



# The BLUEGRASS GUARD

Vol. 21, No. 3

Published by the 133rd Public Affairs Detachment

May 1981

## Looking at safety, Aviation rates '10'

By Terra L. Barnett  
Associate Editor

There may not be any Bo Derek look-alikes flying Kentucky National Guard helicopters but the pilots deserve a "10" anyway.

On April 4, the Kentucky National Guard Army Aviation Support Facility achieved 10 years of accident-free flying.

According to Army National Guard Aviation Manager Timothy Flynn, Kentucky is one of only three states that presently holds a 10-year accident-free record. The other two states are Vermont and North Dakota. "It's an outstanding record," Flynn said.

"I want to commend all Kentucky National Guard aviators and maintenance people for their conscientious awareness of the importance of safety," Maj. Gen. Billy G. Wellman, the Adjutant General, said. "The record they have accomplished is

(continued on page 2)

### Good news?

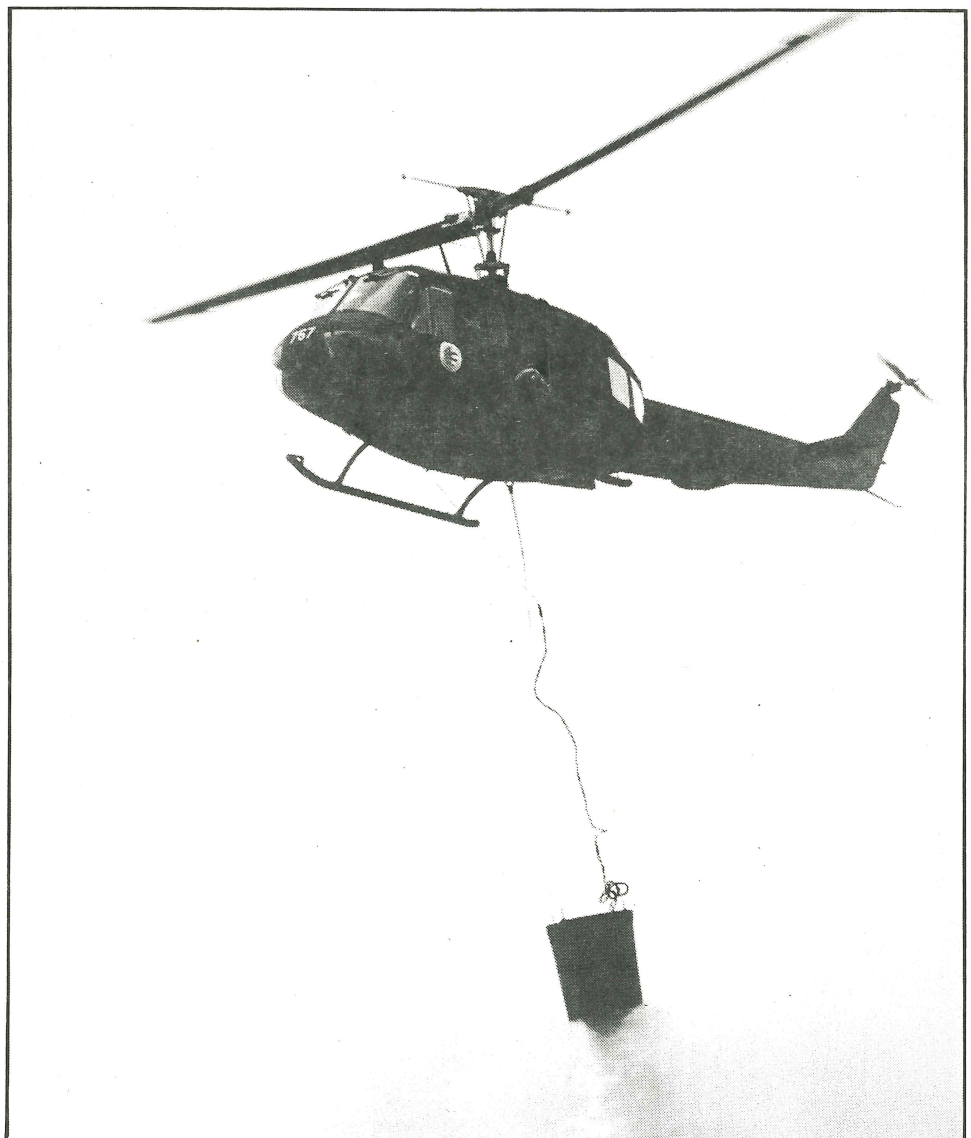
Here's some good news for all of you who aren't ready for those new PT standards: There aren't any new PT standards for Kentucky Guardmembers.

And for those of you who have been getting in shape for them, well, consider yourself way out front.

Due to a misunderstanding, the BLUEGRASS GUARD published a chart of the Army's new Physical Readiness Test standards in the April edition under the impression that the Kentucky Guard would be using them at annual training this summer. Not so.

The standards this year will be the same as before: a four-mile run in an hour or less for everybody being tested. Now, doesn't that sound easy?

The staff of the BLUEGRASS GUARD would like to apologize for any inconvenience this may have caused.



A KENTUCKY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD helicopter uses a large bucket from the state's division of Forestry to demonstrate a method of firefighting from the air. Kentucky National Guard helicopters have served the state accident-free for 10 years, flying Neo-Natal missions from Eastern to Central Kentucky and countless other missions involving natural disasters and civil disorders. (Photo courtesy of Kentucky Department of Tourism)



# Memorial Day is time for remembrance, rededication

## A MEMORIAL DAY MESSAGE FROM THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

"Memorial Day, as you know, is a time to honor our heroic dead.

"Valley Forge, Gettysburg, The Marne, Corregidor, Pork Chop Hill and Khe San. The sacrifices made at these places, where American soldiers bravely fought and died for freedom, take on added significance during this holiday period.

"The men and women we honor may be far removed in time, but not in memory.

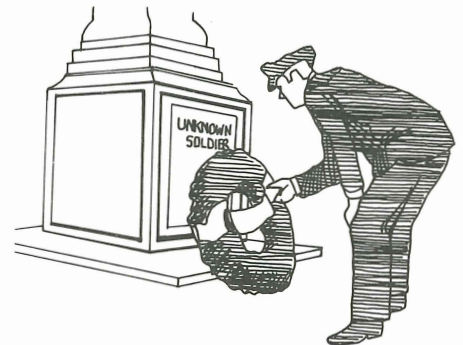
"Let us remember the words inscribed on the Confederate monument at Arlington National Cemetery:

*"Not for fame or reward,  
not for place or for rank,  
not lured by ambition  
or goaded by necessity,  
But in simple obedience  
to duty as they understood it.  
These men suffered all,  
sacrificed all,  
dared all,  
and died."*

"So let Memorial Day not be merely a salute to the past alone but also a day for all of us living to rededicate ourselves to the defense of the principles for which others have fought and died.

"As members of the Kentucky National Guard, let us show publicly our awareness that we must have patriotic men and women in the Service.

"Past and present generations have left marks of total dedication to the pursuit of life, liberty and happiness. Let us not falter in our task to safeguard this freedom for generations yet unborn."



## Aviation rates '10'

(continued from page 1)

something they and all Kentucky National Guardmembers can take pride in."

Col. David F. Fleming, director of Aviation, attributes the record to the "professionalism of the pilots and maintenance crews."

## General Bradley dies

Gen. Omar Bradley, the nation's last five-star general, died April 8 at the age of 88.

Bradley had special Congressional authorization to remain on active duty past the normal retirement age, which permitted him to serve on active duty longer than any other soldier in American history. He had served 70 years at the time of his death.

"This country was built by great military leaders like General Bradley," Maj. Gen. Billy G. Wellman, the Adjutant General, said.

Fleming said that during the 10-year period, 39,759 hours of flying time were logged. He said that 859 of these hours posed the greatest obstacle to reaching that goal.

"The most difficult period we experienced in the last 10 years was during the April 1977 floods in Eastern Kentucky," Fleming said.

In a 10-day period, 35 aviators logged

859 hours while transporting 95 tons of general supplies, 8,500 pounds of medical supplies and more than 109,000 pounds of food and water. They also transported 34 people needing medical attention and rescued at least 50 others trapped by the rising water.

Pilots flew round-the-clock, sometimes in ice and snow, with little or no navigational aids or weather reporting.



**BRIG. GEN. WILLIAM GAST**, Chief of Staff of the Air National Guard, visits a World War I veteran in observance of the National Salute to Hospitalized Veterans. The annual observance, now in its eighth year, was organized in 1974 to honor returning Prisoners of War from Vietnam. Over the years, the salute has grown to include the recognition of all hospitalized veterans in the 172 VA Medical Centers throughout the United States. (Photo courtesy of Veterans Administration)

### THE BLUEGRASS GUARD

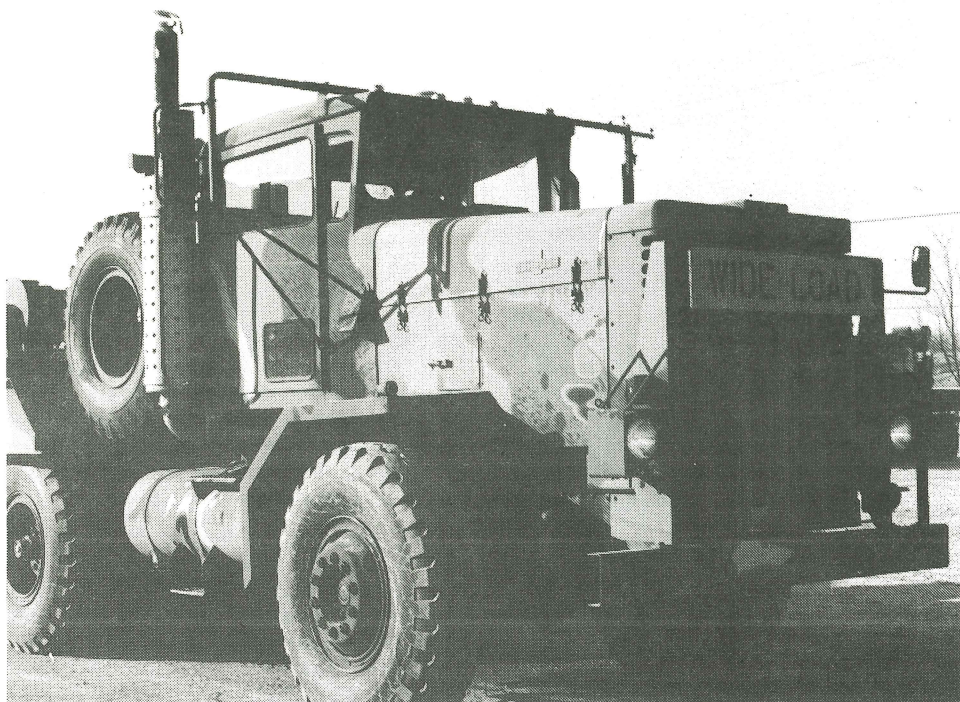
is published using the offset method by the 133rd Public Affairs Detachment, Boone Center, Frankfort, Kentucky, in cooperation with the National Guard Association of Kentucky and in accordance with AR 360-81. It is distributed free of charge to members of the Kentucky National Guard and to other persons upon request.

Maj. Gen. Billy G. Wellman ..... The Adjutant General  
Capt. Keith Kappes ..... Managing Editor  
Sgt. 1st Class J. Gordon Nichols ..... Editor  
Ms. Terra L. Barnett ..... Associate Editor  
Jean Marie Goins ..... Typesetter  
Douglas E. Buffin ..... Graphic Arts  
Lt. Col. Charles E. Hillard Jr. .... Pres., NGAKy  
Lt. Col. Donald J. Waldner ..... President Elect  
Maj. Jacquelyn D. Reid ..... V. P., Air  
CW4 Edwin G. Birdwhistell ..... V. P., Army  
Col. Jerry W. Heaton ..... Executive Director  
Capt. Jasper Carpenter ..... Sec. Treas.



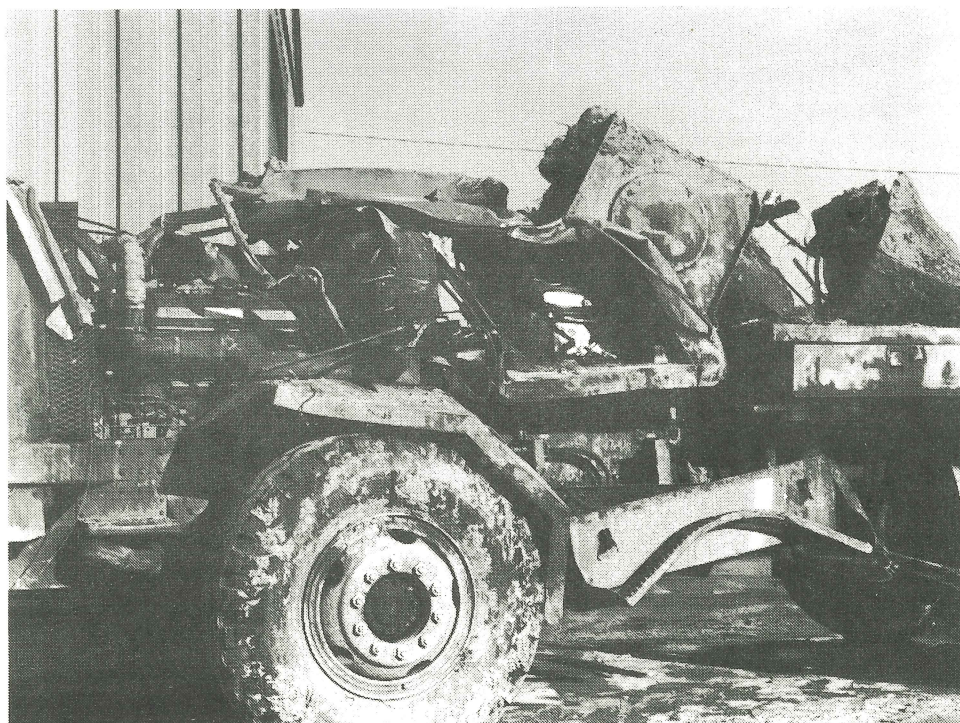
# Topsy-turvy truck wreck 'a heck of an experience'

by Terra L. Barnett  
Associate Editor



## *Before and after*

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE that the M-911 Heavy Equipment Transporter in the photo above is the reverse image of what the M-911 below once looked like. The damaged truck slid off the Western Kentucky Parkway down an embankment and rolled several times before landing upside-down in a creek. The driver, Staff Sgt. Ellis Link, was trapped for nearly six hours in the area just above and to the right of the wheel. (Photos by Terra Barnett)



"It was a heck of an experience."

That's how Staff Sgt. Ellis Link, of Franklin, describes the hours he spent March 4 trapped in the crushed cab of a 22½-ton truck emerged in freezing water.

Link, a member of the 2123rd Transportation Company, Bowling Green, was the driver of an M-911 Heavy Equipment Transporter enroute from Central City to Frankfort with another M-911 in tow.

As he approached the Leitchfield toll plaza on the Western Kentucky Parkway, Link applied the brakes to slow the transport truck down. Something went wrong. Instead of coming to a smooth stop, the vehicle jackknifed and skidded off the parkway, taking with it the towed truck.

"When I mashed on the brakes, I knew it was going to happen. My truck started sliding and I realized the truck behind me was pushing me," Link said. "I fought for about 300 feet but the other truck just kept pushing."

Link threw himself down across the transmission when he saw that the trucks were going to go off the road.

The two trucks tumbled down a 30-foot embankment with the trailing truck landing upright at the bottom of the hill. Link's truck came to rest upside-down in a creek.

"When I got down there in the creek, I thought, 'Oh God, I'm either going to drown or burn,'" Link said.

The overturned truck acted like a dam, causing the creek water to rise in the cab. Within seconds, another Guardsman, Staff Sgt. Roger Lambert, reached Link's truck and kicked out the passenger window to let some of the water escape.

"I think that might have been what saved me from drowning," Link said.

Rescue workers had to hold Link's head out of the water while other rescuers used three sets of Jaws of Life to cut open the cab. Another crew from the Leitchfield Fire Department began cleaning up fuel which had spilled from the truck.

Leitchfield Fire Chief Ronald Hudson said his men could have an automobile cut apart in about seven minutes using a Jaws of Life. But the heavier metal of the transporter made vehicle extrication more difficult and time-consuming.

The major problem in freeing Link was disentangling his feet from the crushed dashboard. The rising water kept a part of the dash under water, forcing rescuers to work with their hands beneath the water.

Hudson said, "It was frustrating as hell to have him loose, all but his toes, and not being able to pull him free for hours."

The emergency teams were able finally to free Link after nearly six hours, then rushed him to the Leitchfield Hospital. During the entire rescue mission and his

(continued on page 4)





SPEC. 4 BRUCE ELZY stands guard near the scene of an explosion in downtown Newport which was caused by an illegal fireworks operation. Elzy is one of 34 Guardsmen from the 198th Military Police Battalion in Louisville who helped control traffic and prevent looting in Newport following the April 2 explosion. (Photo by Terra Barnett)

## Truck wreck\_\_\_\_\_

(continued from page 3)

admission to the hospital, Link remained conscious.

He praised the local emergency crews for their dedication and the four Guardsmen from his unit who stayed with him throughout the rescue and visited him in the hospital during his recovery.

"They were great," Link said of his fellow Guardsmen, CW4 Romer Holland and Staff Sgts. James Baker and Harold Doolin and Lambert.

Link suffered cuts on his head and feet and had some internal bleeding in his abdomen and a lung. His feet were the most severely damaged part of his body, particularly his toes, which had to be surgically reimplanted.

Link said he will be losing the tips of the two smallest toes on his right foot, but that his left foot is giving him the most trouble right now. He received a large gash on his left ankle and damage to one toe. Other than that, he said "I feel really good."

Link returned for light duty work April 21, less than seven weeks after the accident. He has gotten movement back in three of his toes. Although he has crutches, he prefers his cane. "I have a small cane I pack around that I get around pretty good on," he said.

The accident has changed Link's philosophy on life. "When I was down there, I realized Someone had to be with me," he said.

As a result of the accident, some changes are being made in transporting procedures, according to Lt. Col. Edward L. Gill, state maintenance officer.

Gill said that the speed limit has been set at 15 mph for M-911 HET's towing other vehicles on dry roads. There will be no towing on wet roads.

Gill also said that "modifications are being designed which will enable the brakes of the vehicle being towed to be connected with those of the towing vehicle."

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY AND AIR FORCE  
NATIONAL GUARD OF KENTUCKY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
BOONE NATIONAL GUARD CENTER  
FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICIAL BUSINESS

POSTAGE AND FEES PAID  
DOD-314

