



@ease Express

March/April 2010





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Official Newsletter of the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard

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2009 was a historic year for the Wisconsin National Guard as we deployed more than 40 percent of our Soldiers and Airmen. 2010 has been equally historic as we have welcomed home more than 3,000 Guardsmen since Jan. 1. Although the 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Brigade Headquarters Company and many individuals remain deployed supporting contingency operations — we have been grateful for the return of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 951st Combat Engineers [Sappers], and an Embedded Training Team to Wisconsin.

Although back in Wisconsin, our consistent message for these warriors is simple — their mission is not done yet. The mission now is reintegration into civilian life. To aid this mission, we have a three-part reintegration program that provides tools, resources, ideas, camaraderie, and a chance to meet face-to-face with mentors and experts.

One of the strengths of the U.S. military is its ability to adapt and overcome. This is in part an inheritance from our independence-minded forefathers, but this collective strength also comes from the individuals who make up our fighting forces. Each one of us has, to varying degrees, the desire to serve, the courage to leave home and deploy, and the resolve to see the mission through and come home again. Other character traits — resourcefulness, reliability, optimism and many others — play important roles in determining how each individual copes with the stressors and hardships of deployments.

Today, the military is smarter in its approach to individuals and families. The National Guard, Army and Air Force have begun to focus on individual “resiliency.” A good way to understand the resiliency concept is to understand what it is not. In the past, our service members would come back from overseas conflicts with the expectation that life would return to normal once they got home. That rarely was

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From the TAG



Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar
The Adjutant General

the case — there may have been a “new normal,” but the deployment experience changes both the service member and his or her family.

Resiliency is not returning to “normal” following a deployment. Rather, it is processing that deployment experience, taking inventory of what about you has changed, and making an informed decision on what you do and where you go from here — in short, adapting to and overcoming the new reality that follows a deployment.

Each one of us has our own measure of resilience — our own angle of resiliency by which we bounce back from adversity. The amount of direction and assistance we require to acclimate to civilian life will vary depending upon the individual. Research is providing powerful insight to the basic fact that resilience “muscles” can be exercised in anticipation of stress or deployment. This is the foundation of the Army’s Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program. Using this program, which is

open to Soldiers and families, it is possible to learn techniques for dealing with stress, communicating with family members, and increasing your resilience. Brig. Gen. Mark Anderson and Command Sgt. Major George Stopper are applying these principles to units and new recruits in the Wisconsin Army National Guard — it is the right thing to do.

I am also proud of the reintegration process that we offer our Soldiers and Airmen, thanks to the leadership of Col. Kenneth Koon and Lt. Col. Tammy Gross. The Service Member Support Division and the Badger Yellow Ribbon Program, mandated by our Congressional leadership in recognition of the contribution our Soldiers and Airmen, are making for our state and nation.

I strongly encourage each and every one of you, currently in the reintegration process, to take advantage of these tools and programs. Each briefing or tool may not apply to you; however, it may apply to your battle buddy, wingman or a member of your unit. You may find yourself in a leadership position in a few months or years and one of your Soldiers may need these programs. It is an opportunity and should be your primary focus.

Soldiers, Airmen and families are the key resource in our National Guard. We recruited you and want to retain you for a long career, but we also want to give you every advantage to deal with the challenges we all face in our nation’s ongoing contingencies. The National Guard is too important to national security and this includes each and every Soldier and Airman.

Again — welcome home. I am proud of you and remain committed to giving you every resource at my disposal to aid you as you reintegrate.

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Soldier, NCO of the Year named



A field artillery Soldier in the second year of his military career and a maintenance company repairman were named the Wisconsin Army National Guard's Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year March 7.

Pfc. Randy Fendryk of Waukesha and Sgt. Cody Brueggen of Oconomowoc will advance to the regional Soldier of the Year competition in May, where they will face their counterparts from six other states for the right to advance to the National Guard Bureau's Best Warrior Competition in August.

"The competition was unbelievably tight — again," said State Command Sgt. Major George Stopper. "I will tell you it always works that way, and it always comes down to the last minute, the very last event, to figure out who the winner is. If you kept your head in the game and applied yourself the whole iteration, you never know."

Fendryk and Brueggen earned the distinction of being the Soldier of the Year and NCO of the Year by completing a rigorous schedule of a dozen events — completing a physical fitness test, qualifying on M-4 automatic rifles, competing in hand-to-hand combat drills and answering questions on military knowledge before a panel of three sergeants major. This year's competition included a stress-fire event — in which competitors with an elevated heart rate fire their weapon at a target, simulating real demands in the urban warfare seen overseas — for the first time.

Stopper applauded the competitors who did not advance to the regional.

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Sgt. Cody Brueggen, far left, of Oconomowoc identifies five hazards to deliver a report at the "mystery task" station March 5. 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment photo by 1st Sgt. Vaughn R. Larson

Pfc. Randy Fendryk, from Waukesha, is the first to finish an 8-mile road march. 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment photo by Spc. Alyson Berzinski
[Click on this photo to see a video story on this event.](#)



Sgt. William Atkinson, above, of Headquarters Troop, 105th Cavalry in Madison, checks the azimuth on his lensatic compass during the daylight portion of the land-navigation course at Fort McCoy March 5. 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment photo by 1st Sgt. Vaughn R. Larson



At left, Spc. Aaron Wallander, a cavalry scout from the Headquarters Troop 105th Cavalry, faces off against Spc. Randy Fendryk, a multiple launch rocket system specialist from Battery C, 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery in a pugil stick match March 7. 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment photo by Spc. Alyson Berzinski

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“What an accomplishment,” he said. “Those of you not walking out of here with any hardware, walk out of here with your head held way high.”

Brueggen said winning the NCO of the Year competition required a lot of effort.

“The competition was very tough,” he said. “It’s an unbelievable feeling to be standing here.”

Brueggen credited his unit leadership and his sponsor, Sgt. Josh Baranczyk — also of the 107th — with his success.

“Without them getting me prepared,

telling me where to be, what time, what uniform, I wouldn’t be here right now,” he said.

Fendryk said winning the Soldier of the Year award was a big deal, and praised his sponsor, Sgt. Troy Kind for his assistance from the battery-level competition on up.

“He told me what I need to study, what areas I should focus on more,” Fendryk said. “Everything I’ve learned in basic and AIT, everything’s helped. It’s not one thing or another — it’s really an accumulation of your Army history.”

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Sgt. William Atkinson listens to questions offered by a panel of three command sergeants major as his sponsor, Staff Sgt. Charles Hansen, looks on during a board appearance March 6.



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Stopper recognized each sponsor with a coin and words of praise.

“If you could have sat back and watched the mother hen looks on your faces when your competitor was going into the breach, it was awesome to see Soldiers care that much about fellow Soldiers, worry that much about their performance,” he said.

Fendryk, who joined the Wisconsin Army National Guard in February 2009, appreciated the meaning of his selection.

“It’s just so rare,” he said. “Not many people can say they come up to Fort McCoy for a Soldier of the Year competition. It’s just a great feeling to tell

[people] it’s just going to be me and a few other guys competing to see who’s the best Soldier in the National Guard at the state level.”

Both Brueggen and Fendryk acknowledged areas they intend to improve before heading to the regional, such as their performance before a board of three sergeants major.

As tough as the state competition was, Stopper said it was a warm-up for the regional, which like the state event will be held at the Wisconsin Military Academy at Fort McCoy.

Stopper said the competition gives the best Soldiers the chance to showcase their skills and compete against their peers. It also gives senior non-commissioned officers the opportunity to interact with some of the best enlisted Soldiers in the Wisconsin National Guard.

“We generally walk around for four days with big smiles on our faces,” he said. “Our Soldiers are absolutely phenomenal. Our Midwestern work ethic is evident in all our competitors. Those that endure will come out on top.”

Spc. Seth Winchel of Detachment 1, 107th Maintenance Company in Sparta was named 1st Alternate for Soldier of the Year. Sgt. William Atkinson of Headquarters Troop, 1st Battalion, 105th Cavalry in Madison, was named 1st Alternate for NCO of the Year.

Last year, Spc. John Wiernasz of Vadnais Heights, Minn., won the annual Soldier of the Year competition and Sgt. Raymond B. Heilman, Spooner, won the Non-commissioned Officer of the Year competition. Both are members of Detachment 1, 950th Engineer Company, a Spooner-based unit that specializes in mine clearance. Wiernasz advanced to the Army National Guard’s Best Warrior Competition last August at the Warrior Training Center, Fort Benning, Ga. 🇺🇸

View additional photos from the Wisconsin Army National Guard’s Soldier of the Year competition at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/wiguardpics/collections/72157623578647402/>

Dedicated Guard members support Soldier, NCO of Year competition

Spc. Alyson Berzinski

112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

FORT MCCOY — This year's Soldier of the Year and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year competition would not have been possible if it weren't for the Soldiers and NCOs from the 641st Troop Command Battalion behind the scenes.

The supporting units from the 641st included the 132nd Army Band from Madison, 135th Medical Company from Waukesha, and the 641st Headquarters Company in Madison. The support staff was in charge of many tasks including organizing and running events, coordinating meals and transportation and providing medical support.

The 2010 Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year Competition was held at the Wisconsin Military Academy in Fort McCoy March 4-7. The competition selected the top NCO and Soldier to represent the Wisconsin Army National Guard at the Region 4 Army National Guard Competition that will be held at Fort McCoy May 10-13.

The 641st Headquarters Company team requested the land navigation course from Fort McCoy and provided radios, chemical lights, maps, compasses and other tools needed for the competitors to successfully complete the events, said Master Sgt. Bob Burgette, 641st operations sergeants and the noncommissioned officer in charge of the Soldier of the Year land navigation course.

"The Soldier of the Year Competition is huge," Burgette said. "It's the one time of the year the enlisted can receive individual recognition for individual achievements, and it exposes them to things most of them don't get to experience in their job field or unit."

The 135th Medical Company was on site to provide medical support. The medical team had two Soldiers participate



in an 8-mile road march with the competitors to give them support. "We've been dealing with a lot of sore feet and blisters — it's great training for us," said Sgt. Jennifer Wine, a combat medic from the 135th Medical Company.

The 135th also had one of its own combat medics, Sgt. Amanda Pagac, competing in the NCO of the Year Competition. "It's so nice to be able to be here and support her," Wine said.

Burgette said that 641st Battalion Command Sgt. Major David Wetuski has been the primary coordinator for the battalion's support staff.

"In the last three years of the Soldier of the Year there have really been gains in Wisconsin with regards to the improvement in the competition," Burgette said. "The state has done a very good job at improving the course so Soldiers are legitimately challenged." ❧

Master Sgt. Robert Burgette indicates the boundaries of the land-navigation course to Soldier of the Year competitors March 5 at Fort McCoy. Soldiers had to navigate successfully to five separate points during the afternoon, and three points at night. Soldiers and non-commissioned officers competed to represent Wisconsin at the Region 4 Army National Guard Competition in May. 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment photo by 1st Sgt. Vaughn R. Larson



Maj. Chris Hansen, a pilot with the 176th Fighter Squadron of the 115th Fighter Wing in Madison, returned to Naval Air Station Key West, Fla., after a training dog-fight in the skies south of the Naval Air Station March 24 against an F-18 Super Hornet. 115th Fighter Wing Public Affairs photo by Airman 1st Class Ryan Roth

Wisconsin's Falcons fight in Florida sun



Airman 1st Class Ryan Roth
115th Fighter Wing

NAVAL AIR STATION KEY WEST, Fla. — Following a similar flight path of migrant snowbirds, Wisconsin Air National Guard members departed the cool Wisconsin weather in March on a mission to the southernmost part of the United States.

Approximately 145 Airmen of the Madison-based 115th Fighter Wing spent almost two weeks gaining valuable training as their F-16 Falcons sparred against Navy F-18 Super Hornets and F-5 Tigers here.

The weather was a perk, but the true advantage at the Naval Air Station was the increased airspace and the ability to fight different types of adversaries.

"This is great training that we do not experience

back home," said Lt. Col. Steve Kensick, 176th Fighter Squadron director of operations. "A lot of our pilots have not fought a dissimilar asset like a Hornet, and this is great training for them."

There are three types of missions flown here — basic fighter maneuvers, more commonly known as dog-fighting; air combat maneuvers which involves two F-16s versus one F-18; and air combat training that involves three or four F-16s versus any number of adversaries.

"When we do a dog-fight, it is full-on — he is fighting his best, I am fighting my best," Kensick said. "We do not formally keep score, but we normally debrief after each mission and see if our guy won."

Maj. Chris Hansen, a pilot with 176th Fighter Squadron of the 115th Fighter Wing, had never flown against a Super Hornet until this training exercise. He was grateful for the experience.

"The Super Hornets are extremely capable and this opportunity provided valuable training for me," he said.

Hansen said there were many differences between the two aircraft in terms of weight and thrust, which he witnessed first-hand for the first time that day.

Lt. Phil Taggart, a Navy F-18 pilot from the Strike Fighter Squadron 213 (VFA-213) stationed at Virginia Beach, was preparing for his first training exercise with an F-16.

"Coming to Key West brings a new perspective on how our tactics work, and it is interesting to see how that works against an adversary who does things slightly different," Taggart said. ☞

Read the entire story at <http://dma.wi.gov/dma/news/2010News/10058.asp>

State, military officials dedicate new Truax Field fire station

Tech. Sgt. Jon LaDue
Wisconsin National Guard

One of Wisconsin National Guard's newest facilities serves more than just military assets by providing continuous emergency support to more than 1.5 million passengers who fly in and out of the Dane County Regional Airport every year.

U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl, along with Dane County and Wisconsin National Guard officials, formally dedicated a newly renovated, \$6 million fire station at the airport Feb. 19.

The 12-month renovation provided much-needed space — increasing the station from 9,300 to 23,500 square feet. The increase makes room for state-of-the-art vehicles and equipment, recently purchased by the National Guard Bureau, and also for better training and quality-of-life facilities for “around-the-clock” emergency responders.

Kohl was a motivated catalyst behind acquiring the funds for the project, securing the funds as part of the Department of Defense's Future Years Defense Program to support the fighter wing's increased role following Sept. 11. At the ceremony, Kohl again voiced his support for the project.

“You provide a service that is really important, really useful, really critical and absolutely necessary,” Kohl said. “So when we had an opportunity to make a decision to expand this facility ... it was, for me, an easy decision, as well as for Rep. [Tammy] Baldwin, with the full participation of [Dane County Executive] Kathleen Falk. It's in that spirit that we got that done.”

The emergency responders on Truax Field provided emergency response capabilities for more than 95,000 incoming and outgoing flights at DCRA in 2009, despite the fact only 9,000 of those flights can be attributed to Army and Air National Guard aircraft.

“The airport is incredibly proud of the cooperation and the agreement that we have amongst the airport and the military,” said Dave Jensen, DCRA deputy director. “We take great comfort in knowing the service that you provide not only the military but every single user of this airport. It's incredibly comforting for us to know that you are here for us.”

The Truax Fire and Rescue Station responds to more than 250 calls each year, some of which go to many of the 14 local communities they share a mutual-



Above, U.S. Sen. Herb Kohl, fourth from left, assists Station Fire Chief Senior Master Sgt. Gary Peck, fourth from right, along with local dignitaries and fire/rescue personnel, to separate a symbolic fire hose during the dedication ceremony of the 115th Fighter Wing airport fire station in Madison during an official dedication ceremony Feb. 19. Wisconsin Air National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman

At right, Wisconsin Air National Guard Commander Brig. Gen. John McCoy speaks at the Feb. 19 dedication ceremony. Wisconsin Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Jon LaDue [Click on photo to see video](#)

aid agreement with, including Madison, Maple Bluff, Blooming Grove, Sun Prairie, DeForest, Waunakee, Cottage Grove, McFarland, Marshall, Stoughton, Middleton, Deerfield, Cambridge and Monona.

“With the current airport-joint agreement we have with Dane County and Dane County Regional Airport, it's a huge benefit to the county and to the community for us to be here,” said Master Sgt. Gary Peck, Truax Field fire chief.

Peck also said a civilian airport of this size typically

maintains about four to six full-time personnel, compared to the 31 full-time and 27 traditional Guard members the Truax Field fire and rescue station currently employs. Of the full-time employees, only four are funded through Dane County.

“Personally, as the fire chief, I am so grateful for everything that we have,” Peck said. 🙏

Wisconsin Air Guard recruiter among best in nation

Master Sgt. Mike Smith
National Guard Bureau

Recently recognized as one of the National Guard's top recruiters, Senior Master Sgt. Connie Bacik ensures the Wisconsin Air National Guard is ready to serve Wisconsin and America while helping Citizen Airmen achieve their career goals.

Bacik, who oversees recruiting and retention efforts for the Wisconsin Air National Guard, received an award as the 2009 Recruiting and Retention Superintendent of the Year — one of eight top recruiters to be recognized during a formal banquet at the Air Guard's annual Recruiting and Retention Training Workshop in Dallas last week.

"This award is well-deserved," said Brig. Gen. John McCoy, commander of the Wisconsin Air National Guard. "Senior Master Sgt. Bacik is a tremendous asset to the Wisconsin Air National Guard. She is a consistent top performer and her efforts merit recognition not only for the number of recruits she helped bring in to the military, but for her ability to match their talents to our requirements."

Bacik spent most of her military career as a recruiter — her first recruiting position was in 1994.

"I love being able to help people achieve their goals," she said just before the award ceremony.

"I've brought people in as cooks and seen them become pilots," she continued. "I didn't just put somebody in, I got them in the right place and helped them get to their future ... my feeling is that we recruit somebody for 20 years, not their first term."

In fact, Bacik recruited three of the Air Guard recruiters in Wisconsin.

Bacik climbed her way up the recruiting and retention ladder to the state's top recruiting position. As a superintendent, she advises and supports two Air Guard flying wings and a geographically separated unit and coordinates and communicates with the National Guard Bureau.

She credited the success to her team and to her skills as a motivator.

Filling critical vacancies was a big motivator last year, and officials said Bacik focused her team to fill them. The Wisconsin Air Guard also suddenly found itself in need of 100 maintenance Airmen for a new mission.

Her recruiting team met those challenges, she said. Recruiters from outside the unit helped fill those maintenance positions. Then a recruiting competition



SENIOR MASTER SGT. CONNIE BACIK

among them brought in 61 new Guard members between July and September, with 51 recruits filling critically needed vacancies.

"My team is fantastic," she said. "I have a great team."

Now, with vacancies and technical schools filling up and even some of the critical vacancies filling, Bacik said a growing concern is that she can only put people where there are actual positions. Another concern is the wait times

for technical schools. Some new recruits tire of waiting for a school and cross over to the other services.

"It's really against my grain to turn away qualified people," Bacik said. "But we have been there before, and we will get through it."

Air Guard recruiters and retainers are on a two-year win streak with back-to-back fiscal year end-strength goals exceeded. It's a dramatic turnaround from years of missed goals.

In January, the Air Guard reported its monthly accession goal of 470 Airmen was exceeded with a total of 563 Airmen, or 120 percent. In December, it was 154 percent.

"I cannot thank you all enough for the tremendous work that you do each and every day," said Col. Mary Salcido, director of Air Guard Recruiting and Retention. "I feel a great passion for the outstanding people in recruiting and retention."

Other winners recognized include: Recruiting Office Supervisor of the Year: Master Sgt. Loren M. Bell, 146th Airlift Wing, California; Production Recruiter of the Year: Tech. Sgt. Jereme H. Tate, 146th Airlift Wing, California; Recruiting/Retention Noncommissioned Officer of the Year: Master Sgt. Gary D. Dowling, 103rd Air Communications Squadron, Connecticut; Rookie Recruiter of the Year: Tech. Sgt. Eric D. Martin, 188th Fighter Wing, Arkansas; Retention Office Manager of the Year: Master Sgt. Roselina B. Weldon, 154th Wing, Hawaii; Rookie Retention Office Manager of the Year: Tech. Sgt. Paul F. Havran, 132nd Fighter Wing, Iowa; Unit Career Advisor of the Year: Master Sgt. Terri L. Rogers, 142nd Fighter Wing, Oregon 🇺🇸

128th Refueling Wing conducts emergency response exercise

Senior Airman Ryan Kuntze
128th Air Refueling Wing

As the sun rose on a chilly Saturday morning in March, two security forces team members paid vigilant attention at the front gate of the Gen. Mitchell Air National Guard base.

A silent procession of three emergency response vehicles was outbound from the base. Lying on the side of the base-access road, near Grange Avenue, were two abandoned 55-gallon drums leaking clear fluids.

The 128th Air Refueling Wing conducted the above scenario as an emergency response exercise at 9 a.m. on March 6.

"We are required to have two terrorist-use Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosive exercises every year," said Staff Sgt. Nathan Thrun, the emergency management program director.

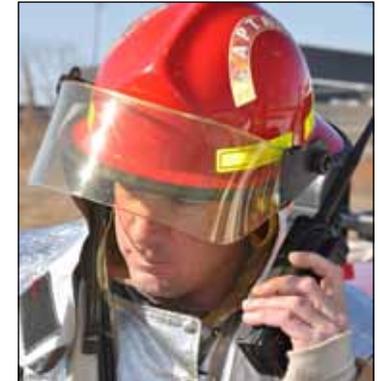
The exercise involved the 128th ARW's Security Forces Squadron and fire department, Thrun said. The goal of the exercise was to examine the 128th's ability as a first responder in an emergency response situation, which allowed the exercise to exclude a majority of the base.

"This was an incident of someone being smart enough to make this stuff, but not smart enough to appreciate his choices," Thrun said.

Such exercises also have real-world applications for the 128th.

"Continuing to practice like this can ensure that we can meet these threats," Thrun said. "I know doing this helps us better prepare for it." 🇺🇸

Read the entire story at <http://dma.wi.gov/dma/news/2010News/10051.asp>



Capt. Mike Fortmann of the 128th Air Refueling Wing Fire Department, communicates with headquarters via a handheld radio during a training exercise at the 128th base on March 6. Wisconsin Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jeremy Wilson

Powering Truax from the ground up

Construction continues at Truax to tap energy stores underground in an effort to go green. The geothermal system here will consist of 70 wells drilled into the field just outside of Building 500. The pipes being installed in each well will make a circuit starting and finishing inside the building. 115th Fighter Wing photo by Tech Sgt. Ashley Bell

Airman 1st Class Ryan Roth
115th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

With the rise in energy costs and a growing national desire to lower consumption rates, the 115th Fighter Wing at Truax Field is investing in an energy-saving system that can address both concerns.

The Wisconsin Air National Guard unit plans to tap the green energy in the ground to save money on heating and cooling bills for Building 500, the fighter wing's headquarters, with a geothermal system expected to be completed by November of 2010.

"We have Department of Defense mandates to comply

with, and tapping the energy in the ground is one way to fall within those mandates," said Lt. Col. Kevin Philpot, 115th Civil Engineer Squadron commander.

This project was designed within the long-term goal of reducing facility energy consumption in the Air Force three percent annually by 2015.

The Air Force is continually looking for more green and cost-effective ways to operate.

"The geothermal system will cost about \$120,000 more than a conventional heating and cooling system but can pay for itself in approximately 7.5 years," said Maj. David Mack, assistant base engineer for the 115th Fighter Wing.

The system takes advantage of the stored thermal

energy found below the ground's surface. The geothermal system here will consist of 70 wells drilled into the field just outside of Building 500, tapping into some of that stored energy. Pipes will be installed in each well, making a circuit starting and finishing inside Building 500. A non-freezing liquid, glycol, will be pumped through these pipes and the temperature of the ground will help heat or cool the building, depending on the season. When the project is complete, grass will be replanted in the field and no green space will be lost.

"As engineers we are looking at the long term to see how we can save money and meet the government mandates," Philpot said. ☺

Deployment recovery process addressed by adjutant general

With the elevated operational tempo continuing for the National Guard, Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, adjutant general for Wisconsin, spoke about Soldiers and Airmen bouncing back from the stresses of deploying to combat zones.

“Resiliency” is how the U.S. Army describes the ability of Soldiers to accomplish difficult tasks in a combat environment. According to Capt. Mike Brandt, the state behavioral health officer for the [Veterans Health Administration](#) many returning veterans have developed resiliency rather than post-traumatic stress disorder.

Dunbar said that resilience, by definition, is an object’s ability to withstand force or trauma and rebound. “It’s the difference between before we deployed to combat and after,” he explained.

He dropped a baseball from shoulder height, noting how it bounced and referred to its “angle of resilience.” He repeated this with a golf ball, a tennis ball and a football, each achieving different results.

“Some of us are like baseballs, and some of us are like golf balls,” Dunbar observed. “Some of us are better at this than others.”

He pointed out that some Guard members who enter the service appear to be rock-solid mentally and emotionally. Then he held up an egg.

“But we don’t know what’s going on inside,” he said, before dropping the egg. “Some people may be ready to crack, and we don’t know it.”

Because each individual in the National Guard is unique, there is no easy way to determine who will have an easier or harder time adjusting after a deployment. So everyone is given the same access to the same tools, Dunbar said, referring to those programs as “arrows in a quiver.”

“We don’t give them the option to walk out of the room,” he said. “We treat them all the same — that’s important.”

Many of these tools or programs were explained during “Wisconsin Day,” a set of detailed briefs given to Soldiers recently returned from a year-long deployment with the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Dunbar noted that Guard members can face heightened stress levels without being on deployment, and detailed what he does to stay resilient. Exercise is one activity.

“I try to remember my blessings,” he said. “We live in the United States of America — it’s pretty amazing, and we tend to forget.”



Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, adjutant general of Wisconsin, uses a baseball to demonstrate the “angle of resilience” during a speech on resilience Friday, Feb. 5 at Joint Force Headquarters in Madison. Dunbar was the featured speaker during a prayer breakfast.

Wisconsin Army National Guard photo by 1st Sgt. Vaughn R. Larson

He emphasized maintaining balance between work and family: “If all you do is work, you’re missing some special time with your family,” he said. Vacations can help maintain that balance, along with understanding that no one is irreplaceable.

“If I die tomorrow, I promise you the Wisconsin National Guard will still be a great organization,” Dunbar said. “If you die tomorrow, I promise you your last thought will not be ‘I should have worked harder.’”

The adjutant general also noted the importance of

being true to oneself.

“You have to be happy with who you see in the mirror,” he explained. “In the end, being true to yourself is being honest with God.”

He also urged his audience to spend some time in silence, whether in prayer or just listening.

“You’ll be surprised at what you might hear,” he said.

Dunbar was the featured speaker during a prayer breakfast held Feb. 5 at Joint Force Headquarters in Madison. ☪

Wisconsin Guard aviators play major role in Haiti relief

The task of airlifting in supplies and cargo by fixed-wing aircraft as part of Operation Unified Response — the U.S. military's mission supporting earthquake-ravaged Haiti — has largely been the jurisdiction of the U.S. Air Force, but a small group of Wisconsin Army Guard aviators took on that role as well.

Three members of the Wisconsin Joint Force Headquarters' Operational Support Airlift Command Detachment 52, a C-26E fixed-wing aircraft unit, left Feb. 9 for Homestead Joint Air Reserve Base in Florida to assume an operational airlift support mission for approximately one month. The small aircraft and crew began shuttling personnel and supplies between Florida and Haiti on Feb. 11. Two new pilots replaced the crew Feb. 22 and continued the mission until early March.

That mission began at the end of January with the Army National Guard's Operational Support Airlift Agency Command (OSAACOM) initially conducting multiple flights into Haiti each day, said Army Maj. Darrell Rasor, the officer in charge of the task force.

"Up until about Feb. 10, it was two flights a day, and it's been from Florida to Port au Prince daily, which is roughly a six-hour trip," Rasor said. "We [were] taking passengers from Homestead ... to Port au Prince and then picking up people in Port au Prince and bringing them back."

According to Col. Jeffrey Paulson, director of aviation and safety for the Wisconsin National Guard, Detachment 52 was the only C-26 aircraft flying relief missions in February for the National Guard.

"It was decided to reduce the footprint from two aircraft to one," Paulson said.

The unit usually transports tools, cargo and personnel supporting rebuilding efforts in Haiti. However, because of the configuration of the aircraft they fly, they could also take on flying VIP missions as well.

Paulson said refueling in Haiti is not guaranteed, so flight loads had to be planned to ensure enough fuel remains to depart. Sometimes the crew refueled at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo, he added.

As the need for supplies and materiel in Haiti decreased after the initial push, many flights of larger aircraft — such as the C-130 Hercules and the C-17 Globemaster III — dropped off and the needed airlift missions have been picked up by the Army aviators, Rasor said.

The air crews from OSAACOM that are flying the missions rotate on a month-to-month basis.

"There are 11 of these C-26 aircraft total within the Army Guard, and we're rotating among the states that operate these types of aircraft," Rasor said.

One of the biggest challenges facing the crews was the short amount of time to plan missions.

"There's really short notice — it's kind of on-demand direct support," Rasor said. "The missions are going every day but you don't know what you're carrying until about two hours prior to take off."

But Rasor said that a short lead time isn't that unusual. "That's pretty inherent with the Army general support aviation mission anyway," he said.

Paulson said that the Detachment 52 crew had to temper its expectations with the reality on the ground.

"The schedule changes constantly," he explained. "Sometimes the flights are cancelled, but they remain[ed] available seven days a week."

By March 6, the crew had flown 11 missions averaging between five and six hours each, shuttling 27,080 pounds of cargo and 114 passengers. Paulson said the aircraft spent a fairly short amount of time in Haiti — no more than 60 minutes, enough time to refuel and reload — due to the high flight tempo at Port au Prince. The resumption of commercial flights in Haiti only increased the premium on airport space.

Another challenge, Paulson said, was the weather. While Florida was also experiencing temperatures in the 40s, Haiti was in the 90s with high humidity.

The aircraft returned to Wisconsin a few days early, but Chief Warrant Officer 5 Kevin Baumann remained until March 11 to hand the mission over to the South Carolina National Guard.

Sgt. 1st Class Jon Soucy of the National Guard Bureau contributed to this release. 

Wisconsin employers get first-hand look at Soldiers' mobilization training

Sgt. Andy Poquette
Wisconsin National Guard

Nearly 30 employers from around Wisconsin gathered at Fort McCoy March 27 to observe mobilization training for Soldiers from the 724th Engineer Battalion. Together with the Wisconsin Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, these employers were able to see first-hand what their employees do in the National Guard.

"I have such a greater degree of respect now for the qualifications of any of my staff who serve in the military," said Carol Holinka, warden of the Oxford Federal Correctional Institute. "After seeing everything involved in their training, I have such a better understanding of their tactical and training experience."

The employers' introduction to military life began with a flight to Fort McCoy via UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and a hearty welcome by the commander of the 724th Engineer Battalion, Lt. Col. Dave O'Donohue.

"First, I want to thank each of you for taking the time to participate in this event," O'Donohue said. "We have a tough mission, and your support allows our Soldiers to concentrate on the mission while they know that they don't have to worry about their job back home. Every day we are sending Soldiers outside the wire to keep the roads safe, and without 100 percent focus, these Soldiers can't do their job."

Employers witnessed a variety of events and operations, including a tour of the 724th Engineer Battalion's Forward Support Company (FSC) area of operations. Capt. Matthew Kelly, FSC commander, explained the company's capability to distribute supplies, recover damaged vehicles and provide maintenance support for the battalion. Before leaving, the employers had an opportunity to take pictures with their Soldiers and sit inside Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) and recovery vehicles.

The party also watched how 724th Soldiers react when they encounter a possible Improvised Explosive Device (IED) during the battalion's route clearance training.

724th Command Sgt. Major Scott Genz said it was important for employers to see for themselves the training their employees take part in.

"As a traditional National Guard Soldier, I know how important it is to have the support of your civilian employer," Genz said. "It's a great thing for employers to see what Soldiers do so they can understand the mission. The training we go through now is much more realistic than it has been in the past. We have better equipment and



Above, Wisconsin employers gather around 724th Engineer Battalion Soldiers to listen in on an after-action review of a just-completed training exercise at Fort McCoy. The exercise tested Soldiers' ability to react upon finding a possible explosive device on the roadside.

At left, Doug Stuart, an assistant general manager at Menards in St. Croix Falls, shares a Meal Ready to Eat (MRE) with Master Sgt. Gregory Wendt, Headquarters Company, 724th Engineer Battalion.

Wisconsin Army National Guard photos by Sgt. Andy Poquette

Master Sgt. Gregory Wendt of Headquarters Company — a contractor sales manager at Menards — also enjoyed lunch with his employer Doug Stuart, an assistant general manager at Menards in St. Croix Falls,

"It's difficult to explain what you do to your employer, and because I work in intelligence, I can't talk about much of what I do," Wendt said. "But this experience allowed Doug to actually see what my unit does."

2nd Lt. Peter Owen contributed to this report.

Read the entire story at: <http://dma.wi.gov/dma/news/2010news/10061.asp>

Additional photos can be found at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/wiguardspics/sets/72157623604583593/>

more team-based training. It's important for employers to see that."

The day culminated with an employer/employee Meals Ready to Eat (MRE) luncheon at the training site Contingency Operating Location (COL) Freedom.

"This experience was a real eye-opener as to what Soldiers actually do during training," said Nate Smith, owner of Smith Sheet Rock and Construction in Pulaski, Wis., and employer of his brother, Pvt. Logan Smith. "After seeing everything they do, to deny employment of a Soldier because of their military duty means you lose out on all the great qualities and training that Soldier has."

ETT return from Afghanistan a priceless moment for families

As members of the Wisconsin Army National Guard's Embedded Training Team arrived in La Crosse March 26 following a deployment to Afghanistan, some family members let their T-shirts do the talking.

"Phone Cards: \$400," the T-shirt front read. "Care Packages: \$1,000. New Furnace: \$5,000. Getting our Soldier back home ... PRICELESS!"

The back of those T-shirts read "Team Miller" in honor of Lt. Col. Russell Miller, one of 16 Wisconsin Guard Soldiers who mobilized a year ago to mentor Afghan officials in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Col. Tim Lawson, ETT commander, thanked the families and friends gathered at the La Crosse Municipal Airport for their support of the unit he refers to as "Iron Badgers" over the past year.

"We were in a war zone, but I am sure that most of the battles were being fought over here by you," he said.

Members of the Miller family members acknowledged the deployment was stressful.

"Our family is so close and this made us stronger," said daughter Jen Miller. "We got through it together."

"He's home just in time for sports," added son Ryan Miller.

The Miller family explained that they make themed T-shirts for various celebrations, and spent months on this version.

Lawson shared how the ETT had trained to support the Coalition Task Force Phoenix by mentoring the Afghan National Police in the western province of Herat, which it did through the presidential elections last August. Lt. Col. Brad Anderson and Master Sgt. Matthew Kronschnabel were sent north almost immediately after the ETT arrived in country, which would prove to pay dividends later.

Following the elections, the scope of the ETT's mission changed, and Lawson



The Miller family gets ready for an interview with a local television station. The family is big on making T-shirts to celebrate occasions and had this particular shirt in mind for quite some time. Lt. Col. Russell Miller just returned from a deployment to Afghanistan with the Wisconsin Army National Guard's fourth Embedded Training Team. Department of Military Affairs photos by Sgt. Sara Roeske

said he ultimately decided that "it was better to have a good job and separate some members than to have a bad job and stay together."

Miller and Sgt. 1st Class Noel Severson remained in Herat to fill critical positions with the Regional Support Team West, while Lt. Col. Richard Borkowski and Sgt. 1st Class Timothy Hass headed to Kabul. The remainder of the team rejoined Anderson and Kronschnabel in the Regional Support Team North, a region administered by German forces. Lawson called it "the ultimate test in versatility."

"I know that most of us ended up doing something different than what we wanted or ever thought that we would be doing," he said. "Most of you became [forward operating base] builders, building

contractors, site managers, equipment distribution centers and mentors to the Afghan Police and Army personnel."

Additional challenges came with the territory — rampant corruption among Afghan officials, and a dangerous enemy waging a determined insurgency campaign. Lawson said there were some close calls, and that fortune and timing favored his team.

"You are all warriors," he said. "I am extremely proud of how you all handled the mission changes and continued to give everything that you had to a country that is in great need. Take some solace in the fact that what you have done today will change tomorrow."

The members of the ETT spent about an hour with loved ones before heading

by bus to Fort McCoy to begin the demobilization process. Jen Miller already had plans for when her father was home for good.

"We have a whole year of stories to catch up on," she said.

The ETT mobilized in March 2009, and after several weeks of training at Fort Riley, Kan. deployed to Afghanistan. This was the Wisconsin Army National Guard's fourth such embedded training team to be sent to Afghanistan. ☺

See additional photos at: <http://www.flickr.com/photos/wiguardpics/sets/72157623584888367/>

Badger Yellow Ribbon program helps families of deployed Soldiers prepare for their return

“Soldier caring” is a military expression about making sure that a service member’s basic needs are met. Once upon a time, that meant meals and pay — but today that caring is much more comprehensive, and extends to a service member’s family as well.

The Wisconsin National Guard’s Badger Yellow Ribbon program regularly conducts family programs designed for before, during and after deployments. One recent event was held Feb. 20 at the Wilderness Hotel and Resort in the Wisconsin Dells for the families of the more than 150 Soldiers deployed with the Embedded Training Team in Afghanistan and the 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB) headquarters element in Iraq.

Reunion issues dominated the afternoon session, as the ETT is expected to return later this month and the 732nd sometime in May. Discussions focused on readjustment issues. Maj. Doug Hedman, state chaplain for the Wisconsin National Guard, detailed a concept called “family battle-mind.” A recently returned service member spoke to family members about his experiences from five deployments, and adjusting to civilian life afterward.

“There really is no ‘normal,’” Vicki Edgren, Badger Yellow Ribbon director, explained. “It’s how each person reacts. Everyone comes back with combat stress, but that’s not the same as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Awareness makes it easier for both sides to adjust. It may take some time, but that doesn’t mean it’s not normal.”

Carla Davis, a co-leader of the family readiness group for the 732nd CSSB headquarters, said the candid presentation explained post-deployment behaviors ranging from a propensity for foul language to altered driving habits.

The morning session offered a new wrinkle — a wellness event, complete with free chair massages and relaxation breathing lessons.

“I think people are tired of being ‘spoke’ to,” Edgren said, referring to traditional meetings where families sit through benefits briefings. “Things like this bring people in. It’s a different approach.”

She noted that some families are unable to attend Badger Yellow Ribbon events due to schedule conflicts, while others have prior experience with deployments.

Davis said the sessions went well. “I haven’t heard anything but great responses,” she said. “Everyone was pleased with the entire day.”

The chair massages were provided by student volunteers from Madison Area Technical College and Global University, while a University of Wisconsin volunteer demonstrated relaxation breathing techniques. The morning session also included advice on self care,

information about Military OneSource and military family assistance centers.

Edgren said that the first wellness event was well received. Additional wellness events will be planned when student volunteers are available, she said.

The next demobilization, reunion and wellness event will be held later this month in Oshkosh. While similar in scope to the Feb. 20 event and geared for families of the 732nd CSSB, Davis emphasized that any military family member is welcome to attend the wellness event.

Reunion and wellness events are sponsored by [Wisconsin’s Service Member Support Division](#), which includes the Badger Yellow Ribbon, the Wisconsin Family Program and the Joint Family Support Assistance Program (JFSAP). Though run by the Wisconsin National Guard, the division provides assistance to families, employers and service members of all components, whether active-duty or reserve. The SMSD and the three agencies within it comprise a large and diverse network of trained service providers, government, non-government, veteran and volunteer agencies that consolidate resources available to Wisconsin service members.

For more information about [SMSD](#) and [Badger Yellow Ribbon](#), visit <http://wisconsinmilitary.org>.

Wisconsin Guard garners top honors in National Guard Bureau, U.S. Army media contests

The Wisconsin National Guard earned four top spots in the [2009 National Guard media contest](#) and took first in the U.S. Army’s [Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition](#) for web-based publication.

The contests recognize military and civilian-employee print and broadcast practitioners for journalistic excellence across several categories including best print, web and video products.

[At Ease](#), the official newsletter of the Wisconsin National Guard, earned first place in the Army’s Keith L. Ware



competition and will now compete against the other military services for the Department of Defense’s Thomas Jefferson Award. NGB announced top finishers March 12, while Keith L. Ware recipients were released March 15. DoD winners are expected to be named in May.

The following four entries placed among the best in the National Guard:

First place, television news category goes to Staff Sgt. Mary Flynn, 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, for

her broadcast story on [Rhythm n’ Booms 2009](#).

The [In the Zone](#) newsletter, produced by the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat team during their recent Iraq deployment, placed third in the newsletter/field newspaper category. The Wisconsin Guard also played a role in producing the first place field newsletter, [The Wire](#), a Joint Task Force - Guantanamo publication produced by the 112th MPAD from March 2007 - March 2008. The Florida National Guard assumed editorial control in March 2008.

Spc. Meghan Phillips earned third place in the deployed television news report category for her broadcast story on a [Coast Guard post security unit returning for another deployment to the JTF-](#)

[Guantanamo](#). Phillips also won third place in this category in 2008. She produced both reports during her 2008-2009 JTF-Guantanamo deployment with the 112th MPAD.

The At Ease earned second place in NGB’s web-based publication category. Dating back to 2001, At Ease has earned three first place finishes for NGB and two first place Keith L. Ware awards. 1st Sgt. Vaughn R. Larson, At Ease editor, transitioned the award-winning hard-copy publication to a web-based publication in 2009.

In-depth information about both contests, including winning entries, can be found online at: [2009 National Guard media contest](#) and [Maj. Gen. Keith L. Ware Public Affairs Competition](#).

Remembering, caring for Wisconsin's wounded warriors

Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell
Wisconsin National Guard

Taking care of Soldiers and Airmen is the number one priority for Wisconsin National Guard leaders — evident by their recent trip to visit wounded warriors.

Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, adjutant general of Wisconsin and commander of the Wisconsin National Guard, and several members of his staff traveled to Fort Knox, Ky., March 11 to visit approximately 30 Wisconsin Guard Soldiers at the Fort Knox Warrior Transition Units (WTU) to demonstrate that priority.

“These Soldiers are constantly in our thoughts and prayers,” said Dunbar. “These are my Soldiers and I care passionately about them; it’s not a burden for me to [visit], it’s a privilege.”

While most Soldiers return home when they complete their active duty tours some — currently about 40 Wisconsin Guard members — need medical care and remain on duty at one of the nine WTUs located on Army installations throughout the U.S. Medical professionals and case managers dedicated to caring for wounded warriors are overseeing the care for these Soldiers, mostly from the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, with injuries ranging from broken bones and torn ligaments to back pain and mental health issues.

Wisconsin leaders make it a priority to visit all of them at least quarterly. Dunbar emphasized the importance of showing support and concern for Soldiers on a mission to get well, and ensuring they are receiving the care they need.

“It’s easy to say to a Soldier, ‘I appreciate you,’ when they leave for a combat zone and pat them on the back when they return,” Dunbar explained. “It’s equally important to realize that these Soldiers are on a mission to get well. It’s a very serious mission and [they are] entitled to our full support. No matter



Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar (left), adjutant general of Wisconsin, meets with wounded warriors at Fort Knox, Ky., March 11. The Soldiers are receiving medical care at the Warrior Transition Unit following their deployment to Iraq. Dunbar and other senior leaders emphasized their health and welfare is a priority. Wisconsin National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Emily J. Russell

what we say on a website or write in a letter to the Soldier doesn’t replace the adjutant general, deputy adjutant general and [state] command sergeant major walking into the room and taking a day to say, ‘we’re here, what’s on your mind?’”

After a year-long deployment, Soldiers are sometimes apprehensive about staying on active duty longer to take care of medical issues especially when while their fellow Guard members transition and return home. During their visit Guard leaders emphasize the importance of tending to their medical needs and continuing their healing process.

Soldiers are also sometimes concerned with the old stigma of being a “broken Soldier” but leader’s also address that

falsehood and stress the importance of rehabilitation and the time they spend at the WTU is insignificant compared to the benefit they receive of returning home healed and ready for duty.

“It was a tough issue that I talked over with my wife,” said Sgt. Kent Milam, a member of the 32nd Military Police Company, who deployed with the 32nd IBCT. “We decided [WTU] was the only way to do it because I had to get fixed.”

Milam, who is a deputy sheriff for Racine County in his civilian job, suffered a shoulder injury which requires surgery. “By going back — not fixed — it would have been a burden to my family and I couldn’t go back to work the way I was,” Milam added.

“We were at Fort McCoy for the 32nd brigade demobilization and there were a lot of people who didn’t want to go to Fort Knox to the WTU,” said Staff Sgt. Tim Touchett, warrior transition liaison for the Wisconsin National Guard. “We talked a lot of Soldiers into doing it because once they realized how good the program is and the benefits of the program they thought, ‘I’d be stupid not to take this.’”

“You get six months of Tricare [insurance] after deployment but what happens if you’re still broke? You’re not getting paid anymore, and you can’t go back to work,” Touchett added. “Regardless of the injury, the Soldier is treated with dignity and respect. That’s the way it should be, that’s the intent of the program.”

First of several veterans job fairs kicks off in Madison

Michael Mauermann had a simple reason for making the drive from Appleton to Madison on a slightly foggy, slightly rainy March morning.

“Returning vet needs a job,” he said, smiling.

Mauermann, a Wisconsin Army National Guard Soldier who deployed twice — most recently with the Onalaska-based Company A, Brigade Special Troops Battalion — was among many veterans to attend a Veterans Job Fair at Edgewood College’s Deming Way campus. Some attendees have been out of the service for decades, while others are still serving out their contracts. But all came to see what was available at the first of 18 such job fairs, the result of a collaboration between the state [Department of Workforce Development](#), [Department of Military Affairs](#), [Department of Veterans Affairs](#) and the [American Legion](#).

Roberta Gassman, DWD secretary, said the state wants to connect its veterans with employers and training services.

“The economy is suffering, but we’re seeing signs of recovery,” she said. “Having skilled workers ready could not be more important.”

Twenty-three employers — many with current job openings — were on hand at the first veterans job fair, and Gassman said they were committed to the employment and well-being of state veterans.

“They have a base of leadership within themselves that, without a doubt, will take us well into the 21st century,” said Ken Black, DVA secretary. He added veterans make excellent employees because they are self-starters, culturally sensitive and hard-working.

“They’re so dedicated they want to do great things with their lives,” Brig. Gen. John McCoy, commander of the Wisconsin Air National Guard, agreed.

Keith Miller of Sun Prairie, who retired from a full-time job as an Army Reserve recruiter in 2001, is currently employed but came out to see what opportunities are available.

“The [Veterans Administration] has been my focus,” he said. “I think working for them would be worthwhile.”

Adam Puhl of Oshkosh seemed optimistic as he visited each station, tucking information neatly into a folder.

“I’ve gotten a few leads I didn’t know about before,” he said.

Dan Viesman, an Argyle, Wis. resident who left the Army in 1974, said he was getting plenty of information at the job fair. A few years from retirement, he expressed concern over his chances for a job.

“There are lots of young people here,” he observed.

Mauermann — who, with seven years of military experience, would qualify as one of the “young people,” — directed his attention to the Madison Police Department and Dane County Sheriff’s

Department booths. “I’m going to school for criminal justice,” he said. “There’s lots of good information here.”

McCoy said that a job fair of this magnitude had been discussed for some time. Gassman described the effort as an “ambitious plan” to reach out to veterans.

“It’s unique,” she said, “and we’re very proud to do it.”

Seventeen additional job fairs for veterans will be held, with the final event at an Army National Guard armory in Superior. 🇺🇸

Health care options part of veteran benefit information weekend

Spc. Eric Liesse

112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The more than 3,200 Soldiers that deployed with the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat team may be home, but the reintegration to civilian life has just begun.

Since Feb. 19, and nearly every weekend through March, Soldiers and their families are attending the first of three reintegration events. During this phase, they spend two days receiving briefings and meeting one-on-one with various subject matters experts regarding employment rights, veteran's benefits, veterans service organizations and education benefits — and also to make sure they know their options to continue military health care.

Active duty service members and their families, including Guard members on deployment, are entitled to health care through [TRICARE](#) — the use of military health care facilities and a network of civilian health care professionals, institutions, pharmacies and suppliers at little to no cost.

When their tour of active duty ends, their health care doesn't — they just transition to a Transitional Assistance Management Program, or TAMP, for 180 days and then are offered [TRICARE Reserve Select](#) for a small fee if they so choose. TRICARE representatives attend reintegration events to ensure Guard Soldiers and their families know which programs they are eligible for, how to enroll, and available coverage.

"TAMP is basically TRICARE Reserve Select, but you get it free for 180 days after a deployment," said Sgt. Chris Ray Dearth, the TRICARE representative. TRICARE Reserve Select is a health insurance plan that qualifying National Guard and Reserve service members can purchase, at roughly \$50 per month for individuals or about \$200 per month for families.

"The main purpose for TRICARE

being here [at the reintegration session] is so the Soldier knows they'll get the TAMP program," Dearth said. Once TAMP ends, Guard members and their families may have different health care options — TRICARE being one of them.

"Illness or injury can strike at any time, so carrying health insurance is a good idea," Dearth said, and TRICARE is an affordable option.

TRICARE was just one of many organizations present for the Yellow Ribbon reintegration weekend. Dearth made it clear his job for this weekend was to identify the needs of the Soldier, not be a salesman.

"We have the TRICARE Reserve Select, [but] we're not selling it to them today," Dearth said. "We're here for taking care of the Soldier. The whole idea of the weekend is taking care of the Soldier."

Dearth appreciated the opportunities presented to veterans at these reintegration sessions.

"Before, Soldiers didn't have a reintegration at all," Dearth said. "Now with these reintegrations, everything that is prudent to them is at one location. They can get all this information in a weekend, whereas if they were to go out to do it on their own, it could take them weeks or months."

Approximately 1,600 Guard Soldiers that deployed with the 32nd Brigade have completed phase one as of March 7 — but integration never stops. Soldiers will return to their armories for phase two and three in the coming months. However, Wisconsin's Service Member Support Division (www.wisconsinmilitary.org) and their team of experts and partner organizations stand by to assist all service members and their families. ☞

Proof of insurance required to drive at Fort McCoy

Motorists who live, work at or visit Fort McCoy, soon will be required to provide proof of motor vehicle liability insurance.

Sgt. Domenic Modica, Fort McCoy installation traffic sergeant, said the new policy — approved as part of the state of Wisconsin budget — means that Wisconsin joins 48 other states in mandating liability insurance coverage. Only New Hampshire doesn't require liability insurance.

Effective June 1, every motor vehicle operator in Wisconsin will be required to have proof of liability insurance in their vehicles at all times. Violators can face fines if they can't provide information when it is requested by law enforcement personnel. Modica said this might occur, for example, when motorists are stopped for a traffic violation.

At Fort McCoy, motorists will be required to provide proof of liability insurance — likely in the form of an insurance card or a letter from an insurance agency — if asked by installation police.

Visitors will be asked for proof of insurance and their driver's license when requesting a temporary visitor pass at the main gate, he said.

Authorized personnel who are registering or renewing a vehicle registration also will have to provide proof of insurance, as well as a state driver's license, vehicle registration certificate/information, and, if applicable, their civilian or military identification cards.

More information is available at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/rsb/Statutes.html>. At the Web site, go to Chapter 344 Vehicles – Financial Responsibilities, and then to Subchapter VI, Mandatory Liability Insurance, Sections 61-67.

For more information about the policy in the Fort McCoy community, call 608-388-2044. ☞



Staff Sgt. Jerry Vogel, a survey team chief with the Wisconsin National Guard's 54th Civil Support Team, is accompanied by U.S. Army North observer/controller/trainer James E. Flowers while exploring the VIP Lounge at Alpine Valley Music Theatre for "contaminants" during an external evaluation March 25. Wisconsin Army National Guard photos by 1st Sgt. Vaughn R. Larson

Ready for the worst-case scenario

Imagine Alpine Valley Music Theatre packed with fans of several rock groups performing a joint concert in the cold, crisp air of a late March evening. As the bands play, concert-goers in the VIP Lounge and concessions area begin to experience burning in their throats and on their skin, as well as difficulty breathing. Panic erupts as fans flee the venue. Meanwhile, local law enforcement receives a call from a group claiming responsibility for a weapons of mass destruction attack at the concert, targeting musicians it claims exploit animals.

While the above scenario was imaginary, the stakes were real for the Wisconsin National Guard's 54th Civil Support Team, which was being evaluated by an Army North team for certification as a full-time emergency or terror attack response unit. The verdict: the 54th CST

was deemed fully trained and mission ready.

"There's a lot of training and a lot of experience on our team," said Lt. Col. Timothy Covington, 54th CST commander. "The team is capable, confident and can perform its mission."

Brig. Gen. Scott Legwold, joint staff director for the Wisconsin National Guard, agreed.

"This external evaluation by U.S. Army North [5th Army] confirms the 54th CST's readiness to deploy anywhere in the state at any time to respond to the needs of federal, state and local authorities," he said. "Governmental leaders at all levels and first responders can have full confidence in this unit's capabilities."

Read the entire story at <http://dma.wi.gov/dma/news/2010News/10062.asp>

Army selects new camouflage for Afghanistan



The secretary of the Army announced that the Army will provide combat uniforms in the MultiCam pattern to all Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom, starting this summer.

This decision follows a rigorous four-month evaluation and reflects the Army's commitment to giving Soldiers in Afghanistan the most effective concealment possible.

Soldiers deploying to Afghanistan this summer will receive fire-resistant Army combat uniforms in MultiCam, along with associated equipment including body armor, rucksacks and helmet covers.

The Army's selection of MultiCam for Soldiers in Afghanistan culminates phase three of a four-phase plan to thoroughly and deliberately evaluate camouflage alternatives.

The Army took action in fall 2009 to provide two battalion-size elements in Afghanistan with uniforms and associated gear in patterns other than the standard-issue universal camouflage pattern (UCP). One unit received uniforms and gear in MultiCam, and the other in a variant of UCP known as UCP - Delta.

In addition, the Army deployed a team of experts to Afghanistan in October to gather extensive data and photos on the diverse environments of Afghanistan, where Soldiers often travel through multiple environments in a single mission, from snow to woodland to desert.

The Army incorporated the information gathered into a photo simulation study it then administered to nearly 750 Soldiers who had deployed to Afghanistan. The study asked them to compare six patterns against eight different environments. The results, along with surveys of Soldiers in the two battalions who received alternate camouflage, formed the basis for the Army's decision on MultiCam.

The Army will now implement phase four of its plan for camouflage, which is to evaluate long-term Army combat uniform camouflage options for all Soldiers.

Camouflage alternatives represent one facet of the Army's ongoing efforts to improve the Army combat uniform. The Army has made more than 26 improvements to the ACU since it was first fielded in June 2004.

Spc. Jesus B. Fernandez crosses a stream during a unit visit Feb. 6 to Angla Kala village in Afghanistan's Kunar province. The Soldiers shown here are wearing the new MultiCam pattern uniforms. U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Gary A. Witte

Packers player links gridiron, Guard

Staff Sgt. Brian Jopek

112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

The NFL may be in the off season, but Green Bay Packer Mark Tauscher is using some of his time to mentor young men and women interested in joining the [Wisconsin Army National Guard](#).

“Anyone that lives in this country understands the importance of the military and the sacrifices made,” Tauscher said during a recent visit to the Wisconsin National Guard armory in Racine. But unlike pro athletes, he said Soldiers and their families do not receive enough recognition for the things they do and especially the sacrifices they make.

Tauscher made a low-key entrance to the armory, dressed in shorts and T-shirt — but just before he was introduced to the audience, he put on his familiar number 65 Packers jersey and talked to about 100 young adults and their families about the similarities of being a pro athlete and serving one’s country in the armed forces.

The terminology is often similar — winning the battle in the trenches, aerial assault, taking the field, controlling the line — but this hometown hero contends that many of the same attributes needed to play in the National Football League also apply to being a Soldier.

Tauscher talked about everything from his early days on the family dairy farm outside Auburndale to his days as a walk-on for the University of Wisconsin Badger football team and, ultimately, his current job with the Packers. He said he wasn’t blessed with a ton of talent, just motivation.

“I always tried to get by on work ethic and trying to be in the right position,” he said. “All that hard work you don’t like really doing at the time ... you look back, and it’s what helped make you successful.” It’s that sort of devotion to training and discipline, Tauscher contends that makes the NFL and the Guard similar.

Tauscher’s visit was arranged through the National Guard Bureau’s NFL/National Guard Player Appearance program which gives pro athletes an opportunity to share their story with young men and women who may be interested in pursuing military careers. 🇺🇸



Above, Green Bay Packer offensive lineman Mark Tauscher autographs a mini-football for a fan during a recent visit to the Wisconsin Army National Guard Armory in Racine.



Left, Tauscher speaks to an audience during a recent visit to the Wisconsin Army National Guard Armory in Racine about his experiences in working to live what he called his dream playing for the Packers.

112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment photos by Staff Sgt. Brian Jopek

TRADOC releases new Warrior Tasks, Battle Drills

Lisa Alley
TRADOC Public Affairs

U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command released the Army's new Warrior Tasks and Battle Drills, and the Critical Individual Supporting Task List elaborating on those tasks and battle drills, March 25.

A PDF document with the new information can be downloaded by clicking [here](#), or from the "What's Hot" list on the [Army Training Network](#) homepage.

The information is accessed using one's Army Knowledge Online (AKO) password or Common Access Card (CAC) login.

The last major overhaul of the tasks and battle drills was 2005, although the number of tasks and drills has evolved in response to lessons-learned from the battlefields of Iraq and Afghanistan.

"We now have a list which has been unanimously approved by all Army commands universally," said Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, TRADOC's deputy commanding general for Initial Military Training (IMT). "Some of old tasks and drills introduced in basic training were not relevant - they were not things most Soldiers would use at any point in their careers. They'd see it one time and then never see it again."

The old tasks and drills list were organized under headings such as "shoot," "communicate," "urban operations," and "move and fight," and contained roughly 32 tasks, 207 subtasks and 12 battle drills.

The new list is streamlined, with 15 tasks, 76 subtasks and four battle drills, organized under the headings "shoot," "move," "communicate," and "survive and adapt."

Warrior Tasks & Battle Drills

SHOOT

- Maintain, employ, engage with assigned weapon system
- Employ hand grenades

MOVE

- Perform individual movement techniques
- Navigate from one point to another
- Move under fire

COMMUNICATE

- Perform voice communications (SITREPS/SPOTREPS/9-LINE MEDEVAC, EXPLOSIVE HAZARD [EH])
- Use visual signaling techniques

SURVIVE

- React to chemical or biological attack/hazard
- Perform immediate lifesaving measures
- Perform counter IED
- Maintain Situational Awareness/Every Soldier as Sensor
- Perform Combatives

ADAPT

- Assess and Respond to Threats (Escalation of Force)
- Adapt to changing operational environments
- Grow professionally and personally (Build resilience)

BATTLE DRILLS

- React to contact
- Establish Security
- Perform actions as a member of a Mounted Patrol
- Evacuate a casualty

Veterans, Families, Retirees

Concordia scholarships for Wisconsin Guard members

Concordia University Wisconsin and the Wisconsin National Guard have established an annual scholarship in the amount of \$10,000. This amount is allocated as follows:

- \$2,500 for a new adult education bachelor degree student
- \$2,500 for a continuing adult education bachelor degree student
- \$5,000 for a new master's level student

To be eligible for this award, all applicants must be members of the Wisconsin Army or Air National Guard. In addition, the following specific criteria are required and will be used in making the award decision:

For all Bachelor Degree students:

1. Applicants must inform the Education Officer at the National Guard headquarters in Madison, by completing the scholarship application form.
2. The application to Concordia University Wisconsin must be completed and submitted with the application fee.
3. Two letters of recommendation must be submitted.
 - a. One must be from the individual's unit commanding officer.
 - b. The second must be from someone outside of the National Guard.

Additional criteria for continuing students:

1. The student must have completed at least two, but not more than nine courses at Concordia in the Adult Education program.
2. The student must be making satisfactory academic progress as evidenced by their grade point average in courses taken at Concordia University Wisconsin.

For Master's level students:

1. Applicants must inform the Education Officer at the National Guard headquarters in Madison by completing the scholarship application form.
2. The application to Concordia University Wisconsin must be completed and submitted with the application fee.
3. In lieu of test scores, the student's undergraduate grade point average will be assessed.
4. Two letters of recommendation must be submitted.
 - a. One must be from the individual's unit commanding officer.

- b. The second must be from someone outside of the National Guard.

Applications and letters of recommendation must be submitted to the Education Officer at the Wisconsin National Guard Headquarters in Madison no later than May 3 for the school year beginning the following Sept. 1. The student will be informed of the award decision by May 26.

Once all applications have been received and reviewed by the Education Officer, he or she will forward the applications to the Certifying Official at Concordia University Wisconsin, in Mequon. The final award decision will be made by the Vice President of Adult and Continuing Education and the Vice President of Admissions in consultation with the National Guard Education Officer. 🙏

TRICARE not affected by health care reform

As Secretary of Veterans Affairs, I accepted the solemn responsibility to uphold our sacred trust with our nation's Veterans. Fears that Veterans health care and TRICARE will be undermined by the health reform legislation are unfounded. I am confident that the legislation will provide the protections afforded our nation's Veterans and the health care they have earned through their service. The President and I stand firm in our commitment to those who serve and have served in our armed forces. We pledge to continue to provide the men and women in uniform and our Veterans the high quality health care they have earned.

President Obama has strongly supported Veterans and their needs, specifically health care needs, on every major issue for these past 14 months – advance appropriations, new GI Bill implementation, new Agent Orange presumptions for three additional diseases, new Gulf War Illness presumptions for nine additional diseases, and a 16 percent budget increase in 2010 for the Department of Veterans Affairs, that is the largest in over 30 years, and which has been followed by a 2011 VA budget request that increases that record budget by an additional 7.6 percent.

To give our Veterans further assurance that health reform legislation will not affect their health care systems, the Chairmen of five House committees, including Veterans Affairs Chairman Bob Filner and Armed Services Chairman Ike Skelton, have just issued a joint letter reaffirming that the health reform legislation as written would protect those receiving care through all

TRICARE and Department of Veterans Affairs programs.
— Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki 🙏

Services, hours for Retiree Activities Offices

The Retiree Activities Office (RAO) provides guidance and information to retirees and spouses of retirees, of all ranks and services. The RAO provides information on military status, TRICARE, military ID cards, survivor benefits, death reporting and much more.

Retirees may provide an e-mail address, to include first name, middle initial, last name, retired military grade and branch of service to widma.retiree@wisconsin.gov to be added to the RAO's e-mail data base. The RAO also has a website that provides a lot of information for retirees and can be found at <http://dma.wi.gov/retirees>.

The Madison RAO is located at Joint Force Headquarters, 2400 Wright Street, Room 160, Madison, Wis. 53704. The RAO is open Tuesdays and Thursdays 7:30 to 11:30 a.m. except on holidays. Their phone number is 608-242-3115, 1-800-335-4157, ext. 3115, DSN 724-3115. Contact the RAO with questions or for assistance.

The Milwaukee RAO is co-located with the 128th Air Refueling Wing, General Mitchell Air National Guard Base, 1835 E. Grange Ave, Bldg 512, Milwaukee, Wis., 53207. Their phone number is 414-944-8212. Their e-mail address is rao.128arw@ang.af.mil. The Milwaukee RAO is manned by volunteers on Tuesdays and Wednesdays from 10 a.m.-2 p.m. 🙏

Veterans Job Fairs slated

Upcoming Veterans Job Fairs are listed below. For additional events, visit: <http://www.wisconsinjobcenter.org/jobfairs/>

Veterans Job Fair, Hayward

Date/time: Friday, April 23, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Location: Army National Guard Armory, 10691 Main St., Hayward
Contact: [Tim Moore](mailto:Tim.Moore), 715/836-2909; or, 715/456-5790.

Veterans Job Fair, Bristol

Date/time: Tuesday, May 4, 10:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Location: Kenosha County Center, 19600 75th Street, Bristol
Contact: [Gerald Costello](mailto:Gerald.Costello), 262/697-4707; or, [Marie Pollnow](mailto:Marie.Pollnow), 262/697-4713.

Meritorious service

Two to enter Wisconsin Army Guard Hall of Honor

Two retired Wisconsin Guard Soldiers have been chosen to enter the prestigious Wisconsin Army National Guard Hall of Honor.

A special committee of current and past Guard Soldiers selected retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Douglas Alfke of Jackson and retired Command Sergeant Major Douglas Gehrke of Monona to receive one of the Wisconsin Army National Guard's highest honors for exceptional achievement and devotion to duty.

They join the ranks of 40 individuals who have brought great credit to the state of Wisconsin and to the Wisconsin Army National Guard. Selection is based on exceptional achievement, devotion to duty and embodiment of the Army's core values — duty, honor, service, respect, loyalty, integrity and personal courage.

Alfke served as a supply sergeant, personnel supervisor, first sergeant, legal technician and equal opportunities advisor in the 32nd Infantry Brigade and as a military personnel technician and labor relations manager in the state headquarters of the Guard.

Gehrke served in the 132nd Support Battalion and the 64th Troop Command where he held supply, personnel, intelligence, operations, first sergeant and command sergeant major positions that supported Guard Soldiers in numerous overseas deployments.

Both men served active duty tours in Vietnam before joining the Guard.

A public induction ceremony will be held at the Wisconsin Army National Guard Hall Joint Force Headquarters May 2. ☎

Tomah Chamber honors Wisconsin Guard member

Maj. John Stoczynski, a logistics officer with the 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, was honored recently as the "2009 Military Person of the Year" by the Greater Tomah Area Chamber of Commerce.

Stoczynski was recognized for raising funds for the Tomah Area Veterans Memorial campaign. He walked 25 miles in nine hours around the Tomah High School track on Veterans Day in uniform and full battle protective gear. He collected more than \$1,100 in pledges per mile

Air Force auxiliary supports Wisconsin Air Guard unit

Senior Airman Ryan Kuntze
128th Air Refueling Wing

There was something different about the 128th Air Refueling Wing's Sijan Hall during the March drill weekend, and it didn't involve the food.

Home-made snacks, along with various items involved in a silent auction, were arranged on several tables throughout the central corridor of the dining facility.

Members of Auxiliary Chapter 851 of the Air Force Sergeants Association were on base to show their support for the men and women in uniform on Saturday, March 6.

The AFSA auxiliary chapter raised funds to support Airmen deployed throughout the world or permanently stationed overseas, said Sue Metzger, the president of AFSA auxiliary chapter 851.

Metzger said the AFSA auxiliary chapter supports Airmen and their families throughout the world by sending various care packages and by collecting coupons for use in commissaries overseas.

"Our primary goal is to support the military," Metzger said. "If this is one small thing to make their lives easier, we will do that."

Master Sgt. Daleynn Lombardo, the 128th ARW communications flight plans and resources manager and a trustee for the AFSA chapter 851 organization, said the primary mission of the Air Force Sergeants Association was to promote recognition of Airmen throughout the Air Force.

The auxiliary chapter of AFSA provides direct morale and quality of life support to the Airmen deployed overseas and their families, Lombardo said.

as well as flat donations for the proposed monument.

Stoczynski has served in the military for 34 years, including several years in the Marine Corps and Marine Corps Reserves. He served in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm, Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom.

He resides in Tomah and is a federal technician employed at Camp Williams as the deputy surface maintenance manager. ☎



Tech Sgt Courtney Rodgers, a 128th ARW intelligence analyst, receives information about the Air Force Sergeants Association from Jean Kolwitz, a senior advisor for Auxiliary Chapter 851 of AFSA, on Saturday, March 6. Members of Auxiliary Chapter 851 were at Sijan Hall to raise funds for their programs involving the shipment of care packages to Airmen deployed or stationed overseas. Wisconsin Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Nathan Wallin

AFSA chapter 851 is involved with all organizations on base, Lombardo said. She added that, in the past year, the chapter was involved with the Milwaukee Air and Water Show and the on-base Christmas party.

Metzger said the auxiliary chapter usually comes on base once per year to raise funds, primarily for the postage costs of sending care packages overseas.

"Sometimes we get a letter back from [the Airmen overseas,]" Metzger said. "It's all worth it when we hear that." ☎

Parting shot



A 724th Engineer Battalion Soldier peers out from the gunner position of the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicle during training at Fort McCoy. The 724th will deploy to Iraq later this spring. Wisconsin National Guard photo by Sgt. Sara Roeske