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123rd Airlift Wing, Kentucky Air National Guard, Louisville, Ky.

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50 Ky. airmen return from desert deployment

Troops arrive to cheering, flag-waving crowd of family and friends



Tech. Sgt. Mark Rines/KyANG

Friends and family members of the Kentucky Air Guard's returning troops gather by the flightline here May 12 to greet them as they step off a Kentucky C-130 Hercules. The airmen had just completed a two-month deployment to an undisclosed location in the Middle East.

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell
Cargo Courier Editor

More than 50 members of the Kentucky Air Guard returned home May 12 after spending about 60 days at an undisclosed location in the Persian Gulf supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Global War on Terror.

The airmen, who had traveled 6,000 miles in a mere four days, were greeting by a crowd of flag-waving, cheering family members and friends gathered near the flightline here.

The suntanned faces of the men and women who stepped off the C-130 Hercules were all smiles as they met the crowd. Emotions ran high, with tears, kisses and hugs punctuating the homecoming moment.

Maj. Jason Arnold, a navigator in the 165th Airlift Squadron, said his children

See DESERT RETURN, Page 4

INSIDE IRAQ

Tech. Sgt. Chris Bricking, a loadmaster in the 165th Airlift Squadron, pulls the chalk from a Kentucky C-130 prior to departing Baghdad International Airport on April 21.

The airport is a primary base of operations for U.S. troops, cargo and humanitarian airlift for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the multinational coalition effort to liberate the Iraqi people and the end the regime of Saddam Hussein.

More than 350 members of KyANG remain deployed at locations around the world in support of the Global War on Terror.



Staff Sgt. Cherie Thurlby/USAF

Lack of 'legal readiness' can be a horror show

Legal Readiness" is not a concept that exists solely within the Judge Advocate General's Department. In fact, it is something that touches the life of every airman on base.

Legal readiness is the service the JAG office provides to this Air National Guard unit. We work to prevent, overcome or mitigate the adverse effects of legal problems that may stand in the way of mission accomplishment and individual duty performance.

We also pay special attention to preparing airmen—and their families—for deployment.

When we are successful, a critical component of the overall operational readiness of the unit is in place.

In preparation for the recent deployments, the JAG office prepared hundreds of wills and powers of attorney.

This contributed to legal readiness by providing deploying members with a sense of security in knowing that they had these personal affairs in order.

However, in the case of a married couple, the service member with a will makes up only half the equation. To have an effective estate plan and ensure a protected future for your children, each spouse needs a will.

Here's why: A will is a document that directs how most of your property will be distributed upon your death.

Whether they know it or not, every adult actually has a will. If you haven't signed a will yourself, the state in which you reside will impose a one-size-fits-all will upon your estate at your death.

So, if you die without a will, state law

determines who receives your assets. (Contrary to popular belief, your spouse does not usually inherit everything.)

A will is the only way that you can choose a guardian for your minor children if they lose both parents. Without a will, a judge will decide with whom your children live and who will manage their inheritance.

If a married couple does not have children, or does not have children together, a will can make sure that each other's share of the assets goes exactly where he or she wants.

We've heard lots of horror stories in the JAG office that illustrate these three points.

Horror Story No. 1: A husband with a child from a previous marriage knows that his current spouse will do the right thing for his child if something happens to him. Accordingly, his will leaves everything to his wife. When tragedy strikes, all of the husband's estate goes to his widow. The widow has no will and dies a short time later. Most states will not consider his child (her stepchild) to be her legal heir. Legally, an estranged brother is the widow's next of kin.

Result: Her brother ends up inheriting the bulk of what the couple owned together and the husband's child is left in the cold.

Horror Story No. 2: Two children are orphaned. Although their parents had a heart-felt agreement with their best friends that each would take care of the other's children if anything ever happened, they never formally designated them as guardians in their wills. Both sets of grandparents are in their late sixties with various health problems. Beset by shock, guilt and grief, they each insist upon trying to gain custody and proceed to fight it out in front of a judge.

Result: Children end up with guardians

not chosen by their parents and not well-suited to raise children.

Horror Story No. 3: Throughout their marriage, a childless couple has worked hard and acquired a fairly large estate. Both husband and wife come from very large families; only the wife has a will. Upon her death, husband inherits all of wife's assets by the terms of her will. Husband dies later, still without a will of his own.

Result: All of the couple's substantial estate goes only to the husband's family; wife's relatives inherit nothing.

The easiest way to avoid horror stories like these is for everyone, including both spouses, to have a valid, up-to-date will.

And, in support of overall Legal Readiness and as a show of support to all the dependent spouses in the unit, the legal office is drafting wills for dependent spouses during the month of June.

There is no cost, but please plan to spend about an hour with us.

Prior to your appointment, there are three decisions you will need to make:

- Where you want your assets to pass in the event of your death.

- Who you want to take care of your minor children if they lose both parents.

- Who you want to serve as your executor—the person who manages and distributes the assets of your estate. It can be your spouse but you should also have a second choice.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, contact the Legal Family Readiness Office at ext. 4647.

Maj. Allison Weber is a judge advocate in the 123rd Airlift Wing.

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Our office is located in room 2118 of the Wing Headquarters Building. Deadline for the next issue is July 1.

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An electronic version of the Cargo Courier is available at the Kentucky Air Guard's Web site — www.kyloui.ang.af.mil

House backs troops



TOP: Master Sgt. Scott Andrews of the 123rd Airlift Wing Plans Office shakes hands with Dennis Hastert, speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, as a congressional delegation visits deployment sites overseas April 21.



LEFT: Hastert and other house members show their support for deployed troops engaged in the Global War on Terror.

RIGHT: Kentucky Congresswoman Anne Northup was among the members of the House of Representatives who visited the airmen.

Pictured from left to right are the Kentucky Air Guard's Tech. Sgt. John Wardrip and Master Sgt. Scott Andrews, Capt. Ken Novak of the 86th Provisional Airlift Wing, Tech. Sgt. Stephanie Slayton of the Kentucky Air Guard, Woody and Anne Northup, Lt. Col. Steve Bullard of the 123rd Airlift Wing, and Tech. Sgt. Maria Taylor and 1st Lt. Michael Powell of the 86th.



Photos courtesy of Master Sgt. Scott Andrews/ KyANG

Act may protect Guard members on active duty

Cargo Courier Staff Report

Members of the Kentucky Air Guard who are called to active duty to in support of the Global War on Terror may seek credit protection under a law passed to aid GIs in an earlier global war.

The Soldiers' and Sailors' Civil Relief Act of 1940 protects military members from certain legal obligations while they are actively engaged in national defense.

Among the act's chief provisions is its ability to reduce interest rates on debts incurred before active-duty status, protect servicemembers and their families from eviction and delay civil court actions.

But it's not automatic. For Guard members to take advantage of the act, the individual troop should notify his or her creditors of the active-duty status and intent to invoke civil relief act rights.

Rights under the act include:

- Limiting interest rates to 6 percent for all debts incurred before the start of active-duty service. This provision includes interest rates on credit cards, mortgages and auto loans but does not apply to student loans.

- Protecting family members from eviction during times of active-duty service, regardless of whether the lease was signed before or after activation. If the monthly lease is \$1,200 or less, a landlord must seek a court order to authorize an eviction.

- Prohibiting repossessions and foreclosures without court permission.

- Postponing civil lawsuits the servicemember is a direct party to, such as bankruptcy.

- Extending deadlines to file law suits by eliminating time served on active duty from calculating any statute of limitations.

- Protecting active-duty people from taxation by states other than by their state of domicile.

- Prohibiting creditors and insurance companies from making adverse credit reports, denying credit or taking adverse financial action against a servicemember based solely on invocation of the act.

For more information, stop by the base legal office or call ext. 4242.

KyANG homecoming



Desert return

Continued from Front Page

nearly tackled him as they ran to greet him.

"I think I'd forgotten what good-looking kids I had," Arnold said. "I was extremely happy to see that they were doing well. They had all gotten so much bigger."

His family, the major said, are the ones who made the biggest sacrifices during his deployment.

"We train to do a certain job and are focused on doing that job, but our families are the ones who bare most of the burden.

"They are left behind to fix the car and manage the hundreds of other tasks it takes to run a household all by themselves."

Although Arnold said he had misgivings about leaving his family behind, he also said he gained some valuable experience while he was gone.

"We flew a lot of different types of missions into a hostile environments with hostile weather. Often times the operational demand would even change during the mission.

"We had to think on our feet and adapt and overcome. Most of all we had to learn to be flexible because

the situation wasn't quite the paradise we are accustomed to."

During the missions, KyANG aircrews flew "anything and everything" into the theatre, Arnold said.

"Anything that can and will be carried, we carried it—trucks, ammo, MREs, special forces troops, humvees..."

While Arnold said he is happy to be home, he also said he'd willingly return to the Persian Gulf if called upon to do so.

"I wouldn't be anxious to leave my family again, but it's my duty."

The desert environment at the deployed location wasn't too much of a culture shock, Arnold noted.

He is a veteran of the first Gulf War and has been to the region a number of times. He and his wife even lived in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, for two years.

Col. Michael Harden, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, said he is delighted to see the 50 Kentucky airmen return home.

"I'm extremely proud of all the folks who deployed to fight this war," Harden said. "Their accomplishments and dedication have been outstanding. Now we're just waiting for the safe return of the rest of our people."

About 350 KyANG personnel remain deployed around the world.



TOP LEFT: An American flag, held by Staff Nalley of the 123rd Aircraft Generation Squadron, is carried by the Kentucky aircraft as it arrives from the Persian Gulf on May 12.

TOP RIGHT: One troop proudly carries the flag as Kentucky airmen walk from the aircraft to meet their families and friends.

ABOVE: Maj. Jason Arnold, a navigator in the 123rd Airlift Wing, spends time with his wife, Sherie, and their children during the homecoming reception in the maintenance hangar.



ABOVE: This special homecoming message conveys one family's feelings to their returning hero.

LEFT: Members of the crowd hold signs and wave flags to welcome home more than 50 airmen returning from the two-month deployment.

BELOW: Several hundred family members and friends gather at the flightline awaiting the arrival of the wing's C-130 Hercules.



Sgt. James
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Persian Gulf

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165th Airlift
and their chil-
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ABOVE: Maj. Gen. D. Allen Youngman, the commonwealth's adjutant general, and Col. Michael Harden, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, welcome home Maj. Phil Millett, a member of the 165th Airlift Squadron.

LEFT: Kentucky Air Guard troops work to unload bags and equipment from the C-130 while returning airmen spend time with their families and friends.

Photos by Tech. Sgt. Mark Rines/KyANG

Grant selected as state HQ command chief

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell
Cargo Courier Editor

Being a member of the Kentucky Air Guard and a reservist in the Air Force comes as naturally as breathing for the new command chief master sergeant in state headquarters.

To Mark Grant, it is simply a way of life—and has been since he left his small hometown in Adair County, Ky., to see the world.

Grant began his Air Force career as an administration specialist at Lowry Air Force Base, Colo., where his commander liked him so much he didn't want him to leave.

"I was getting orders, but he just kept getting them cancelled," the chief said.

Grant eventually left the Air Force, ventured out into the civilian work force and began going to college. He joined a reserve unit at Peterson Air Force Base, Colo., and an ROTC unit at the University of Northern Colorado with dreams of flying.

He soon left and headed home to Kentucky when he discovered there were no pilot slots at the university's ROTC unit.

Grant then joined the ROTC unit at the University of Louisville, but when he learned

that a medical condition would prevent him from flying, he left ROTC for good, continued his education and joined the Kentucky Air National Guard.

Since then, his career soared.

In 1988, just two years after joining the unit, Grant was offered a full-time position in the wing's finance office.

He eventually worked his way through every position in the section and then became the only enlisted comptroller in the Air Guard and Air Force.

In his new position, Grant said his job is to ensure that enlisted troops are taken care of.

"I'm here for the betterment of the troops while accomplishing the mission," the chief said.

"It's my responsibility to do everything I can to enhance the way of life for enlisted troops in the Kentucky Air Guard."

According to the chief, he will serve as a conduit between the state's adjutant general and the wing's airmen.



Senior Master Sgt. Terry Lutz/KyANG

Chief Master Sgt. Mark Grant discusses preparations for drill weekend with 2nd Lt. Roxanne Westmoreland and Senior Master Sgt. Susan Sanders.

"I'm dedicated to what the Air Force stands for," Grant said.

"My wife says the Air Force is my first

See GRANT, Back Page

Pantry opens after wing receives generous donations

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell
Cargo Courier Editor

The wing's Family Readiness Team opened a pantry on base in May to provide food and personal-care items to the families of deployed KyANG troops.

So far, the pantry has been a resounding success thanks to the generosity of people in the community, said team member Darlene Swanner.

In fact, the phone continues to ring, with people wanting to donate everything from canned goods to diapers.

The pantry was formed because area residents initially had collected numerous items to send to troops overseas. However, there was no way to ship items to the Persian Gulf.

"We told them we couldn't help get it to the troops either, but if they wanted help the families, we'd take it off their hands," Swanner said.

"Some of the deployed troops have bills and house payments that fit the budgets they

have when they work at their civilian jobs, and now their military pay is a lot less," Swanner explained. "This can really hurt a family financially."

The pantry was something Swanner and Paula McLain, another Family Readiness Team member, had talked about for a long time and hope to continue even after the deployments.

The store currently is full of food and personal items such as cereal, pasta, juice, canned goods, diapers, shampoo and more.

"It's well-stocked, and we would love to see family members take advantage of it," Swanner said.

"That's what the community gave it to us for. Please don't wait until you are desperate to come and ask for help."

The Pantry is open Mondays through Fridays and Sundays of drill weekends from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information on the pantry, contact Swanner or McLain at ext. 4647.



Master Sgt. Charles Simpson/KyANG

Darlene Swanner encourages family members of deployed airmen to stop by the Family Readiness Team pantry, which is stocked with food and other items.

'P' pin honors parents, bolsters support

By Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez
Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON—A new program will help airmen honor those who are often their biggest supporters—their parents.

All uniformed airmen can now sign their parents up to receive a new “P” lapel pin. The pins are about three-fourths of an inch square and feature a silver letter “P” cradled within the Air Force symbol.

A personalized letter to the parents from Secretary of the Air Force James G. Roche



Staff Sgt. C. Todd Lopez/USAF

Airmen can now sign up to have a “P” pin sent to their parents. A personalized letter from Secretary of the Air Force James G. Roche and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper will accompany the pin and thank you letter.

and Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper will accompany the pins.

“We could not protect America’s freedom without the incredible people who are willing to carry on the Air Force tradition,” the letter reads.

“As the proud parents of one of those airmen, your support continues to be critical to our ongoing efforts and makes a real difference to our country.”

The program “is a way to build and maintain public support for the global war on terrorism,” said Brig. Gen. Edward Tonini, director of Your Guardians of Freedom, the Pentagon office responsible for the “P” pin effort.

“Demographically, the people most likely to wear the pin with the greatest amount of pride—to church, to Rotary Club meetings or to the grocery store—are our parents.

“By wearing this pin, parents will let you know of the pride they have in you,” Tonini said.

“When they wear that pin out, their friends will ask about it. Your parents will tell them about you and your service, and how proud they are of you.”

Those who would like their parents to receive the “P” pin can sign up at the Your Guardians of Freedom Web site at <http://www.yourguardiansoffreedom.com>.

Signing up will require airmen to enter the names and addresses of up to two parents or parental figures, Tonini said.

The program is voluntary and comes at no cost to those participating.

The distribution of the “P” pin and accompanying letters is the second major effort by the relatively new Your Guardians of Freedom office.

The first was the “E” pin campaign, started in November 2002, in which pins featuring an “E” and personalized letters are sent to the civilian employers of Air National guardsmen and reservists.

Both pin programs are contemporary adaptations of public support campaigns carried out during World War II.

The Your Guardians of Freedom program is designed to continue those traditions by ensuring the continued support of Air Force activities by those who do not wear the blue uniform, but stand behind those who do, Tonini said.

“Your Guardians of Freedom is an outreach program targeted at what we consider the core constituencies that the Air Force requires to do its work,” Tonini said.

“If we are going to keep people in the Air Force ... we need programs targeted at their families ... and their extended families.

“In the case of the Reserve and Guard, that also includes civilian employers.”

The “E” pin program is ongoing, and reservists and guardsmen can still sign their employers up at the Your Guardians of Freedom Web site.

“In the Air Force, we tend to use the term ‘force multiplier,’” Tonini said. “These programs aren’t force multipliers, but rather, support multipliers all around the country.”

Air Force eases Stop-Loss restrictions in May

Air Force Print News

WASHINGTON—Air Force personnel officials announced May 14 the release of more than half of the Air Force specialty codes restricted from retirement or separation May 2 under the Stop-Loss program.

Following a review of operational requirements, 31 officer and 20 enlisted career fields were released from Stop-Loss, the officials said.

The officer career fields released are 11BX, 11EX, 11FX, 11HX, 11KX, 12BX, 12EX, 12FX, 12KX, 12RX, 12TX, 13BX, 13DXA, 13DXB, 32EX, 43EX, 43HX, 43TX, 44EX, 44MX, 45AX, 45BX, 45SX, 46FX, 46MX, 46NXE, 46SX, 48AX, 48GX, 48RX and 51JX.

The enlisted career fields released are 1C2XX, 1C4XX, 1S0XX, 1T1XX, 3E000, 3E0X2, 3E4X1, 3E4X2, 3E5X1, 3E7X1, 3E8X1, 3E9X1, 3H0X1, 3N0XX, 4A1XX, 4A2XX, 4B0XX, 4E0XX, 4H0XX and 5J0X1.

The Air Force announced Stop-Loss, a Defense Department program designed to retain members of the armed forces beyond their established dates of separation or retirement, for 99 specialties and deployed airmen March 13.

The move was aimed at ensuring personnel levels were adequate to meet upcoming contingencies.

Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper pointed out that service officials have always said they will use Stop-Loss only as long as necessary to accomplish the mission.

Promotions, retirements & separations



The following individuals have been promoted to the rank indicated as members of the Kentucky Air Guard and reservists of the United States Air Force:

SENIOR AIRMAN (E-4)

- Stacy Bensing**,
123rd Airlift Wing
- Rachel Cowley**,
123rd Services Flt.
- Angela Graham**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- William Lee**,
123rd Services Flt.
- Heather Marshall**,
123rd Services Flt.
- Blaine Morgan III**,
123rd Services Flt.

STAFF SERGEANT (E-5)

- Joseph Felinski**,
123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Matthew Skeens**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.

- Monique Yuill**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Alan Wade**,
123rd Logistics Sq.

TECHNICAL SERGEANT (E-6)

- Kelley Blair**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Mark Blevins**,
165th Weather Flt.
- David Curl**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Kelly Drescher**,
123rd Medical Sq.
- James Fenwick**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Margaret French**,
123rd Mission Support Flt.

The following individuals have retired as members of the Kentucky Air National Guard and reservists of the United States Air Force:

- Staff Sgt. Dale Dummitt III**,
123rd Civil Engineers Sq.

- Tech. Sgt. Larry Harlson**,
123rd Aerial Port Sq.
- Maj. Charles Mayfield**,
123rd Support Gp.
- Lt. Col. James Simpkins**,
165th Airlift Sq.

The following individuals have separated from the Kentucky Air Guard:

- Staff Sgt. Steven Bell**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.
- Senior Airman Kevin Dean**,
123rd Security Forces Sq.
- Airman 1st Class Richard Prewitt Jr.**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Staff Sgt. William Robertson**,
123rd Maintenance Sq.
- Senior Airman Jesse Smith**,
123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Staff Sgt. David Stephenson**,
165th Airlift Sq.
- Staff Sgt. Brent Ward**,
123rd Aircraft Generation Sq.
- Staff Sgt. Stephanie Wilding**,
123rd Services Flt.
- Capt. Timothy Welsh**,
165th Services Flt.

Grant

Continued from Page 6

love," he said, laughing.

Brig. Gen. Richard Ash, the assistant adjutant general for air, said the Kentucky Air Guard is fortunate to have Grant as its state command chief.

"He's the right person at the right time and right place," Ash said. "In addition to his intellect and ability to quickly grasp complex issues, his 'people' skills are outstanding.

"This position is key to ensuring that the interests of the organization and its membership can be balanced to achieve the mission."

Mission accomplishment, the general said, is about a compromise between the needs of the organization and the wants of its people.

"Grant will play a pivotal role at better finding that ideal balance," Ash said.

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