



# The BLUEGRASS GUARD

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## Unit mobilizes in surprise test exercise

By SFC Chuck Toler

The 138 members of the Kentucky Army Guard's 130th Maintenance Company, located in Walton, will long remember Friday, April 8.

At 8 a.m. that morning Capt. Michael Sebastian, unit commander, received a telephone call from Col. Harold Loy, Director of Operations and Training for the State Area Command (STARC). The message from Loy was, "Your unit has been 100 percent mobilized. This is a test exercise."

Even though it was a totally unexpected test, it had to be conducted as though it were real. Twenty percent of the people were to be activated immediately with the remainder reporting at 7 a.m. Saturday morning.

Sebastian immediately initiated his unit alert plan by contacting key personnel. By noon 20 percent were at the armory.

The remainder of the weekend was full of the hustle and bustle of an actual mobilization. All the unit members had to be called in, and some left their civilian jobs. Equipment had to be retrieved from other areas of the state.

At 7 a.m. Saturday all unit members were present along with a support staff from STARC.

The inventory and loading of equipment began immediately. Personnel specialists were busy checking records to assure proper ID cards, immunization records, dependency records, and other documents were in place.

By noon Sunday, the armory had been released to state control, all equipment had been loaded, and personnel records checked. Guard members were then ordered to board buses and other military vehicles and move to their alternate assembly area.

After a briefing at the alternate area, members were loaded back on the buses and taken to the Cincinnati Airport. A C-130 aircraft from the 167th Tactical Airlift Group, West Virginia Air National Guard, awaited.

After the group boarded the aircraft and

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**IS THIS FOR REAL?** Members of the 130th Maintenance Company board a C-130 aircraft at Cincinnati during a realistic mobilization exercise. (Photo by SFC Chuck Toler)

# Newest Guard Armory dedicated in London

By Spec. 4 Don Belisle

More than 100 people turned out for the dedication of the Kentucky Army National Guard's newest armory in London. The facility is located near the Kentucky State Police Post and will house Company B, 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry. Adjutant General Billy G. Wellman dedicated the \$863,000 facility, which received 75 percent funding from the federal government with the remainder coming from the state.

"This armory is a symbol of the investment in defense of this nation," said Wellman. "I have been more involved in the construction of this armory than any other. I would like to thank the city and county officials, as well as the citizens of Laurel County. This is a partnership. These are your tax dollars; this is your armory and it is my responsibility to maintain it."

Wellman also had more good news, announcing that Company B will become a full unit Sept. 1. The authorized unit strength will increase from 79 to 150.

Company Commander Capt. Clifford L. Childers is pleased with the new armory, labelling it "a dream turned reality."

London Mayor Johnny Lewis, who once commanded the unit, said, "There is no comparison between this facility and the facilities we had to endure in the earlier years." Lewis also gave special

thanks to Wellman, who was a second lieutenant when the two men first met.

Also present at the ceremony was Congressman Hal Rogers who described the event as "not only a great day for London and Laurel County, but for the whole state."

Rogers, who served in the Kentucky

Army Guard for more than eight years, presented Childers with an American flag flown over the nation's capitol. It will now be flown over the new armory.

"I dedicate this armory in the honor of freedom and in honor of those men and women who have paid the supreme sacrifice," Wellman concluded.



**"DREAM TURNED REALITY"**--More than 100 people attended a dedication ceremony of the newest Kentucky Army National Guard armory in London. (Photo by SFC Chuck Toler)

## Program offers commission before commencement

By Sgt. Robert W. Pillow

The Simultaneous Membership Program (SMP) offers Kentucky Army Guard members enrolled in college a chance to be commissioned before graduation.

The program is designed for people in the Guard or U.S. Army Reserve who want to go into Advanced ROTC and for cadets who would like to join a reserve element. Before SMP became available four years ago, reservists had to go into an Inactive Reserve Group to get a commission through ROTC.

CW4 Edwin G. Birdwhistell, of the state Personnel section, said SMP allows a person in the Guard to stay in, drawing E-5 pay or

retain current pay if higher, while drawing the monthly subsistence of an ROTC cadet. And, while the Guardsmen is in SMP, he is still entitled to the benefits of the Kentucky National Guard.

The program could give a Guardsman a chance to earn about \$15,000 if he enlisted and completed basic training before starting college.

"The program is an excellent opportunity to earn money to cover the costs of getting a college education," Birdwhistell said.

SMP requires its members to participate in all ROTC training. If Guard training causes a scheduling conflict with ROTC training, ROTC has priority.

The program's members are commissioned as officers in U.S. Army Reserve upon completion of Advanced ROTC. A college's professor of military science can allow a Guard member to start the Advanced ROTC program in his freshman year if he has completed basic training. Because of this, a reservist could be commissioned by the end of his sophomore year.

SMP members who are commissioned incur an 8-year obligation, regardless of the amount of prior service they have. The time spent in SMP can not be used for

longevity purposes if the member is commissioned, but can be used for this if the member remains in enlisted status.

Those in SMP serve in a "third lieutenant's capacity" on Guard drills, Birdwhistell said. The Guard commander usually assigns them officer-level duties without placing them in command, he explained.

Guard commanders evaluate their "SMP cadets" and recommend to a college's military science professor whether they should be commissioned, Birdwhistell explained.

When a Guardsman joins the program, he will be given, upon request, a guaranteed reserve forces duty number. This assures him that he can get into the Guard once he is commissioned. Cadets joining SMP may also request the number, but there is no guarantee that he will be assigned to a reserve unit, Birdwhistell said.

A Guardsman in SMP with a GRFD number who is commissioned before graduating can go on active duty when he finishes school.

"We don't like to see this happen because we lose an officer," he said. But the practice does "give the Guard an

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# KMA pre-basic should ease adjustment

By Sgt. Robert W. Pillow

The Kentucky Military Academy is offering a pre-basic combat training program for new recruits in the Kentucky Army National Guard to ease the adjustment problems experienced in basic training.

The program offers 14½ hours of instruction on basic military skills such as shining boots, making bunks and drill and ceremonies. New recruits travel from their home units to Fort Knox, where they spend one weekend learning about basic training and what will be required of them as trainees. One session has also been scheduled at Fort Campbell.

The academy is supplying the NCOs who teach the new recruits. Eleven weekends at Fort Knox have been set aside for the orientation, which went into operation in December. About 140 people have participated in the program, which is required for all non-prior service recruits in the Central Kentucky area before going on active duty.

Three new recruits who completed the program in February, say they think the pre-basic orientation will have helped them when they start basic training.

PV1 Debbie Puckett, a state headquarters clerk/typist who goes to basic in August, said the program taught her "a little of what to expect when I get to basic."

"They (the instructors) let us know that we were getting a sampling of what we would get in basic," the private said. "They said there would be a lot stricter discipline (enforced during basic)."

Puckett and two other recruits, PV1 Deborah Buffin of state headquarters and PV1 Matthew L. Veatch of Battery B, 2nd Battalion, 138th FA said they were not yelled at much by the instructors. Veatch said he was "dropped" for pushups when some spot corrections were made.

Veatch said he liked the training "pretty good."

"It was interesting," the private from the Carlise unit said, "the way they treated us. At first it seemed like it was going to be rough, but it got easier."

Buffin said that she and others who have attended the program would be "up" on military skills at basic where others might not know so much about them because they had not had the orientation.

The instructors gave her a little advice on how to handle basic, she said. "They just tell you to go down there with an open mind," Buffin explained. "They tell you it's really a mind game."



**CRASH COURSE**--New recruits get a taste of basic training with a new program offered by the Kentucky Military Academy. The pre-basic course is designed to ease the adjustment of new recruits to military life with 14½ hours of instruction on basic military skills. (Photo by SFC Chuck Toler)

## Fiberglass helmet replaces steel pot

By PFC Don Belisle

The Army will begin issuing a new fiberglass helmet, replacing the steel pot used the past 40 years. The new helmet, which resembles the headgear worn by the Germans during World War II, is made of resin and synthetic fiber material called Kevlar.

The Army says the new helmet, with built-in webbing, will provide one-third more protection than the metal version.

### Guardsmen-Presidents

Interesting pieces of trivia sometimes cross the desk of a newspaper editor, and the following certainly qualifies. Did you know that 17 U.S. Presidents were former members of the National Guard or militia? Of course you didn't.

The Guardsmen-Presidents have been: George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Andrew Jackson, William H. Harrison, John Tyler, James Polk, Franklin Pierce, James Buchanan, Abraham Lincoln, Ulysses Grant, Rutherford Hayes, James Garfield, Chester Arthur, Benjamin Harrison, William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and Harry Truman.

One of the Presidents, James Buchanan, was only a private, while the rest were officers.

William Harrison was a member of the Kentucky Militia.

The helmet will also be better in battle because it covers the soldier's neck and temple area, according to Army specialists who have conducted years of testing. Field testing was done with the new fiberglass helmet during 1976 and 1977. At present, the helmet has been given mainly to airborne troops.

The Army plans to purchase more than one million of the helmets and distribute them to active, National Guard and Army Reserve soldiers.

The new helmet, like the steel version, weighs about three pounds but Army officials say it is more comfortable because it comes in four sizes.

The Kentucky USP&FO has not yet been notified when the new helmets will be issued to members of the Kentucky Army National Guard.

### Unit mobilizes

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took a short ride down the runway, the exercise was over. Only 55 hours after it began, the unit had mobilized and could have been airborne en route to their mobilization point.

In the debriefing which followed, a few minor problem areas were brought out, but Col. Robert Dezarn, Deputy Commander of STARC said he was "well pleased with the exercise."

# Post exchange is another Guard benefit

By Capt. Tom Little

O.K., Soldier, so you're in the Guard. You know you get a paycheck every month and you get that annual training check once a year.

In the back of your mind there's the recognition that you're working toward retirement, but you're not exactly sure how that works, and you know you've got some kind of insurance coverage called "SGLI."

How do these things work? When do you qualify? Is there any more?

There are many more benefits and there are explanations to go with all of the programs which may be unclear to you now. Over the next few months, the BLUEGRASS GUARD will address many of the programs, and we will be pleased to try to answer any questions you may have. Just drop us a line.

Today's topic is post exchange (base exchange in the Air Force) and commissary privileges, both during normal periods and during annual training.

There are three post exchange facilities in Kentucky: Fort Knox, Fort Campbell, and Lexington-Bluegrass Army Depot. Guard members may use these as well as any other in the country, regardless of the branch of service in the area. For example, if you are an Army Guardsman on vacation near an Air Force Base, you may use the exchange on that base.

The exchange is open to you and members of your immediate family--that is, your spouse and any children. However, they must have proper identification and a copy of your Leave and Earnings Statement. You are entitled to one visit for each Multiple Unit Training Assembly (MUTA) shown on that form. A drill weekend normally counts as four MUTAs.

Most military installations have a number of different post exchange facilities, such as the general department store, specialty shops, toy stores, and lawn and garden facilities. You can use them all.

However, the Class VI store, which sells alcoholic beverages, is available only during annual training periods.

When you're on annual training status, you generally have access to all military facilities just as if you were on active duty. In most cases, unless you are in uniform, you'll have to have a copy of your orders as well as your red ID card.

The commissary is the military version of a supermarket. It's available to Guard members and spouses only during annual training or when the member is on orders for 72 hours or more. The Guard member's spouse may use the commissary alone, but must have a copy of the current military orders as well as proper identification.

In some cases, particularly during and after an overseas deployment, you may be eligible to order from the AAFES Exchange System catalog, which offers items from around the world at very com-

petitive prices. Unit commanders and first sergeants should be able to advise you any time you have that benefit.

## Guard . . . at a glance

### RUNNERS

Individuals from across the state are invited to compete in a 4-mile run during the Boone Center Armed Forces Day celebration May 21. Winning units and individuals will receive awards. Entry information will be sent to each unit.

### OWENSBORO GAIN

An Owensboro unit of the Army Guard recently reached its full 148-member strength for the first time in 10 years. Troop A, 240th Cavalry was created during the last major reorganization of the Kentucky Guard and local officials had been notified that the community could lose the Guard if strength failed to improve.

## Categories determine unit strength

Three categories have recently been established to determine the number of people each Kentucky Army Guard unit may recruit. According to a recent letter to commanders from Maj. Gen. Billy G. Wellman, the adjutant general, the policy is designed to give unit commanders the flexibility to mobilize and deploy units at 100 percent of wartime strength and to prohibit overstrength and "enhanced" strength in some non-deploying, non-combat elements as stipulated by Congress.

Emphasis is to be applied to increasing strengths in units which are understrength, with priority given to units scheduled for early deployment.

Units in category "A" may reach 25 percent above required wartime strength levels. Those units are: 1st Battalion, 149th Infantry; 1st and 2nd Bns., 123rd Armor; Troop A, 240th Cavalry; 2nd Bn., 138th Field Artillery; 1st Bn., 623rd FA; 207th Engineer Company; 201st Engr. Bn.; 475th Combat Support Hospital; 441st Medical Detachment; 223rd, 438th, and 614th Military Police Companies; and 973rd Medical Detachment.

Those units in category "B" may recruit

up to full wartime strength. They are: 103rd Support Bn.; Headquarters, 149th Separate Armored Brigade; 2123rd Transportation Co.; 198th MP Bn.; 307th Maintenance Co.; 1149th Ordnance Det.; 615th MP Det. (CID); Co. C, 42nd Aviation Bn.; Det. 1, 1155th Trans Co.; Hq., 138th FA Bde.; and 139th Maint. Co.

Other units, which fall in category "C", may recruit only to their normal authorized strength.

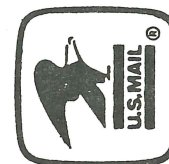
## Program offers

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opportunity to get Guard officers with two or three years of active duty experience."

A Guard officer who does go on active duty this way will go back to a Guard unit when his active duty tour is completed unless his obligation is satisfied.

About 75 members of the Guard in SMP have been commissioned since 1981. About 31 are expected to be commissioned in May. More than 100 are in the program now, he added.



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