

at ease

October 2004

MISSION CONTINUES

Volk sizzles
Officers wanted
Training highlights

Homeland Defense
is Job One

From the top

During this, the busiest time for the Wisconsin National Guard in nearly 60 years, there is no shortage of subjects I could address in this column. They would all be relevant, all would be important, and any of them would be worthy of my attention and yours.

But one issue among them is most important of all right now: There is nothing more important to the Wisconsin National Guard than our families.

Every unit in the Wisconsin National Guard has a family support group, which is a great resource for all the families of our Soldiers and Airmen — whether they are mobilized or not. But these groups are especially helpful during the stressful times of a deployment, when soldiers and airmen are serving far from home, and families sometimes need to draw support from one another.

Family support groups are led by volunteers doing vitally important work for families. They are unsung heroes who contribute to the readiness of the National Guard through their work with our Soldiers' and Airmen's families.

Another valuable resource is our Family Assistance Center. This is a team of problem-solvers who stand ready to help the families of any U.S. service members from Wisconsin — Active, Guard or Reserve — when they need assistance with any one of a range of mobilization or deployment-related issues.

Family Assistance Center liaisons are located in six communities — Madison, Ashland, Chippewa Falls, Wausau, Camp Douglas and Milwaukee. In September alone, these regional liaisons assisted more than 800 families with a wide variety of issues: financial, legal, youth, communication, Tricare and even household problems.

The Family Assistance Center is ready to help. Family members can call the Family Assistance Center in Madison toll-free at 1-800-292-9464 (select Option 3 at the menu). The Family Assistance Center has access to a wealth of community and military resources to assist with almost any issue. A toll-free phone call to Madison will also get families referred to a regional

liaison closer to their homes, if having a nearby contact is something that will help.

We take helping our families very seriously. If you or your family have a family issue — large or small — please give our Family Assistance Center a chance to help.

Remember this number: 1-800-292-9464 (Option 3 at the menu).

Since the last issue of *At Ease* was published in June, three more Wisconsin service members have given their lives in service to their country:



Albert H. Wilkening
Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening

- **Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Charles A. Kiser** of Cleveland, Wis., died June 24 in Mosul, Iraq, when an explosion occurred near his convoy. Kiser was assigned to the Army Reserve's 330th Military Police Detachment in Sheboygan. Chuck was 37, and an outstanding Soldier who once served on a security detail for me when I attended the Deke Slayton Airfest in La Crosse in 2003.
- **Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Stephen G. Martin**, 39, of Rhinelander, died July 1 from injuries sustained in Mosul, Iraq, when a car bomb exploded near his guard post June 24. Martin was also assigned to the 330th Military Police Detachment.
- **21-year-old Marine Cpl. Adrian V. Soltau**, Milwaukee, died Sept. 13, due to enemy action in Al Anbar Province, Iraq.

New leader for Emergency Management



Johnnie Lee Smith

Governor Jim Doyle appointed Johnnie Lee Smith as the administrator of Wisconsin Emergency Management in the Department of Military Affairs. Smith has been serving as the administrator of the Division of Gaming at the Department of Administration since April 2003. Smith replaces Ed Gleason, who was WEM administrator from 1999 until leaving the position in September.

"Having worked with Johnnie Smith for over seven years, I know he is well qualified to lead Wisconsin Emergency Management," Doyle said. "He is dedicated to his work and has shown leadership in all of his positions, from the Milwaukee Police Department to the Division of Narcotics Enforcement to the Division of Gaming. I am confident that under Johnnie's leadership, Wisconsin Emergency

Management will continue as a premier organization that citizens and communities across the state can count on during times of disasters or emergencies."

Smith is a great addition to the Department of Military Affairs team, according to Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening. "Johnnie Smith has all the personal qualities and professional credentials Wisconsin needs in an effective emergency management administrator and key member of the state's homeland security team," Wilkening said. "I look forward to working with Johnnie to further strengthen our already outstanding emergency management organization."

"I am honored that Governor Doyle has appointed me to serve in this important position," Smith said. "I take this responsibility very seriously, and I will work with other state and local agencies to ensure that Wisconsin citizens and businesses are, to the greatest extent possible, prepared to meet any catastrophic event the state may be faced with."

Smith previously worked as the administrator for the Division of Narcotics Enforcement at the Department of Justice. Prior to that, he served 29 years with the Milwaukee Police Department and was promoted to captain in 1989.

at ease

October 2004



at ease

Volume 27 Number 3

Official Magazine of the Wisconsin
Army and Air National Guard

The Adjutant General: Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening
Deputy Adjutant General Air: Maj. Gen. Fred R. Sloan
Deputy Adjutant General Army: Brig. Gen. Kerry G. Denson
Director of Public Affairs: Lt. Col. Tim Donovan

At Ease Staff:

Publications Editor: Kelly Bradley
Photo and Copy Editor: Larry Sommers

Contributing staff writers and photojournalists:

Lt. Col. Brownie Ehlers	Staff Sgt. Ronald Minnick
Maj. Bob Giblin	Spc. Mary Flynn
Capt. Jacqueline Guthrie	Spc. Sara Roeske
Lt. Adam Bradley	Spc. Gretal Sharpee
Master Sgt. Michael Schlafman	Spc. Meghan Phillips
Sgt. 1st Class Julie Friedman	Maj. Chris Rodel
Staff Sgt. Brian Jopek	Master Sgt. Wayne Rodriguez
Sgt. Jim Wagner	

How to Reach Us

E-mail: atease@wi.ngb.army.mil
Phone: (608) 242-3055 Fax: (608) 242-3051
Address: Department of Military Affairs; Attn: Kelly Bradley
2400 Wright Street; Madison, WI 53708-8111

Submissions

For photo or story submissions, please call (608) 242-3055 or e-mail atease@wi.ngb.army.mil for our StyleGuide.

Change of Address

Current Guardmembers: At Ease gets your current mailing address from your unit records. No special notification is necessary.

Guard retirees, civilian and institutional addressees:

Change of address notification should be sent to Sarah Selah at the address below:

Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs; Attn: Sarah Selah
2400 Wright Street; Madison, WI 53708-8111
Fax: (608) 242-3168 E-mail: sarah.selah@dma.state.wi.us

The Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard At Ease magazine is an authorized publication for members of the Department of Defense. Contents of the At Ease are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, or the Department of the Army or Air Force. The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Wisconsin National Guard Public Affairs Officer. Printed by Royle Printing, a private firm in no way connected with the U.S. Government under exclusive written contract with the Wisconsin National Guard. Circulation: 18,000.

Features

- 6 Homeland Defense is Job One**
Renewed focus, new capabilities
- 9 Gold bars in your future?**
Do you have what it takes to be an Army Guard Officer?
- 12 Volk Field sizzles**
Tempo picks up at Volk Field
- 14 United in partnership**
Nicaraguans visit Wisconsin
- 16 Mission continues**
Update on current operations

Annual Training '04

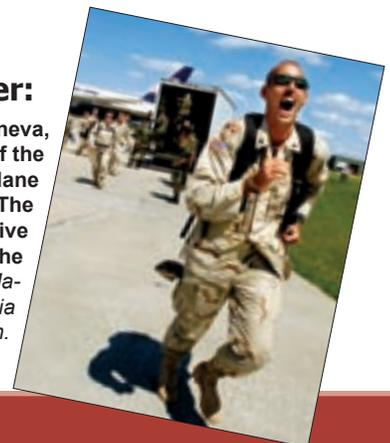
- 22 Urban warfare**
Training for today's battlefield
- 24 Aerial Infantry**
32nd Brigade troops take to air
- 26 Northern Lightning strikes**
Joint exercise held at Volk Field
- 28 Civilians on the Battlefield**
Distinguishing friend from foe

Departments

- 2 From the Top**
- 4 People in the news**
- 30 News Briefs**

On the cover:

Spc. Ronald Bearce, Lake Geneva, was among the first soldiers of the 32nd Military Police off the plane Friday, July 23, at Volk Field. The 150 soldiers had been on active duty for 16 months, most of the time in Iraq. Photo by John Maniaci, Wisconsin State Journal via www.Merlin-Net.com.





Steve Apps, Wisconsin State Journal

Pfc. J.R. Salzman, 147th Aviation Battalion, competes in the log rolling event at the Great Outdoor Games in Madison July 11. Salzman won the event's gold medal, his third.

Soldier of the Year

Staff Sgt. Brian Jukubiak, 134th Signal Battalion, was selected as the First Army West NCO of the Year. Jukubiak was also selected as the First Army NCO of the Year as well as the Forces Command NCO of the Year. Jukubiak will represent FORSCOM at the Army NCO/Soldier of the Year Competition.

Sgt. Darren Habermehl was selected as the First Army West Soldier of the Year. Habermehl was also selected as the First Army Soldier of the Year and represented the First Army at the FORSCOM competition.

Both Soldiers competed in day and night land navigation, weapons qualification, Army Physical Fitness Testing, written exams, a mystery task, Common Task Testing and an appearance board.

This is the fourth year in a row Wisconsin Soldiers have finished first or second at the First Army Competition.

Witmer memorial planned

The Wisconsin National Guard will dedicate the auditorium at Joint Force Headquarters to Wisconsin Army National Guard Specialist Michelle Witmer, the first female in the history of the National Guard to give her life in combat action. The Michelle Witmer Memorial will include a life-size bronze bust, a permanent addition to the state headquarters lobby.



Costs of the project are expected to total about \$25,000 and will be paid entirely by individual and organizational contributions to the Michelle Witmer Memorial Fund. A planning committee hopes to commission a sculptor within the next two months and dedicate the sculpture and newly-renamed "Witmer Hall" auditorium on Memorial Day 2005.

The Wisconsin National Guard Association is receiving donations for this memorial. Soldiers, Airmen, retirees, other members of the National Guard family — and even members of the general public — are invited to contribute to the Michelle Witmer Memorial. Contributions may be mailed to:

Ronald R. Wagner, Executive Director
WINGA Inc. Room 208
2400 Wright St.
Madison, WI 53704-2572

Make checks payable to "Michelle Witmer Memorial."

Waters receives Sijan award

Lt. Col. Jim Waters, 128th Air Refueling Wing, is the 2004 recipient of the Lance Sijan award, presented annually by the Milwaukee Eagles Club Aerie #4214 to an Airman who demonstrates outstanding leadership abilities while assigned to an organization at the wing level or below.

The award is named in honor of Milwaukee native Lance P. Sijan, the first Air Force Academy graduate to receive the Medal of Honor. Sijan was shot down over North Vietnam in 1967 and evaded capture for 45 days despite severe injuries. He died in a North Vietnamese prisoner of war camp and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

The Sijan award rounds out Waters's 30 years with the 128th. He retired Sept. 30 as wing chief of staff and community manager. He started his military career

in the active-duty Air Force as a personnel clerk before transferring to the Wisconsin Air National Guard. After receiving



Lt. Col. Jim Waters

his commission, he served in various staff positions including disaster preparedness officer, chief of logistics and plans, chief of the consolidated base personnel office and director of personnel.

Throughout his career, Waters has represented the 128th Air Refueling Wing at numerous community events throughout Southeastern Wisconsin.

"Lieutenant Colonel Waters is truly deserving of this award, by going above and beyond in service to our community," said Milwaukee County Executive Scott Walker. Other community leaders and military members attended the award presentation, as well as Capt. Lance Sijan's parents.

Badgers dominate supply excellence awards

Wisconsin National Guard units dominated the Army chief of staff's 2004 Supply Excellence Awards competition. Badger State units won three of nine awards available to the entire National Guard, and a Wisconsin unit was runner-up on a fourth.

Winning Wisconsin units are the 107th Maintenance Company, Sparta; Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, Appleton; and Joint Force Headquarters, Madison. The Supply and Services Division of the United States Property and Fiscal Office, Camp Douglas, was runner-up in its category.

Two representatives of each unit traveled to Alexandria, Va., accompanied by Brig. Gens. Kerry Denson and James Krueck and other Wisconsin Guard officers, to attend the Sept. 1 award ceremony.

U.S. Army deputy chief of staff for logistics Lt. Gen. Claude V. Christianson presented the awards in a 10 a.m. ceremony at the Hilton Alexandria Mark Center; recipient unit representatives also attended a dinner



Front row, from left: Staff Sgt. Eric Beach and Sgt. 1st Class Charles Zehner, representing 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry; Sgt. Paul Moore and Sgt. 1st Class Larry Birner, representing USPFO; Sgt. 1st Class Randall Connell and Staff Sgt. Antonio Viedma, representing Joint Force Headquarters; and Spc. Marisa Capazuto and Sgt. 1st Class Robert Cutts, representing 107th Maintenance Company.

at the hotel that night.

The chief of staff's Supply Excellence Awards program came into being in federal fiscal year 1986 and was expanded to include the National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve in 1998. Major commands

nominate winners in each category (categories relate to size and property accounting methodology of units). The U.S. Army Quartermaster Center and School then dispatches technically qualified teams for on-site evaluations of nominated units.



Haubrich receives Bong Award

Staff Sgt. Mike Haubrich, center, Mission Support Flight, 128th Air Refueling Wing, received the 2004 Richard Bong Award during the annual Armed Forces Week Bong Award Breakfast at the Wisconsin Club in Milwaukee. The award — named for Wisconsin-born Major Richard Bong, the leading U.S. air ace of World War II and a Medal of Honor recipient — goes annually to one member from each

branch of the military. It honors achievements, contributions, personal growth, qualities of leadership, military bearing, and appearance. Haubrich, a member of the 128th since 1997, was activated and deployed during Operation Iraqi Freedom and was the wing's Airman of the Quarter in November 2003. Standing with Haubrich are Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening and Rear Admiral Dirk Debbink, Commander, Naval Reserve Readiness Command.

One big Guard family

While Spc. Jose Rivera, second from right, standing, was at Annual Training on June 18 with Detachment 2, 107th Maintenance Company, his car was stolen and burned near his home in Milwaukee. The car, and his children's car seats and stroller were completely destroyed. Rivera had moved to Wisconsin from Puerto Rico with his wife, Keyla, and two children, Patricia and Ignacio, only three months earlier. Fellow Soldiers took up a collection to replace the stroller and car seats and helped find a minivan to replace the destroyed vehicle.





this we will
defend

“We’re the National Guard... we guard the nation.”

Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum
Chief, National Guard Bureau

Story by Lt. Col. Tim Donovan
At Ease Staff

Three years have now passed since the September morning in 2001 when terrorists attacked America and changed the world. That attack brought renewed focus on the National Guard and the Guard’s first and most important mission.

Beginning more than 100 years before America was a nation, colonial militias — forerunners of the modern National Guard — were always about protecting their communities. This mission has never been more important than it is today.

The Wisconsin Guard’s Soldiers and Airmen have been serving on the front lines of a new, 21st century war since the very morning of September 11. Their important role continues — and grows.

Where are the front lines in this new war?

Today’s “battlefield” includes the mountains and caves of Afghanistan as well as the streets of Baghdad and Mosul. But it also includes the skies over America and every acre of a land once protected by vast oceans but now unsettlingly exposed to threats from fanatics armed with boxcutters, homemade bombs or worse.

The terrorists who created this frightening new world also re-emphasized the Guard’s important role as America’s homeland defense experts.

As the homeland security threat condition was raised for several U.S. locations this summer, National Guard Bureau chief Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum directed the National Guards of the 54 states and territories to step up their homeland defense capabilities. In August, each state stood up a new Rapid Reaction Force — a force designed, trained and equipped for homeland defense in the post-9/11 world. Each state’s RRF can muster a

Lt. Adam Bradley



Opposite Page: Members of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, cope with provocations from mock demonstrators during the first exercise of the Rapid Reaction Force in Green Bay, Sept. 12. The “demonstrators” were portrayed by other Guard members.

Photo by Sgt. Jim Wagner

Right: Infantrymen of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, practice urban warfare at Fort McCoy in June.



Sgt. Jim Wagner

Pfc. Jordan Paul and Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry form a perimeter defense during the first exercise testing the capabilities of Wisconsin's new Rapid Reaction Force, held in Green Bay Sept. 12.

company-sized element of about 125 troops within four hours, with a battalion-sized force available within 24 hours, if required, to sustain operations beyond an initial response.

The reaction forces aren't new units, though, because they are built entirely from units and troops we already have. Nor is this a new mission for the Guard. As the Guard Bureau chief reminded state public affairs officers meeting in Colorado Springs in July: "We're the National Guard — we guard the nation."

Wisconsin's Rapid Reaction Force was formed in August, made up mostly of soldiers from the 32nd Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry. Drawing troops from this Appleton-based infantry battalion made sense, according to the Wisconsin Army Guard's commander, Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson.

"These are mostly light infantry Soldiers," Denson said as he observed the RRF's first exercise in September. "They're out there doing pretty much the same things infantry Soldiers have been doing forever, like establishing security, patrolling, running checkpoints. What's different is where they're doing it and why, because the potential enemy the country faced during the Cold War is far different from the real enemy — terrorists — that we might face today right here at home."

The exercise, held Sept. 12 on the campus of Northeastern Wisconsin Technical College in Green Bay, tested the Guard's ability to place an effective initial response package of 125

Soldiers on the ground in a hurry at an incident site or as a deterrent force.

With TV news crews and curious neighbors watching carefully, camouflaged Soldiers swarmed over the sprawling campus. Razor wire barriers were quickly stretched across key entry points. Armed Humvees from the battalion's Delta Company prowled the grounds, occasionally racing to sectors requiring a little more firepower than the foot Soldiers had on hand. From his hidden perch on a campus rooftop, a sniper stood silent watch — waiting, ready.

"Here at the squad level, this exercise is all unscripted," according to Staff Sgt. Joe Streeter, a squad leader with Charlie Company of Fond du Lac.

Streeter said his Soldiers were happy to be part of something that's real-world and relevant. "It is a chance for us to see how all the tasks we trained on fit into the big picture in a realistic situation," Streeter said. "The soldiers adapted very quickly to all the issues that came up, they did very well."

Vehicles entering the area were carefully searched for weapons, bombs or other suspicious contents. Even TV news cars were searched, while the reporters videotaped the action for their nightly newscasts.

"Because these are light infantry Soldiers, they came into this additional assignment with almost all the training



“Homeland defense is Job One.”

Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening
Adjutant General of Wisconsin

and equipment they needed to be an effective force from day one,” Denson said. “But the special training they did receive was really focused on the terrorist threat, either what capabilities they would need as a deterrent force or in the event they were responding to an actual terrorist incident.”

In addition to the infantry battalion, other Rapid Reaction Force troops would come from the 32nd Brigade’s cavalry troop in Merrill and Antigo, and from the brigade’s military police platoon in Wausau. Transportation and other support for the reaction force, if needed, can be drawn from still other Wisconsin Guard units — either Army or Air.

“There’s no more important mission for the Guard right now than homeland defense,” said Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, the adjutant general of Wisconsin.

“Wisconsin’s citizens deserve nothing less than their National Guard’s continued focus on the vital homeland defense business,” Wilkening said. “The Guard is prepared to deploy anywhere in the world — and certainly anywhere in Wisconsin — where Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers and Airmen can help keep Wisconsin and America safe from anyone who would cause us harm.” ■

Members of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, place a razor wire barrier during the first exercise of Wisconsin’s National Guard Rapid Reaction Force Sept. 12.



Sgt. Jim Wagner



OCS

OFFICER CANDIDATE SCHOOL

WISCONSIN MILITARY ACADEMY

ESTABLISHED 1958

STORY AND PHOTO BY SGT. JIM WAGNER

Officially, it's water survival training, a grueling series of events designed to test future leaders' ability to fight without terra firma to steady them.

But to Wisconsin Army National Guard officer candidates this August day at Fort Lewis, Wash., it seems like something else entirely: swim day at the park. Their faces, after months set in grim lines of determination, now break into smiles as they realize they are just weeks away from graduation and entry into the commissioned officer corps of the Army National Guard.

Water streaming from his pockets, soaked uniform darker than normal and plastered to his skin, Officer Candidate Justin Gumtow of Plymouth-based Battery B, 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery, steps out of the water and says happily, "This is really exhausting."

Gumtow is one of 16 candidates who spent more than a year preparing for Phase III Officers Candidate School. Hours spent poring over history lessons, writing reports, practicing land navigation and slogging through the woods of Fort McCoy in field training exercises finally led to Fort Lewis, where they are honing their leadership skills under the watchful eyes of their instructors.

The purpose of Officer Candidate School is to produce graduates who have the skills, knowledge, attitudes and leadership abilities to serve as commissioned officers. The primary emphasis in the OCS program is on leadership development and assessment.

On returning to Wisconsin after completion of the two-month Phase III training, all that remains undone is the commissioning ceremony, where candidates will become lieutenants as they are pinned with gold bars by a proud mother or father, a spouse or child — or sometimes even by the adjutant general.

From there, the sky's the limit.

Guard leaders want more enlisted troops to understand the nature of the OCS opportunity. Because the Wisconsin Army National Guard is coping with a shortage of junior officers in line units, opportunities for young officers have never been better. According to Capt. Tom Prieve, head of officer recruiting for the Wisconsin Army National Guard, at any given time there are approximately 100 vacancies for company grade officers — lieutenants and captains.

Prieve said that in some units, squad and platoon sergeants are taking on the roles generally reserved for first and second lieutenants, because of the officer shortage.

"If you're a sergeant who's already doing the work of a lieutenant," he said, "you may as well get commissioned and pick up the extra pay and privileges."

For most Soldiers, the best route to a commission is the 16-month traditional OCS course offered through the Wisconsin Military Academy, which occupies a modern training facility at Fort McCoy. Since being accredited as a state Officer Candidate School in 1958, WMA has given over 1,600 new officers to the Wisconsin National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve.

The OCS course is organized in three phases:

- Phase I — A two-week annual training period in May at Camp Ripley, Minn.
- Phase II — A year of weekend drills spent at WMA's Fort McCoy facility.
- Phase III — An intensive two-week period at Fort Lewis in August of the year after Phase I.

An alternative to this traditional routine is the so-called "501" accelerated program: Cadets head to Fort Custer, S.D., in June for a combined Phase I and II lasting about 6 weeks; then



An OCS candidate prepares for a blind jump during Phase III at Fort Lewis, Wash.

head to Fort Lewis for Phase III the same August.

Other routes to the gold bar of a second lieutenant include active-duty OCS, four years at the United States Military Academy at West Point, N.Y., and — for college students — the Reserve Officer Training Corps. ROTC is an attractive option financially, especially when combined with traditional Guard service through the Simultaneous Membership Program. "It's a lot of work, but very financially attractive to Guard Soldiers who are enrolled in college," Prieve said. "It really adds up."

Officials say a slight increase in officer retention is starting to make a dent in the shortage of officers. But the Guard is still looking for a few good officers to lead its next generation of Soldiers — and the window of opportunity is wide open. The Wisconsin Army National Guard holds its next OCS Orientation — a chance for Soldiers to explore their commissioning possibilities — Saturday, November 6, at WMA, Fort McCoy.

To find out more information about the officer training programs available, visit the Web at <http://dma.wi.gov/dma/wma/officer.htm>.

Note: Officer Candidate Justin Gumtow is now 2nd Lt. Gumtow, assigned to Battery B, 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery, Wisconsin Army National Guard.

Volk Field sizzles

Story by Larry Sommers
At Ease Staff

“Volk Field offers well-maintained facilities and the professional personnel to run them for any mission that comes along,” says Master Sgt. Greg Cullen, airfield manager at Volk. And the missions have been coming along, fast and furious, for the Air Guard base in west-central Wisconsin.

“It would be difficult to place a percentage on our increased work load,” said Lt. Col. Brendan Smith, director of operations at Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center. Before Sept. 11, 2001, “we were comfortably busy. Deployments to Volk were manageable and there were very few aircraft movements outside of our normal hours.

“Immediately post-9/11 we lost almost all of our deployment business due to real world taskings and hadn’t picked up the APOE mission yet.”

But lately, Volk’s activity level has soared as scores of units use the base as an aerial port of embarkation, or APOE, many others train in new terrorism-related skills, and the CRTC continues to perform its normal training operations.

Volk Field has become one of the premier departure and arrival points for U.S. military units deploying for active duty. Those units include the Wisconsin Army National Guard’s 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry — the first combat unit mobilized by the Wisconsin Guard since World War II — which embarked at Volk Field June 23, headed for Iraq with a pause for mobilization processing and training at Camp Shelby, Miss. In just the first 8 months of 2004, more than 12,000 passengers and 4 million pounds of cargo passed

Left: Firefighters respond to a mock aircraft crash during a Readiness Safeguard Exercise at Volk Field CRTC.

Opposite page: Guard officials and members of the 132nd Army Band offer a welcome as soldiers of the 829th Engineer Detachment, deplane at Volk Field Dec. 15, 2003, after a seven-month deployment to Southwest Asia. *Photo by Lt. Col. Tim Donovan*



Maj. Jon McDaniel



through Volk Field as more than 100 units moved to and from Kosovo, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and a few training locations in the continental United States.

“Our exceptional relationship with Fort McCoy as their aerial port of embarkation has been instrumental in efficiently and safely deploying and redeploying thousands of mobilized troops,” said Col. Gunther Neumann, Volk Field commander.

“Supporting an APOE mission can be very gratifying,” said Cullen — “especially when the families are here to welcome home the soldiers as they get off the plane.”

Meanwhile, the Combat Readiness Training Center continues its normal mission, serving as a training site for approximately 20 large units of more than 100 people and hundreds of smaller units per year.

Volk’s Readiness Safeguard program conducts Ability to Survive and Operate exercises year-round. ATSO has been a major arrow in Volk Field’s quiver for years, but now it’s more challenging with a new concept of operations against chemical warfare. The new concept gives a base under chemical attack the option to respond with different levels of chemical protective clothing on different parts of the base — depending on the location of attack, type of chemical agent, and wind direction. “Easy in concept, difficult in execution,” according to Smith.

Throw in a major joint exercise (Northern Lightning 2004, held June 15-25; see story, p. 26); a weekend open house drawing over 3,000 interested civilians; construction and dedication of a

new control tower, a new deployed unit command post and a new main entry gate; total replacement of a large part of the primary taxiway; and playing host to numerous conferences and meetings — and what you get is “Volk Field: The Airbase that Never Sleeps.”

Despite the ramped-up activity level, the base has only 89 of its 113 authorized positions funded. Volk’s management responds by reducing the staffing of some shops during “periods of reduced flying operations” and even closing the airfield when possible.

For example, the transient maintenance shop is staffed as a weekdays-only, 40 hours-per-week operation; but with aircraft arriving and departing at all hours, the shop is actually open for business about 65 hours in an average week.

How does that work? With three full-timers on staff, plus one part-timer on irregular hours, “We take turns adjusting our schedules to accommodate the ever-changing times that a lot of these flights are coming and going,” said Master Sgt. Jeff Tomaloff, shop chief. “At times we are spread pretty thin when we have people on different shifts, but we manage.”

Other parts of the organization make similar adjustments. A just-completed manpower study offers justification for additional positions, but funding those positions will face a stiff uphill fight in the military budgeting process. Operating a growth industry with a practical lid on manpower presents exactly the kind of challenge the military is noted for meeting. ■

by the numbers Jan-Aug 2004

113 unit movements through Volk Field

4.0 millions pounds of cargo

2.6 million pounds of fuel pumped

12,147 passengers

United in Partnership

Military cooperation

Humanitarian assistance

Emergency preparedness



Staff Sgt. Keith Fenske

Story by Larry Sommers
At Ease Staff

It's a partnership for mutual benefit: The Wisconsin National Guard and the Republic of Nicaragua. The two have been paired under the National Guard Bureau's state partnership program.

"We wanted Nicaragua," said Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson. Wisconsin and Nicaragua have a 40-year history of cooperation, with "people-to-people exchanges" and more than 20 sister-city relationships sponsored by Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Inc., starting in 1964 — a lasting result of President Kennedy's Alliance for Progress initiative of the early 1960s. Besides, the two states are logistically compatible. "Nicaragua is accessible by C-130, we've even flown our C-26 down there, and you can move equipment there by sea barge," said Denson.

Furthermore, the Wisconsin Army National Guard has a recent working history in Nicaragua; as part of U.S. Southern Command's New Horizons exercise program, Wisconsin Guard units deployed to Nicaragua for Joint Task Force Chontales — a project to build or rebuild schools and clinics in the mountainous rural areas.

In early 2002, on a National Guard helicopter flying officials to inspect the work sites of JTF Chontales, Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson, Wisconsin's deputy adjutant general for Army, met Dr. José Adán Guerra Pastora, Nicaragua's new minister of defense, beginning a personal acquaintance that helped pave the way for the next step of the developing international relationship.

Nicaragua applied to the United States government for inclusion in the National Guard Bureau's state partnership program. The program began in the 1990s as a way to reach out to Eastern European countries just emerging from the Iron Curtain and expanded its scope later in the decade by adding Latin American nations. The program "matches state Guard units with national

Spc. Jason Hohnberger, a chaplain's assistant with the 724th Engineer Battalion, gets acquainted with a young Nicaraguan while on a humanitarian assignment as part of Joint Task Force Chontales, the New Horizons 2002 mission in Nicaragua.

militaries to help countries modernize their forces, observe the concept of civilian control of the military in action and promote civil-military relationships.” It also promotes civilian ties between local business and government officials.

Thus, in April 2004, a Wisconsin delegation headed by Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, the adjutant general, and including representatives of the Wisconsin Army and Air Guard, Wisconsin Emergency Management, and the governor’s office, visited Managua to kick off the new partnership. Then, on Aug. 24-26, 10 officials from ministries of the Nicaraguan government, led by Dr. Guerra, returned the visit. They exchanged information with Gov. Jim Doyle and other Wisconsin officials, and Guerra joined Wilkening in inking a letter of intent to develop a lasting partnership. The new partners are now working out details of proposed collaborations.

The Nicaraguans are keenly interested in the program’s benefits to their civilian economy, according to Denson, particularly in the areas of agriculture and disaster preparedness. While in Wisconsin, their delegation had the opportunity to visit a modern large-scale dairy farm near Sun Prairie.

But Denson emphasized that benefits of the program flow in both directions. Example: Due to its civil war of the 1980s, Nicaragua is strewn with thousands of land mines, which their armed forces are now clearing. This means that Nicaragua, with a total national defense budget significantly less than that of the Wisconsin National Guard, harbors some of the world’s greatest expertise in clearing land mines. An early program contemplated under the new partnership will bring Nicaraguan mine experts to Fort McCoy to train Wisconsin Guard members on mine clearance.

“We think there’s a lot of synergy” between Nicaraguan and Wisconsin Guard military capabilities and experiences, Denson said. “It’s a real opportunity for both Wisconsin and Nicaragua — they have experience in things we need to learn, and we can help them in other ways.” ■

Above: Nicaraguan officials visit a dairy farm near Sun Prairie as guests of the Wisconsin National Guard Aug. 26.

Right: Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening shakes hands with Dr. José Adán Guerra Pastora, Nicaragua’s defense minister, in Madison on Sept. 25, 2004. The two had just signed a joint letter of intent to develop a partnership between the Wisconsin National Guard and the Republic of Nicaragua under the National Guard Bureau’s state partnership program.



Larry Sommers



Larry Sommers

the mission continues...





Family and friends bid farewell to 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry at Volk Field in June. *Photo by Joe Oliva.*

By Lt. Col. Tim Donovan
At Ease Staff

The Wisconsin National Guard's support of U.S. military operations around the world continues.

While one unit, the 32nd Military Police Company, came home during the summer, four Army Guard units were just halfway through their deployments and still others were just answering new calls to active duty. The Wisconsin Air National Guard, meanwhile, was deploying in smaller Aerospace Expeditionary Force packages — to France, Israel, Iraq and elsewhere — and the 115th Fighter Wing's homeland defense mission from Truax Field entered its fourth year.

Wisconsin National Guard units on active duty, AEF deployments — or recently returned — are:

- 264th Engineer Group
- Company B, 118th Medical Battalion
- Detachment 1, 139th Mobile PAD
- 232nd Personnel Services Company
- 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry
- Battery B, 1st Battalion, 126th Field Artillery
- Joint Task Force Phoenix
- Joint Force Headquarters Detachment 12 and 13
- 115th Fighter Wing
- 128th Air Refueling Wing
- 115th Civil Engineer Squadron
- 832nd Medical Company
- Task Force Red Arrow
- 1st Battalion, 426th Regiment
- 107th Maintenance Company



The detainees and artillery rounds were captured in the 264th Engineer Group's area of operations. The artillery shells would have been used as Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs).

- 128th Air Control Squadron
- 32nd Military Police Company

These are just a few of their stories.

Volk Field — News media were calling it the “Mother of All Send-Offs.” With 680 deploying soldiers and around 4,000 family members and friends on hand to see them off, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry's send-off was the Wisconsin Guard's largest single event of its kind in anyone's memory.

The battalion soldiers were hidden from view inside Volk Field's maintenance hangar until the 132nd Army Band struck up the Army Song. The giant hangar doors slowly opened to music and cheers, and as the “Eagle Battalion” came into full view, four F-16 fighters streaked overhead in an aerial salute.

“Today we leave the safety, comfort and love of our homes, of our families, of our friends, to mobilize and train at Camp Shelby, Mississippi,” Lt. Col. Michael Dosland told his soldiers' families.

The battalion was scheduled to go first to Mississippi, then finish up four months of training at Fort Irwin, Calif. Because they would become part of the Tennessee Guard's 278th Regimental Combat Team, they would also lose, temporarily, their “Red Arrow” patches of 32nd Infantry Brigade.

Dosland told the send-off audience that he ordered the large Red Arrow insignia removed from the Eau Claire armory.

“We're going to affix that Red Arrow to a post and we're going to drive that post into the ground wherever the Eagle Battalion treads,” Dosland said. The Army can take the Red Arrow off our shoulders, but they can't take the Red Arrow from our hearts.”

And then the Eagle Battalion flew south, one company at a time, aboard four chartered airliners.

FOB Speicher, Iraq — Accurate weather forecasts for Tikrit don't require much training in meteorology.

Monday: Hot, sunny, dry.

Tuesday: Hot, sunny, dry.

Wednesday: Hot, sunny, dry.

By mid-August, the highest temperature recorded by the 264th Engineer Group was 131 degrees on Col. Art Zuleger's vehicle thermometer.

Wisconsin's 80 engineer soldiers have been living in the heat



Sgt. Aaron Masterson, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, sights a 120 mm mortar from the back of an armored personnel carrier Aug. 24.

of north central Iraq for more than seven months.

“We have come to the conclusion that 115 degrees is about the upper limit of being able to function productively for any sustained period,” Chaplain Bruce Frederickson wrote in note to the Wisconsin Guard headquarters in August. “After that, your body just doesn’t cooperate.”

Living conditions at the forward operating base are Spartan, but they could be worse.

“We remind ourselves all the time that although we live in tents and are deprived of many of the comforts of home, we live far better than the average Iraqi,” Frederickson wrote.

Many of the unit’s engineer missions are improving life for Iraqis. People who once drew drinking water directly from the Tigris River and carried it home on the backs of a donkey will someday drink water purified by treatment plant — courtesy, in part, of the 264th Engineer Group. And Iraqi children are now attending classes in two schools renovated by the 264th engineers.

Volk Field — The chartered airliner carrying the 32nd Military Police Company back to Wisconsin was supposed to land a little after 3 p.m. on July 23, but when it appeared at 2:40 on its final approach to Volk Field’s runway 27, not a single complaint about the off-schedule arrival could be heard.

As the plane taxied to a stop, a crowd of 2,000-plus family members and friends waited a bit impatiently for long-awaited reunions with loved ones originally expected to be home three months earlier.

Gov. Jim Doyle, U.S. Sens. Herb Kohl and Russ Feingold, and five Wisconsin legislators lined up at planeside to give the soldiers their first handshakes on Wisconsin soil. Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, Maj. Gen. Fred Sloan, Brig Gen. Kerry Denson and other senior military officials were also on hand to welcome Wisconsin’s MP Soldiers home.

Standing in line with the elected officials and generals were two enlisted soldiers: Sgt. Charity Witmer and Spc. Rachel Witmer, sisters of Spc. Michelle Witmer, who was killed while serving with the 32nd MP Company in April. Rachel Witmer was rejoining her unit after three months in a stateside assignment; Charity, a member of another Wisconsin Guard unit serving in Iraq, just knew she needed to be there. While the governor, senators and generals were exchanging handshakes with the returning MP soldiers, Charity and Rachel were sharing emotional hugs.

One familiar element at every Wisconsin National Guard



Lt. Col. Ken Lee, commander of Co. B, 118th Medical Battalion, receives the Purple Heart Medal from Gen. Peter Schoomaker, Army Chief of Staff, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Lee was hospitalized for wounds received in a suicide bomb attack in Baghdad.

homecoming at Volk Field was missing. The 132nd Army Band, in Germany for a two-week overseas training deployment, was replaced for the day by members of the University of Wisconsin Alumni Band. About 16 UW Band alums volunteered to fill in.

“When you say ‘W-I-S-C-O-N-S-I-N,’ you’ve said it all!”

Oak Creek Armory — Eighty Soldiers of Bravo Battery, 1st Battalion, 126th Infantry stood in formation on the Oak Creek armory lawn Sept. 7. The entire battalion had been on alert for a possible mobilization since May, but only Oak Creek’s Battery B got the call and the remainder of the battalion was released from alert.

The artillery Soldiers left their M109-A6 Paladin howitzers behind when they left for their mobilization station at Fort Hood, Texas. Like many other field artillery troops from National Guard units across the country, these Soldiers will adapt to a new howitzer-less security mission to meet the changing force requirements in Iraq.

Walter Reed Army Medical Center — “I owe my life to Chris Cook,” Lt. Col. Ken Lee told At Ease in a phone call to his room at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. “I am absolutely sure we would all have been killed without Sgt. Cook’s quick action.”

Lee was talking about a Sept. 12 incident in Baghdad. Three vehicles from Co. B, 118th Medical Battalion were stopped outside the Green Zone when a car sped past an Iraqi National Guard checkpoint. As the car raced toward Company B’s eight soldiers, Lee hadn’t yet released the safety on his weapon when Sgt. Chris Cook fired two rounds through the speeding vehicle’s windshield.

The driver was a suicide bomber with his sights on the Wisconsin Guard’s eight soldiers. But instead of detonating his improvised explosive one or two feet from the Wisconsin troops, Cook’s gunshots into the car forced him to set off the bomb early. Although eight soldiers were wounded, 30 feet of distance between the bomb and its intended target made all the difference.

Five of the wounded soldiers were treated for relatively minor wounds and returned to duty, but Lee and two others were evacuated first to Landstuhl, Germany, and then on to Walter Reed.



264th Engineer Group Soldiers receive IVs after working in 124 degree heat to clear rubble following an insurgent bombing.

Balad, Iraq — Help wanted: Critical job working outside in sandy, arid 110-degree heat. Must leave comforts of home, family and friends for four months. Will provide perimeter security during increased threat levels and escort third country and local nationals to job sites. Free travel.

If you read that ad in the newspaper you probably wouldn't be sending in your resume anytime soon. But at Balad Air Base, Iraq, most of the security escorts assigned to the 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron not only volunteered for the job, they actually enjoy it.

Roughly 60 noncommissioned officers perform the crucial job of escorting anywhere from 80 to 140 local nationals (LNs) or third country nationals (TCNs) to work sites throughout the base daily.

"We're the primary barrier between base personnel and the on-base TCNs," said Chief Master Sgt. Erik Price, security escort program manager, from the Wisconsin Air National Guard. "(The escorts) came over here with a very good attitude and they take their job very seriously."

"Basically, no work on base gets done without us," said Staff Sgt. Guenther Bogensperger, 332nd ECES, who supervises in-processing and out-processing of TCNs and LNs from the gate and is deployed from Keesler Air Force Base, Miss. "Most of them are just trying to make money and help their families, but of course there (may be some) out there trying to gather information, so we always have to be on our toes."

Upon arrival at Balad the escorts barely get their feet on the ground before they are out performing their service. They attend



Chief Master Sgt. Erik Price, 332nd Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron security escort program manager, who is deployed from the Wisconsin National Guard, watches as local nationals enter Balad's north gate Oct. 4. Air Force photo by Airman 1st Class Joshua Jasper.

a security escort training program where part of their training includes a use of deadly force class and a local intelligence briefing from the Office of Special Investigations.

"Within 48 hours of being here, hopefully they've had all of their training classes are ready to go to the job site," Price said. "We try to get it down to a couple days, because we need them right away. They're thrown right into the fire when they get here."

"It is a good program and these kids come over here and bust their (tails) for four months," Price said. "They're all over here trying to make a positive impact on the operation." — *Story by Staff Sgt. Ryan Hansen.*

Paktia Province, Afghanistan — It isn't hard to guess the home state of some of the Joint Task Force Phoenix soldiers in Gardez. Flying just beneath Old Glory is the Wisconsin state flag, while another flagpole sports the University of Wisconsin's "Motion W" logo along with the banner of a Milwaukee-based motorcycle company of some renown.

In early October, Col. Todd Nehls and eight Wisconsin soldiers were working with the Afghan National Army to enhance security for Afghan elections scheduled for Oct. 9. It was a new mission for a task force originally sent to Afghanistan to mentor senior Afghan National Army (ANA) officers.

"We are right in the middle of this thing," Nehls said of the national election. "We will now provide 100 ANA soldiers for security of the counting center."

Nehls described the vote counting center as a large tent so all the votes can be counted in a single "room." The tent is exposed to rocket attack and sniper fire, which might be used by insurgents attempting to disrupt the election process.

An incident-free election is a top priority as Afghanistan looks forward to building a free, secure and democratic society in a land recently suppressed by the extremist and terrorist-harboring Taliban regime.

Khandahar, Afghanistan — The flag flying in front of Lt. Col. Mike Gourlie's quarters in Khandahar is green and gold. As a teenager, Gourlie delivered the Green Bay Press Gazette to Vince Lombardi. As an adult he is one of the most rabid Packer fans in Wisconsin and, arguably, the biggest Packer backer in Khandahar.

Gourlie is a Joint Task Force Phoenix member leading a small element in Khandahar while the rest of the team operates from Gardez.

In a note to Wisconsin, Gourlie described living conditions that don't include some of the things we take for granted in Wisconsin: amenities like flush toilets or even portable latrines, which are in short supply.

So how do the Afghan National Army soldiers and their Wisconsin National Guard mentors manage the sanitary requirements of camp life?

It's kind of technical, but the preferred method involves a trench, JP8 jet fuel, and a book of matches.

Tomah, Beloit, Black River Falls — Phones began ringing at the homes of 1158th Transportation Company Soldiers during the evening of Sept. 21. The calls were all too familiar for many of the unit's 299 members who received much the same call just 18 months earlier.

From March until June 2003, the unit was on active duty at Fort McCoy preparing for overseas deployment orders that never came. Half the unit was released from active duty after three months, but 80 Soldiers were sent to Knox, Ky., until December 2003 while 60 others served at Fort Irwin, Calif., through February 2004.

And now the 1158th was called up again.

This time the unit will serve overseas in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. Because the unit had already been mobilized, some Soldiers would have been exempt from a second mobilization that would take them beyond the 24-month active duty limit established by Defense Department policy. Many of them waived the limit and will mobilize with the company Oct. 21.

Lambeau Field, Green Bay — The famous tundra wasn't frozen yet on Aug. 16 when the Green Bay Packers honored the families of 22 of Wisconsin service members — including one from the Wisconsin National Guard — killed in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A color guard from the 32nd Military Police Company, home from Iraq just three weeks, led families through the Packers tunnel and onto the field. Kirk Straseskie's parents were followed by the families of Mathew Schram, Paul Sturino and Rachel Bosveld. Jeremy Wolfe's family walked onto field with the families of Eugene Uhl and Warren Hansen — all three lost on the same day, in the same helicopter collision.

The families of Chris Splinter, Robert Cook, Nichole Frye, Bert Hoyer and Hans Kurth walked onto the field through an honor cordon of Packer players. National Football league stars like Brett Favre and Ahman Green applauded the families of Sean Schneider, Ryan Jerabek, Jesse Thiry and Michelle Witmer. More than 70,000 fans stood up to recognize the families of Michael McGlothin, Chuck Kiser and Steve Martin.

Then the stadium hushed.

After 15 seconds of deafening silence, Sgt. Brenda Bushera and the Guard's 132nd Army Band performed the National Anthem and, as "...the home of the brave" melted into thunderous applause, a formation of four F-16s from Madison's 115th Fighter Wing roared over the stadium to salute Wisconsin's fallen heroes.

Mosul, Iraq — It's not exactly Cooperstown, but Soldiers of the 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) occasionally find themselves enshrined on a "Wall of Fame."

Since February, six of the unit's Wisconsin Soldiers, along with 14 from the Illinois Guard, have been telling the story of U.S. forces in Northern Iraq. The public affairs Soldiers cover operations in the Mosul area, and also go on patrols with the Task Force Olympia Stryker Brigade troops from Fort Lewis, Wash.



Above: Spc. Gretal Sharpee, 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, shares a helicopter seat with Homilia, an Iraqi translator.

Most of the MPAD's print stories are published in the task force's Olympia Observer and many appear in The Scimitar, a weekly publication of the Multinational Corps-Iraq public affairs office, which features stories and photos from public affairs units throughout Iraq. Still others are sent to the post newspaper at Fort Lewis, Wash., The Northwest Guardian, which uses many of the stories about the Fort Lewis Soldiers of Task Force Olympia. The unit also sends stories and photos to hometown newspapers all over the United States, and to the Army's Digital Video Imagery Distribution System in Atlanta.

The wide distribution of these professional public affairs products results in stories and photos appearing in various military and civilian publications and on websites all over the world.

And that's how MPAD soldiers end up on Mosul's Wall of Fame.

It's become a contest for the journalists to see just how far and wide their work is published. An Oct. 8 Google search for one of the unit's journalists, Staff Sgt. Fred Minnick, turned up 149 hits.

Fred Minnick, public affairs Wall-of-Famer, Wisconsin Army National Guard. ■



Local elders in Afghanistan meet with Col. Todd Nehls and other members of the Central Corps Assistance Group. The elders represent a community of people who returned to Afghanistan from Pakistan in hopes of a new start.

MISSION:

URBAN



WARFARE

TRAINING FOR TODAY'S BATTLEFIELD

From left: Spc. Paul Mahlik, Sgt. Mark Streckenback, Spc. Stephen Madaski and Spc. Nicholas Pichette, members of Company B, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, move together as a team to quickly clear a room.

Sgt. 1st Class George Petts, Headquarters, 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry, instructs, from left, Spc. Jason Smits, Spc. John Moyles, Sgt. Max Wain and Sgt. Chris Tappen, on team assaulting techniques.



Story and Photos by Lt. Adam Bradley
At Ease Staff

In the last decade, combat has changed drastically: Battles are often fought in city streets, with undefined enemy lines. The Army's combat doctrine continually adjusts to meet the realities of today's battlefield.

Changes in doctrine force Wisconsin Army National Guard units to train differently. These changes have been accelerated with the 32nd Infantry Brigade's switch from mechanized to light infantry — a conversion that began September 1, 2003. In the past several years, the brigade has incorporated more urban fighting techniques into its normal training scenarios.

A decade ago, Army units were learning basic urban operations and room clearing battle drills from Field Manual 7-8, the infantry rifle platoon and squad guidebook. Today's world, with major operations conducted in places like Fallujah, Iraq, and Afghanistan border towns, has required FM 7-8 to include more specialized tactics for urban operations.

"More and more, combat has been taking place in cities," said Sgt. Peter Schreier of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry. "The Army has needed to place more emphasis on being able to fight in a city. It's a real different environment, and one of the toughest combat environments."

Schreier was selected as a Military Operations on Urban Terrain instructor because of his recent experience in Iraq with the 10th Mountain Division. Soldiers returned from combat in Operations Iraqi Freedom or Enduring Freedom provide what field manuals can't — practical experience.

MOUT is more than just crashing your neighbor's house party with weapons in hand and breaking anything that gets in the way. MOUT training involves carefully organized, highly detailed and well rehearsed element tactics that take a great deal of time and instruction to learn. Units don't realize how much time it takes, said Sgt. 1st Class Brian Bieniek, urban operations range senior trainer and a member of Company C,

2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry.

What it all boils down to is being able to quickly search a building for the enemy — moving as a team from room to room and firing at close range — while keeping civilians and friendly forces safe. For Soldiers who haven't been exposed to MOUT training before, this can be quite a change.

The training includes close-quarters combat training, reflexive-fire training and team and squad room clearing. Soldiers going through reflexive-fire training spend many hours practicing proper room clearing form, explained Sgts. Joshua Doro and Daniel Kelm of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry. Repetitively working your muscles for long periods of time trains your body to instinctively react and snap to an assaulting form when needed, they said.

"The pace has been good and we've been getting a lot of excellent training," said Doro. "It's been hard, but it's been great training. They hit the basics and they hit them hard, and that's what you always need."

Fort McCoy's recently built urban operations range includes mock buildings and staged rooms, built to give Soldiers multiple realistic scenarios, said Sgt. 1st Class George Petts, a reconnaissance platoon sergeant of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry.

"This is the first AT where we really incorporated a well-thought-out MOUT train-up lane and MOUT mission," said Bieniek.

Previously, MOUT training was considered specialized, and only incorporated as an additional training event. Units now realize how valuable this training is. They're starting to include MOUT training as a priority and main focus in training schedules, said Bieniek.

Goals for future training, such as civil disturbance training, are to incorporate Soldiers from previously deployed units. By using experienced Soldiers from current operations, "we can start to understand what's relevant and what's really going on," said Bieniek. ■



Above: Sgt. Shane Reines, a forward observer with Headquarters Service Battery, 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, Wisconsin Rapids, looks over the Fort McCoy range after a training exercise.

Right: Soldiers from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, rush to secure a perimeter defense around a UH-1 Huey they just disembarked from as part of an air insertion training exercise at Fort McCoy.





Aerial Infantry

32nd Brigade takes to air

Story and photos by Sgt. Jim Wagner
At Ease Staff

With a high-pitched roar, a UH-1 Huey climbs into the air over the impact range at Fort McCoy. The hovering helicopter bears a special cargo, a forward observer from Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery.

With topographical map, protractor, grease marker and binoculars in hand, the forward observer — Sgt. Shane Reines — intently scans the range looking for a simulated enemy anti-aircraft emplacement.

Finding his target, he calls in an artillery strike from towed howitzers sited around the forests of the training range.

A miss.

Reines adjusts fire after taking a new bearing, and the guns pound the target to splinters. Mission complete, the Huey does a 90-degree bank and sweeps back to the helipad.

Air operations continue to play a key role for the 1,900 or so Soldiers of the Wisconsin Army National Guard who participated in this year's Annual Training June 5-19. Operations are conducted using the four Hueys flown by 832nd Medical Company or the four UH-60 Black Hawks of Company A, 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation. The "ground pounders" of the 32nd Separate Infantry Brigade take advantage of the latest Army tactics in the air.

For Reines, a member of the brigade-level combat lasing team, the helicopter saves him hours of marching to high ground, clearing a space and camouflaging it to observe enemy units.

Riding in a helicopter, he has eyes on target in 10 minutes and from altitudes he most likely wouldn't get otherwise.

Mission planners from the 32nd SIB have been ratcheting up their training schedule to include more light infantry tactics. With the loss of their armored personnel carriers, tanks and other troop transports, brigade Soldiers have had to look elsewhere to find a ride to the war.

It's a change noticed and approved of by many of the Soldiers participating in the exercises this year.

"This AT was a lot tougher than the past two years," said Spc. Robert Johnson, an infantryman from Company B, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, Green Bay. "It was things we did at the other ATs, but it was more constant."

In addition to more Military Operations on Urban Terrain training, more infantrymen took part in air insertion training — the loading of Soldiers into a helicopter at a pick-up zone with drop-off at another landing zone, the "hot zone." This year, 164 Soldiers, divided into four separate flights, participated in the training, compared with only a platoon in previous years.

"It was absolutely awesome," said Pvt. Steven Sattler, a squad assault weapon gunner with Company B, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, participating in his first AT and his first helicopter ride. "We're supposed to be an air assault unit — go in there with speed, aggressive action, get in there and get down — and get people in the hot zone as soon as possible. That's what the Hueys did." ■

Northern Lightning

STRIKES



Story and Photos by Sgt. Jim Wagner
At Ease Staff

Two F-16 Fighting Falcons scream over a nondescript section of Volk Field's vast ranges looking for a downed pilot. From the ground, Capt. Ryan "Gus" Roberts of the 170th Fighter Squadron, Springfield, Ill., uses a special mirror to signal the pilots in the sky.

"They say you can see this thing from 50 miles away," Roberts said. "From as close as he is right now, it's really noticeable."

That's good, because spotting a lone man in a green flight suit from a passing F-16 at 10,000 feet is more like pulling a needle out of a haystack than picking someone out of a lineup. With the mirror, however, it's just a matter of time before UH-60 aircrews from Company B, 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation, arrive to rescue Roberts.

The search-and-rescue exercise was just one of several conducted in Northern Lightning '04, a new multi-state air exercise involving elements of the Army and Air Guard, Air Force Reserve and active duty Air Force.

It started out as a relatively manageable exercise for several Air Guard outfits to hone warfighting skills. But this year's version has turned into something entirely else — a massive air and ground support exercise like Red Flag, the Air Force's premier aerial war game conducted at Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

The exercises "are typically a one-week deal with Midwest states," said Maj. Bryan Cook, exercise director. "Last year, we



decided to step it up and talked about doing something more, something that mimics what's going on with Operation Iraqi Freedom.

"The whole thing snowballed to the point where the flying was almost secondary," he added with a grin.

The dogfights, bread-and-butter training for fighter pilots, were still there: F-16s from Wisconsin battled F-16s from the Iowa Guard, with one side or the other mimicking MiG-29s, a typical threat aircraft. But this year, a lot of behind-the-scenes activities were added to give the exercise real-world credibility. Like Army Guard Black Hawk crews rescuing downed pilots.

Another major addition to the training involved simultaneous data communications between National Guard, Reserve and active-duty components.

Several years ago, the Army and Air Force teamed up to develop the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System, JSTARS, to identify land units in a battle. The Air Force gets similar information on air units from the Airborne Warning and Control System, AWACS.

Both Army and Air use a NATO standard digital communications system — but the Air National Guard uses a difficult system to communicate with F-16s.

"We couldn't send pilots information directly," said Senior Master Sgt. James Stefanski, an air weapons controller with the 128th Air Control Squadron at Volk Field. "Normally, we had to contact them through a tactical air control party."

Using a Joint Range Extension Transparent Multi-Platform Gateway Equipment Package, or JTEP, the information is passed from the AWACS or JSTARS right into the cockpit of the fighters.

If it sounds confusing, that's because it is.

"Even I have a hard time figuring it all out sometimes," Stefanski said. Nevertheless, he and his crew were responsible for getting JTEP up and running, setting up antennas around Volk Field to get the job done.

The result? An exercise that provided real-world training normally found only on active duty. All told, more than 17 units participated in Northern Lightning. Only seven of them operated out of Volk Field. The rest flew from their home stations, performed their missions in Volk Field air space and returned home immediately.

Airmen in Volk Field's Air Operations Center controlled the action to ensure the safety of as many as 20 aircraft in the same air space simultaneously. This "white force" of controllers also acted as a referee between "blue" forces (friendly) and "red" forces (aggressors).

Maj. Todd Sheridan, chief of weapons for the 132nd Fighter Wing of Des Moines, Iowa, said Volk Field and its ranges already provide a good environment for air operations; everything else included in the exercise made it great.

"Typically," he said, "you'd have to go to the Utah Test and Training Range or to Red Flag at Nellis for this kind of training. This isn't Red Flag training... but it's close." ■



Clockwise from left: Capt. Ryan "Gus" Roberts, an F-16 pilot with the Springfield, Ill.-based 170th Fighter Squadron, uses a mirror to signal circling rescue aircraft during Northern Lightning '04.

Capt. Roberts activates a smoke flare for a UH-60 Black hawk helicopter during a search and rescue mission at Volk Field.

Staff Sgt. Bobby Shepherd, a crew chief with the 132nd Fighter Wing out of Des Moines, Iowa, guides an F-16 into his space on the Volk Field flight line. The pilot, Lt. Col. Tim Farquhar, B Flight commander for the 132nd Fighter Wing, had just returned from a training exercise over the Volk Field range.

"White" force officials from the Air National Guard at Volk Field direct air activity at the Air Operations Center.

CIVILIANS ON THE Battlefield

By Sgt. Jim Wagner, At Ease Staff

Chanting, "Go home!," a band of six protestors visits the combined A and C Batteries of 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, and launches a tirade against the commander, first sergeant and gate guards, who are in the middle of an interview with a civilian reporter.

While the Soldiers are occupied — answering questions from the media representative, intercepting a protestor approaching an artillery crew firing rounds, stopping another from wandering into the tactical operations center, and making peace with the others who are demanding water — the chief protestor picks up a phone wire connecting the TOC to a perimeter guard station 200 yards up the road. Casually, he takes out a knife, strips the rubber insulation off the communications line and deftly short circuits the connection.

"Oops," he says with a malicious grin — "I guess they won't be talking to the guards anytime soon."

Welcome to the battlefield of 2004, a combat zone filled with non-soldiers, but not necessarily non-combatants — people who could be the shepherd's family from down the road, or a terrorist cell bent on killing.

It's an environment all too common for U.S. troops in areas like Iraq and Afghanistan. Finding out who the enemy is, without taking the lives of innocent civilians, has become one of the thorniest challenges for those involved.

Soldiers participating in this June's Annual Training at Fort McCoy experienced something new: People dressed in jeans or shorts and T-shirts, protesting against the Army or just wandering the hills and ridges of their ranges. The "civilians" actually were other Soldiers from Team Grizzly — a "Civilians on the Battlefield" (COBs) unit touring the U.S. to train Soldiers headed overseas.

The team comprises 44 members of the Minnesota, Iowa, Alabama and North Dakota Army National Guards. They were mobilized for the 34th Infantry Division deployment to Kosovo last October. When the division team was downsized from 2,000 to 1,800 Soldiers just a day before departure, Maj. Carl Madsen, Minnesota Army National Guard, grabbed 74 of the 200 extras and formed the COB team. Thirty were sent

on to Kosovo earlier this year, leaving the 44 present team members, 19 of whom supported the Opposing Forces training provided by 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry this year.

Their mission is to give Soldiers a taste of what they will find overseas, whether it's dealing with civilians who walk up to U.S. base camps and interact with Soldiers, or looking for improvised explosive devices along a convoy route. The team bases its scenarios on the Combined Arms Lessons Learned document published monthly by the U.S. Army.

Master Sgt. Norm Baker, Team Grizzly first sergeant, said the training his group provides is a good indicator of what Wisconsin citizen Soldiers will find overseas today.

"It really dials them up, it gets them in the mindset of being in a real battlefield," he said. "You need all the realism you can get. We add another dimension."

The training also reinforces the need for operational security awareness. One of Baker's unit members lifted a walkie-talkie being used in the field at this year's AT. The familiar Motorolas are an inexpensive item and give units an easy way to communicate with squad members. Unfortunately, since it was now in the hands of the "civilians" of Team Grizzly, the enemy was able to listen in on troop movements and other information, giving them the upper hand. "We put a bullhorn to the speaker of the walkie-talkie, so that everyone in the camp could hear what was happening in the TOC and realize that we had it," Baker said.

Another scenario provided insight into the limits a unit has out in the field when dealing with protestors. The Soldiers of Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, thought they would be dealing with 40-50 protestors one day during AT. Instead, there were only four to five — but it proved just as difficult to contain. With Team Grizzly members trying to get past the guards, walking around the perimeter and generally making a nuisance of themselves, it was all the Soldiers could do to maintain control.

"I don't know if we could have handled 40 to 50 protestors today," said Sgt. Major Michael Wagner after the exercise. "But, because of the training the 32nd Brigade received this year with COBs, we can work on finding an answer." ■



Sgt. Jim Wagner

Mock protestors taunted a soldier standing guard in front of the tactical operations center for Batteries A and C, 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, during Annual Training at Fort McCoy, June 2004. The “civilians” were portrayed by Guard members as part of the exercise.

New jog togs for Air Guard

The Air Force's new physical training uniform will soon hit the streets.

The new uniform was approved earlier this year by Air Force chief of staff Gen. John P. Jumper and is making its way into active service.

"We did a wear and fit test from January through March," said Senior Master Sgt. Jacqueline Dean of the Air Force Uniform Board. "We took all the feedback, and we now have established military specifications."

The uniform design was distributed to manufacturers who began full production around July.

The uniform consists of dark blue running shorts, a gray T-shirt and a dark blue running suit — all with reflective safety markings.

Dean said the goal was to have enough uniforms by October to supply Airmen scheduled for immediate deployment. After that requirement is met, the uniforms will be available for purchase through the Army and Air Force Exchange Service.

The uniform will have a two- to three-year phase-in period. The running suit will cost about \$100, and the shorts and shirt about \$25. As of mid-July, officials hadn't determined whether Airmen will receive a lump sum allotment in October, an increase in their annual clothing



allowance or a voucher to pay for the initial requirement.

Although personal preference is the rule for shoes, Dean said they must be conservative in design and color. Saluting will not be required while wearing the PT uniform, and jewelry wear will be the same as with other uniforms, so long as safety is taken into consideration. — *Air Force Print News*

Warrant Officer insignia changes

On July 8, Army warrant officers began wearing branch insignia specific to their military jobs, in place of the traditional "Eagle Rising" warrant officer corps insignia they have worn since the warrant officer rank was created in 1921. The purpose of the change is to denote that warrant officers, like commissioned officers, are part of the "larger officer corps," according to personnel officials.

At the same time, the temporary insignia of rank for chief warrant officer 5 has been replaced by a DoD-wide CW5 insignia consisting of a metal bar divided lengthwise by a 1/8-inch stripe.

Help troops call home

The Department of Defense has authorized the Army and Air Force Exchange Service to sell prepaid calling cards to any individual or organization that wishes to purchase cards for deployed troops. The "Help Our Troops Call Home" program gives cards to service members deployed to such areas as Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Cards may be purchased for individuals at their deployed addresses or for "any service member" deployed or hospitalized.

Cards available through the program do not expire and there are no added charges or connection fees. To donate a prepaid calling card, go to www.aafes.com. Click the "Help Our Troops Call Home" link.

— *Department of Defense*

Soldiers Radio and Television

Keep up with Army news from your desktop. Soldiers Radio and Television offers up-to-date information that can help you manage your career, understand Army missions and connect with fellow Soldiers. SRTV products include:

Soldiers Radio News — a five-minute radio newscast featuring Army news;

Sergeant's Time — a live-chat show featuring the Army's top enlisted leaders as guests;

Army Today — a magazine-format weekly feature;

News Note — a two-minute radio newscast;

Soldiers Radio Live — music, Army news, interviews, live Pentagon and Department of Defense press briefings, and remote broadcasts from such special events as Army football games; and

Army Bandstand — music from military ensembles.

Tune in at www.army.mil/srtv/ or use the "Soldiers Radio Live" link at www.army.mil.

— *Soldiers Radio and Television*

Milwaukee teens are ACEs with the Guard

Three Milwaukee-area teens spent the summer with the 128th Air Refueling Wing, learning aviation-related workplace skills through the Aviation Career Education program. ACE — a result of partnerships between industry, schools and government — is a summer employment opportunity for high school students and promotes aviation and space education in all grade levels.

Dominic Donald, Tameseya Lashay Allen, and Nicholas Sisouphone all graduated from high school in June and have post-high school plans for the fall.

Dominic, 17, graduated from North Division High School with a 3.5 grade-point average, and will attend the University of Wisconsin—Stevens Point to major in Business and Economics. He has spent four years in the ACE Program, two of them with the 128th, working in the aircraft maintenance area.

Tameseya, 18, a graduate of the Lynde and Harry Bradley Technology and Trade School,

worked in the life support area on base. Tameseya has already enlisted in the 128th and will join the life support section after basic training and tech school. She has participated in the ACE Program for 3 years. This summer was her first with the 128th.

Nicholas Sisouphone graduated from Pulaski High School and intends to enlist in the active duty Air Force as a security forces airman. He worked with aircraft maintenance and security forces this summer. It was his fourth year with ACE.

The program resulted from an initiative by former governor



ACE Program supervisor, Master Sgt. Del Williams (left), is shown with ACE Program participants: Tameseya Lashay Allen, 18, Dominic Donald, 17, and Nicholas Sisouphone, 18.

Tommy Thompson in 1989 that included the state's Department of Transportation, Bureau of Aeronautics, and Department of Public Instruction; the Milwaukee Public Schools; teachers, principals, aviation enthusiasts, pilots, state government professionals, and the air transportation industry.

Share your ideas

Have an idea for the Army? Soldiers and Department of the Army civilians can now go online to offer their recommendations — and possibly win some cash.

The Army Suggestion Program seeks ways to improve work methods, materials, processes, equipment, logistics, utilities, or tools that will benefit the Army. The suggestion must present a problem or situation, propose a solution and state the benefit to the government.

Implemented suggestions that save the Army money are often eligible

for cash awards. The more money saved, the larger the potential award.

The Web site features a "save" function that allows users to fill out the submission packet over a period of time, rather than during just one session. It also allows supervisors to nominate a person for recognition as top Soldier or DA civilian suggester of the year. The Army Suggestion Program, at <https://armysuggestions.army.mil>, went online in May, and requires an Army Knowledge Online user name and password.

— Army News Service

Flag patch — why reverse it?

The Stars and Stripes now graces the right shoulder of every Soldier in uniform. The U.S. Code calls for the canton, the rectangle with the stars, to be positioned to the left. So why do Soldiers wear it reversed?

The tradition originated at a time when cavalry and infantry units had standard bearers who carried the colors into battle. During a charge the standard bearer's forward momentum caused the flag to stream backward. The canton, which flies closest to the pole, appeared on the right when seen from the right side of the passing formation.

Soldiers wear the flag in full color with camouflage uniforms because the U.S. Code dictates that the military use it so.

— U.S. Army Center for Military History





Photo by Jim Biever/Packers.com

A color guard leads the families of Wisconsin servicemembers killed in action onto Lambeau Field during a salute to "Wisconsin's fallen heroes" before the Green Bay Packers – Seattle Seahawks football game Monday, Aug. 16 at Green Bay. The color guard members — from left, Sgt. Jessica Derosia, Sgt. 1st Class Daniel Doering, Staff Sgt. Edward Wenzel and Spc. Nicholas Warzalla — are all members of the 32nd Military Police Company, Wisconsin Army National Guard, recently returned from a 15-month deployment to Iraq.

Departments of the Army and Air Force
National Guard of Wisconsin
Office of the Adjutant General
2400 Wright Street, Madison, WI 53708

Official Business
Penalty for use \$300

PRESORTED STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MADISON WI
PERMIT #2310