

THE CARGO COURIER

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Ky. Guard to assume Afghanistan agriculture mission

Joint Air and Army team will harvest goodwill by promoting sustainability

By Tech. Sgt. D. Clare
Cargo Courier Editor

Kentucky National Guard troops will soon be taking the skills they learned at home or on their family farms and putting them to work helping the people of Afghanistan rebuild a sustainable future.

Guard officials are seeking about 66 volunteers from either the Kentucky Army or Air National Guard to deploy to the combat zone in July, where they will comprise an Agri-Business Development Team.

"This is an opportunity for us to take the unique military and civilian skills we have as Guard members and make an incredible difference through a unique mission," said Col. Bill Ketterer, vice commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

According to Army Maj. John Holmes, who will serve as executive officer for the team, Bluegrass Guardsmen will continue a five-year push by the Army National Guard to make it possible for Afghan farmers to feed themselves and their nation.

Decades of war and oppressive rule have eroded the agricultural knowledge base in the country, he said. Basic management practices that are considered commonplace on family farms in the U.S. elude the nation's citizens, 70 percent of whom work to provide basic sustenance for the country.

"Most of the agriculture experience over there has pretty much been wiped out," Colonel Ketterer said. "If you can imagine losing



Col. Martin Leppert/Army National Guard

Members of the Missouri Army National Guard's Agri-Business Development Team visit with a local farmer in eastern Afghanistan to discuss how they can assist farmers in the region. Kentucky Guardsmen will be assuming the mission this summer with the first of two 10-month rotations.

your father and grandfather to the Taliban or some other regime, and then being asked to change the oil in your vehicle, grow and

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Wing members deploy to support presidential inauguration

By Tech. Sgt. D. Clare
Cargo Courier Editor

Approximately 60 members of the 123rd Airlift Wing were called to duty to support the 56th Presidential Inauguration in and around Washington, D.C., from Jan. 15 to 22.

The troops included explosive ordnance disposal experts, communications specialists, services personnel, aircrews and members of the wing's Contingency Response Group, or CRG.

The Airmen joined more than 10,000 fellow Guardsmen and women who pro-

vided communications, transportation, traffic control and medical and logistical support at the event.

"We were proud to be there, representing our state and being part of a historic event in our nation's history," said Capt. Ash Groves of the CRG, who deployed to Martin State Airport in Baltimore, Md.

"If something had gone wrong at the inauguration, with 2 million-plus people on the National Mall, the capabilities of local emergency responders and facilities would have been overwhelmed," he said.

The captain and more than a dozen members of the CRG joined with the wing's 123rd

Airlift Control Flight to facilitate medical evacuations outside the city if needed. They worked with Delaware Airmen who stood up a Mobile Aeromedical Staging Facility, active-duty Airmen who maintained a Critical Care Team, and a Disaster Medical Assistance Team that fell under the Department of Health and Human Services.

For CRG troops, who will be among the first responders in any emergency situation, the experience was invaluable, Captain Groves said.

"Since 9/11, there are so many agen-

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Air Force mission is to fly, fight and win in air, space and cyberspace

We recently met with the senior Air Force civilian and military leaders to discuss the way ahead for our Service.

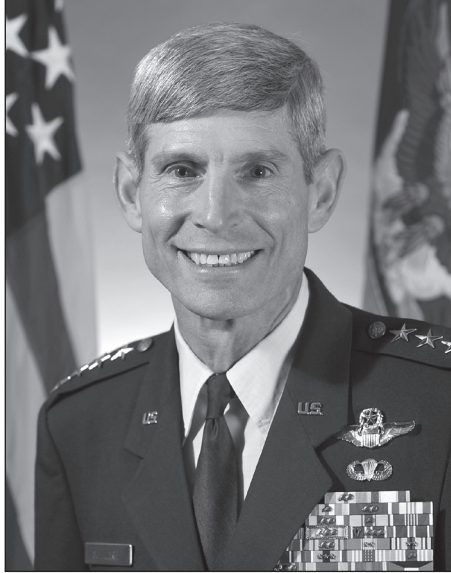
During the discussion, we decided upon a new mission statement, which reads: "The mission of the United States Air Force is to fly, fight and win ... in air, space and cyberspace."

The mission statement

reflects our rich heritage and continuing commitment to provide decisive air and space power on behalf of national leaders and the Joint team. The mission statement also conveys our responsibility, along with other services and agencies, to develop capabilities for the



Michael B. Donley
Secretary of the Air Force



Gen. Norton A. Schwartz
USAF Chief of Staff

warfighting domain of cyberspace. We will convene the Air Force top leadership team several times over the coming months. Our intent is to quickly come to closure on near-term issues, as well as delve into opportunities and challenges that require a deeper and

We are proud of the work that you do every day to strengthen America's defense posture and contribute to the Joint team. We know your commitment to our core values of Integrity, Service and Excellence is steadfast. Keep up the good work: fly, fight, win!

more introspective look. As we move forward, it is important for Airmen to understand our broad priorities for the Air Force:

- Reinvigorate the Air Force nuclear enterprise
- Partner with the Joint and Coalition team to win today's fight
- Develop and care for Airmen and their families
- Modernize our aging air and space inventories
- Acquisition excellence

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Our office is located in room 1160 of the Wing Headquarters Building.

We welcome your feedback. Please contact the Public Affairs Office directly if you have suggestions for articles or photography. Publication deadline for submissions to the next issue is Feb. 27.

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An electronic version of the Cargo Courier is available at the Kentucky Air Guard's Web site — www.123aw.ang.af.mil

Base 911 system offers fastest emergency response

Everyone knows to dial 911 during an emergency situation.

However, if you are on the base and use a mobile phone, there is a dilemma. The mobile phone will contact the city dispatch agency, which will route the call downtown and dispatch help from off-base.

Unfortunately in this case, base officials will not be notified, creating two issues.

First, in many cases, base emergency management personnel are available and can respond very quickly compared to city responders.

Second, city responders must gain access to the base and may be slowed down if proper notifications are not made.

To ensure the best emergency response, always try to use on-base 911. The on-base system calls in directly to Central Security Control, or CSC.

CSC will then make appropriate notifications to responding agencies. In the event you can only use a mobile phone and you're on base, follow up your mobile phone 911 call with a call to CSC using their administrative number, (502) 413-4477.

Some base locations, including the flightline, have dedicated Base Emergency Reporting Phones that are direct tied to CSC.

All you have to do is pick up the phone and wait for the CSC dispatcher to answer before reporting your emergency.

These procedures are put forth so that we may better minimize dangers and injuries to the members, contractors and visitors of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

Please call your base safety office, CSC or the fire department if you have any questions or concerns.

—Lt. Col. Phil Howard
123rd Civil Engineer Squadron

MWR facility back in service

Runaway concrete truck forced closure in 2007

By Tech. Sgt. Diane Stinnett
Cargo Courier Staff Writer

The Base Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility re-opened Dec. 2, offering Kentucky Airmen a place to once again relax and enjoy unit camaraderie.

The facility was closed in August of 2007 after a cement truck driver lost control of his vehicle and slammed into the edge of the Base Annex where the MWR was housed.

Newly remodeled and improved, the facility now offers Airmen a billiard table, a

foosball table, high-definition televisions and an area for soft drinks and snack foods.

“Providing a place for our members to go to relax is important,” said Lt. Col. Matt Stone, Mission Support Group commander. “We spend a lot of time pursuing our missions. This is a downtime opportunity for people to get together after work and just hang out, to get to know each other and talk about something other than work.”

In addition to providing an on-base recreation facility for Airmen, the MWR facility is available for units or groups to host gatherings or social events.

The facility can be reserved through the Services Flight. Call (502) 413-4120 to make reservations.



Senior Airman Max Rechel/KyANG

Col. Bill Ketterer, vice wing commander, cuts a ceremonial ribbon at the reopening of the Morale, Welfare and Recreation facility. The facility was shut down for more than a year after a cement truck crashed into the building housing it.

Team

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harvest crops, sell your products, grow and process your animals and take them to market, you start to imagine the void that exists in Afghanistan. We're not going to feed them. The Kentucky National Guard is going there to teach them to fish."

In country, Major Holmes said the teams would maintain a high operational tempo in three provinces to help local producers. He said some of the basic skills that Airmen or Soldiers developed in their civilian and military careers will be tremendously useful.

To make the point, he talked about the experience of Nebraska National Guard members who are currently carrying out the mission. During the conduct of routine rounds, the Guardsmen met an implement dealer who asked for help repairing a tractor.

With a basic mechanic's toolbox and no spare parts, the team was able to quickly start the tractor.

"Then he showed them nine more tractors that weren't running," Major Holmes said. "They went to work and were able to fix six or seven of the tractors with no repair parts. And the guy was pretty happy."

Agriculture techniques in the country are basic, with imple-

ments and plows often being pulled by cows. The major said the sorry state of most livestock in the area would be unrecognizable to American farmers.

Airmen and Soldiers participating in the mission will have a full array of stateside and federal government resources. They will work hands-on in a variety of capacities to help the region's farmers improve their yields, feed their families and meet the nation's demands for food.

The Kentucky National Guard's support of the program will continue for two 10-month tours.

Airmen and Soldiers with a variety of skills are needed. Civil engineers, hydrologists, irrigation specialists and others who feel their civilian or military experiences can contribute to the team are asked to voice their interests through their chains of command.

Selected candidates will undergo mobilization or advanced combat skills training for their respective services. The team will then gather together for "purple" team-building and additional training before deployment.

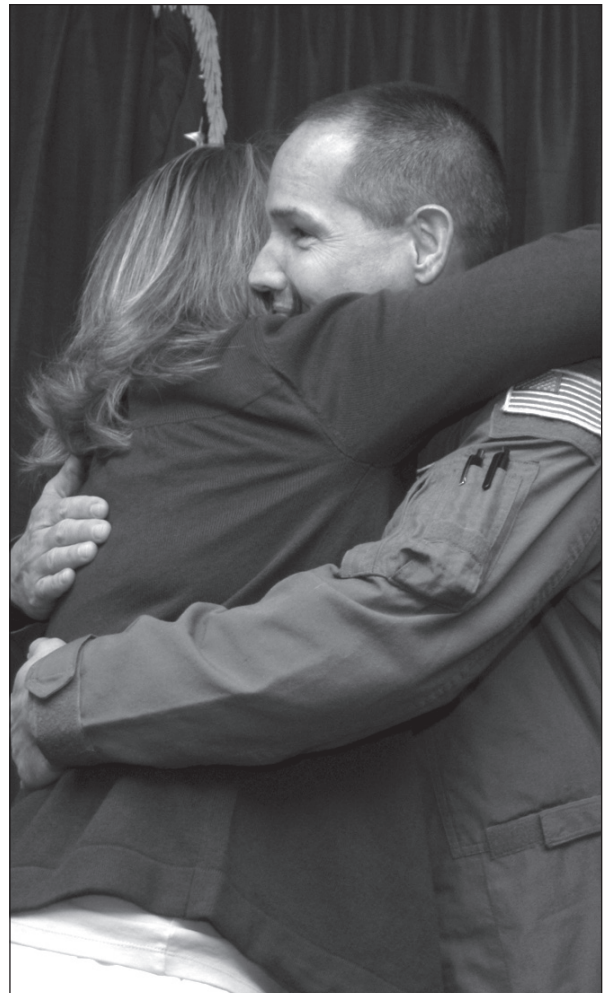
"I want people who want to do this mission," Major Holmes said. "I want people who are willing to go over there and work and make a difference and know they can contribute.

"This can be the most rewarding thing you ever do in the military."

Career milestones

Right: newly promoted Chief Master Sgt. Jeff Brown, a loadmaster with the operations group, receives a congratulatory hug from his wife upon his promotion to the highest enlisted rank Jan. 10.

Below: Col. Mitchell Perry, director of strategic plans at Joint Forces Headquarters, is "pinned" by his son and wife at his promotion ceremony Jan. 10.



Photos by Senior Airman Max Rechel/KyANG

Family readiness official seeks increased involvement

By Tech. Sgt. D. Clare
Cargo Courier Editor

The wing's new Family Program coordinator wants to create a network of support for family members before, during and after deployments.

With an Air Expeditionary Force deployment on the horizon in March, he's seeking a few good family members to help lead the way.

"There are people in this wing who have been part of the military family for 30 years," said David Rooney, the new full-time family support coordinator. "There are young people who have seen their military parent go away for a significant period of time. Our goal at this point is to identify our key leaders and create opportunities for our members to support one another."

Mr. Rooney said he is available at all hours to help family members. He'll connect them with traditional support resources and provide a bridge during times of crisis.

Yet, he believes a proactive, community-based approach is the best solution for wing members who understand the challenges they face as a result of military service.

"I want everyone in the wing to feel like they are part of a family," he said. "I want to create leadership opportunities for our members and harness the natural creativity and talent that we already have in our organization."

At the heart of Mr. Rooney's philosophy is his belief that all wing members benefit when unit spouses and children spend time together and network.

To that end, he is devoted to hosting quarterly events for military families. He's also strongly encouraging youth involvement. A youth council is being formed at the state level. He is looking for young teen family members to become charter members of a wing youth group that will send representatives to statewide events.

"At the heart of it all, we need our family members to understand the critical role they play in the wing's mission," said Mr. Rooney, who is a retired active-duty master sergeant. "We need to be there for our fellow family members whose military members are deployed. We need to develop relationships with one another in good times and bad and be there for each other all the time."

Mr. Rooney will be hosting his first family readiness group meeting today at the Family Readiness Center in the Base Annex. Follow-up meetings will be held monthly on a regular basis.

All interested family members are encouraged to participate in the meetings and quarterly events. He is seeking members with special and unique talents to organize social groups and support networking opportunities.

"Organic, grassroots initiatives are going to be more effective and better supported than anything we'll get out of a brochure," he said. "Everyone has something they can contribute for our community. My job is to support and help our family as we support and help each other."

Mr. Rooney can be reached during working hours at (502) 413-4647, on his cell at (502) 425-8653, and via e-mail at david.rooney@kyloui.ang.af.mil.



Capt. Dale Greer/KyANG

Involvement of spouses and youth are a key way to grow social networks and support initiatives in the base Family Program, officials say.

Free childcare offered

For Kentucky Airmen who are stuck between a rock and a hard place when it comes to finding childcare during Unit Training Assemblies, a new program may make it easier to serve.

The National Guard Home Childcare Program is currently funding the care of four wing members who otherwise wouldn't be able to fulfill their monthly military obligations.

According to Maj. Robert Geary, Services Flight commander, help may be available for many more Airmen who express the need through their chain of command.

"We want to be able to go to the National Guard Bureau on a monthly basis and show them that we're a unit which is effectively using this program," Major Geary said. "The more successful we are at demonstrating that need on a consistent basis, the more likely it is that we will receive additional support."

The major said care is currently provided minutes from the base by a professional, licensed childcare provider. That provider was further scrutinized by NGB before being approved to participate in the program.

"The feedback we have received from Airmen utilizing the program has been outstanding," he said. "They tell us the quality of care their children receive is exceptional."

The wing will take identical steps to credential an additional provider if more Airmen come forward with a need. Junior Airmen are given priority and will be placed on a waiting list to participate in the program. Single parents and military members with deployed spouses are excellent candidates for the assistance. All interested members must be able to substantiate the need for care.

"We're not going to be able to help everyone who wants childcare, but we believe we can increase our participation substantially," the major said. "That's why it's critical that people who truly need the help step forward."

Wing marksmen dominate state, regional competitions

Airmen sweep events, earn national accolades

By Senior Airman Jason Ketterer
Cargo Courier Staff Writer

Marksmen from the 123rd Airlift Wing were recognized recently for nearly sweeping the 2008 Kentucky State Pistol and Rifle Championship at Fort Knox, Ky.

The performance continued the wing's streak of placing in every individual category — and usually winning — during competition against Kentucky Army National Guard shooters from across the state.

Airmen placed first in every category of the competition for individuals this year, and were subsequently named overall team rifle and team pistol champions.

“We have been shooting so long, we could do this in our sleep,” said Master Sgt. John Martin, the pistol team captain. “This team has won virtually every (state) category for the last five years.”

An all-Kentucky state team comprised of three of the Wing's top shooters and one Soldier won first place at the regional competition for Team Rifle.

One of those squad members, Senior Master Sgt. John Siebert, captain of the rifle team, went on to win the regional-level competition.

From there, he was invited to compete in the National Guard and Reserve Winston P. Wilson Combat Match in North Little Rock, Ark., where he placed third nationally.

According to Sergeant Siebert, the level playing field of military competition made the wing's accomplishments even more noteworthy.

“At these competitions everyone has the same rifle and the same ammo,” Sergeant Siebert said. “You don't win by having better equipment like (you do) in civilian matches. Here, the better marksman will always win.”

Sergeant Martin credits the team's dynasty of success with each member's commitment to individual practice.

Members of the marksmanship team prepare year 'round by competing in civilian matches such as the Camp Perry National Matches and the Kentucky State High Power Rifle and Long Range Championships, where



Photo courtesy KyANG Marksmanship Team

Kentucky Air Guard marksmen continue a long-standing tradition of out-shooting their citizen-Soldier counterparts in state, regional and national competitions.

they also have been very successful.

While he has been shooting competitively for around 10 years, Sergeant Martin said team members rotate regularly.

“No matter how well we do, we're always looking for good shooters who are interested in being a part of the team,” he said. “We're always looking for motivated individuals who love to compete.”

Members of the team have won other prestigious awards, too, including the Excellence in Competition Badge, a little-known honor that is given a number based on the amount of shooters who have earned it. So far, that number hovers at just 368.

Two of its recipients — Sergeant Martin and Master Sgt. Darryl Loafman — recently received the badge for excellence in pistol competition.

“Marksmen have to earn a total of 30 points (to be awarded the badge),” explained Sergeant Siebert.

“These points are awarded at the competitions where ... you have to place in the top 10 percent of the field. The size of the match effects how many points you can earn at a time, so it is definitely an award you have to work hard to earn,” he said.

For information on joining the squad, contact any team member.

State Individual Rifle: First place to Senior Master Sgt. John Siebert; second place to Staff Sgt. Norm Rechel; third place to Master Sgt. Darryl Loafman

State Team Rifle: First place to the Air Guard (Sergeant Siebert, Master Sgt. Travis Keehner, Sergeant Loafman and Staff Sgt. Norm Rechel)

State Individual Pistol: First place to Sergeant Loafman; second place to Master Sgt. John Martin; third place to Sergeant Siebert

State Team Pistol: First place to the Air Guard (Sergeant Loafman, Sergeant Martin, Sergeant Keehner and Sergeant Rechel); second place to the Air Guard (Lt. Col. Steve May, Lt. Col. David Seaver, Sergeant Siebert and Master Sgt. Dave Selby)

State Novice Award: First place to Colonel May; second place to Lt. Col. Todd Francis

Regional Individual Rifle: First place to Sergeant Siebert

Regional Team Rifle: First place to the Kentucky Guard (Sergeant Siebert, Sergeant Keehner, Sergeant Rechel and Army Staff Sgt. Greg Scott)

Winston P. Wilson National Rifle: Third place to Sergeant John Siebert.

AFPC officials transfer health records to VA

Move will help speed disability processing

Air Force News Service

RANDOLPH AIR FORCE BASE, Texas — Personnel Center officials here began to transfer health treatment records of retired and separated active, Guard and Reserve Airmen to the Department of Veterans Affairs Feb. 1.

As a result, AFPC became the central transfer gateway to improve the flow of Air Force health treatment records aiding in the timely handling of any disability claims.

The effort applies to the records of Airmen who retired or separated on Jan. 1 or later.

In 2007, the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense directed all branches of service to transfer health treatment records of retiring and separating military personnel to the VA from a "centralized personnel out-processing location." The nature of AFPC made it the Air Force solution.

"The personnel community has the experience in records management required to meet the OSD directive," said Sharon Hogue, the AFPC master personnel records branch chief. "The records branch already had the infrastructure in place for the accountability and maintenance of centralizing Air Force personnel records. We offered to help the medical community streamline this process."

Last October, AFPC officials started testing this new process as the transfer point for Air Force health treatment records sent to the VA using Randolph, Lackland and Laughlin Air Force bases, all in Texas, as test bases.

"The AFPC Centralized Processing Center took in the records and processed them according to the new directive," Ms. Hogue said. "Based on the findings of the field test, AFPC decided to bring on the entire Air Force at one time, rather than in stages, resulting in one-stop processing and streamlining the Air Force method."

Airmen do not have to wait until separa-

tion or retirement to file a disability claim with the VA. They can file up to six months in advance, providing they can be available for any requested VA medical appointments. In these cases, Airmen can request a copy of their records from their servicing medical treatment facility to provide to the VA.

Following the new guidelines, the Airman's medical treatment facility holds the original record until 30 days after separation or retirement to ensure all documentation from medical or dental appointments and procedures toward the end of an Airman's service is captured, and then sends the record to the AFPC Centralized Processing Center.

"We are confident we will provide a valuable accountability service to our total force Airmen and to the VA with this new mission," Ms. Hogue said.

"When records of retired and separated Airmen are transferred and tracked by the Air Force Personnel Center, we will make sure they get to the correct VA location in a timely manner."

Venerable C-130 retired after 47 years of service

**By Staff Sgt. Thomas J. Doscher
386th Air Expeditionary Wing**

SOUTHWEST ASIA — After 47 years of service without a single hit, a C-130 with the 386th Expeditionary Operations Group here has flown its last combat mission and will be retired to the 309th Aerospace Maintenance and Regeneration Group at Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, Ariz.

Airmen in the 386th EOG and 386th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron celebrated the retirement of aircraft no. 1847 by dousing the aircraft with a deluge of water from two fire trucks as it taxied in from its final mission Jan. 30.

"She's a good plane," said Capt. Kevin Graham, 737th Expeditionary Airlift Squadron aircraft commander. "We never had any problems with her."

Captain Graham flew 1847 on numerous missions and was glad he was able to fly it on its final combat mission.

"We flew it over its 30,000th hour mark," Captain Graham said.

"It's cool that we got to fly it down here, past its 30,000th hour and its final combat

mission. It's impressive that we can have an aircraft that's 47 years old and still in the fight.

"You can't live without them."

Aircraft 1847 accumulated 30,100 hours over its 47-year career, the equivalent of flying three-and-a-half years without landing.

Staff Sgt. Brad Kretschmer, 386th EAMXS (deployed from Ramstein Air Base, Germany) spent the last three-and-a-half years as 1847's dedicated crew chief. He said the old Hercules still has plenty of fight.

"She's done this much for us so far; I think she's got a lot left in her," he said. "You're not going to see many of these flying around still. Most of them are retired or at (Davis Monthan AFB)."

Sergeant Kretschmer said while the aircraft never had any combat damage or other major accidents, its age required crew chiefs to put a little more care into the Vietnam War-era Hercules.

"This one is just older," he said. "It's got its old age going for it, so we try to take a little more care of her so she can

keep flying.

"We catch the little stuff here and there and fix it. There's always something. She has her little gremlins."

Col. Herbert Phillips, 386th Maintenance Group commander, credited the maintainers for giving 1847 the ability to rack up more than 440 flight hours over 340 sorties during this rotation.

"It's above-standard-mission-capable-rate over the course of this deployment is a tribute to the maintenance crews who ensure she is ready to meet all taskings," he said.

"It is particularly amazing when you consider the age of the aircraft is older than the ages of the two crew chiefs added together."

Sergeant Kretschmer said the crew chiefs will spend the next few days removing mission-essential equipment from 1847 and preparing to send the aircraft back to its home base at Ramstein Air Base, but it won't be going home alone.

"I'll be on its last flight home," Sergeant Kretschmer said. He is also preparing to finish his deployment.

"I'll do my farewell on the way home."

Inauguration

Continued from Front Page

cies. The more we get out and see how people operate, the more we understand about our piece of the puzzle," he said. "Talking about something and doing it on a white board or on e-mail is very different from getting out there and seeing the equipment and knowing what is expected when we hit the ground."

"It was a great opportunity for these guys to go out together and work in a real-world environment," agreed Col. Warren Hurst, CRG commander. "They volunteered on a very short notice and executed the deployment process for a high-visibility operation. It made us better as a team."

Senior Master Sgt. Lou Corner and Tech. Sgt. Lowery Woods, wing explosive ordnance disposal technicians, were called to provide EOD support for the U.S. Secret Service.

A veteran whose service includes duty in Iraq, Pakistan and Kuwait, Sergeant Corner and his fellow technician brought a unique level of experience to the table.

"I've done many EOD missions," Sergeant Corner said. "I'm always proud of doing a good job, and it was gratifying to be there to perform our mission when we were called to do so."

Senior Master Sgt. Roy Self was at the heart of the National Guard's response. Sergeant Self, a loadmaster, augmented the Airlift Control Flight functional area manager at Andrews Air Force Base, Md.

In terms of command and control for the mission, he served at the very edge of the spear.

Elsewhere, a nine-person detachment of 123rd Services Flight members traveled by ground to the "Red Zone" near the National Mall to support 300 Soldiers. They used another military unit's Single Pallet Expeditionary Kitchen at a school gym to provide food services, according to Lt. Col. Matt Stone, 123rd Mission Support Group commander.

"They did a fantastic job," he said. "They set up using equipment they'd never used before and took great care of those Soldiers. They were sent to provide meals but ended up setting up an entire bed-down site. It was an amazing effort by traditional Guardsmen."

The Kentucky Airmen were joined by Kentucky Army National Guard communications support personnel and an aviation element consisting of 27 Soldiers and five UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters.

Dozens of additional Bluegrass Airmen remained vigilant at home station, supporting forward deployed members while standing ready to respond at a moment's notice.

"Because of the unique versatility of the Kentucky National Guard, we are able to provide proven assets you can't find anywhere else," said Maj. Gen. Edward W. Tonini, Kentucky's adjutant general.

While the National Guard has a history of support dating back to the first presidency, contributions this year marked a new milestone for citizen Airmen and Soldiers.

"The scope is incredible," said Gen. Craig McKinley, chief of the National Guard Bureau. "This is the largest footprint the National Guard has ever had for an inauguration."

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