

THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

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

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FEATURES



INTO THE BLUE

Airmen train with Army PTAE



FROM FRONT LINES

Aviators fly Serbian skies



GREEN REPORT

Weapons qualification time for Army Guard



THE COVER

Cover Photo by Capt. Andi Hahn/KYARNG

Go along the front lines with the Kentucky JSO as they combat marijuana cultivation in the Bluegrass.



Kentucky NATIONAL GUARD
Unbridled Service

THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

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Hooah! 

Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson, editor

Change of Address

Don't miss an issue!

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

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

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Letters to the editor

The Bluegrass Guard values opinions

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

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

Safety office: Soldiers should stand prepared

By 2nd Lt. Joshua L. Witt
Kentucky National Guard Safety Office

The impromptu mission preparedness of National Guardsmen and their Families is fully tested when Soldiers and Airmen are activated in response to natural disasters and declared emergencies.

As was seen in the Ice Storm of 2009, many Guardsmen packed up to assist the Commonwealth of Kentucky while their own communities and homes were in a state of emergency.

It is the responsibility of Guardsmen to maintain an augmented level of individual and Family readiness in expectation of such emergency mobilizations as we enter in to the winter weather season.

The impact of sudden separation reverberates across the spectrum of a Guardsman's life. Employers, Family, friends and daily responsibilities are suddenly left behind, sometimes for extended periods of time when the call to action is received.

It is paramount that the home front be proactively stabilized in anticipation of future Guard missions. The ever-present threat of domestic terrorism must always be considered.

Natural disasters on-par with Hurricane Katrina in 2005, or the high winds of Hurricane Ike in 2008 could occur anytime. Major earthquakes in the Commonwealth remain a distinct possibility. Pandemic flu has the potential of affecting every aspect of American life.

Guardsmen and their Families

Preparation Inventory



Keep your TA-50, uniforms and issued military gear clean, accessible and well maintained at all times.



Make an emergency kit with a three day supply of the following: drinking water (one gallon per Family member per day); non-perishable food; first aid kit; small tool kit; clothing and extra batteries for flashlights. These are tools that will help your Family survive an emergency.



Conduct preventative vehicle maintenance.



Discuss emergency preparation with your Family and have a plan for any natural disaster as well as the unthinkable such as house fires, car accidents or health emergencies.

must acknowledge that "preparing to be prepared" is a primary expectation of the contemporary Minuteman. By nature of our role as Soldiers and Airmen, we are expected to be confident, prompt and prepared in response to an activation order.

A command from the Governor or President could require us to immediately leave our homes and report to our respective units for an indeterminate amount of time. Planning and preparation for such an emergency mobilization can greatly increase our level of individual and Family readiness in that critical moment.

With Family and loved ones knowledgeable of basic safety practices and adequately prepared to adapt without their Soldier or Airman, the stresses of separation are decreased. Distractions such as unpaid bills, personal affairs and the like can be mitigated in advance by developing a written plan. In essence, Guardsmen should equip and emotionally prepare their Families as if a scheduled mobilization is always on

the immediate horizon.

While each Soldier and Airman volunteered to serve and protect the interests of the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the United States, we must also bear the personal responsibility to diligently prepare our homes and Families for disasters. Understanding of this precept is fundamentally important to our success as Citizen Soldiers. As we fulfill our duty to the Commonwealth and the country, it is paramount that we carefully balance accountability for our dual roles.

Guard members will continue to face situations when the mission requires us to leave our homes and loved ones in service to others. Between now and then, the individual commitment to home front preparedness rests squarely on each Soldier and Airman. Online resources such as www.ready.army.mil and www.fema.gov/plan/prepare/supplykit.shtm provide excellent resources on preparing your home and Family in case of an emergency or disaster.



Alpha Co., 206th Engineer Soldiers assist Grayson County residents during the 2009 Ice Storm. Even Kentucky Guardsmen who sustained damages to their own home provided assistance during relief efforts.

Photo by Spc. Michelle Waters/KYARNG

J2: Make security awareness your resolution

Col. Charlie Harris
State Security Officer

Security should be a top-priority for Soldiers and Airmen ... and not just at the armories.

In order to maintain a good state of readiness, Soldiers and Airmen need to be secure in their homes.

As you begin to make your 2010 resolutions, I recommend that you take a moment to evaluate the security level in your home.

With the holidays behind us, we tend to sit back and take a sigh of relief that the hustle and bustle is finally over. But this is prime time for identity thieves to utilize your personal information that they may have found in your garbage ... remember throwing out all those receipts and credit card statements after Christmas or Hanukkah? Now is the time to pay close attention to your statements and immediately report any and all unauthorized charges.

It's also a great time to update your home inventory.



Now that Santa or Aunt Sally has provided you with all your new toys (think gaming systems, big screen televisions or jewelry), it is time to go through and identify your most precious items by taking digital photos and recording serial numbers. Remember to keep your printed inventory in a safe place such as a fire-safe box or a security deposit box. In the event your home is burglarized you will be able to provide your insurance company and the police with necessary information.

And prevent those burglaries by looking at the threat level in your home. Do you have enough lights on when you are not there? Do you have a key hidden under a door mat or in your mailbox? Do you leave your garage door open when you are not home? These are simple things that can invite an intruder into your home.

I challenge you to start a resolution to improve your own security. Over the next four months, The Bluegrass Guard will explore other ways to assist you with keeping your Family safe on the Internet, while on vacation and other points of interest that will help you maintain a good level of readiness.

Feel free to visit the J2 SharePoint for more information, and look for articles to come.

Guardsmen deploy for OIF

Staff Report

More than 150 Kentucky Guardsmen were honored during two separate deployment ceremonies in December.

Both the 171st Aviation Regiment and the 2113th Transportation Company deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The 171st will provide C-23 Sherpa transports, while the 2113th will provide convoy security.

This marks the third combat tour for the 171st, which also holds the distinction of the first Kentucky Army National Guard Aviation unit to deploy in support of OIF.

In addition, it is the second deployment for the 2113th, which deployed to OIF in December 2004 - January 2006.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiler/KYARNG



Photo by Sgt. Cassandra Groce/KYARNG

▲ Members of the Kentucky National Guard's 2113th Transportation Co. stand at parade rest during a departure ceremony Dec. 6.

◀ Staff Sgt. William M. Pope and his Family listen to remarks by Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini during the departure ceremony for the 171st Aviation Detachment. "I will miss my family, of course. Especially my wife, Heather," Pope said. "But this is my family too," he said about the 10 aviators he will deploy with. "They're my brothers."

Airmen train with PTAE

By Staff Sgt. Jason Ketterer
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GREENVILLE, Ky. — Successful combat operations require training, vigilance and skill, even if some support forces never set foot on a real battlefield — much less a simulated one.

The Kentucky Army National Guard's Pre-Mobility Training Assistance Element is working to change that with a 30-day training course designed to immerse deploying troops in battlefield scenarios here before they ever leave Kentucky.

"Our mission is to provide training and assistance to every commander that is sourced for a mobilization," said Lt. Col. Chuck Schneider, commander of the PTAE, based at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center.

"We do that by training individual Army Warrior tasks and theater-specific tasks depending on which theater they are mobilizing to."

The training, which also is available to members of the Air National Guard, increases "boots on the ground" time for theater commanders.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

Sgt. 1st Class Ricky Fraley conducts field training for members of the Kentucky Air Guard's 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron.

It also keeps Soldiers and Airmen closer to home for a longer period of time before deployments, he said.

Launched in 2007, the unit's instructors have now trained more than 1,500 Soldiers and Airmen in basic combat skills, providing them with the knowledge and experience necessary to survive combat while effectively executing current warfighting tactics.

The training element is comprised of eight Army Guardsmen with more than 15 years' experience in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We cover core Soldier and Airman skills that any commander needs their troops to know," Schneider said. "It includes drivers training, Humvee roll-over training, land navigation using GPS, first aid and combat lifesaving skills.

It's basic knowledge we want all Soldiers and Airmen to know before they go to Iraq or Afghanistan."

Maj. Thomas McCarty, operations officer for the PTAE, said the team specializes in in-

dividual training that can be done in-state before a unit is ever mobilized.

"Our training element helps the mobilizing unit put together theater-specific training," he said. "We train language skills, country orientation, hot weather training for Iraq and cold weather training for Afghanistan."

Conducting pre-deployment training close to home is one of the biggest benefits for deploying Kentucky Army and Air Guardsmen, he added. Before the operation stood up, Soldiers and Airmen had to attend longer combat training courses at Fort Dix, N.J., or Camp Shelby, Miss., spending up to eight weeks of additional time away from their families.

"When we helped train the 223rd Military Police Company in 2007, we helped them trim their training plan and shave off three weeks of their time, actually changing their mobilization date," McCarty said.

In fact, the 223rd MP Company was the first National Guard unit to change its mobilization date based on a more efficient pre-deployment training plan, according to First Army, the command cell in charge of train-



Kentucky Air National Guard 2nd Lt. Jarrett Goddard shoots his M-9 at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center's live fire range.

Photo by Tech Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG



Photo by Tech Sgt. Dennis Flora/KyANG

PTAE instructors conduct a class for 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron at WHFRTC.

ing, validating and deploying reserve component units.

“That training plan kept our guys home for an extra 23 days with their families before mobilizing,” McCarty said. “It was a great feeling for our then-new team. That immediate result really forged our identity and mission.”

Schneider said the training his forces provide — matched with the facilities at WHFRTC — are a great resource for Kentucky Guardsmen.

“We have the best PTAE team in the United States, in my opinion,” he said. “We have great soldiers who’ve deployed and stay current with what is going on in theater, and the National Guard Bureau helps us do that. As far as using Wendell Ford as a training center, it’s second to none. They’re extremely user-friendly, which is a big convenience to our team.”

Members of the Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron agree. The unit just completed combat-skills training at WHFRTC in preparation for a deployment overseas next year.

Master Sgt. Ron Schmitz, supervisor of electrical power production for the squadron, said the unit’s Airmen learned much in the Joint Forces training environment.

“The Army team was very knowledgeable in combat skills training,” he said. “It was some of the best skills training our unit has received since I’ve been in the Civil Engineer Squadron.”

Senior Airman Nick Ketterer stretches a liner inside an Alaskan tent at Volk Field, Wis., in support of Patriot '09.



First Last/KyANG or KyANG

123d CE Squadron sets standards

By Tech Sgt. Jason Ketterer

paoky@ky.ngb.army.mil

VOLK FIELD, Wis. — The Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron has a reputation for overcoming any challenge, and its deployment here in July for the Patriot '09 joint training exercise only served to underscore that point.

Maintenance issues with a C-17 assigned to deliver a Disaster Relief Bed-down Set provided Airmen with a real-world experience that couldn’t have been written into the playbook.

The DRBS, recently developed to support the Department of Homeland Security’s natural and man-made disaster response efforts, is designed to become a sufficient village in the wake of disaster.

For the training exercise, it was to house 150 follow-on troops during the combat simulation.

But according to Capt. Keith Smith, operations officer for the 123rd Civil Engineer Squadron, the set was two days late.

“Despite the lengthy delay, our Airmen were able to plan the site, inventory the set and complete construction in time for the exercise participants to have quarters the next day,” he said.

Within 14 hours, he said, Airmen constructed 16 billeting tents, had the village powered and air conditioned.

Patriot director, Lt. Col. Tim Maguire said the National Guard Bureau exercise has seen a lot of firsts in its nine year existence, but the 123rd’s achievement ranks as one of the more impressive.

“It was amazing watching what they did in a day and a half,” Maguire said. “They got some great experience out of this, but I think they could have done it in their sleep.”

“I’m thoroughly impressed.”

Excellence is nothing new for the 123rd CES, which previously earned two Deneke Awards as the top civil engineering squadron in the Air National Guard and, along with its parent 123rd Airlift Wing, boasts a total of 13 U.S. Air Force Outstanding Unit Awards — including one with a “V” device for valor.

In recent years, work teams and individuals from the 123rd CES have deployed to nearly every continent and contingency mission supported by the U.S. military, including Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Jump Start, the border

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Photo by Rank



Photo by Spc. Chris Erickson/KFOR PAO

Kentucky Aviators take to Kosovo skies

By Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson
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Kentucky National Guard aviators joined Soldiers from 37 states and five other NATO nations Nov. 14 to form Kosovo Forces 12, a task force dedicated to maintaining a safe and secure environment and allowing freedom of movement in Kosovo.

"We've trained very hard for this mission, really for more than 18 months now," said KFOR 12 commander, Brig. Gen. Alan S. Dohrmann.

More than 80 Kentucky aviators from Bravo Co., 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation and Charlie Co., 169th MEDEVAC are charged with monitoring the Serbian skies, supporting slingload operations, troop transports and medical evacuations.

The units deployed with 11 Kentucky Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters in August.

The task force includes National Guardsmen and

Reservists who provide a wealth of knowledge and experience, Dohrmann said.

"They are all eager to maintain a safe and secure environment," he said.

The Kentucky Soldiers conducted training at Camp Atterbury, Ind., for several weeks prior to receiving additional training at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany.

In addition to aviation support, the Kentucky troops provide ground humanitarian support at Serbian elementary schools and within the community surrounding Camp Bondsteel.

"I am having a good experience here," said Kentucky Guardsmen Spc. Andrew T. Moreno, an aviation fuel tester.

"It's always great to work in an international environment."

Pilot spends ground time at Serbian schools



Photo by Capt. Eric Seymore/SCNG

Chief Warrant Officer Stephanie Motley gives Serbian elementary school students candy for their artwork Dec. 1.

Motley works as a volunteer teaching Serbian elementary school children to read in the town of Gorni Livoq, Kosovo. She is currently deployed with Bravo Co., 2-147th Aviation as a UH-60 Blackhawk pilot in support of KFOR 12.



Photo by Capt. Stephen Martin/KYARNG

- ▲ A Kentucky National Guard squadron of UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters flies across the Austrian over the skies of Kosovo during a training mission.

- Sgt. Jeremy Knight, Bravo Co., 2-147th, trains members of the Portuguese Army on proper slingload operations for a Panhard M-11 Armored Scout Car Nov. 6.



Photo by Capt. Stephen Martin/KYARNG

ADT assists Bagram in exercise

By Spc. William E. Henry
Task Force Cyclone, 38th ID PAO

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Imagine you're snug in your warm bed in the cold early morning hours only to be awakened by a loud voice that sounds outside: "Code purple, code purple, mass casualty in the casualty collection points," the voice repeats.

You scramble to dress and assemble your combat lifesaver gear as fast as you can. Then run to the CCP to assess the current group of mass casualties with an array of injuries.

This is the training that Task Force Cyclone combat lifesavers went through during a quarterly scenario at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Nov. 13.

Seventeen Soldiers from the task force went through a month-long process to review, remember and test their combat lifesaver skills. Blocks of instruction included on-site processes, assessment of casualties and hands-on emergency treatment.

The exercise was base-wide and included multiple task forces, security personnel and medical professionals. Task Forces Thunder, Lightning and Med participated in the exercise, while Combined Joint Task Force-82 oversaw the operations.

According to Army Maj. Michael Fenchak, Task Force Cyclone medical operations officer, this exercise was in preparation to assist on-post hospitals and medical personnel with a MASCAL event.

"The purpose was to coordinate actions of individual

CCPs in order to work in synch with the Craig Joint Theater Hospital in the event there is a catastrophic event on BAF with casualties greater than the Hospital can handle," said Fenchak.

Task Force Cyclone's medical non-commissioned officer-in-charge, Army Staff Sgt. David Irving, worked closely with Army Sgt. Isaac Jones, Kentucky Agri-business Development Team medical NCOIC, to develop a challenging training plan for the Soldiers.

"Most combat lifesavers only get training once a year. But, by doing these additional exercises they can better react and treat if we have an actual mass casualty," said Jones, a resident of Lexington, Ky.

According to Irving, by repeating the steps and processes of a CCP and practicing the motions of how it all operates will become routine functions for the Soldiers.

"It's all about muscle memory. If you set it up the way you tear it down the same way, it's going to become repetition," Irving said. "That's what happened today. Everybody knew exactly where everything was supposed to go. They immediately started doing it and it was awesome."

The task force Soldiers



Photo by Spc. William E. Henry/Task Force Cyclone, 38th ID PAO

Task Force Cyclone Soldiers Sgt. Benjamin Hermus, Speedway, Ind., and Spc. Henry Mitchell, Indianapolis, give aid to a Kentucky Agribusiness Development Team role player during a quarterly training exercise held at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Nov. 12.



Photo by Spc. William E. Henry/Task Force Cyclone, 38th ID PAO

Kentucky Agribusiness Development Team member, Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Ramsey, receives medical treatment for a head wound as a role player from Task Force Cyclone members, Spc. Jonathan Dyar, resident of Fort Wayne, Ind., and Sgt. Nancy Hughes of Indianapolis, during a quarterly training exercise held at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, Nov. 12. The group of Soldiers trained for about a month to prepare for a final mass casualty scenario.

who participated said they feel more comfortable with their abilities to assist casualties.

"It's a very good experience and we'll definitely know what to do if one does happen," said Army Sgt. Benjamin Hermus, a help desk NCO from Speedway, Ind. "There's no real way to expect what's going to happen at a MASCAL. But at least we will be a little calmer about it and know exactly what we're supposed to do if that time comes."

Both medical NCOs were impressed with the performance of the Soldiers, and Irving was especially thankful for the assistance of the Kentucky ADT who played the part of the casualties in the scenarios.

"I think all of our Soldiers did awesome-rific, especially for a group of folks that have had no medical training (except CLS)," Irving said. "They're perfect, they were great. We couldn't have done it without the Kentucky guys."

CE

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patrol mission in Arisona.

The unit also began four-day bivouac training long before it was required by Air Force regulations

and was a forerunner in going the extra mile in many other requirements, said Lt. Col. Phil Howard, squadron commander.

That record of achievement continues in 2009 with Patriot and a long list of other training events, all designed to bolster the unit's combat skills and prepare it for an Operational Readiness Inspection in 2010, followed by an anticipated overseas deployment.

"We've had a lot of opportunities, a lot of challenges and a lot of successes this year," said Howard, who credited those achievements to the hard work of the squadron's Airmen. "The Kentucky Air Guard is one of the premier Air Guard units in the country because of dedicated Airmen like ours," he said. "They are traditional Guardsmen and women responding to their country and their state's call to service, while still maintaining and balancing family, civilian employment and community needs.

"In the months and years ahead, the 123rd CES will continue looking for new and innovative ways to complete our missions and fulfill our motto, 'Don't worry about it; we can do it!'"



Photo by Rank First Last/KYARNG or KYANG

A C-17 aircraft, handled by the 123d Contingency Response Group, prepares for take-off at the Municipal Airport in Salinas, Calif.,

Farmers harvest support for ADT



Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiler/KYARNG

Staff Report

Kentucky's Future Farmers of America and other Kentucky agricultural professionals presented Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, adjutant general, and the Kentucky National Guard's future Agribusiness Development Team with more than \$6,000-worth of gifts, supplies and other items to send to the Kentucky Agricultural Development Team currently serving in Afghanistan.

Students from the Western Hills High School FFA, along with Steve Meredith, executive director of the Agriculture Communications Association packed more than 20 care packages with Kentucky country ham, locally grown honey, candy and Kentucky cheese products.

"It might not get there in time for Christmas," Meredith said, "but we're going to help them have a happy New Year!"

Not only will the 64-members of the Kentucky ADT receive treats, but the packages also included more than 1,000 hats, scarves, gloves and socks for Afghan families in communities which the ADT serves.

"We hope that we'll be able to support the next mission and continue to support additional missions, because I truly believe this is a very important thing for us to do," Meredith said.

Winning Kentucky's war

An in-depth look at the Joint Support Operations Program

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

It's a seemingly endless battle – one that began long before the wars in Afghanistan or Iraq... and it continues to rage.

Blackhawk helicopters throttle the air above the forest canopy along the Eastern Kentucky mountains while Kentucky National Guard Humvees led by Kentucky State Police patrol cars race down narrow, two-lane country roads below.

The enemy: 'dopers' and their sometimes enormous fields of marijuana.

Leading the fight: the Kentucky National Guard's Joint Support Operations – a highly trained unit of National Guardsmen who team with the KSP as part of the Governor's Marijuana Strike Force, a counter-drug operation tasked to halt marijuana cultivation in the Bluegrass.

A Kentucky National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter takes off from the London, Ky., airport for a JSO mission. Trained spotters are able to see patches of marijuana (as pictured far right) in the dense foliage of the Eastern Kentucky mountains.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Aaron Hiller/KYARNG



Photo by Spc. Michael Pfaff/KYARNG



Photo by Capt. Andi Hahn/KYARNG



Photo by Capt. Andi Hahn/KYARNG

- ▲ Two Kentucky State Troopers exit a Kentucky National Guard Blackhawk during a marijuana eradication mission in Eastern Kentucky this summer.
- ◀ A Kentucky Guardsman spies out of a marijuana patch after a marijuana eradication mission this summer.

The Program

As early as the 1970s, states began using National Guard assets to assist law enforcement with the ever-growing drug problems that threatened the safety of communities nation-wide.

“Law enforcement agencies, by themselves, couldn’t master the circumstances,” said Col. Stephen Hogan, Counter Drug Coordinator for Kentucky’s JSO.

“They quickly realized the military was the asset that allowed them to access difficult terrain and to utilize better equipment.

“When funding became available, state governments realized they could use military assets as leverage in support of local law enforcement,” he said. “It was both a necessity and an opportunity to use military assets.”

In the 1980s, Kentucky ranked second in the nation to California for marijuana cultivation. With funding available to support the mission, Kentucky Guardsmen worked side-by-side with the KSP and other local and federal law enforcement agencies for the first time in what was known then as the Green-Grey sweep.

After the initial sweep eradicated more than one million crops, the Department of Defense recognized individual state governor’s needs for a defensive force to support state and local law-enforcement agencies to combat the extreme production of marijuana in Kentucky and other states.

A full-time force was authorized, giving the Kentucky State Police the lead as the law enforcement agency, with the Army National Guard Support.

In the early 90s, the name changed to the Governor’s Strike Force, and now two decades later, the program is headquartered in Lexington, Ky.

Today’s JSO is tasked with five basic missions: provide ground reconnaissance, criminal analysis, eradication and drug demand reduction to The Commonwealth of Kentucky.

Clearing the Commonwealth

“The Guard is the main support the marijuana strike force has,” said Sgt. Jim Ingram, eradication supervisor for the Kentucky State Police.

“It provides the majority of our air assets, all the support that goes on board with having air assets, vehicles,

maintenance, ground personnel, intelligence for daily calculations and strategic planning.”

Where a casual observer might see simply a mish-mash of green hues, a trained spotter can locate a marijuana plant out of a forest. Members of the JSO team learn tell-tale signs and train their eyes to spot plants grown anywhere from backyards to mountainsides with little more than a dirt trail leading to it.

It is a common misconception that the drug problem in Kentucky is centralized to the mountains of Eastern Kentucky. In fact, it is a state-wide effort, with teams spread across the Commonwealth.

Each summer, JSO takes to the skies in search of those illegally cultivating marijuana. From the early morning brief until dark, these trained specialists drop in to marijuana patches via UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters, cut dope and then haul it to locations where it is burned.

“We want to arrest those responsible for cultivating,” Ingram said. “We want to keep marijuana off the streets and out of the hands of the children and people of the Commonwealth.”

Just as the insurgency in the Middle East adapts to our military’s techniques and tactics, the dopers here adapt to the Strike Force tactics as well. It’s a perpetual game of adaptation and trying to stay one step ahead.

JSO teams are often met with booby-trapped fields and sometimes cultivators who don’t want their “crops” to be taken.

“One of the things that we can influence the outcome is by deterring these individuals that are going to participate,” Hogan said. “The bad guys are aware that we’re here. They’re afraid of us. And, that’s something that is one of our success criteria.”

Although marijuana is the primary focus of the JSO’s eradication mission, Hogan said the reconnaissance and criminal analysis teams deal with a litany of drugs that are sold in the Commonwealth.

“Methamphetamines is the primary ‘other drug’, and we are starting to see a lot more abuse of illegal prescription medications such as OxyContin and Xanax in epic proportions,” Hogan said.

“The criminal analysis and reconnaissance teams assist with tracking these abusers so that there is a difference



Photo by Spc. Michael Pfaff/KYARNG

Kentucky State Troopers load marijuana plants on to a Kentucky National Guard Blackhawk helicopter in the mountains of Eastern Kentucky during the summer 2009 Marijuana Strike Force.



Photo by Capt. Andl Hahn/KYARNG



Photo by Spc. Michael Pfaff/KYARNG



◀ Kentucky State Trooper Manny Soto and Kentucky National Guard Maj. Dewayne Lewis, aviation officer in charge for JSO, discuss an eradication mission on the way back to a UH-60 Blackhawk.

in supply reduction and demand reduction of these substances,” he said.

Education is Key

Arresting and prosecuting dopers won't be the only thing that deters drug use in Kentucky, especially when corruption can be prevalent in some of the more poverty stricken towns.

To ensure demand reduction across the state, Hogan's Drug Demand Reduction team provides education and outreach through the state's school system and other community programs.

This specialized team travels across the Commonwealth teaching youth about the effects drugs have on an individual. In uniform, the Citizen-Soldiers act as mentors and role models to youth in rural communities where the influence of drugs is around every corner.

“It's important because everyone needs to know what the effects of drugs are to yourself and to your community,” said Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Campbell, a DDR representative. “We try to get to the people at an early age so they are informed when it comes time to make a decision about drugs.”

Campbell said DDR is tracking statistics using pre-surveys and other data in order to judge the success of the program, but it will be years before the middle-school children reach the fork in the road where they become a law-abiding citizens or one of the dopers the eradication team is after.

Hogan said the DDR outreach mission is paramount to the communities taking ownership back from drug cultivators.

“I think at the end of the day the drug problem is going to be rectified by community outreach and a grassroots kind of effort,” he continued. “There's just so far you can go with supply and demand reduction efforts. The community has got to get behind this as an issue and see about solving it at the individual level.”

The Report Card

In fiscal year 2009, the Kentucky JSO assisted law enforcement with the destruction of more than 300,000 marijuana plants, totaling more than \$714 million. In addition, KSP made more than 480 arrests.

Since 2006, efforts have eradicated approximately \$4 billion in marijuana from reaching Kentucky's streets.

However, Hogan said JSO is working to reduce the importance of numbers and statistics, and concentrate on the overall community improvement.

The return on investment, he said, isn't just about the money.

Because JSO Soldiers work full-time on Title 32 status,

Once they have collected the illegal marijuana plants, KSP and the Kentucky National Guard burn the crops.



Photo by Spc. Michael Pfaff/KYARNG

they are well-versed in basic Soldiering skills as well as community liaisons with other agencies and county officials.

“These guys are well practiced to operate with a lot of different agencies that all have varying interests and various objectives,” Hogan said. “They are well-practiced in taking their direction and intent and turning it into an executable military action.”

A skill which comes in handy when the Soldiers are activated under direction of the governor for state missions such as the Ice Storm of 2009.

“In terms of the Global War on Terror,” he said, “it goes back to having these guys for 365 days. Their training translates extremely well to GWOT height and qualifications both with weapons and the technical aspects such as familiarization with the military equipment they have to operate daily.”

JSO's Future

After two decades of fighting drugs in Kentucky, Hogan said the effort is making strides towards the better.

“The goal is to eradicate the scope of the problem to such an extent to where centralized support of military efforts is no longer necessary,” Hogan said. “So that we can go home and the local police can handle the issues in their jurisdiction.”

“Right now, the scope outmatches their capabilities and right now that is impossible without military support.”

Hogan said he envisions a transfer of the Strike Force back to local officials sometime in the next 10-15 years, and “go to the house.”

“If everything goes right, we'll be really close to working ourselves out of a job,” Hogan said. 🐉



Kentucky State Trooper Anthony Trotter rappels out of a Kentucky National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk during a marijuana eradication mission this summer.

Photo by Spc. Michael Praff/KYARNG



Photo Submitted

State Combat Team places first at MAC III Regionals

By Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson

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Marksmen from the State Combat Team placed first and second overall at the MAC III Regionals held at Camp Butner, North Carolina this June.

"When our state brings home awards, or any of our shooters bring home anything, it makes me feel like we have the best state represented," said Maj. A.J. Huddleston, a State Combat Team shooter.

Kentucky was one of five states that battled to the very last round down-range to bring home the honor of first place overall.

Kentucky had an "A-Team" and "B-Team" representing the best of the Bluegrass at the event. Shooters were judged on the pistol and rifle ranges.

"Our A-Team took first place in the rifle category, second in the pistol category and first overall," said Master Sgt. Dennis Stockton. "Our B-Team placed third

in both events for a third place overall finish.

"This competition came down to the final rounds to settle the winners, it was that close," he said.

"We are very satisfied with our efforts and the professionalism the teams displayed in representing the Commonwealth of Kentucky," Stockton said.

Members of the team say that their participation makes them better shooters, but also better leaders.

"Obviously, being able to shoot is a necessary skill for a Soldier," said Sgt. Jeffrey Ice.

"But high level competition forces you to prepare carefully. If you haven't done your PCC/PCIs before you begin a match, guaranteed, you will not do well. In a team leadership position, you need to be able to look ahead, make assessments of personal capabilities of each of the team members and try to use their strengths and minimize the effect of their weakness," he said.

Guardsmen saving lives

Kentucky NCOs recognized at home and abroad for actions

By Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson
gina.vaile@us.army.mil



NAME: Sgt. Michael Clary
UNIT: HHC 206th Engineers
LOCATION: Owensboro, Ky.
HOMETOWN: Owensboro, Ky.



NAME: Sgt. 1st Class Ben Moyers
UNIT: KY-ADT, Team 1
LOCATION: Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan
HOMETOWN: Sharps Chapel, Tenn.

Eight months after assisting the Daviess County Sheriff's Office and other first responders with pulling four teenagers trapped in a frozen creek in Owensboro, Ky., one Kentucky Guardsman was honored with Kentucky's highest medal for military service during a ceremony Oct. 9.

Sgt. Michael A. Clary was awarded the Kentucky Medal of Valor for his actions Feb. 4, in which he and Sgt. Matthew S. Hamilton, currently deployed to Iraq with the 301st Chemical Company, saved the four teens from the roof of a vehicle submerged in icy Panther Creek.

"It's clear that these two Guardsmen risked their lives to save others," said Kentucky Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini.

Clary, who along with Hamilton rescued the teens with a Kentucky National Guard humvee, said he did what any Guardsman would've done.

"I am grateful (for the honor), but I feel like I am being recognized for something the whole Kentucky Guard had a part in," Clary said.

Daviess County Sheriff Keith Cain, who was at the accident site and the award ceremony, said in his 36-years of law enforcement, the 2009 Ice Storm was the most devastating event that he has encountered.

"Sgt. Clary and Sgt. Hamilton simply took the initiative, they knew what had to be done and without being asked, they came to assist us," he said. "I have

absolutely no doubt in my mind that not only would the lives of those four teenagers have been lost, but also the lives of some of my officers."



Photo by Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson/KYARNG

One Kentucky Guardsman saved the life of another Nov. 11 at the dining facility at Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan.

Sgt. 1st Class Ben Moyers is credited with saving a fellow Agribusiness Development Team Soldier by successfully performing the Heimlich maneuver, preventing the Soldier from choking to death.

According to witnesses, the ADT Soldier choked on a piece of meat and Moyers quickly reacted to the situation.

Maj. John Holmes, executive officer of the ADT, said pre-deployment training conducted by Guardsmen Lt. Col. Rob Larkin, a civilian paramedic with the Lexington Fire Department, was instrumental in preparing ADT

Soldiers in basic first aid.

"Sgt. 1st Class Moyers learned the essentials to act accordingly to the situation," Holmes said. "This situation proves that you may use that training at any time during your deployment."

Moyers actions have been recognized by Brig. Gen. Lonnie Culver, commander of Task Force Cyclone, and Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Capel of the 82d Airborne Division.



Photo by Maj. John Holmes/KYARNG

Pvt. 1st Class Jason Pennington gains a proper side control of Pvt. 1st Class Daniel Zienkiewicz during Level 1 Army Combatives Training at the Bluegrass Army Depot Dec. 12. Both privates are REPs with the Kentucky National Guard's Detachment 4, 2nd Battalion 75th Recruiting and Retention's Recruit Sustainment Program. Approximately 40 REPs belong to Det.4, which physically, mentally and administratively prepares civilians for the transition to Soldier prior to Army Basic Combat Training.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson/KYARNG

Henderson Armory opens doors to community

Staff Report

Members of the Henderson, Ky., community were treated to an open house Sept. 12 at the Det. 2, 307th Maintenance armory.

"Our open house brings awareness that our armory is active and that Soldiers are here for our community," said Staff Sgt. Ashley Wolfe, unit readiness NCO.

Soldiers provided a hotdog lunch, there were games for prizes and prospective recruits competed against one another for Guard memorabilia.

"There were approximately 150 to 200 members of the community who came out," Wolfe said. "We were able to show them our unit history, some of our vehicles and teach them about what we do," she said.

A Kentucky Guard UH-60 Blackhawk was also on hand to wow the crowd.

Wolfe said the unit had two or three recruit leads and hopes that future community open houses will be as successful.



▲ 2nd Lt. Eric Green shows 4-year-old Larry Barnett how to do a push-up to win a prize at the Guard Challenge table during the Henderson Armory Community Open House in September.

➤ Staff Sgt. Haydon Wolfe, Spc. Sgt. Wolfe, SPC Ryan Walker and 10-year-old Alex Cooke prepare hotdogs to serve to the Henderson community during the Det. 2, 307th Maintenance Community Open House in September.



103rd BSB prepares for winter, conducts chainsaw safety

Story and Photos By Staff Sgt. Paul Evans
103rd Brigade Support Battalion UPAR

In preparation for the possibility of another state disaster such as the 2009 Ice Storm, the Headquarters Company, 103rd Brigade Support Battalion conducted training on the proper use and maintenance of chainsaws Nov. 8 during the unit's drill period.

Also covered in the training was proper tree removal procedures under icy conditions.

Chainsaws proved to be a valuable tool during the 103d's response to the storm that blanketed most of the state and left more than 70,000 Kentuckians without power last January.



- ▲ Sgt. Steven Sparks safely cuts a log during chainsaw training for the 103rd Brigade Support Battalion.
- ◀ Spc. Matthew Benson walks to the testing site during chainsaw training for the 103rd Brigade Support Battalion Nov. 8. (Photos by Sgt. Paul Evans/KYARNG)

Soldier finds more than monetary rewards in GRAP

By Staff Sgt. Gina Vaile-Nelson
gina.vaile@us.army.mil

Sgt. James Riley isn't a recruiter, but he has increased the Kentucky Guard's force by seven Soldiers.

And for doing so, he has earned \$14,000.

As a Recruiting Assistant for the Guard Recruiting Assistant Program, Riley talks with potential recruits and eases some of their concerns about the Army National Guard.

"Some people are interested, but afraid to talk to a recruiter," Riley said. "I tell them my story and tell them what I do for the National Guard. I usually tell them what the Guard has done for me, and the many possibilities it offers once you are in."

For each Soldier a RA refers to the Guard, a \$1,000 bonus is deposited into the RA's account after the Soldier swears into the Guard. Another \$1,000 is deposited after the recruit ships to Basic Combat Training.

It doesn't hurt that you make \$2,000 per Soldier," Riley said. "But the most rewarding aspect is knowing I am giving a recruit a new lease on life in the Kentucky National Guard, and a new career."

According to Maj. Tamara Hurst, Recruiting and



Photo submitted
Sgt. James Riley, a Guard Recruiting Assistant for the GRAP program talks with a prospective recruit for the Kentucky National Guard.

Retention commander, there are 3,728 Kentucky Guardsmen enrolled in GRAP.

"There is no one who knows the Guard better than its members and therefore, no one better equipped to tell the Guard story," she said.

GRAP efforts, Hurst said, have contributed to Kentucky remaining a Mission Maker for the last six years.

Hurst said in two easy steps, a Soldier can sign up for the program and be on his way to increasing our ranks, and his bank account.

"Training takes about 30 minutes and once completed, the Soldier is a certified Recruiting Assistant," she said.

In addition for the \$2,000 bonus for enlisted recruits, Hurst said officer accessions pay up to \$7,500.

For Riley, it's more than the money.

"It's amazing watching people grow from a civilian to a Soldier. Knowing that I helped play a part in that process is very rewarding," he said.

To enroll in the GRAP program, log on to www.guardrecruitingassistant.com and click the APPLY NOW button. 🐦

Fiscal year starts off with a bang

Story and photos by Spc. Michael Pfaff
paoky@ky.ngb.army.mil

GREENVILLE, Ky. – Kentucky Guardsman brought Fiscal Year 2010 in with a bang as units converged on ranges throughout the various training areas for annual weapons qualification.

The Kentucky Guard's 751st Troop Command and its subordinate units: the 1163rd Area Support Medical Company; 202nd Army Band, 307th Maintenance Company and 133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment all qualified at the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center Oct. 3-4.

"Without weapons, we cannot defend ourselves," said Master Sgt. Charles Kuhlman. "Weapons qualification is one of the most important tasks a Soldier will undergo."

Ultimately, weapons qualification is a fundamental skill for every branch of the military and every military occupational speciality Kuhlman said.

"I kind of look forward to it actually," said Spc. Brian J. Ewalt, a tuba player with the 202nd Band.

Ewalt said he gets so busy with his civilian life that maintaining his basic Soldiering skills is a "nice change of pace."

"The Army has the same expectations for all Soldiers, whether they're in the band or the infantry," he said. "Everyone should have the same level of basic skills whether or not they have to use it on a daily basis or not."

Soldiers began the day on the zero range, firing at a target 25-meters away, with a successful shot-grouping of 9 rounds.



▲ Sgt. 1st Class Leslie A. Duncan, 751st Troop Command battalion supply sergeant, shows Sgt. Marco Hernandez, a range safety officer, how he shot during his last shot group. This will tell Duncan what kind of adjustments he needs to make on his M16 rifle in order to zero his weapon. Hernandez gives advice and helps Soldiers make those adjustments.

➤ Sgt. Marco Hernandez, a mechanic with the 1163rd Area Support Medical Company and range safety officer for the IWQ event held in October, gives the signal to the tower operator at the "zero" range that his side of the range is clear and Soldiers are ready to drop into their foxholes and begin firing.



Once they met zero qualifications, Soldiers marched to the qualification range where they were tasked with firing 40 rounds in several firing positions; supported in the foxhole, prone unsupported and kneeling. Afterward, Soldiers received their score, which requires a minimum of 23 to pass.

"Sometimes we have some troubles out here, especially if it's snowing and raining," said Kuhlman. "But today was a beautiful day. The Soldiers are pumped up and everyone is shooting better because of that."

Kuhlman said the qualification range at WHFRTC



Spc. Brian J. Ewalt, 202nd Kentucky Army National Guard Band tuba player, fires on the zero range while Sgt. Marco Hernandez, range safety officer, watches to make sure Soldiers are being safe.

steadily improves. He noted that this year the lanes included painted heads of silhouette targets, with odd-numbered lanes painted in white to assist Soldiers with identifying their lane.

"I recall bringing in the lifters for these things, maybe about 10 years ago," he explained. "They have upgraded quite a bit since then. This is a wonderful training site, the qualification range being among the best I've ever qualified on."

Weapons qualification does have its hazards, and safety was a main priority for the 751st TC.

Units provided range safety NCOs to assist with the zero and qualification ranges. The Soldiers underwent training and certification to be able to do so. Safety is a primary concern for the staff here. Units will generally provide their own safety officers on the range, but they are over-watched by range control. Sgt. Marco Hernandez, a mechanic with the 1163rd, was working as a safety officer on the zero range.

"Safety, safety, safety," said Sgt. Marco Hernandez, a mechanic with the 1163rd.

"The biggest thing is safety. After that, I'm just here to help Soldiers make adjustments and get a good zero because if they don't get a good zero, it makes it very hard to qualify."

During this year's qualification, Soldiers were also offered Advanced Warrior Training – that include many basic Soldiering tasks such as reacting to chemical hazards and calling in support for a medical evacuation – as well as hand-to-hand combatives training after they completed their weapons qualification.



Photo by Spc. Michelle Waters/KYARNG

Cindy Culver, state youth coordinator, poses with Santa as the Kentucky National Guard accepts donations of toys to the Family Assistance Center from the Bluegrass Realtors.

Making spirits bright

Lexington-Bluegrass Association of Realtors donates toys to National Guard Family Assistance Center

Staff Report

More than 300 Kentucky National Guard Families had a Merry Christmas thanks to the Kentucky Bluegrass Association of Realtors.

For the third year, the association donated toys to the Kentucky National Guard Family Assistance Program, which assists Army and Air Families in need.

"I'm overwhelmed at the amount of gifts and the support that the Bluegrass Realtors have shown the Kentucky Guard," said Capt. Bryan Combs, family programs director.

"I can't say how much we appreciate the support of the association and the community here," he said.



Capt. Bryan Combs and Cindy Culver of the Family Assistance Center, thank V.F.W. members and the Bluegrass Realtors for their generosity towards Kentucky Guard Families.

Santa loads a bicycle in a Kentucky National Guard truck.



Photos by Sgt. Emily Slusher/KYARNG

THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

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Making a list ... checking it twice ...



Photo by Maj. Dale Greer/KYARNG

Tech. Sgt. Matt Atkinson, a loadmaster in the 123rd Airlift Wing, checks C-130 passenger manifests at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base in Louisville, Ky., on Sept. 12, prior to a flight to Puerto Rico. About 100 Kentucky Air Guardsmen supported the U.S. Southern Command airlift operations from San Juan through Oct. 10, as part of Operation Coronet Oak.

This issue ...



Kentucky Guard supporting OIF, OEF and Kosovo missions



Guard snapshots from around the Commonwealth

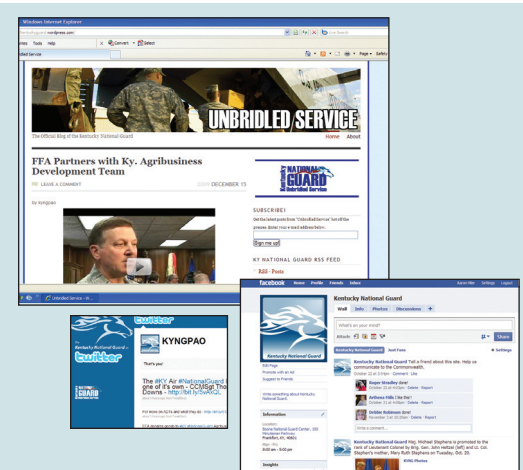
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Keeping your Family Cyber Safe



News from Kentucky troops on the front lines



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