

The Bluegrass Guard



Volume Eight, Issue Two

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

November 2003

*"Greater love has no man than
this, that a man lay down one's
life for his friends."*

John 15:13



Kentucky Army Guard soldier killed in Iraq

Sgt. Darrin Potter is first KYARNG combat fatality since the Vietnam War

by Staff Sgt. David W. Altom
STARC Public Affairs

The Kentucky Army National Guard suffered its first combat fatality since the Vietnam War with the loss of Sgt. Darren K. Potter last month in Iraq.

Potter was killed on September 29th when the vehicle he was riding overturned in a canal while responding to hostile fire at the Abu Gharib Prison complex near the western edge of Baghdad. Two other soldiers from the 223rd managed to swim to safety but Potter was swept away by the current.

Another soldier, Sgt. Andrew Joseph Baddick, drowned while trying to recover Potter's body. Baddick was a paratrooper with the 82nd Airborne Division.

Potter was a member of the Kentucky Army National Guard since 1998 when he joined the 223rd Military Police Company. A native of Louisville, Potter served for two years with the Jefferson County Police Department prior to deploying to Iraq.

Iraq was not Potter's first overseas deployment. In 2001 he went with the 223rd to Bosnia where he served as a military police investigator.

According to his friends and fellow soldiers, Potter was committed to a life in the military and law enforcement.

"I had a lot of respect for Sgt. Potter," said Capt. Adrian Wheeler, commanding officer for the 223rd MP Co.

"He was a professional soldier and a dedicated law enforcement officer. I often asked to ride with him when I accompanied his teams in the field and I was always impressed by his commitment to the job and to the soldiers under his command."

The 223rd has been in Iraq since last February. The Kentucky Guard MPs have been providing force protection to the soldiers of the 82nd Airborne Division, guarding prisoners and training newly appointed Iraqi law enforcement officers.

At the time of this printing the 223rd was scheduled for redeployment back to the United States sometime in late November.



Photos by Staff Sgt. David W. Altom



The Bluegrass Guard

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Printed in cooperation with the Defense Automated Printing Service

circulation approximately 8,500

The Bluegrass Guard is published periodically under the provisions of AR 360-81 for the personnel of the Kentucky National Guard. Contents of *The Bluegrass Guard* are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army, Department of the Air Force, or the Kentucky Department of Military Affairs. News, features, photographs and art material are solicited from readers; however, utilization is at the discretion of the editorial staff. Contact Editor, Bluegrass Guard, Boone National Guard Center, Frankfort, KY 40601-6168, tel. 502-607-1556/1562 DSN 667-1556/1562, or send by fax to 502-607-1260 or email to altomdw@bngc.dma.state.ky.us No paid advertising will be accepted, nor will payment be made for contributions.

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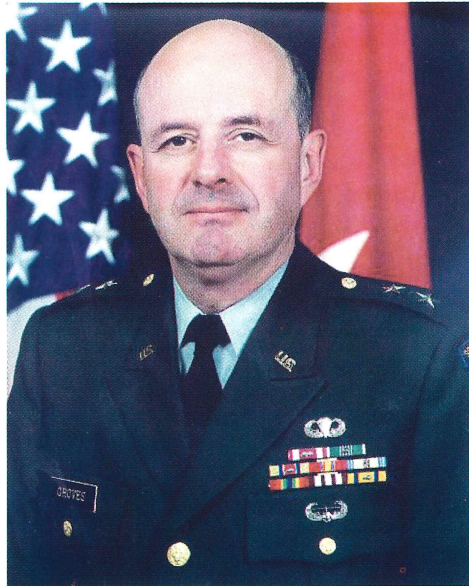
Former Adjutant General dies in accident

Maj. Gen. John R. Groves Jr. served during Patton administration

by Staff Sgt. David W. Altom
STARC Public Affairs

Former State Adjutant General John R. Groves Jr. died in sport aviation accident at the Bardstown Airport on Saturday, September 27th. The accident occurred when the aircraft he was in apparently crashed shortly after takeoff.

An avid aviation enthusiast as well as an architect, attorney and university professor, Maj. Gen. Groves was appointed Adjutant General of the Commonwealth of Kentucky by Governor Paul E. Patton on December 12, 1995. His accomplishments as Adjutant General included the increased development of Bluegrass Station, an emphasis on armory improvement and replacement, and the expansion of the Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center, making the Kentucky National Guard an integral partner in "Fort Kentucky." Maj. Gen. Groves' efforts also saw the establishment of the Kentucky Youth Challenge Program and the success of the National Guard Tuition Assistance Program. He helped put Kentucky on the international



map with the State Partnership Program and he oversaw Operation "New Horizons" in the South American nation of Ecuador. Maj. Gen. Groves also oversaw establishment of Kentucky's Weapons of Mass Destruction (Civil Support Team), forecasting the Kentucky National Guard's critical role in homeland security.

He returned to a teaching position at the University of Kentucky College of Architecture in August of 2001.

With more than 36 years of military service, Groves worked in several fields, from infantry officer to combat engineer. After four years of enlisted experience, he was commissioned through Infantry Officer Candidate School in 1968. His military education includes the Infantry Officer Basic Course, Judge Advocate General School, Command and General Staff Officer Course, Engineer Pre-Command Course, Senior Officer Logistics Management Course, and the U.S. Army War College. On June 1, 1997, he was selected by the Department of Defense for membership on the Reserve Forces Policy Board.

His leadership assignments have included a company command with the 1-149th Infantry, Battalion Commander of the 201st Engineers, and Commandant of the Kentucky Military Academy. Maj. Gen. Groves is one of the first National Guard officers selected to serve on the faculty of the U.S. Army War College.

The legacy of the citizen-soldier

by Maj. Gen. D. Allen Youngman
Adjutant General for Kentucky

Since September 11, 2001, the soldiers and airmen of our National Guard have been at the forefront of our nation's military response. The demands on our personnel and their families have been well beyond what most of us would have predicted in this modern age. The 21st century has turned out to be a violent time, with demonstrated threats to our way of life both here at home and abroad. Going away to war always involves sacrifice. As always happens when soldiers and airmen answer the call to duty, they leave behind families and friends, churches and schools, jobs and neighbors. We rejoice that many of our units have returned safely at this point and our prayers are with those who are still deployed or in the process of deploying.

The recent loss of Maj. Gen. (Retired) Russ Groves and Sgt. Darrin K. Potter reminds us life is fragile. More importantly,

in the way they conducted their lives they showed how strong we can be, and how, with determination and hope, we can achieve so much given the short time we are here on this earth.

I can think of few people who accomplished as much as Russ Groves, or who held as much promise as Darrin Potter. As



Photo by Staff Sgt. David W. Altom
Maj. Gen. Youngman prepares to present a flag to Sgt. Potter's parent at the funeral.

a peace-time general officer and consummate citizen-soldier, Maj. Gen. Groves brought the Kentucky Guard to the state of readiness it needed for this war. True to form, his life was claimed during his pursuit of a new skill, a higher standard for himself.

Darrin Potter was an exceptional soldier and superb NCO. Always ready to answer the call to duty, he epitomized the very best attributes of the citizen-soldier tradition. His professional and private life were key to his success as a member of the Military Police Corps, an organization whose overriding purpose is to protect those who cannot protect themselves. Sgt. Potter died the way he lived, moving toward the enemy and attempting to disrupt and defeat a threat against his fellow soldiers.

It's been said that one person can rarely make a difference. Maj. Gen. Groves and Sgt. Potter—both in the way they lived and the way they died—proved otherwise. Their legacy is now part of our mission.

Airman receives Silver Star from secretary of the Air Force

Story by Capt. Dale Greer and Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell
123rd Airlift Wing Public Affairs office

A Kentucky Air National Guardsman received the Silver Star Nov. 1 during a ceremony at the Air National Guard Base in Louisville in recognition of the airman's heroic acts while deployed to Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom.

Tech. Sgt. Keary J. Miller, a pararescueman in the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, was praised by the Secretary of the Air Force, Dr. James G. Roche, for his bravery under fire during a mission on a remote Afghan mountain in 2002.

"When faced with the well-entrenched and committed enemy force, when faced with the reality that men around him were receiving mortal wounds, when confronted with the prospect that he, too, might suffer the unfortunate fate that others endured on that 10,000-foot mountain, he courageously stepped into the breach to risk his life to save his fellow warriors," Roche told an audience of nearly 350 gathered at the Kentucky Air National Guard Base.

"Because of the actions of this intrepid airman, Keary Miller, with his teammates on the mountain, 10 gravely wounded Americans came home -- home to their units, home to their families and home to an ever-grateful nation.

"Our nation is so very blessed to have professionals of his character and courage."

Miller, the first Kentucky National Guardsman to receive the honor while serving in the unit, distinguished himself by gallantry in connection with military operations against al-Qaida and Taliban forces near Marzak, Patkia Province, Afghanistan, on March 4, 2002. On that date, Miller was the Air Force Combat Search and Rescue Team Leader assigned to a Quick Reaction Force tasked to recover two American servicemen evading capture in austere terrain.

Just before landing, his MH-47E helicopter received rocket-propelled grenade and small-arms fire, severely disabling the aircraft and causing it to crash land. Miller and the remainder of the assault force formed a hasty defense and immediately suffered four fatalities and five critical casualties, according to the



Photo by Chief Master Sgt. Terry Lutz
Secretary of the Air Force Dr. James G. Roche pins the Silver Star on Tech. Sgt. Keary Miller

award citation.

Despite intense enemy fire, Miller moved throughout the battlefield, crossing open danger areas on numerous occasions, in order to assess and care for critically wounded servicemen. As the battle drew on, Miller removed ammunition from the deceased and, in multiple acts of extraordinary courage, proceeded through some of the day's heaviest rocket-propelled grenade, mortar and small-arms fire, while distributing the ammunition from position to position.

Shortly thereafter, another attack erupted, killing one pararescueman and compromising the casualty collection point. Miller braved the barrage of fire in order to move the wounded to better cover and concealment. His intrepidity and skill led to the successful delivery of 10 gravely wounded Americans to life-saving medical treatment and to the recovery of seven servicemen killed in action, his citation said.

"If we are to prevail in this global war on terrorism, it will be because of the bravery and selfless sacrifice of soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines who are cut from the same cloth as Keary Miller and his colleagues in the 123rd STS," Roche said.

"And we will prevail."

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Kentucky's adjutant general, Army Maj. Gen. D. Allen Youngman, expressed his appreciation for what he called "the personal valor and professional excellence of a great warrior."

Youngman also praised other members of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, who have been actively engaged in Operation Iraqi Freedom as well as combat operations in Afghanistan.

"What you do and what you have done, and the support and sacrifices of your families, makes more of a difference to most Americans than they will ever know," he said.

To date, the Air Force has approved just 18 Silver Stars for airmen who participated in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom.

State Pistol Team seeking new recruits

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell
Cargo Courier Editor

The Kentucky State Pistol Team, which consists of both Army and Air Guard members, is seeking a few new shooters.

According to the team's captain, Master Sgt. John Martin, membership offers numerous advantages besides improved shooting skill.

"It's really a good time, and it's also very enlightening," Martin said.

"You always come away from the competitions better than when you went."

For example, regularly scheduled shooting matches promote teamwork and discipline, he said.

"You get an opportunity to

learn how to be part of a team while representing the Kentucky National Guard.

"Also, you have an opportunity to compete against some of the best marksmen in the country," Martin said.

In order for the team to compete, it must have the same number of new shooters as experienced shooters, which is why Martin is always looking for new recruits.

The matches in which the team competes are held about four times a year at locations across the country.

The team usually practices once a month at Fort Knox.

Interested Guard members should contact Martin at 502-364-9425.

A Kentucky Air Guard C-130 Hercules recently completed a major inspection at Ramstein Air Base, Germany, marking the first time in history a deployed aircraft has undergone a isochronal inspection at a Ramstein hangar. Photo by Senior Airman Diane Stinett/KyANG



Tech. Sgt. Stephen Travis, from the 123rd Airlift Wing, works with Senior Airman Frank Belltran, from the 86th Airlift Wing, on an engine during the inspection. Photo by Senior Airman Philip Speck/KyANG



75th Troop Command Reorganizes

Combined Force Structure Enhances Mission Readiness

Spec. Charles L. Westmoreland
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The Kentucky Army National Guard's 75th Troop Command, based at Bluegrass Station in Fayette County, has undergone a major reorganization designed to better align it with the future needs of the Army mission as well as future state missions.

The recent reorganization transformed the 75th TC from a brigade-level unit headed by a colonel to a general-officer command. Included in the effort was the addition of several new brigade and battalion units, raising the number of assigned soldiers to nearly 3,000 engineers, chemical specialists and military police officers spanning the Commonwealth from Ashland to Owensboro.

Maj. Gen. D. Allen Youngman, Adjutant General for Kentucky, said the transformation places the Kentucky Army Guard "at the leading edge across the nation for transitioning to a joint force headquarters."

"The military is often accused of fighting the last war, instead of focusing on the future, but



Photo by Staff Sgt. David W. Altom

Maj. Gen. D. Allen Youngman (right), the Adjutant General, passes the colors to Brig. Gen. Michael Curtin (left) during the change of command ceremony.

this restructuring will change that," said Youngman. "With the addition of the 75th Troop Command as a joint forces command we have the ability to accept operational control of other non-National Guard forces for homeland security and homeland defense operations here in Kentucky."

"Instead of force providers we will now be force employers when required," Youngman said.

Brig. Gen. Michael Curtin took command of the 75th, replacing Col. Jim Lile. This is the fifth command for Curtin, a veteran of the Persian Gulf War.

"In a lot of ways this is like coming home. I'm back where I want to be, in command and working with soldiers."

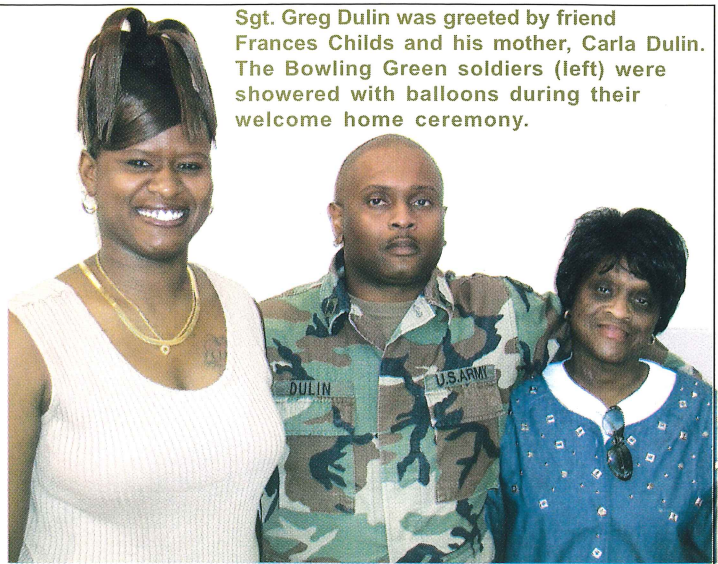
The reorganization of 75th Troop Command coincides with the formation of the Kentucky National Guard's new Joint Force Headquarters.

Units under the command of the 75th TC:

- Kentucky Medical Command (Lexington)
- 75th Engineer Brigade (Lexington)
- 75th Chemical Brigade (Lexington)
- 75th Military Police Brigade (Lexington)
- 201st Engineer Battalion (Ashland)
- 198th Military Police Battalion (Louisville)
- 206th Chemical Battalion (Richmond)
- 41st Civil Support Team (Louisville)
- 103rd Chemical Battalion (Owensboro)
- 1st Battalion, 75th Troop Command (Fort Knox)
- 206th Engineer Battalion (Harrodsburg)
- 1103rd Law and Order Military Police Detachment (Harrodsburg)



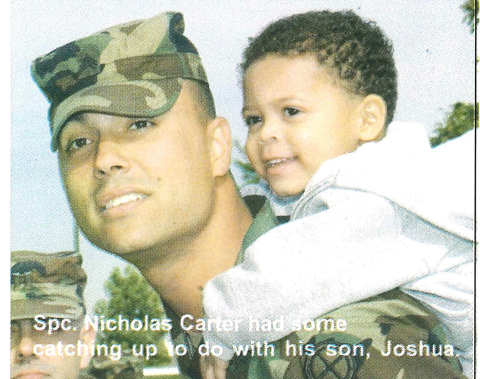
Sgt. Greg Dulin was greeted by friend Frances Childs and his mother, Carla Dulin. The Bowling Green soldiers (left) were showered with balloons during their welcome home ceremony.



Nearly 200 soldiers from the Kentucky Army National Guard returned to their hometowns last October following a successful mission in support of the NATO peacekeeping mission in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As part of OPERATION JOINT FORGE, Kentucky troops from Bowling Green, Hopkinsville and Ravenna left their hometowns October 2002 for Fort Riley, Kansas, and proceeded in January 2003 to eastern Europe where they conducted patrols, seized weapons and worked with local officials to stabilize the peace.

The deployed units included all elements of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 123rd Armor; and Company C, 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry.



Spc. Nicholas Carter had some catching up to do with his son, Joshua.

Two Army Guard units receive orders

Two Kentucky Army National Guard units have received mobilization orders to provide support for ongoing operations:

- **Detachment 3, Company H, 171st Aviation – Frankfort** This unit has nine personnel and is commanded by Chief Warrant Officer Dale Chisenberry. It is responsible for operation of two C-23 Sherpa utility/transport (fixed-wing) aircraft. The unit's mobilization station is Fort Benning, Ga.
- **2123rd Transportation Company (Heavy Equipment Transport) – Richmond with its detachments in Owensboro and Louisville** The 2123rd has 299 personnel and is commanded by Capt. Roger Metz. The unit will mobilize at Fort Campbell, Ky.

These units will report to their respective armories on Sunday, December 7th to prepare for movement to their mobilization stations later that week.



Photo by Capt. David B. Page

From left to right, Pfc. Scott M. Sipress, Sgt. 1st Class David J. Heavrin, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel W. Boller and Spc. Bartley J. Greenwood, all from HHB 138th Field Artillery Brigade, fired their howitzers at Waterfront Park in Louisville, October 15, at the conclusion of the re-enactment of the historic meeting between Capt. Meriwether Lewis and Capt. William Clark. This event was the second of sixteen national signature events to be held to commemorate the bicentennial of the historic Corps of Discover Expedition of Lewis and Clark.

Camp teaches kids about parents' role in Guard

Photo and story by Capt. David B. Page,
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Rachel, daughter of Sgt. 1st Class Kevin Nash from the 231st Military Intelligence Company, descends the rappel tower at the first Youth Development Camp held this summer at Wendell H. Ford Regional Training Center.



The camp, sponsored by the State Family Program Office and the State Family Readiness Council, was designed to foster a sense of well being in children of Kentucky National Guard members, as well as to help them understand more about why their parents are members of the National Guard.

During the one-week camp, children participated in many sports, crafts, and classes on the prevention of alcohol and drug abuse, first aid, history and respect for the flag, and drill and ceremony.

"I really like it (camp)," said Rachel, "I am going to come next year if they have it."

or current resident

The Bluegrass Guard
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WANT TO SEE YOUR UNIT IN PRINT?

If you think you have a newsworthy story or event happening in your unit, contact Capt. David B. Page with the details at 502-607-1186, or via email at david.page@ky.ngb.army.mil.

The types of events that will be covered are:

- Battalion-level and above changes of command
- Deployment/Welcome Home ceremonies
- Interesting/large-scale training events or deployments
- Major unit or individual awards (ex. Unit Citations, Soldier's Medal)
- New programs that involve Guard members (ex. Youth Camp)
- Unique individual soldier stories

Please send your requests to Capt. Page a minimum of 30 days before the event so the proper support can be provided to you.

You are encouraged to take photos of events and forward them to Capt. Page as well so the photos can be used to develop a story. If you are using a digital camera, please be sure to use a camera that has a minimum resolution of 2.0 megapixels to ensure proper reproduction.



Photo by Spec. Dionne D. Short
133rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Brig. Gen. Michael Curtin, commander of the 75th Troop Command, pinned a potential officer candidate during an Officer Candidate School open house at the Embassy Suites in Lexington, Ky., Nov. 1, 2003. The open house, which was one of two informational sessions, allowed enlisted members to learn of the many opportunities the OCS program offers.