov. 3 at the Bradford Hall Auditorium, located on the campus of Kentucky State University, to a crowd of current and former military dignitaries and supporters of the Kentucky Guard.

"From bagpipes and drums on the battlefield to the sound of a lonely bugle in a cemetery, music continues to be an integral part of military tradition," Brig. Gen. John Heltzel said during the ceremony. "'Kentucky's Guardians' is an anthem that honors Citizen-Soldiers past and present."



Photo by Sgt. Gina Vaile/KYARNG

Sergeant Steven Thompson accepts the Kentucky Distinguished Service Medal from Maj. Gen. Donald C. Storm, Adjutant General of Kentucky, on Nov. 3. Thompson was awarded the medal after composing "Kentucky's Guardians," the official song of the Kentucky National Guard.

Who's That?



Name: Sgt. Steven Thompson

Instrument: Trumpet

Inspirations: His grandfather, Robert Marcum a guitarist

Favorite bands: The Eagles; Willie Nelson; Beatles; Fleetwood Mac; Prince; Johnny Cash among others ...

Band makes history with first female first sergeant

By Sgt. Gina Vaile
Editor

When Sharon Cates turned 19-years-old, she auditioned for the Army National Guard Band and enlisted into the Kentucky National Guard. She, along with three other females became the first females in the 202nd Army Band.

Thirty-one years later, Cates is the only one of the four original females left in the band. And she's worked her way to become "Top."

"The rewarding experience that has kept me in the band for 31 years has been performing each month with excellent musicians, a commander who strives for a high level of musicianship, and the family of friends I've found in the band," Cates said.

During the band's summer 60th anniversary tour, Cates was able to meet with more than 25 of the original founding members of the 202nd Army Band.

"There is something unique about a group of people joined together making music that has an enduring bond," she said.

For Cates, the music comes easy -- she's been playing for more than 41 years. However, she is quick to admit that the most challenging aspect of being the first sergeant of the band is coordinating smooth and efficient drill weekends. In the last 10 years, the 202nd has gone from having a Concert Band, Jazz Band and Marching Band to having 42 members and nine different performing groups.

"The logistics have been much more complex and demanding. Communication and pre-planning have become essential," she said.

In addition to making sure the 202nd Army Band runs smoothly one weekend a month and during annual training tours, Cates finds time to balance her family of three and civilian job with the Jefferson County Public School system.

"As my responsibilities have grown, both my family and employer have been willing to allow more of my time to be spent with the extra duties," she said.



Photo by Sgt. Gina Vaile/KYARNG

First Sgt. Sharon Cates performs with the 202nd Army Band. Cates is the first female promoted to the rank of first sergeant for the 202nd Army Band.

Who's That?



Name: 1st Sgt. Sharon Cates

Instrument: Clarinet

Favorite bands: Over the Rhine, California guitar Trio and the Cavaliers Drum and Bugle Corps

Joined the Guard: September 1975

Husband: John

Daughters: Darcy and Erin

Music Makers

Celebrating 60 years of the 202nd Army Band



- ▲ Former members of the 202nd Army Band celebrated 60 years of history in Ashland, Ky., this summer.
- ▲ Major Gen. Donald Storm presents retired Col. Armando Alfaro with the Commanders Award for Public Service for his work on the "Kentucky's Guardians," the official song of the Kentucky National Guard.
- ◀ Members of the 202nd Army Rock band perform at the Soldier of the Year Banquet.



Warrant Officers recognized

Staff Report



Photo Submitted

Chief Warrant Officer Dean E. Stoops is the first Guardsman to receive the Eagle Rising Award.

Two Kentucky National Guard warrant officers were recently honored for their distinctive service and achievements obtained while deployed in support of Operations Iraqi and Enduring Freedom.

Chief Warrant Officer Dean E. Stoops was selected as one of two recipients of the 2006 Eagle Rising Award sponsored by the Military Officers Association of America and the U.S. Army Warrant Officer Career Center. He is the first National Guardsman to ever receive this high honor.

Chief Warrant Officer Mark W. Grapin was named winner of the 2006 James H. McClellan Aviation Safety Award. Sponsored by General

Electric Aircraft Engines, this award is presented annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to Army aviation safety in the previous calendar year.

Both warrant officers are members of the 63rd Theater Aviation Brigade, and are full-time support employees at the Army Aviation Support Facility on Boone National Guard Center.



Photo submitted

Chief Warrant Officer Mark W. Grapin accepts the 2006 James H. McClellan Aviation Safety Award.

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