



at ease

Wisconsin National Guard

October 2007

From the top

For the past five years I've been honored to serve as adjutant general of Wisconsin and commander of the Wisconsin National Guard.

It was an extraordinary time to be adjutant general. Five years ago I began my term the same day Wisconsin Emergency Management and the Wisconsin National Guard were responding to a tornado in Ladysmith, and five years later we were recovering from devastating floods in southern and southwestern Wisconsin.

In between, we've participated in the largest mobilization of the Guard in more than 60 years. Wisconsin has witnessed the incredible service and sacrifice of 8,000 of our soldiers and airmen who've been called to serve. They have performed long, difficult and dangerous missions with the kind of skill and courage I have witnessed time and again from the men and women who serve in the Wisconsin National Guard. Wisconsin Guard soldiers were wounded in action for the first time since World War II. We have welcomed our heroes safely back to Wisconsin. And we lost eight Army National Guard soldiers who answered our nation's call and never returned.

In the past five years I have been impressed, inspired and proud. I have been incredibly happy and I've been indescribably sad. It's been an amazing five years.

As I leave the position of adjutant general, I turn the finest National Guard in the nation over to a first-rate officer and a strong leader who will be an outstanding adjutant general. Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar is superbly qualified to lead the Guard and the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs into the future.

Don, you have the stick.



Albert H. Wilkening
Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening



Donald P. Dunbar
Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar

Although we had a ceremonial change of command ceremony the first week of August and I'd been involved in a full-scale state emergency a few weeks later, the gravity of the position of adjutant general didn't fully set in until the last day of August — the day before I formally assumed command — when I stood with General Wilkening in Oshkosh to welcome troops home from their dangerous year-long mission in Iraq. It was a sobering reminder for me of the high stakes involved with service in the

Wisconsin National Guard, and of the awesome responsibility I have been given by Governor Doyle to you and the citizens of Wisconsin.

Words really fail to convey how impressed I am with the quality of the soldiers and airmen of the Wisconsin National Guard. You are out there doing important work for our state and nation every hour of every day, and you're doing it exceptionally well.

As I begin my term as adjutant general of Wisconsin we are a nation — and a National Guard — at war. The months and years ahead will most certainly bring more mobilizations, present new challenges, cause additional hardships, and demand further sacrifices. But I already know there is no mission you will be assigned that you will not accomplish with the same selflessness and courage that has always characterized the soldiers and airmen of the Wisconsin National Guard.

I look forward to leading you, supporting you, and serving with you. You are the very best National Guard soldiers and airmen in the nation and I am proud to be associated with you as we work together to serve Wisconsin and America.

Since the last issue of *At Ease* was published, 26 Wisconsin service members have lost their lives in service to their country:

- Marine Lance Cpl. Adam VanAlstine, 21, Superior
- Marine Lance Cpl. Eric Palmisano, 27, Florence
- Army Reserve Staff Sgt. Nathan Vacho, 29, Janesville
- Army Spc. Eric Clark, 22, Pleasant Prairie
- Army Spc. Grant Dampier, 25, Merrill
- Navy Reserve Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Jaime Jaenke, 29, Bay City
- Army National Guard Cpl. Stephen Castner, 27, Cedarburg
- Army National Guard Sgt. Ryan Jopek, 20, Merrill
- Army Cpl. Kenneth Cross, 21, Superior
- Army Spc. Shaun Novak, 21, Two Rivers
- Marine Sgt. Luke Zimmerman, 24, Luxemburg
- Army Capt. Rhett Schiller, 26, Waterford
- Marine Lance Cpl. Jesse Tillery, 19, Vesper
- Marine Capt. Kevin Kryst, 27, West Bend
- Marine Cpl. Joshua Schmitz, 21, Spencer
- Army Pvt. Evan Bixler, 27, West Bend
- Army Cpl. Matthew Grimm, 21, Wisconsin Rapids
- Marine Lance Cpl. Andrew Matus, 19, Chetek
- Army Spc. Jon St. John III, 25, Neenah
- Marine Lance Cpl. Harry Timberman, 20, Minong
- Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Robert Basham, 22, Kenosha
- Army Pfc. Nicholas Riehl, 21, Shiocton
- Army Sgt. 1st Class Jesse Albrecht, 31, Hager City
- Army Sgt. Tyler J. Kritz, 21, Eagle River
- Marine Cpl. Matthew Zindars, 21, Watertown
- Army Capt. Derek Dobogai, 26, Fond du Lac

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The issue of *At Ease* in your hands is, at 52 pages, by far the thickest edition we've produced in the 30 year history of this publication — both as a tabloid newspaper and, for the past five years, as a magazine. It's also taken the longest time to plan, write, edit, design and print — as we've scrambled to cover an impressive organization fully engaged across the nation and around the world.

This issue reaches back to January 2006 to capture the some of the stories of Wisconsin Soldiers and Airmen been doing important and dangerous work all over the planet. You've served from the Southwestern United States to Southwest Asia. You've kept the peace in Kosovo and helped your neighbors in Wisconsin. You should be very proud.

A few of our stories have aged a bit, but are still worth telling. Other stories are so fresh the ink is barely dry. But we hope you'll sit back and soak up some of the Wisconsin National Guard history you have written.

Lt. Col. Tim Donovan, Public Affairs Officer

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On the Cover:

An F/A-18 Hornet is refueled by a KC-135R from the 128th Air Refueling Wing, Milwaukee. Navy fighters use a drogue basket hooked to the boom of the KC-135 for air-to-air refueling. The 128th Air Refueling Wing turned 60 this year.

Wisconsin Air National Guard photo



Wisconsin's 30th Adjutant General

A Conversation With

BRIGADIER GENERAL

DON DUNBAR

EDITOR'S NOTE: Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar sat down with *At Ease* Sept. 10 after completing his first full week as Wisconsin's adjutant general. In a far-ranging conversation, General Dunbar talked about his experience, his first impressions, and his role in Wisconsin's homeland security. Here are some excerpts:

Q. Tell us about your background...what are the steps you've taken to get to the Adjutant General's office?

A. My background is 24 years in the military. I joined the military in 1983 after growing up in Philadelphia, went off to a pilot training slot in the Air Force and ended up flying B-52s for about six years on active duty. Then I separated — sort of followed the herd out to fly for the airlines and found out that wasn't my cup of tea. I was very fortunate to get in with the Washington National Guard flying KC-135s in Spokane, and I was an "M-day" or traditional Guardsmen on the Air Guard side for about four years. I did a lot of deploying for things like Operation Restore Hope in Somalia and Operation Just Cause [Panama], and then ended up going to the Guard Bureau and the Pentagon in 1995. Who'd have thought it, but I ended up staying there for about seven years. I was the KC-135 functional manager for about 19 KC-135 wings in the Air National Guard, then I was on the DoD staff for the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs and then Executive Officer for General Weaver when he was Director of the Air National Guard. After completing the National War College I was picked up for command in Washington State at the group level. I commanded the 141st Operations Group and deployed a few times as a commander. When Wisconsin went nationwide for a wing commander in 2005 I was fortunate to get picked to command the 128th Air Refueling Wing, that's how I came to Wisconsin.

Q. How does your education, training and experience prepare you for the position of Adjutant General?

A. Well, the Adjutant General leads the Wisconsin Air and Army National Guard and so military experience is important. Not just that though, in the National Guard you have a pretty unique blend

of soldiers and airmen who come from active duty, many who are "traditional" from start to finish, and then you have some folks who are AGR (Active Guard and Reserve) or technicians. And while I've never been a technician, I've been active duty and a traditional Guardsmen and I've been an AGR so I understand how those things work. Commanding is very, very important, so having commanded in the Air National Guard at the group and wing commander level — and deploying as a commander — gave me other valuable perspectives. Then going to the Guard Bureau, working at the Pentagon with the DoD staff in the joint world provided experience that brought a lot of additional understanding to the position.

Q. What are your impressions of the Wisconsin Guard as you see it from your new position as the Adjutant General?

I'm getting to know the Army National Guard a lot better and, just like the Air National Guard, I find it an extraordinary organization with a lot of depth and a lot of breadth. Our soldiers and airmen are extraordinary...their competence and their reputation. I think that we're in the top tier with several other states who are blessed with hard working, dedicated troops and airmen who go out and do a great job consistently who have deployed in very, very difficult situations and come home, reenlisted and been retained and several of them have gone a second time — and a few a third time — and that is extraordinary in this time in history when our nation is relying more and more on the Guard and reserve. So I find it an extraordinarily wonderful organization that it's going to be easy trying to put a lot of passion into trying to get things to work.

Q. You wear a couple of hats in addition to commanding the Wisconsin National Guard. Tell us about your roles in emergency management and homeland security.



A. Wisconsin Emergency Management is a division of the Department of Military Affairs, so as the department head for the state I have the overall responsibility for Wisconsin Emergency Management through WEM's administrator, Johnnie Smith. But there are 43 people in WEM and they do an extraordinary job – whether it's Larry Reed or Steve Peterson or Diane Kleiboer or any of the other folks in WEM who really know their business from top to bottom. Substantially good relationships have been built, along with good processes so we can lean forward without falling on our face at the same time not waiting too long. I give a lot of credit to General Wilkening who was the previous TAG who really worked hard in getting all of this established.

On the homeland security front, I am the governor's homeland security advisor and I chair the Homeland Security Council. My role there is to partner with the other state agencies and make sure that we're paying attention not only to the national response plan – soon to be the national response framework – and making sure Wisconsin's efforts are effectively aligned with the federal government and our partners from other state agencies, local government and Wisconsin first responders. I'm inheriting a very tight organization that is open and honest with each other. Again I find depth and breadth of personnel and a lot of resources. I think we can do a good job for the state, the governor and the people.

Q. On the eve of your assumption of command of the Wisconsin National Guard, you were involved first-hand in a significant state emergency...what are your observations about Wisconsin's capabilities in emergency response?

A. That was an interesting experience. I teased General Wilkening that he didn't have to set up an actual emergency, he could have just set up a tabletop exercise. Seriously, we didn't choose to have the flood and it was a terrible event for the people in southwestern Wisconsin, but it gave me a great opportunity to see firsthand the effectiveness of our response. I got a phone call at about 6 a.m. that Sunday morning, and when I came in WEM had already stood up the state emergency operations center, they had called in personnel from all the state agencies. So what I saw right away was a process in place to respond to an emergency and that's very important. Initially what we had to do was

control certain roads that were closed down and so we had the State Patrol respond. There were also dams under a lot of stress, so we had DNR monitoring them and, eventually we used Army Guard aviation and Air Guard engineer assets to get over there and relieve some of that stress. We also monitored the evacuation of a few communities that were under water. So WEM's role is to monitor all that to learn whether a county is or might become overwhelmed and need help. And when they need help they call the state and the state responds. Sometimes the state's response will include the National Guard, sometimes we'll provide other resources...state troopers or the DNR, or assets from correctional facilities. The point is we get the right assets to that local county and that's what happened here. And I thought it was done very, very well. So the name of the game is to be ready when something happens because you don't know what's coming. We need to have relationships in place in advance, then do everything we can to effectively respond...take care of the people of Wisconsin, mitigate to try and avoid the damage in the future and then improve your processes and do it even better the next time and I'm convinced that we have the level of professionalism here in Wisconsin to do just that.

Q. What is your vision for the Wisconsin National Guard?

A. My vision for the National Guard is to be a ready and available force, which I think we are, so we can respond to any emergency at the local state or federal level. It's a very unique organization, the National Guard, because we wear hats as a reserve organization of the Army and the Air Force at the same time we are the governor's military force for everything from civil disturbances to helping out in a national disaster. So the vision would be a ready, responsive organization that is partnering with the Army and Air Force to defend the country and attentive to the needs of the state. I would add to that every one of our 10,000 soldiers and airmen is a Guardsman first, then a soldier and an airman, but we are Guardsmen first, so you saw that with the floods in the southwestern part. We had I think, at the peak, about 20 Air Guard engineers out there working with for the state, so this is not just the Army National Guard, this is the Wisconsin National Guard – Army and Air – responding to state emergencies. ■

Changing of the Guard



Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar



Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening

Brig. Gen. Donald Dunbar was named the next adjutant general of Wisconsin by Gov. Doyle June 15.

“Colonel Dunbar brings a wealth of experience and a history of dedicated service to this position,” Doyle said when announcing the appointment in June.

Dunbar, who has commanded the 128th Air Refueling Wing since March 2005, succeeded Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening as adjutant general Sept. 1.

Wilkening assumed the state’s top military post less than a year after the Sept. 11 attacks and has overseen continuing large-scale deployments of Guard units for operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom. He has also chaired the governor’s Homeland Security Council from its creation in March 2003.

“Wisconsin has been fortunate to benefit from the exceptional leadership of General Wilkening during a time of unprecedented importance for our National Guard and Division of Emergency Management,” Doyle said. “I’m confident this high caliber leadership will continue with Colonel Dunbar.”

Dunbar, a 24-year Air Force veteran, is a command pilot with more than 3,000 flying hours, principally in B-52 bombers and KC-135 tankers. In addition to squadron- and wing-level flying assignments, he has served in high-level staff positions at National Guard Bureau and the Department of Defense. He is a 2002 graduate of the National War College



Brig. Gen. James Krueck

and came to the 128th Air Refueling Wing after commanding the 141st Operations Group, Washington Air National Guard. In 2005 he commanded the 385th Expeditionary Operations Group, supporting Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom with C-17 transport and KC-135 refueling operations.

“I am honored to have been selected as Wisconsin’s adjutant general and hope to continue

the tradition of outstanding leadership established by General Wilkening and the other officers who have led the finest National Guard in the nation,” Dunbar said. “I am committed to the readiness of our Army and Air National Guard and our preparedness to meet any challenge and accomplish any mission in our service to Wisconsin and the nation. I thank Governor Doyle for his confidence and my family for their support, and I look forward to serving with the 10,000 soldiers and airmen of the Wisconsin National Guard.”



Brig. Gen. Gerald Olesen

Dunbar’s appointment completes a full change in the top ranks of the Wisconsin Guard. Brig. Gen. James Krueck and Brig. Gen. Gerald Olesen became the state’s top Army and Air Guard commanders in a joint ceremony less than one year ago.

Krueck, who succeeded Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson as deputy adjutant general for Army, is a long-time Wisconsin Army Guard member who enlisted in 1966. After ten years of enlisted service, he was commissioned a



Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson



Maj. Gen. Fred Sloan

second lieutenant of armor and eventually served in a wide variety of units as well as headquarters staff assignments of increasing responsibility. Krueck went to Operation Desert Storm in 1990 as a member of the 13th Combat Support Hospital and more recently served in Iraq as commander of the 32nd Separate Infantry Brigade.

Olesen assumed command of the Wisconsin Air National Guard from Maj. Gen. Fred Sloan after serving many years in the active Air Force and the Wisconsin Guard. He served in a variety of command and staff assignments with the 115th Fighter Wing, capped with service as full-time chief of staff in state Air Guard headquarters.

Also in new hands this summer is the position of senior enlisted advisor for the Wisconsin Army National Guard. Command Sgt. Maj. John Hauschildt was suc-



Command Sgt. Maj. George Stopper



Command Sgt. Maj. John Hauschildt

ceeded by Command Sgt. Maj. George Stopper. Hauschildt served in the position seven years, beginning in July 2000. Stopper, most recently the senior enlisted advisor of the 64th Troop Command, has served more than 28 years in the Wisconsin Army National Guard, including a recent overseas deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom. ■

In Memoriam...

Three Wisconsin National Guard members have been killed in Iraq since *At Ease* last went to press.



Stephen Castner
1978 - 2006

Cpl. Stephen Castner, 27, Cedarburg, died July 24, 2006, when a roadside bomb exploded near his vehicle while on patrol in Iraq. Castner was a member of 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery in Milwaukee.

Nine days later, on Aug. 2, 2006, Sgt. Ryan Jopek, 20, Merrill, died from injuries sustained after an improvised explosive device detonated near his vehicle in Tikrit,

Iraq. Jopek served with 2nd Battalion, 127th

Infantry Regiment, in Waupun.

Both Soldiers were remembered for their smiles. Family members recall “Stevie,” a name Castner preferred according to one press report, as a sometimes-zany person who often kept in contact with friends and family.

His smile was the first thing people think of when they picture Jopek, recalled one of his friends.

“He had a big, goofy grin that could brighten the day of anyone he crossed paths with,” said friend Sgt. Kyle Clemens to a reporter.

Jopek attended school at Merrill High School and joined the Wisconsin Army National Guard after graduation. Castner was pursuing a degree in public land



Ryan Jopek
1986 - 2006

management at the University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee after serving four years in the Air Force.

Castner and Jopek became the 57th and 58th Wisconsin battle deaths of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Then, after an interval of more than eight months, Staff Sgt. Robert J. Basham, 22, Kenosha, was killed in a non-combat incident in Doha, Qatar.

Basham was a member of Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 126th Field Artillery, before being mobilized in 2005 for a year of overseas service in

Kuwait with 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry. As his

fellow Wisconsin soldiers were returning to their homes last November, Basham volunteered for another tour of duty, this time with a Kansas National Guard unit with a mission inside Iraq.

Staff Sgt. Basham “was always known for the commitment he had to his military service, and volunteering to serve beyond his original tour of duty demonstrated that part of his character that made him a valued member of the Wisconsin National Guard,” wrote Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, the adjutant general of Wisconsin, in a statement issued after Basham’s death.

“It was Rob’s lifelong dream to serve America, and his life ended during this service,” his family said in a separate statement.

The Wisconsin Army National Guard has now suffered eight fatalities in the effort.



Robert Basham
1984 - 2007

Two Guard units receive top family readiness award

Wisconsin units have won the top family readiness programs in the Army National Guard for two years running.

In a Pentagon ceremony Feb. 16, Thomas Hall, assistant defense secretary for reserve affairs, recognized the Madison-based 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry as having the best family readiness program in the Army National Guard for 2006. The previous year’s award had gone to 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, headquartered in Appleton.

The 2-128th distinguished itself by processing point-of-contact information for 570 of its 573

Soldiers, sending out more than 900 newsletters each month, successfully managing four phone-tree evolutions during the year, and getting welcome-home packages of family readiness information to 95 percent of unit members. A survey showed 75 percent of the unit’s Soldiers and their families said they coped extremely well with deployment.

The 2-127th was honored in 2005 for many achievements, notably: Fewer than five out of 620 Soldiers non-deployable due to family readiness problems; creation of a mailing list and interactive Web site to keep family members in touch with one another; and possession of valid

military identification cards by 98 percent of eligible family members.

The family readiness program awards are presented during the annual Family Readiness Summit in Washington, D.C. Awards go to the best family readiness programs in the seven reserve components — Army National Guard, Air National Guard, Army Reserve, Naval Reserve, Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps Reserve and Coast Guard Reserve.

“Families always play a very key role in the careers and lives of our young men and women who serve,” said Hall. “When a service member is deployed, the last thing they need to be worrying about is problems at home.”

Wisconsin Soldiers receive national leadership award

Capt. Josephine Jerome received congratulations from President Bush in the Oval Office May 18 as one of seven National Guard officers receiving the Army's 2006 General Douglas MacArthur



Capt. Josephine Jerome receives congratulations from President George W. Bush.

Leadership Award. The award was presented by Army chief of staff Gen. George W. Casey Jr.

Jerome is the full-time budget and finance officer in the state's Army Guard Recruiting and Retention Command and in her traditional Guard role commands Company B, 724th Engineer Battalion.

"I'm humbled to be recognized so highly and am thrilled to be able to use my knowledge of the award procedures to help others be nominated in the future," Jerome said. "The soldiers of Bravo Company 'Bulldogs,' 724th Combat Engineer Battalion, have been my inspiration as I strive to earn their respect and provide them quality, challenging training balanced with soldier caring. This is their award as much as it is mine."

Jerome previously served in the active Army as a Signals Intelligence analyst

and Russian linguist, led a platoon of the 229th Engineer Company on deployment to Tikrit, Iraq, from May 2003 to March 2004, and recently became the first female National Guard soldier to complete the Army's Sapper Leader Course.

She is the second Wisconsin Guard member in as many years to win the top leadership award for company-grade officers. Maj. Scott Southworth, commander of the 112th Public Affairs Detachment, was presented the 2005 MacArthur Award in 2006 by then Army chief of staff Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker.

With only a handful of MacArthur Awards apportioned to the Army National Guard in a given year, it is unusual for two officers from the same state to be honored in successive years.

Private Soldiers – Wisconsin Guardsmen write book

The Wisconsin Historical Society Press has published *Private Soldiers: A Year in Iraq with a Wisconsin National Guard Unit* by Benjamin Buchholz, with photos by Staff Sgt. Joseph Streeter and 1st Lt. Nathan Olson. The book chronicles the year-long deployment of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, Wisconsin Army National Guard, from the Soldier's view. Their mission would take them into the most dangerous regions of Iraq, where they would withstand hundreds of attacks, see dozens wounded, and lose three members killed in action.

Written and photographed by three battalion members, *Private Soldiers* provides a first-hand account of life in Iraq. Fascinating soldier interviews reveal the effects of deployment on the troops and on their families back home, and interviews with Iraqi civilians describe the Iraqis' perceptions of life, war, and working alongside Wisconsin troops. Brilliant photography illuminates the 2-127th's year, from training to "boots on the ground" to their return home, while candid photos taken by battalion members capture the soldiers' day-to-day lives and camaraderie.

An extremely timely and relevant account of soldiers' lives, *Private Soldiers* honors Wisconsin's participants in the Iraq war and helps readers understand the war's human side.

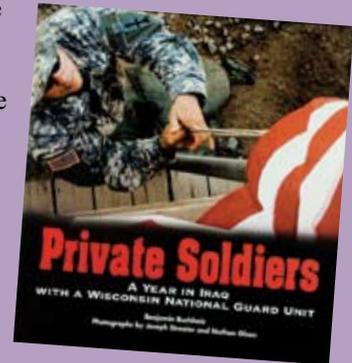
All royalties from sales of *Private Soldiers* will go to the 2-127th's family support groups and to funds established in memory of the battalion members who gave their lives in the Iraq

war.

Capt. Benjamin Buchholz was battalion civil affairs officer during the unit's deployment. He works full time for the Wisconsin National Guard as the 2-127th's training officer.

Staff Sgt. Joseph Streeter has been a member of the Wisconsin Army National Guard for over twelve years. While deployed in Iraq he served as a squad leader in the 2-127th's C Company. He also works as the system administrator at the Wisconsin Joint Force Headquarters and runs a sports photography business.

1st Lt. Nathan Olson has been a member of the Wisconsin National Guard for more than sixteen years. During his time in Iraq he served as a platoon leader in C Company, 2-127th Infantry. He also works for the Wisconsin National Guard as the environmental assessment and reports manager for the state.



Retiree Activities Office available for assistance, information

The Retiree Activities Office provides information to retirees and widows 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.

The RAO maintains an email database to keep retirees informed. If you are a military retiree eligible to receive military retired pay, and would like to be on the distribution list, provide

email address, name, retired military grade and branch of service to widma.retiree@dma.state.wi.us.

The RAO is located at Joint Force Headquarters, 2400 Wright Street, Room 236, Madison, Wis., 53704. The RAO is open Tuesday and Thursdays, 7:30 – 11:30 a.m., except on holidays. Please contact the RAO with questions or for assistance at 608-242-3115 or toll-free at 1-800-335-5147.

Through Thick & Thin

A look back at the Wisconsin National Guard in action

By Larry Sommers, *At Ease Staff*

Now into the sixth year since Sept. 11, 2001, the Wisconsin National Guard marches on.

With this issue, *At Ease* takes a big step back, for perspective: To seek a sense of just how busy and versatile our state's Guard has been, to recall changes and challenges met along the way, to grasp the depth of America's reliance on the Guard, and to honor the wild and dangerous ride endured thus far by our thousands of Soldiers and Airmen, who continue to serve faithfully.

3 4 8 KODAK SAFETY FILM



Abigail Hagemeister hugs her father, 1st Sgt. John Hagemeister, 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry, at the unit's welcome home ceremony in November 2006.
Photo by Staff Sgt. Emily Russell

In one awful moment, life in the United States was changed forever. The Guard responded instantly.

Here in Wisconsin, F-16s from Truax Field zoomed aloft and took up a tense patrol, guarding against a repeat of the Sept. 11 disaster. Wisconsin Air Guard controllers set up in an Illinois cornfield to help Chicago's regional air traffic center distinguish threats from normality as civil aviation shakily resumed operations. Soon, here as elsewhere, Army Guard Soldiers made a comforting presence providing extra security at major airports; and before long, Army Guard MPs joined Air Guard Security Forces to protect fighter and tanker aircraft on the ground. The ensuing operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and elsewhere relied on mobilized Wisconsin National Guard units deployed early and often; they served with competence, valor and distinction. Those operations continue, engaging the attention of Wisconsin units that rotate overseas for a year at a time, then return and begin preparing for an unknown, but likely, future mobilization. At the same time, the Guard still serves traditional missions including stints in places like Kosovo and Central America, as well as state active duty mobilizations for disasters that periodically strike the Badger State.

But somewhere in all this hectic and heroic activity, something fundamental shifted: The Guard became an operational reserve, called on routinely to share the heavy lifting of the 21st Century. Inevitably, in an age of alarms and excursions, the Guard would be ordered to respond in new ways to unprecedented threats neither international nor intra-state. A new class of operations arose — regional contingencies in the U.S. — exemplified first by the swift response to Hurricane

Katrina in the Fall of 2005 and then, the following summer, by a presidential order to provide forces along the Southwest Border (Operation Jumpstart). The Guard had gone from a position of neglect in the 1970s and 1980s, through increasing relevance in the 1990s, to becoming, in the first decade of the new century, a favored tool in America's toolbox.

And the beat went on.

Comings and goings

After two months of training at Camp Shelby, Miss. — briefly interrupted by Hurricane Katrina — Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, shipped to Kuwait in late November 2005 and took up security duties there. They relieved a Hawaii National Guard unit providing entry control point security, convoy security, and quick reaction forces. The Wisconsin artillerymen were augmented by Soldiers from other units, mobilized or re-assigned to fill unit vacancies.

The new arrivals joined Wisconsin Guard members of 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry; 32nd Infantry Brigade Headquarters; and the 1158th Transportation Company who were already on duty in the theater.

Even with more than 2,000 Wisconsin Guardsmen on active duty, about 7,240 troops remained at home, available for state active duty and to support homeland defense or homeland security missions.

One unit that served in Iraq from May 2003 to July 2004 was recognized for "extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy of the United States." The 180-member 32nd Military



Maj. Jim Richie, left, walks on a 'presence patrol' near Basra, Iraq, with an Iraqi interpreter disguised for safety, center, and a soldier with the Lithuanian army. Richie was a liaison officer for the Coalition forces and was deployed to Iraq and Kuwait with the 32nd Brigade Headquarters in 2005-2006.

U.S. and Afghan National army soldiers led by Lt. Col. John Schroeder, Wisconsin Army National Guard, uncover and secure a large cache of rocket-propelled grenades and heavy machinegun ammunition in a village in Afghanistan, April 11, 2006. *Wisconsin Army National Guard photo by Lt. Col. John Schroeder*



Police Company received the Valorous Unit Award, equivalent to the award of a Silver Star to an individual. The award was presented in a ceremony at the Oconomowoc armory Dec. 10.

In mid-December, the 1158th Transportation Company, a unit of 280 male and female Soldiers who operate M-1070 Heavy Equipment Transporters, returned to Wisconsin after driving more than 2.25 million miles, hauling nearly 7,600 pieces of equipment to every part of Iraq from a base in Kuwait. (See story, p. 50.) Relatives, friends, senior Guard officials, Wisconsin's lieutenant governor and the 132nd Army Band converged on Volk Field to give the 1158th a joyous welcome — a pattern that would be repeated for other units in coming months.

Red Arrow in combat

Also in December, an event took place that resonated for veterans and members of the 32nd "Red Arrow" Infantry Brigade (formerly the 32nd Division). Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, who deployed in November for Operation Iraqi Freedom, became the first troops since World War II authorized to wear the Red Arrow as a "combat patch" on the right shoulder.

The Red Arrow design, a vertical arrow through a horizontal bar, was adopted during World War I to symbolize the 32nd Division's piercing of the Hindenburg line and every other German line it faced in the war. The division also fought in the Southwest Pacific in World War II, with 654 days in combat — more than any other U.S. division in any war. From the Iraq war's inception, Red Arrow troops wore combat patches honoring the Army units to which they were attached under Central Command orders. As of December 17, they were permitted to wear the Red Arrow recognizing their historic unit affiliation. Troops of 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, were soon joined by 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry; Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 32nd Separate Infantry Brigade; and 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry, in wearing the Red Arrow combat patch.

Meanwhile, a specialized force of 16 Wisconsin Army National Guard members departed in early January for training at Camp Shelby, bound for Afghanistan, where they were slated to join Coalition Task Force Phoenix, a group that trains and prepares the Afghan national army to defend its homeland.

Gov. Doyle visits

In late January 2006, Gov. Jim Doyle traveled through Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Kuwait with fellow governors Mike Huckabee of Arkansas, Dave Freudenthal of Wyoming and Rick Perry of Texas. The four chief executives made the week-long tour of U.S. Central Command locations as guests of the State and Defense departments. While in Kuwait, Doyle visited members of 32nd Brigade Headquarters at Camp Arifjan; 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery at the Kuwait Naval Base; 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry at Camp Navistar; and 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry at Camp Buehring.

"I promised you two things when you left Wisconsin," Doyle told the Soldiers: "That the Packers would win the Super Bowl — and they will...eventually.... And that we would take care of your families — and we are."

"I was just very honored and privileged to have a chance to visit with the troops and see what they are doing," Doyle said after the visit. "I want everybody in Wisconsin to know that the troops I have spoken to are in very, very good spirits and their morale is very high."

Also in late January 2006, the 1157th Transportation Company received orders to report for active duty June 14. Besides having been ordered to active duty the past September to support hurricane relief efforts in Louisiana, the unit had been deployed to Fort Bragg, N.C., from September 2002 to August 2003. Because of the quick return to active duty, Soldiers who had served on the Fort Bragg deployment were exempt from the 2006 call-up.

Eleven Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 426th Regiment, were honored in a Feb. 4 ceremony at the Wisconsin Military Academy for their deployed service as artillery trainers at Fort Sill, Okla., between February 2003 and late 2005. While at Fort Sill, they trained more than 4,000 Soldiers in field artillery tactical data systems and fire support.

WMD team ready

The Wisconsin National Guard achieved a milestone in early February 2006 when the Department of Defense certified the

Staff Sgt. Syanna Swyers and Staff Sgt. Elizabeth O'Herrin assemble a 500-pound JDAM (Joint Direct Attack Munition) while deployed to southwest Asia last summer. The JDAM was one of several precision munitions carried routinely by the 115th Fighter Wing's F-16C+ jets while in theater.



Photo provided by the 115th Fighter Wing

Madison-based 54th Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team as fully prepared to support civil authorities in responding to incidents involving WMDs. The 22-person joint Army and Air Guard team is trained and equipped to identify threats, assess potential consequences, and assist civilian authorities in managing the appropriate response to the situation. The team immediately plunged into its first real-world mission, supporting federal authorities on watch against potential terrorist incidents at the Super Bowl in Detroit.

Later that month, Wisconsin's Army and Air Guard troops in Southwest Asia got a personal visit from Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, the adjutant general of Wisconsin, and Command Sgt. Maj. John Hauschildt, senior enlisted advisor of the Wisconsin Army National Guard. The pair visited the same bases and units that hosted Gov. Doyle a month earlier and also made contact with the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing, 128th Air Refueling Wing and 128th Air Control Squadron, making command visits to their bases in the region.

"It is an honor to be among Wisconsin's best," Wilkening told 41 Soldiers who re-enlisted in ceremonies he conducted during his visit. "Your commitment to duty and this mission is shown by your willingness to re-enlist, even while deployed and separated from family and friends."

Mid-March 2006 brought a mobilization order for some 400 Soldiers of Milwaukee-based 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery. They mobilized April 19 to their unit armories at Milwaukee, Plymouth, Two Rivers and Sussex; and they departed April 22 for pre-deployment training at Camp Shelby, Miss., for a one-year overseas deployment.

New USPFO

Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard units and individuals receive the bulk of their logistical support through the United States Property and Fiscal Office at Camp Williams, collocated with Volk Field just outside the village of Camp

Douglas. The venerable supply, equipment and finance facility moved into brand-new quarters dedicated in a ceremony June 8, 2006. The 81,960 square-foot building was constructed over a 16-month period at a cost of \$13.7 million. National Guard Bureau chief Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum joined Gov. Doyle and the Wisconsin National Guard's senior leaders for the dedication ceremony.

Another large Wisconsin building, the Experimental Aircraft Association's Eagle Hangar in Oshkosh, was the place where Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton in mid-June joined Gen. Wilkening and Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson, commander of the Wisconsin Army National Guard, to see off 170 members of the 1157th Transportation Company — augmented by personnel of other units around the state — as they left for Camp Atterbury, Ind., to train up for their one-year overseas deployment.

About 200 members of Madison's 115th Fighter Wing deployed to Iraq June 20 on a 50-day mission in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. The contingent included F-16 pilots and crew chiefs, intelligence, life support, supply, munitions, avionics, engine, hydraulics and other personnel.

Mexico border, Kosovo

While all these overseas deployments were going on, President Bush made the National Guard a player in another big national drama: The immigration crisis along the southwestern border with Mexico. In a speech May 15, 2006, the president called for up to 6,000 National Guard troops at a time to support Border Patrol operations aimed at stemming the tide of illegal immigrants.

Eighty Wisconsin National Guard members volunteered for the border security detail, dubbed Operation Jumpstart. They gathered July 11 for a briefing and final instructions before heading to Phoenix, Ariz. First Lady Jessica Doyle joined the top Wisconsin National Guard officers to see them off and wish them well. A national-level memorandum of understanding placed such

units under dual command, with Arizona exercising operational control and Wisconsin continuing to have administrative control. The original 80 troops were augmented later by approximately 20 more, for a duration staff of about 90 Soldiers and 10 Airmen. Then, in January 2007, two rotations of 100 Soldiers each, drawn from the 724th Engineer Battalion, 229th Engineer Company and 829th Engineer Detachment, performed a two-week Annual Training in Arizona, helping with barrier construction.

Wisconsin Guard troops helped with border operations again this Spring. Wisconsin's task force in support of Operation Jumpstart, 375 strong, deployed in the period May 27 to June 17, 2007, led by infantrymen of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, along with some 30 medics from the 13th Medical and Dental Detachment and the 135th Medical Company, plus 30 maintenance specialists from Company B, 132nd Support Battalion. The infantry troops manned observation posts to report illegal crossings to the Border Patrol.

In addition, the 264th Engineer Group deployed about 100 troops for Task Force Diamondback — building fences and other barriers, base camps, lighting and roads along the southwest border during the same period.

On July 18, 2006, Madison's 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation began a new tour of active duty, bound ultimately for Kosovo, to support stabilization efforts in the Balkans. (See story, p. 32.) Only 92 of the unit's 241 Soldiers were mobilized for the mission, because most had recently served on active duty when mobilized in January 2003 for the Iraq war. The 92 flew from Madison to Fort Knox, Ky., to perform flight operations training and later relocated to Camp Atterbury, Ind., for individual tasks training. In mid-October they departed for additional training at Hohenfels, Germany. Finally, on Nov. 15, they deployed to Kosovo. Phasing into their new mission over a three-week period, they relieved a Michigan unit, which redeployed to the U.S. in early December.

Sorrows and joys

Meanwhile, Gov. Doyle and state Guard officials flew to Camp Shelby, Miss., to take part in a military send-off ceremony and southern-style barbecue for the 430 troops of 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery headed for Southwest Asia.

But one of those Soldiers, Spc. Stephen W. Castner of Battery C, was to lose his life shortly after arriving in theater. On July 24, 2006, his first mission escorting a supply convoy, Castner's Humvee rolled over a roadside bomb. Castner was killed and three other Soldiers in the vehicle injured. It was a grim introduction to combat for the Wisconsin artillery battalion, and armories throughout the state once again flew their flags at half-staff to honor Castner, who was promoted posthumously to the rank of corporal.

Three days later, while the state was still feeling the shock of Castner's death, the sorrow was tempered by joy as 80 members of 32nd Brigade Headquarters returned safely from their year in the desert as an element of the 377th Theater Support Command.

Only a few days later, however, Sgt. Ryan Jopek died Aug. 2 near Tikrit, Iraq, also the victim of an improvised explosive device. Jopek, the 20-year-old son of a Wisconsin National Guard NCO, was killed on the last convoy mission before he would have come home with his unit, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry. He was originally a member of Merrill-based Troop E, 105th Cavalry, but was transferred into the infantry battalion at mobilization to fill a unit vacancy.

Even as the Guard community coped with the losses of Castner and Jopek, there was joy and relief at the return of 32nd

Brigade Headquarters and the impending return of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry.

(In Spring 2007, the Wisconsin Army Guard lost two more members, though not through enemy action. Staff Sgt. Robert Basham, Kenosha, a member of 1st Battalion, 126th Field Artillery, died in a non-combat incident in Doha, Qatar, April 14 while serving overseas with 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry. And on May 2, Spc. Justin Exner was killed in a Madison traffic accident. Exner was a combat veteran who served in Iraq with 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, and was preparing to deploy again as a volunteer with Troop E, 105th Cavalry.)

Air warriors

Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center was home base for the National Guard's "Patriot 2006" exercise July 15-28. (See story, p.35.) Citizen Soldiers and Airmen from 31 states joined coalition forces from Canada, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, as well as observers from Turkmenistan, to practice complex military air operations in a simulated battle zone. More than 2,000 personnel received training in various air-related specialties, and 11 different aircraft types saw action.

Aug. 10 saw 240 members of the 115th Fighter Wing return to Truax Field from voluntary 50- to 120-day tours in Iraq.



Maj. Jackie Guthrie

Spc. Joseph Sanchez, 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry, inspects a vehicle at Camp Virginia, Kuwait in Feb. 2006.



Staff Sgt. Joseph Streeter

Spc. Jeffrey Diederichs, 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, waits for fuel at Forward Operating Base Summeral, Iraq.

Unlike Army Guard personnel, who typically serve 12-month “boots on ground” tours in the Central Command operations area, Air Guard personnel deploy on the 120-day rotation schedule of Aerospace Expeditionary Forces. During this deployment, 115th Fighter Wing personnel provided close air support for ground forces in Iraq and accomplished other combat and combat support missions. The deployed personnel included a mix of Air Force specialties, including operations, logistics, and various aircraft maintenance specialties.

More comings and goings

Defense Minister Avil Antonio Ramirez Valdivia led a small group of Nicaraguan military officials in a three-day visit to Wisconsin Aug. 15-17, 2006. Wisconsin and the Central American country are paired in the National Guard’s State Partnership Program, which seeks to foster communication, cooperation and understanding. The five-member Nicaraguan delegation toured Truax Field and the 115th Fighter Wing, met with Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton and other state officials, and traveled to Fort McCoy. A similar military/civilian team from Wisconsin visited Nicaragua the following week. Then, in early May 2007, senior Guard leaders accompanied Lawton on a return visit to Nicaraguan government agencies in Managua, further cementing the two-state relationship.

On Aug. 17 and 19, 2006, some 600 members of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry returned to Wisconsin after a year on the ground in Kuwait and Iraq. The joy of homecoming was

tempered by memories of three unit Soldiers killed in Iraq — Spc. Michael Wendling, 20, Sgt. Andrew Wallace, 25, and Sgt. Ryan Jopek, 20.

On Sept. 12, some 75 Air National Guard members of the 128th Air Control Squadron, based at Volk Field, departed for a 4-month mission in Afghanistan. The highly mobile unit often deploys to spots around the world where its skills and equipment are needed. Squadron members supported the Theater Air Control System and assisted with the command and control of airspace over Afghanistan.

More than 6,650 Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers and Airmen remained available for duty in Wisconsin, including the state’s 500-Soldier Rapid Reaction Force.

Agility required

In October 2006, the 1157th Transportation Company, deployed to Iraq, made a quick adjustment and changed their primary mission to force protection. Assigned to the 15th Brigade Troops Battalion at Camp Taji, they left the cabs of their M-1088 fuel transport trucks and took up duties as tower guards, watching over the fortified compound. One unit member, Sgt. Katy Werginz, Waupaca, came to the aid of a pair of tower guards wounded in a mortar attack Jan. 26, got them out of harm’s way and en route to medical care.

On March 15, 2007, the 1157th reverted as quickly to its primary mission when replaced on the tower guard duty by a quartermaster unit. “Adjustment from [transporting] fuel to force

protection, back to fuel, has been easy,” said company commander Maj. Tim Skelton. “We’ve maintained proficiency with our fuel transport job skills while doing our force protection mission.”

Two new DAGs

In mid-autumn 2006, both of Wisconsin’s deputy adjutant general slots changed hands at the same time. Brig. Gen. James A. Krueck took command of the state’s Army National Guard, and Brig. Gen. Gerald C. Olesen became Air Guard commander, in a joint change-of-command ceremony in Madison Oct. 31. Krueck came to the position fresh from an overseas tour leading the 32nd Separate Infantry Brigade headquarters element attached to the 377th Theater Support Command in Iraq. Olesen’s previous position was full-time executive support staff officer in Wisconsin Air Guard Headquarters.

While welcoming the two new leaders, the Wisconsin Guard honored their predecessors, Air Guard Maj. Gen. Fred Sloan and Army Guard Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson. Sloan was the commander who led Madison’s 115th Fighter Wing into the F-16 era and built it into the nation’s top fighter wing. Denson, an aviator with combat service in Vietnam, led Wisconsin’s Army Guard to full strength in the demanding post-September 11 environment.

And yet more comings and goings

In early November 2006, more than 400 Soldiers of 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, arrived at Volk Field and were greeted by hundreds of friends and family members after a year-long deployment to Kuwait and Iraq. The unit performed security duties at U.S. and Kuwaiti military installations and also inside Iraq.

The following week saw the joyous return of some 520 troops who were deployed to Kuwait with 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry, in November 2005.

On January 11, 2007, the 30 members of Madison’s 232nd Military Intelligence Company came home after nearly a year on duty in Afghanistan as part of the 10th Mountain Division. Their mission included intelligence collection, analysis and dissemination.

On Feb. 3, Madison’s 115th Fighter Wing received the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, its fifth in the past 26 years.

At the end of the month, 15 Wisconsin Army Guard Soldiers returned from a year with Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan.

Late Spring 2007 brought more send-offs — this time for some 180 members of Troop E, 105th Cavalry, departing from Antigo and Merrill, and 30 members of Berlin’s 332nd Rear Operations Center, both units bound for Iraq after Stateside training periods.

July saw the welcome return of more than 400 members of 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery. The 5 S accomplished as if they had been infantry Soldiers all along.

The most recent round of departures and arrivals left the Wisconsin National Guard with about 520 Soldiers and Airmen on active duty.

Changing of the Guard

Also in July, Gov. Jim Doyle named

Col. Donald P. Dunbar to replace the retiring Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening as the state’s adjutant general. A symbolic flag-passing ceremony occurred at state headquarters on Aug. 3, and Dunbar officially took over his new duties, as a brigadier general, on Sept. 1.

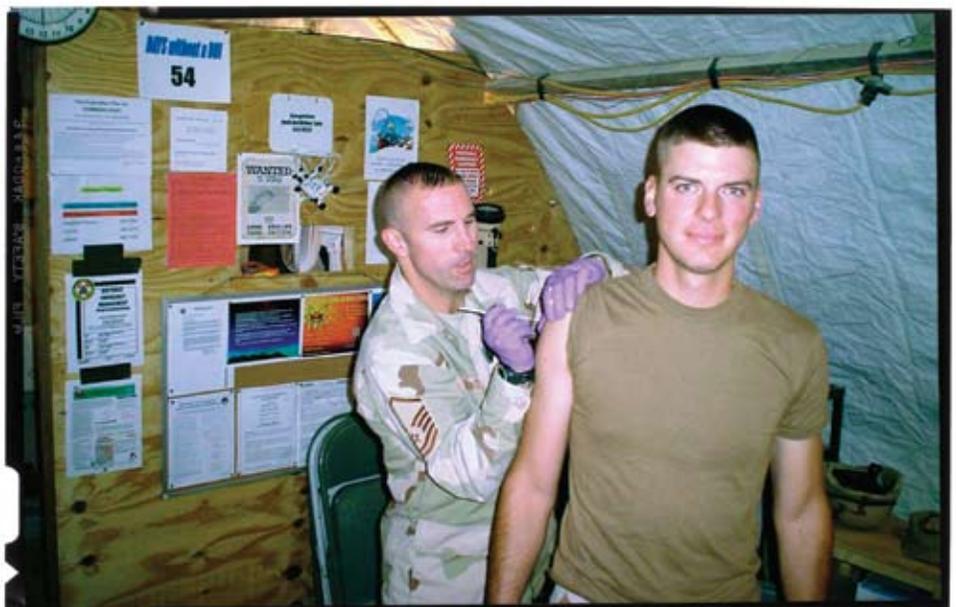
The new Guard commander found himself “in deep waters” even during the brief transition to his new office, as Guard units were called to respond to the state’s most widespread flooding since 1993 after a week of heavy rains in late August. (See story, p. 26.) More than 130 Wisconsin Army and Air Guard members performed flood relief duties at the request of local and state emergency management officials.

Late August saw the return of about 165 Soldiers of the 1157th Transportation Company from their one year mission in Iraq, and as this edition of *At Ease* goes to press, some 90 aviation troops of Madison’s 147th Aviation Battalion are expected home soon from their deployment to Kosovo. This will leave the Wisconsin National Guard with fewer than 300 members on active duty for the first time in years.

In the meantime, another unit, the 135th Medical Company — formerly Company B, 118th Medical Battalion — received the Army’s Meritorious Unit Commendation for “exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding services” while deployed to Iraq in 2004 and 2005. The unit provided medical support to U.S. and coalition forces and to Iraqi citizens, notably the former dictator Saddam Hussein.

Since September 11, 2001, more than 80 percent of the Wisconsin National Guard’s Soldiers and Airmen have served on active duty either at home or overseas. Most of these 8,000-plus troops have now completed their active-duty missions and are back in Wisconsin serving with their Guard units. So for the Wisconsin National Guard, there is a brief respite from the unremitting strain of service since Sept. 11, 2001.

Yet the beat goes on. As long as our world remains a difficult and dangerous place, political leaders will continue to reach into the toolbox and find the Wisconsin National Guard. ■



Master Sgt. David Kind administers a flu shot to Tech. Sgt. Jimmy Michaels. Both Airmen were deployed with the 128th Air Control Squadron, to Kandahar, Afghanistan from September 2006 to January 2007.



Above: A soldier of 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry, Wisconsin Army National Guard, performs maintenance on one of the unit's trucks in Kuwait, Feb. 20, 2006. *U.S. Army photo by Maj. Jackie Guthrie*

Top Right: Lt. Eric Krueger administers first aid to one of the local children in Safwan, Iraq. *Photo provided by 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry*

Right: Staff Sgt. Kim Gobel, left, of the 115th Fighter Wing, assists local Explosives Ordnance Destruction team members to prepare Unexploded Ordnance for a controlled detonation at Balad Air Base, Iraq. *Photo provided by 115th Fighter Wing*







Left: Staff Sgt. Robert Wendt directs 115th Fighter Wing Fire/Rescue personnel through a live fire exercise at Volk Field.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Paul Gorman

Above: Soldiers from numerous Wisconsin National Guard units work on installing the primary fence between the Mexico and Arizona border. The Wisconsin Guard Soldiers served in Arizona as part of Operation Jumpstart in the fall of 2006.

Photo by Maj. Jackie Guthrie

Below: On Christmas Day, 2006, a convoy from Ghazni to Sharana, Afghanistan, is halted when the Humvee trailing the other vehicles slips off a road covered with more than 9 inches of snow. The convoy took 6 hours to travel a route normally covered in 1.5 hours but eventually arrived in Sharana, bringing turkeys and deep fryers to a small detachment of U.S. trainers assisting the Afghan National Army. The convoy was led by Col. Dominic Cariello, Wisconsin Army National Guard. *Photo by Lt. Cmdr. Tracy Less, United States Naval Reserve*

Right: Five Black Hawk helicopters from the 147th Aviation Battalion land for the first time at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. About ninety Soldiers from the battalion are deployed to Kosovo for a year. *Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Roger Cutts*







Left: Lt. Homer Buckingham spends time with his wife Crystal and children Jordan, 3, and Alexis, 2, during the November 2006 homecoming ceremony for 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry.

Below Left: Tanner Delger begins his ascent on the rope ladder as his team runs through Fort McCoy's conditioning course during the 2006 Wisconsin National Guard Youth Camp.

Below: Maj. Steve Kensick, a pilot with the 115th Fighter Wing, Madison, hugs his family upon returning from a deployment last summer.



Troubled



Top: Sgt. 1st Class James Wetter signals to Sgt. James Buchen, a wheeled vehicle mechanic with the 229th Engineer Company, as Buchen uses a pay-loader to move rock on Hunder Coulee Road near Stoddard Aug. 27, 2007.

Middle: Sgt. Matthew Berndt, 147th Aviation Battalion, runs out from under a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter after sling-loading a water pump under the craft for transport to an imperiled dam near Viroqua Aug. 23.

Bottom: Staff Sgt. Josh Rittenhouse, 229th Engineer Company, directs a dump truck to the edge of a flood-damaged road near Soldier's Grove Aug. 23, 2007.

Waters



Story and Photos by Sgt. Jim Wagner
At Ease Staff

After a summer-long drought, Wisconsin residents got more rain than they could handle Aug. 18-24. The week of constant downpours brought the most severe and widespread flooding since the great flood year of 1993.

Southwest Wisconsin was hardest hit, with a deluge that dropped 10-12 inches in the first two days and just kept coming. In the “driftless region” with its steep unglaciated hillsides and deep coulees, dams overflowed and mudslides took out everything in their path: homes, roads, vehicles — anything not bolted into the bedrock.

By Sunday morning, Aug. 19, some 200 people in the Gays Mills area were evacuated from their homes; the state Emergency Operations Center and the National Guard’s Joint Operations Center were both activated; and three southwestern counties had declared states of emergency. Gov. Jim Doyle confirmed their distress with a state-level emergency declaration, qualifying the counties for National Guard assistance, later that day.

The first call for Guard help came on Monday afternoon, when the village of Gays Mills asked for an emergency generator. The Air National Guard’s 128th Air Control Squadron delivered a diesel generator with fuel and Airmen to keep it going.

On Tuesday, the Army Guard’s 107th Maintenance Company delivered pallets of bottled water donated by Wal-Mart to the Gays Mills and Soldier’s Grove fire departments. Later in the day, two Army Guard engineer teams from the 229th Engineer Company were activated to clear roads of debris.

Next out were ten engineers from the Air Guard’s 115th Civil Engineering Squadron, sent to clear debris from the spillways of several earthen dams. The engineers were airlifted in by an Army Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter of 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation, as flooding made ground transport to the dams improbable.

The blockage at the West Fork Kickapoo #4 dam turned out to be severe. Rolls of hay, each weighing between 2,000 and 3,000 pounds, had jammed the intake. Waters surrounding the intake needed to be drained before the rolls of hay could be cleared. The helicopter battalion was again called on and flew in pumps and hoses provided by the state’s Department of Natural Resources in a sling load operation that got the equipment delivered in time to clear out the dam.

As the waters started to recede Tuesday and Wednesday, critical repairs to roadways began. The 229th Engineer Company went to work repairing washed-out roads and bridges.

More than 130 Guard members helped with flood relief operations. Total private and public damage exceeded \$50 million. Five Southwest Wisconsin counties are under Presidential disaster declarations, while other counties across southern Wisconsin are having damages assessed by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

The state got more rain than it bargained for, but the Wisconsin National Guard was available and ready to help when needed. ■

A bedraggled dog gets a lift out of danger as members of the 115th Civil Engineering Squadron, Wisconsin Air National Guard, clear debris from the spillway intake of an earthen dam in southwestern Wisconsin.

Back to the Border

Wisconsin National Guard troops
return to Southwest after 90 years

Wisconsin National Guardsmen relax at camp on the Mexican border.

Photo provided by the Craig Luther Collection, Wisconsin Veterans Museum

Above: Left to right – Sgt. Ruben Fierrus, Spc. Kevin Nichols, Pfc. Anthony Masucci and Sgt. James Davis stand in front of a new Border Patrol 2006 Dodge Charger. *Spc. Samuel Castro*



By Lt. Col. Tim Donovan
At Ease Staff

March 9, 1916 — Mexican bandit and revolutionary Francisco “Pancho” Villa sends a force of about 500 to cross the border at Columbus, New Mexico, where they attack the frontier outpost and surprise a small garrison of 13th Cavalry troops. Before slipping back across the border, Villa’s raiders stole 100 mules and horses, burned the town, and killed ten citizens and a dozen soldiers. And they outraged President Woodrow Wilson.

From the White House, Wilson ordered a military response. Within a week, U.S. Army Brig. Gen. John Pershing was assembling an expeditionary force of 10,000 troops to capture Villa. On March 19, Pershing’s expedition moved south into the Mexican state of Chihuahua in pursuit.

But while Army forces chased Villa in Mexico for eleven months, the 1,951 mile southern U.S. border would be exposed.

Wilson called on the National Guard.

Three months later, on June 19, three Wisconsin National Guard infantry regiments, a cavalry troop, field artillery battery and field hospital were mobilized at their hometown armories in Wisconsin for federal service along the U.S. border with Mexico. By the end of June they had mustered into federal service, then headed south to Texas where they, along with National Guard forces from around the country, protected the U.S. border.

Flash forward 90 years.

A million or more people a year are illegally crossing into the United States from Mexico and the U.S. Border Patrol cannot stem this human tide. And from the White House, another U.S. president looks to the National Guard.

For well over a decade, the porous border between Mexico and four U.S. states had been a wide-open entry point for illegal immigration into the United States. In mid-May 2006, President Bush and Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, National Guard Bureau Chief, announced that National Guard troops would begin a two-year mission in the four southwestern states along the U.S. border with Mexico.

Even before the first National Guard troops from around the country began flowing into the border states last July, the border had become a contentious political issue across the nation. Immigrants—those in the country legally and those without permission—rallied for immigrant rights on statehouse steps, vigilante groups formed to take the issue into their own hands, editorial writers opined, politicians formed unusual alliances to craft doomed legislation, municipal governments

1,000 miles or more from the nearest border crossing considered roles they could take in the absence of a federal solution, and the eyes of America watched as the nation's National Guard came to the rescue.

Wisconsin was among the first states to sign up National Guard forces to support the operation. As word of the mission went out to Wisconsin troops, hands flew up as soldiers and airmen volunteered to serve.

The Wisconsin Army Guard's traditional annual training period for 2006 was just beginning and most of our units were already committed. But more than 100 Wisconsin troops volunteered for long-term duty as duration staff in Arizona. They would take on a variety of support missions—from maintaining Border Patrol vehicles to staffing ops centers to standing watch from lonely outposts.

Spc. Thomas Sahf, a member of 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry was assigned to an Entry Identification Team and, by the end of January figured he personally helped stop at least 30 people from making illegal border crossings.

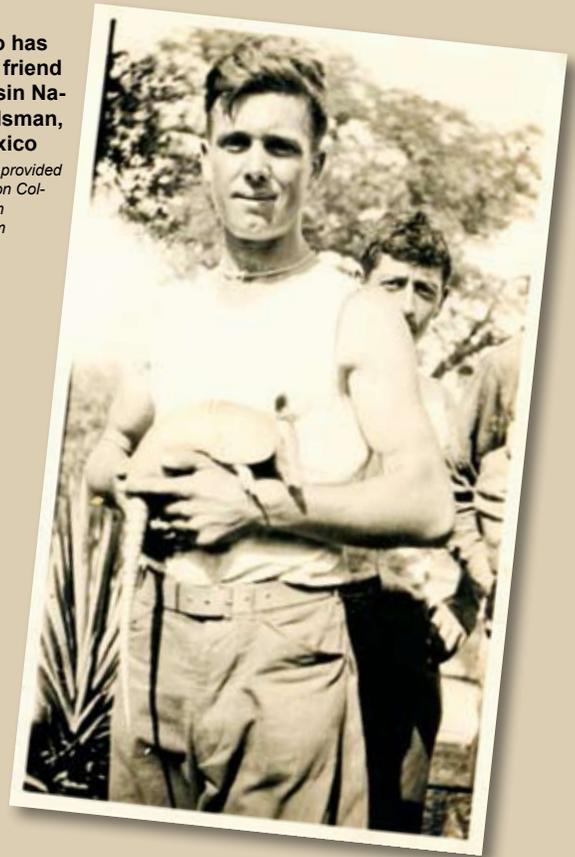
"A lot of them would have got through without us being here," the Windsor, Wis., soldier told Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening while the adjutant general was visiting troops in February.

Other Wisconsin troops provided different support.

Spc. Katrina Kitchner, Wausau, is a Wisconsin Army Guard MP who wasn't able to serve in Kuwait with her unit because she hadn't yet completed her military police training. Jump Start offered an opportunity to serve. "This is something that really represents the National Guard, we are helping out our nation and serving our country in an important way," she said.

Sgt. Kyle McKittrick of Warrens, Wis., was working in Phoenix as a truck driver, using skills he acquired in the 1158th

An armadillo has made a new friend in a Wisconsin National Guardsman, near the Mexico border. Photo provided by the Bill Muldoon Collection, Wisconsin Veterans Museum



Transportation Company to deliver equipment to border patrol stations throughout Arizona. "Everyone has a role," he said. "We are 88 Mikes (the Army MOS for motor transport operators) and we're doing our job."

Spc. Travis Arnold's job is to monitor cameras for intruders and notify Border Patrol officers. "We are enabling agents to be out in the field," according to the artillery soldier. "The Guard in itself is responsible for homeland security...It's a very rewarding job," he said.

Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum emphasized that National forces were there in support. "We ... are not doing Border Patrol law enforcement work," the Guard Bureau chief said during a joint news conference with Border Patrol officials as the mission was beginning. "We're doing everything else that other badge-carrying Border Patrol people used to have to do. We are replacing them so that he can get badges back to the border," Blum said.

Was the Guard making a difference on the border? Just ask Border Patrol Capt. Murel Addison.

"This has made an immediate impact," Addison told Wisconsin Guard leaders at the border. "The Guard is filling a very vital role and it's allowing us to bring more agents with badges and guns to the border."

And, according to Addison, there's an indirect impact from the Guard even though Guard soldiers have no direct enforcement role on the border. "People aren't going to cross when they see National Guard troops working there," Addison noted.

"Your guys have been just a tremendous asset," Chief David Aguilar told Wilkening. "Every one of these young men and



Lt. Col. Tim Donovan

Pfc. Jacob Jana, 724th Engineer Battalion, uses a welding torch to prepare steel rails for construction of "Normandy barriers" for use to slow illegal immigration on the Southwest border in January.

women are doing a great job and seem happy to be here,” he said.

Aguilar, who heads the entire U.S. Border Patrol, makes a strong case for the border’s growing importance to national security.

“I firmly believe that this country is going to continue living under the dark cloud of terrorism,” he said. “We’re going to stop them from coming in the usual way. We can no longer afford to ignore the border.”

When a new training year dawned on Oct. 1, units whose previous commitments kept them from Jump Start missions in the first few months were available to provide “rotational” annual training support on the border.

In January, soldiers of the 724th Engineer Company, the 229th Engineer Company and the 829th Engineer Detachment—veterans of Operation Iraqi Freedom—descended on southern Arizona for a taste of a different desert and a mission considered critical to the homeland security of the United States. The Wisconsin engineer soldiers were divided into two packages, each pulling about a two-week mission along the border.

Pfc. Jonathon Thomas came to the border for two weeks with the 229th Engineers.

“This is inspiring, coming out here and doing what I love,” Thomas said in San Miguel, Ariz., as he cut railroad track steel to fabricate so-called Normandy barriers—named for beach emplacements that didn’t keep 1,000,000 Allied assault troops from invading France in 1944, but are effective at stopping vehicles in 2007 Arizona.

Other Wisconsin Guard engineers were building a more formidable barrier just outside of the Arizona city of San Luis—sections of what will eventually be a 700-mile fence along more than 1,900 miles of southern U.S. border.

The largest Wisconsin force on the border was made up mostly from units of the Appleton-based 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry. This 360-soldier force, called Task Force Wisconsin, included 300 infantry soldiers, along with maintenance troops from the 132nd Support Battalion’s Company B and medics from Company C.

The infantry soldiers were assigned to Entry Identification Teams, and their reports to Border Patrol agents resulted in the apprehension of several hundred pounds of illegal narcotics and the detention of over a thousand illegal immigrants crossing into the United States from Mexico.

There was a humanitarian element of their mission, too. With southern Arizona desert temperatures regularly above 100 degrees, people sneaking into the country without enough water risk serious heat injuries or even death—so Wisconsin soldiers were sometimes lifesavers when they provided water to illegal immigrants who made it only as far as the 127th’s outposts.

By the mid summer of 2007, the overall size of the Guard’s Jump Start presence began a programmed reduction from 6,000 troops to a cap of 3,000 as the Border Patrol’s force was increasing according to plan. By next summer, the National Guard’s mission on the border is expected to be completed.

Operation Jump Start is a testament to the National Guard’s vast capabilities. At a time when the nation’s National Guard has been used more than at any time since World War II—and in more ways that most people could have predicted: the war on terror, operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, a continuing presence in the Balkans, Hurricane Katrina, the southwest border—the Guard proved once again that it is superbly suited for missions across the full spectrum of military operations anywhere on the planet.

And “anywhere on the planet” includes—as it always has—our own communities, our states, and our national borders. ■

Pulling Her Weight

By Staff Sgt. Seth Israel
Operation Jump Start

“Take care of the dogs and fish, and don’t forget to lock up the house — I’ll be back in two years.”

Pfc. Carrie Bearce, Elkhorn, a member of the 724th Engineer Battalion, was on her way back to the southwest border region. She had spent her Annual Training in Douglas, Ariz., in December 2005 “and I absolutely loved it. So when I heard about the border mission, I knew I had to be a part of it.”

In July 2006, she deployed to Arizona with some 100 Wisconsin Guardmembers assigned for the duration of the two-year mission.

Bearce, a truck driver certified in most of the Army’s five-ton vehicles, was assigned to Task Force Raven, the entity that commands and controls aviation assets.

“So I am cross-training to learn refueling,” she said in an interview shortly after arriving. “I am driving a HEMTT [Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck] fueler around the southern part of Arizona. I will primarily be refueling OH-58s, which are observation helicopters.”

Typically, HEMTT 978 fuelers weigh in at nearly 20 tons.

“My family still can’t get over the fact that a 110-pound female is able to move so much vehicle around,” said Bearce.

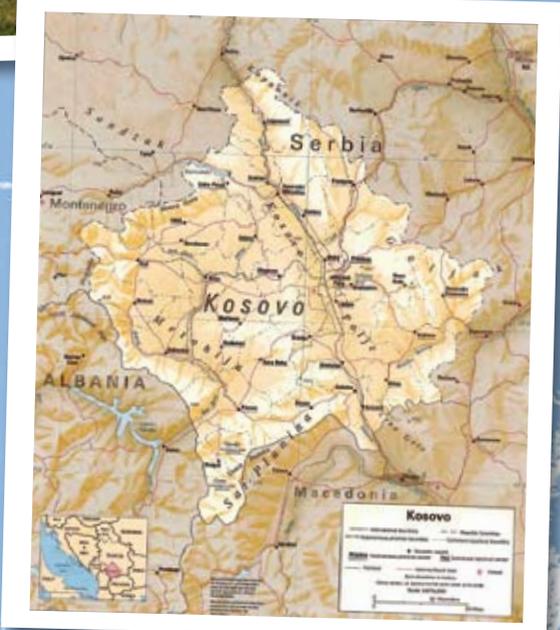
“I am just happy that I have been given this chance to learn something new and see this beautiful state.”



Pfc. Carrie Bearce deployed to Arizona for Operation Jump Start in July 2006. Photo by Spc. Samuel Castro, Operation Jump Start



Šar Mountain's Ljuboten Peak, known as "Big Duke" to U.S. troops, dominates the horizon 14 miles southwest of Camp Bondsteel. The 955 acre camp was built in 1999 to house NATO forces responsible for security and stabilization in eastern Kosovo.



By Lt. Col. Tim Donovan
At Ease staff

CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo — Nearly 15 months after they were called to active duty last July, about 90 Soldiers from the Madison-based 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation were nearing completion of their one-year mission in Kosovo in late September. The Soldiers, serving with Multi-National Task Force East as Task Force Eagle at this base in eastern Kosovo, have been busy supporting NATO operations to stabilize the former Yugoslavian region while its political future is being worked out.

NATO has been leading a peacekeeping operation in Kosovo since June 1999, with 16,000 troops from 34 nations working to build peace and maintain stability in the contested province.

Wisconsin flight crews flew more than 4,000 hours on 600-plus missions in the seven UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters they shipped from Madison last summer, along with three other Black Hawks from the Georgia National Guard. Other unit Soldiers kept the aircraft maintained and handled the myriad administrative and logistics requirements of a complex military operation. The Wisconsin Soldiers also supported active duty attack helicopters rotating in and out of Kosovo from their base in Germany, and a three-helicopter medevac element from the Pennsylvania Army National Guard.

Camp Bondsteel is also temporary home for National Guard infantry troops from several states, a U.S. Air Force weather

detachment, and NATO forces from Romania, Poland and Ukraine — and it's not unusual to see military uniforms from any of a dozen other European forces on the base. Other security sectors in Kosovo are presently run by French, Italian, Turkish and Irish forces — but the Madison-based Guard Soldiers might be called to fly missions anywhere in Kosovo or beyond. One mission provided support to the president of the United States when he made a June visit to the Albanian capital of Tirana.

It was a long and circuitous route to Kosovo for the Madison aviators, who left Madison July 18, 2006, for Fort Knox, Ky. Flight crews trained briefly at Fort Rucker, Ala., then the unit came together again at Camp Atterbury, Ind., before completing training with three weeks in Hohehfelds, Germany. When the Soldiers arrived in Kosovo last November they were fully trained — and more than ready to start the one-year clock on their Kosovo mission.

As their year in Kosovo winds down, the Soldiers are

Black Hawks over KOSOVO



Wisconsin aviators near end of
year-long mission in Balkans



Wisconsin Army National Guard Spc. Tony Falkner, left, of Colfax, and Sgt. Nate McDonnell, Verona, clean a compartment in the nose of a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter while Sgt. Jonathan Gourlie, Madison, vacuums the cargo compartment. The unit's seven helicopters must be thoroughly cleaned before they can be shipped back to the U.S.

Right: Capt. Kurt Southworth, right, uses a map to point out Kosovo landmarks to Brig. Gen. Jim Krueck aboard a Task Force Eagle UH-60. Krueck and State Command Sgt. Maj. George Stopper visited troops from the 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation as they were nearing the end of their year-long mission.

Below: A Madison-based UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter lifts off from a helipad at Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo, Sept. 25. The Wisconsin Guard's 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation has been operating from the base in eastern Kosovo since November 2006 and is in the final month of a one-year stabilization mission.



beginning preparations to transfer the mission to Guard troops from other states who are now completing their own training in Germany. On Sept. 25, personal belongings that won't be needed in their last month at Bondsteel were packed for shipment home and inspected by U.S. Customs officers. This was a welcome first step in what will soon be a long-awaited trip home.

In a final newsletter to the aviation task force's families back home, Task Force Eagle commander, Lt. Col. Martin Pond, reminded families that their support at home empowered the Soldiers to accomplish the mission in Kosovo.

"The family is the heart and soul of the Soldier," Pond wrote. "We all need to thank you for your tremendous efforts."

Pond also wrote about the thousands of hours flown by lift and medevac company troops, the task force's exceptional maintenance company, and the headquarters company Soldiers who ran "the best forward arm refuel point (FARP) in Europe." The FARP troops pumped nearly a half million gallons of JP-8 jet fuel, refueling more than 2,450 aircraft.

Even off-duty hours were productive. The Wisconsin aviators raised almost 12,000 Euros (about \$17,000) to support schools and students in Gnjilane, Ferazji, Kamenicë and Binač. Two days a week, the soldiers teach children to speak English – an important "bridging" language for kids with different ethnic backgrounds and native languages who otherwise could not easily communicate.

When the Wisconsin troops hand over the mission soon, their journey home won't be nearly as long or indirect as the trip to Kosovo. They expect to spend only about a week from the day they leave Kosovo until they are back with their families in Madison.

But in late September the mission continued. Helicopters were maintained and kept ready to fly, administrative tasks were accomplished with close attention to detail, flights were carefully planned and safely flown.

The time to travel home was near, but the time wouldn't arrive until the end of October. ■



~ EXERCISE GLOBAL PATRIOT ~

Sgt. Mary Flynn
At Ease Staff

In the last two weeks of July 2006, some 2,000 uniformed service members conducted the National Guard's premier joint training exercise at Volk Field.

Patriot 2006 combined citizen Soldiers and Airmen from more than 31 states, coalition forces from Canada, England and the Netherlands, and observers from Turkmenistan. It was one of the most complex training exercises ever conducted at Volk Field.

Starting in September 2005, Maj. David Tessmer worked as liaison between Volk Field and the Patriot planning staff, a core group of about ten people from across the United States, selected by National Guard Bureau to plan the exercise. Tessmer is the full-time officer in charge of Volk's Air Combat Training System.

Volk Field is a training facility, and its environment and location make it an ideal venue for Patriot. Volk has the right mix of airspace, equipment, billeting, dining facilities — even an air-to-ground scoreable weapons range, Hardwood, a few miles northeast of the field.

Also, the Volk Field staff has an excellent working relationship with nearby Army Reserve installation Fort McCoy, allowing for coordination and conduct of joint training within a very reasonable distance.

To prepare for Patriot 2006, Tessmer attended planning conferences with the Patriot planning staff. The overall goal of Patriot is to ensure that the Soldiers, Airmen, and foreign



~ Above: Two Canadian CH-146 Griffons fly in formation on a training mission during Exercise Global Patriot.
U.S Air Force Photo by Staff Sgt. Michelle J. Ingram



service members who take part receive valuable and relevant joint operations training.

Together the Patriot and Volk staffs planned how to accomplish the training objectives, where to park the many visiting aircraft, and when to reserve airspace.

Volk Field also hosted advance visits from participating units to conduct site surveys, getting a feel for the location and facilities. These visits helped commanders decide what types of training to pursue in the upcoming exercise, in accordance with Patriot's "bottom up" structure.

Instead of units receiving orders from above stating what types of training they will conduct, commanders help design the exercise in advance to meet their training needs. Other joint exercises, like the Air Force's Red Flag and the Army's National Training Center exercises, are scripted by national authorities; local commanders have less say on the kinds of training offered.

Patriot's bottom-up exercise design allows units to make the most of their training: While participating in the larger exercise, they also accomplish their own particular training objectives.

The first week of Patriot 2006, July 14-21, focused on unit-level training and individual training events such as self aid and buddy care, small arms training, and briefings on subjects such as anti-terrorism and force protection.

During the second week, July 22-29, units took part in a 3-day exercise scenario requiring them to conduct a variety of missions and put much of their training to the test.

Ground units established a defensive perimeter around the field.



~ Top: Staff Sgt. Kim Frederick, Willow Grove Air Reserve Base, Philadelphia Penn., looks upward while land navigating during the Combat Search and Air Rescue (CSAR) class at Fort McCoy, July 21, 2006. *US Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Robert A. Whitehead*

~ Above: Capt. Debby Kennedy-Jordan and Maj. Dan Kraft from the 2020 EMEDS (Expeditionary Medical Evacuation System) prepare to install a breathing tube in Col. Gerald Schneider, commander of the EMEDS who was acting as a simulated gunshot victim. *US Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Patrick J. Cashin*

~ **Top: A flight engineer is hoisted from the ground by a CH-46D Chinook in a search and rescue mission.**
US Air Force photo by Staff Sgt. Michelle J. Ingram



Units in the field transported simulated hazardous material to the airstrip and simulated an accidental spill that in turn required other units to help control the situation.

Medical units got in on the training with simulated casualties; military HAZMAT teams went to work decontaminating vehicles, people and aircraft.

Special Forces troops and instructors coordinated training on combat search and rescue missions, while other units practiced providing close air support and helicopter door gunnery.

Combat aircraft crews supported the exercise, many from remote home stations such as South Dakota or Georgia.

Also participating was the Joint Surveillance and Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS), a modified Boeing 707-300 aircraft carrying controllers who use high-tech equipment to detect enemy aircraft and land vehicles and swiftly target them for attack.

Flight crews also practiced assault strip landing and take-off, plus troop insertion and extraction.

The Patriot exercise also allows the Army and Air Force

research labs to demonstrate new technologies for testing and evaluation. Exercise players can see, operate and comment on new equipment “right off the lab table,” before it is distributed to units around the world.

With all these activities, and more, to coordinate, how did things go for the Volk Field staff?

“Very smooth,” commented Senior Master Sgt. Greg Cullen, NCO in charge of airfield management at Volk. “Considering that we integrated Canadian forces, Air Guard, Army Reserve, and all the other people involved, while being geographically separated... the communication process didn’t falter one time.”

Tessmer noted that the staff’s goal was to enable the best possible training for all who attend.

“It’s very rewarding,” he said. “There are very few times that we get to interact with a wide variety of units and things at once.”

The activity and pace of a major joint exercise tests the staff at Volk Field, but they have the satisfaction of knowing they play an essential role in a great training opportunity for all who take part. ■

Commanders in Chief

By Lt. Col. Tim Donovan, *At Ease Staff*

No Wisconsin governor sacrificed more to support the troops than Louis Harvey.

Barely in office four months, Harvey traveled to visit wounded Wisconsin soldiers who had just fought in the Civil War battle of Shiloh. On April 19, 1862, boarding a boat on his way back from the battlefield, he fell into the Tennessee River and drowned.

The next Wisconsin governor to visit troops in the South — 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry training at Camp Shelby, Miss., in 2005 — was Jim Doyle (governor 2003-present), but he crossed the Tennessee River in a Wisconsin Air National Guard KC-135 at an altitude of 35,000 feet.



Louis Harvey
1862 - 1862

Unlike active-duty military forces and their reserves whose commander-in-chief is the president of the United States, the commanders-in-chief of the 54 state and territorial National Guards are their respective governors.

The Wisconsin National Guard has had 43 commanders-in-chief since territorial governor Henry Dodge appointed the first Wisconsin militia officer in 1837, more than a decade before Wisconsin became a state.



Jim Doyle
2003 - present

Wisconsin's current governor and commander-in-chief is, of course, Doyle, first inaugurated at a ceremony in the state Capitol rotunda in January 2003. In fact, the first thing

Gov. Doyle heard after swearing his oath of office was the Guard's 132nd Army Band as it played "Ruffles and Flourishes" and then "On, Wisconsin" to welcome the new governor into office. Wisconsin National Guard bands have rendered similar honors at every governor's inauguration ceremony since at least 1924, according to Wisconsin Guard records.

In addition to the band, most new or re-elected governors are escorted to the ceremony by the adjutant general in a symbolic demonstration of the governor's position as the Guard's civilian authority and also of the Guard's non-partisan deference to the office of governor.

When Doyle took office in 2003 he became the eleventh wartime commander-in-chief of the Wisconsin Guard. Four men — Alexander Randall (governor 1858-1862), Louis Harvey (1862), Edward Solomon (1862-1864) and James Lewis (1864-1866) — were Wisconsin governors during the Civil War; Edward Scofield (1897-1901) was governor during the 1898 war with Spain; and Emanuel Philipp (1915-1921) held the job when the 32nd Division fought in the first world war.



Edward Solomon
1862 - 1864

Two governors of Wisconsin served during World War II — Julius Heil (1939-1943) sent the state's National Guard off to war, and Walter Goodland (1943-1947) welcomed its return.

Tommy G. Thompson (1987-2001) was commander-in-chief during the first post-Cold War mobilization of the Guard in 1990 for Operation Desert Shield, and Scott McCallum (2001-2003) was in his east wing office on Sept. 11, 2001, when America was attacked and a new war on terror had its inception.

The Wisconsin Guard was already engaged in homeland defense missions in Wisconsin and military operations against the Taliban regime in Afghanistan when Doyle took the oath of office. Within six weeks, he was bidding farewell to the 229th Engineer Company at the armories in Prairie du Chien and



Wisconsin governor Jim Doyle visits 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, Wisconsin Army National Guard, on active duty at Kuwait Naval Base, Kuwait in January 2006.

Maj. Jackie Guthrie

Platteville as they answered a call to arms that would eventually take them to the Sunni Triangle north of Baghdad.

Gov. Doyle would attend dozens more sendoff ceremonies as the historic mobilization of Wisconsin Guard troops continued through 2003, 2004, 2005 and 2006. He has also been at Volk Field to shake the hands of Wisconsin Guard troops as they returned from their overseas assignments in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan.

Except for the ill-fated Louis Harvey and his visit to a Civil War battlefield, Jim Doyle is the only Wisconsin governor who traveled to a combat zone to visit deployed National Guard troops. In January 2006, Doyle accompanied National Guard Bureau chief Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum and three other state governors on a trip to Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan, where Wisconsin Guard troops were serving on active duty. Doyle also visited Pakistan, where U.S. military relief efforts were underway after a devastating earthquake.

While all of Wisconsin's governors served as commander-in-chief, some brought the experience of uniformed military service into their positions. These soldiers-turned governors included three who reached the military rank of general and a half dozen others who served as officers between the rank of lieutenant and lieutenant colonel. One future governor lost an arm at Gettysburg, and another had been a musician in a Civil War band.

Most of Wisconsin's governors, with or without prior military service, had noteworthy experiences commanding the Guard during their terms as the state's chief executive.

Some Wisconsin Guard commander-in-chief trivia:

Cadwallader Washburn was a delegate to a Washington, D.C., peace convention held in 1861 in an attempt to prevent the Civil War. After that effort failed, Washburn returned to the state to become colonel of the 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Cavalry. He was a major general of volunteers when the war ended and he returned to La Crosse. He became Wisconsin's 11th governor, serving 1872-1874.

At the outbreak of the Civil War, William Upham enlisted in the 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry. He was wounded at the first battle of Bull Run and held as a Confederate prisoner. After a prisoner exchange, Upham gained admission to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, where he graduated in 1866. He resigned his commission as a first lieutenant in 1869 and returned to Wisconsin, where he later served as the state's 18th governor, 1895-1897.



William Hoard
1889 - 1891

William Hoard was a musician with the 4th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry during his first Civil War service in 1861 and 1862. A medical condition forced his discharge, but he recuperated well enough in



Wisconsin State Historical Society

Wisconsin Governor Jeremiah M. Rusk and his staff at the funeral of General Ulysses S. Grant in New York City. Present with Rusk, 5th from the left, and in dress uniforms were: Col. Chas. King, Acting Chief of Staff; Brig. Gen. Henry Palmer, Surgeon General; Brig. Gen. E. M. Rogers, Quarter Master General; Col. W. C. Bailey, Judge Advocate General; Col. W. S. Stanley; Col. C. E. Morley; Col. N. R. Nelson; Col. E. E. Clough; Col. John Hicks; and Lt. Col. F. A. Copeland, Asst. Inspector General.

Munnsville, N.Y., to continue his military service briefly with the 1st New York Artillery. Hoard served as the 16th governor of Wisconsin, 1889-1891.

Jeremiah Rusk (1882-1889) resigned as a state assemblyman in 1862 to accept a commission in the Union army. Rusk served as an officer in the 25th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry before mustering out of the service in 1865 with the brevet rank of brigadier general.

Lucius Fairchild (1866-1872) enlisted in 1861 in the Wisconsin volunteer infantry and served in the famed Iron Brigade. He rose to the rank of colonel. At the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863, he was wounded in the first day's fighting and lost his left arm. He was promoted to brigadier general before being mustered out of the service.

Civil War governor Edward Salomon (1862-1864) moved vigorously, raising 14 new regiments and refilling the ranks of old ones. He belligerently protected the state from impositions by the War Department, prosecuted the draft, and sent troops to arrest draft rioters.

Before the U.S. entered World War I, Gov. Emanuel Philipp (1915-1921) favored neutrality, but once the U.S. was involved he vigorously supported the war effort. He organized the state council of defense and the state food

administration, and he equipped the Wisconsin National Guard for federal service. Philipp successfully opposed the violent anti-German war hysteria of the time, and was elected to his third term on a platform that both supported the war effort and upheld constitutional liberties.

Alexander Randall (1858-1862), early in his tenure, started a legislative investigation of frauds in the distribution of federal land grants in Wisconsin. Then, when the Civil War broke out, he vigorously organized the state for its participation in the war effort.

A 42-acre training post in Madison, named in honor of Randall, saw more than 70,000 men pass through its gates in the Civil War. Today, about the same number of football fans crowd into Camp Randall Stadium on autumn afternoons to watch the University of Wisconsin Badgers play Big Ten football on the same grounds that once trained and quartered soldiers.

When Nelson Dewey became the State of Wisconsin's first governor on June 7, 1848, the Wisconsin National Guard, then known as the state militia, had already been established for more than 11 years. Territorial governor Henry Dodge had appointed



Lucius Fairchild
1866-1872



Alexander Randall
1858 - 1862



Nelson Dewey
1848 - 1852

the state militia's first officer in 1837.

It was 1901 before the first Wisconsin-born governor, Robert M. La Follette, took office. All the state's governors before 1901 were born in other states or, in three cases, other countries. Two more Wisconsin governors born outside the United States served after La Follette: James O. Davidson, born in Sogn, Norway; and Julius Heil, born in Duesmond, Germany.

One man held the state's highest office only four days. Arthur MacArthur, elected lieutenant governor in 1855, became acting governor when Gov. William A. Barstow resigned March 21, 1856. Four days later, the state Supreme Court bestowed the governorship on election opponent Coles Bashford, and MacArthur's term came to an abrupt end. Today, MacArthur is remembered mainly for his progeny: His son, Arthur



Martin Schreiber
1977 - 1979

MacArthur, Jr., received the Medal of Honor after carrying the 24th Wisconsin's regimental colors to the top of Missionary Ridge in Chattanooga, Tenn. — to the rallying cry “On, Wisconsin!” — during the Civil War. His son in turn, Douglas MacArthur, also a Medal of Honor recipient, commanded U.S. Army forces in the Pacific in World War II, accepting Japan's surrender on the deck of the U.S.S. Missouri in Tokyo Bay 82 years after his grandfather's famous charge.

It wasn't long into Martin Schreiber's term that his new role as commander-in-chief became important. Schreiber became acting governor on July 6, 1977, after Gov. Patrick Lucey resigned to become U.S. ambassador to Mexico. The next day, a statewide strike of state employees prompted the biggest state active duty mission for the Wisconsin National Guard in its history.

Six lieutenant governors have succeeded governors in Wisconsin's history. But whether they achieved the office at the polls or after the election by filling an unexpired term, all of Wisconsin's governors and acting governors have been commanders-in-chief of the Wisconsin National Guard. ■



Wisconsin State Historical Society

Officers of the Second Wisconsin Infantry posed in front of a tent. They are, from left to right, Quartermaster J.D. Ruggles, Dr. A.J. Ward, Major J.S. Allen (standing), Lt. Colonel Lucius Fairchild, Adjutant C.K. Dean (standing), and Colonel Edgar O'Connor. Fairchild, Dean and O'Connor are clearly wearing the distinctive black hats of the Iron Brigade. The flag of the 2nd can also be seen, unfurled behind them.

Wisconsin Governors at War

Three governors of the Badger State were stellar Soldiers in the Civil War:

Cadwallader Washburn, a businessman and politician, went to war as colonel commanding the 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Cavalry. He was soon promoted to brigadier general and then major general of volunteers. He commanded the Army's Dept. of West Tennessee and during Grant's Vicksburg campaign commanded the Yazoo Pass expedition and directed a detachment of three divisions of XVI Corps. He later commanded the Dept. of the Gulf.

Jeremiah Rusk served in the 25th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, rising to the brevet rank of brigadier general before the end of the war.

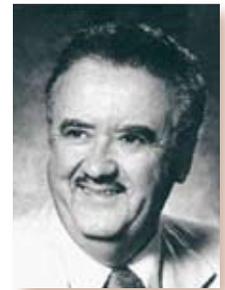
Lucius Fairchild began his service as a captain in the 1st Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, then received a Regular Army commission and served as a captain in the 16th U.S. Infantry. Subsequently he became a lieutenant colonel in, and then colonel in command of the 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry, a regiment of the famous Iron Brigade. He led the 2nd Wisconsin in the battles of South Mountain, Antietam, Fredericksburg, and Chancellorsville. At Gettysburg his left arm was shattered by a musket ball and had to be amputated. Shortly after this loss, he was commissioned a brigadier general of volunteers and mustered out of the service.

Other Wisconsin governors with military service include:

- William Upham: 2nd Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry and U.S. Military Academy in Civil War
- William Hoard: 4th Wisconsin Volunteer Infantry and 1st New York Artillery in Civil War
- Edward Scofield: 11th Pennsylvania Reserves in Civil War
- George Peck: 4th Wisconsin Cavalry in Civil War
- Lee Sherman Dreyfus: U.S. Naval Reserve in World War II
- Gaylord Nelson: U.S. Army in World War II, fought in Battle of Okinawa
- John Reynolds: U.S. Army in World War II
- Tommy G. Thompson: Wisconsin Army National Guard and U.S. Army Reserve



George Peck
Governor: 1891 - 1895
A Private in the 4th
Wisconsin Cavalry



Lee Dreyfus
Governor: 1979 - 1983
U.S. Navy service in
WWII 1944-1946



Gaylord Nelson
Governor: 1959 - 1963
U.S. Army service in
WWII 1942-1946



John Reynolds
Governor: 1963 - 1965
U.S. Army service in
WWII 1942-1946



Homage to Huey

By Larry Sommers
At Ease Staff

Whomp, whomp, whomp. . . .

More than fifty years ago, Floyd Carlson flew the first prototype of Bell's turboshaft helicopter at Fort Worth, Texas.

Only a few years before, the Bell Aircraft Corporation had revolutionized battlefield medicine with its H-13 Sioux helicopter. The bubble-domed air ambulance rushed wounded soldiers to Mobile Army Surgical Hospitals (MASH), carrying two patients per trip, in external pods atop the landing skids.

"Helicopter evacuation... was responsible for the reduction of mortality

Above: An 832nd Soldier prepares for a flight in a UH-1 Huey helicopter.



Photo provided by 832nd Medical Company

Four UH-1 Huey helicopters of the 832nd Medical Company fly by Seattle's Space Needle. The Wisconsin aviators were deployed to Fort Lewis, Wash. from January 2003 until May 2005. The unit provided installation medevac support and supported civilian search and rescue efforts in the nearby mountains.

among the wounded in Korea to the phenomenal figure of only 2.4 percent, the lowest of any major military campaign to date," reported Lt. Col. Spurgeon H. Neel, Jr., the Army's first aviation medical officer, in 1955.

Neel — a senior flight surgeon, parachutist, and gliderist — was the driving force behind the Army's post-Korea competition for an even better rotorcraft. Bell again won the contest with its HU-1Y Iroquois, delivered to the Army June 30, 1959. The military designation soon changed to "UH-1," but by then the original "HU-1Y" had already spawned the inevitable nickname — "Huey."

Huey: Mainstay of the U.S. Army in Vietnam... air ambulance for Wisconsin motorists injured in holiday car crashes... rescue bird for lost hikers in the Pacific Northwest... friend to dazed residents of the hurricane-battered Gulf Coast in 2005.

Past age 50, Huey continues to deliver the goods.

Its 700-horsepower Lycoming turboshaft engine made Huey a natural for lugging all kinds of payloads, not just wounded soldiers, through the steamy airways of Vietnam. Warm air dramatically cuts lift, so the high-powered Huey — especially its later models like the UH-1D and UH-1H, with 1,100 and 1,400 horsepower, respectively — worked best in the tropical environment of Vietnam.

"Turbines will maintain rated horsepower longer in a higher, hotter environment, compared to a reciprocating engine," says Brig. Gen. Kerry Denson, Wisconsin's Army Guard commander.

As a young pilot in the 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), Denson once had to hover a Huey just above ground level in a vicious crossfire, bringing much-needed ammo to American infantrymen pinned down

in a field. Their mission completed, Denson and his crew flew out of the rice paddy with 53 bullet holes in the aircraft and had to set it down a few miles away because the engine was overheating. The maintenance supervisor was furious that Denson had subjected the aircraft to such damage; but after it was sling-loaded back to base under a Chinook helicopter, the Huey flew again.

"It would take a lot of combat punishment," he says.

That toughness, plus the Huey's mechanical reliability, relatively large payloads, and ability to fly in warm air made it indispensable in the Vietnam War. Pilots like Denson and retired Wisconsin Army Guard member Tom Paulson inserted squads of infantrymen into battle in the morning, then spent all day shuttling ammunition, rations, supplies, reinforcements to the engaged troops, and bringing out casualties.

Paulson had a close call in 1970,

ambushed by Viet Cong machine gunners while trying to extract an infantry squad from a fruitless search mission. The tail rotor was damaged, and Paulson spun into a nearby river. From his pilot's seat, encumbered with 10 pounds of body armor, he looked out to the water below.

"The river was crystal clear and looked about three feet deep," he said. "Well, it was eight feet deep; and I went in with all that 'chicken plating' on and sank right to the bottom.

"My machine gunner had ammunition belts wrapped around his body, and he dismounted the machine gun and took it out with him into the river. I saw him walking along the bottom, holding the machine gun over his head, out of the water."

Somehow, Paulson and his gunner struggled to shore and rejoined their crew on the river bank.

"We all got back okay, with just a few bruises and pulled muscles, and were flying the next day. It felt good to fly again right away, partly because three days later they gave me a brand-new Huey, with a bigger engine, and only four hours on it.

"But then, when it had 21 hours on it a few days later, I landed on a booby trap and blew the tail rotor off."

Despite these mishaps, Paulson survived Vietnam and completed a

distinguished career as an active Army and Wisconsin Guard pilot, retiring with over 9,200 hours of accident-free flying.

Huey went on search-and-rescue missions, pulling Soldiers and downed Airmen out of tight spots. Huey, bristling with machineguns, went into battle as a gunship. Slimmed down into the AH-1 Cobra gunship, with rocket pods hung outside its slenderized fuselage, the Huey airframe became a prime combat weapon.

Huey went everywhere, did everything.

"Huey did for helicopters what the DC-3 did for airlines," said Denson. "Huey absolutely changed our Army."

More than 7,000 Hueys served in the Vietnam War, according to the Vietnam Helicopter Pilots Association. Nearly half of the Hueys that flew in Vietnam perished there, along with 1,074 Huey pilots, 1,103 crew members, 532 American passengers, and an unrecorded number of Vietnamese passengers.

The Wisconsin Army National Guard "got Hueys when Vietnam started winding down," said retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Darold Hoelz, former state aviation maintenance officer. In 1950 Hoelz, then a civilian mechanic for West Bend Aviation, was recruited into the Guard by Paul Poberezny, the Guard's

state supervisor of light aviation. (Poberezny later gained fame as founder of the Experimental Aircraft Association, with its annual Oshkosh-based fly-in and airshow.)

At that time the Guard's aviation assets — all part of the 32nd Division — were stationed at Timmerman Field, Milwaukee, and in Kenosha, Stevens Point, Eau Claire and Superior. Aircraft were assigned to division headquarters, divisional artillery headquarters, and each artillery battalion and infantry regiment. In 1961 the aircraft were taken from the units and consolidated in the 32nd Aviation Company.

The aviation company mobilized with the division for the Berlin Crisis of 1961-62 and spent a year at Fort Lewis, Washington. After returning from Fort Lewis, the company became a battalion, with sites at West Bend, Watertown and Oshkosh. The unit had a mixture of aircraft — Hiller H-23 Raven helicopters, Cessna L-19 Bird Dog and DeHavilland U-6 Beaver fixed-wing planes, according to Hoelz. Later they acquired Sikorsky H-19 Chickasaw and H-34 Choctaw helicopters.

The first Huey arrived in November 1970.

In January 1971, the unit — re-

Right: A young Lt. Kerry Denson poses by the door of his UH-1 Huey helicopter in Vietnam.



Photo provided by Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Kerry Denson.

designated the 53rd Assault Helicopter Company and commanded by Roger Greenwood, a future Wisconsin Army Guard chief of staff and brigadier general — relocated to Madison.

“We came with observation helicopters and fixed wing aircraft with a troop lift mission,” said Greenwood. “From ’72 to ’75 we picked up UH-1s and could finally do our (assault) mission.” The 53rd became the 47th Attack Helicopter Battalion, and eventually 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation, a command aviation unit that traded in its Hueys for UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters.

But the Hueys didn’t go away — they remained at the Guard’s West Bend flight facility, in a reconstituted aviation

company within the 32nd Separate Infantry Brigade. In September 1990, the West Bend detachment was re-organized into the 841st Medical Company, flying Huey air ambulances. The unit was soon redesignated the 832nd Medical Company, the identity it retains today.

Wisconsin’s Hueys, in each unit where they were assigned, paid their own way in service.

For years in the 1970s and 1980s, the “Friend in the Sky” program put National Guard helicopters aloft over crowded highways on major holiday weekends, with volunteer medics to give first-aid to injured travelers. The program started with the old Hillers, but soon the Hueys took over, with more internal room for medical personnel to care for patients in flight.

“In the early days of ‘Friend in the Sky,’ the State Patrol was extremely reluctant to use us,” said retired Chief Warrant Officer 5 Charles Koranda. “They were afraid we would create more congestion than they already had, so they would try and handle everything with ground ambulances.”

Acceptance came when a family car was rear-ended on the Interstate near De Forest. Because the car and its occupants

were knocked well off the roadway, the patrolman on the scene called on “Friend in the Sky.” Koranda and other members of the Huey crew transported the accident victims smoothly to St. Mary’s Hospital in Madison. From then, the program enjoyed a smooth relationship with law enforcement.

Sometimes Hueys were called upon outside the “Friend in the Sky” program — that is,

not on holiday weekends when the birds were aloft waiting for ambulance calls. On one occasion, a woman was seriously injured in an auto crash near Wisconsin Rapids. The local ambulance was tied up with another accident, and the University Hospital’s helicopter was down for maintenance. Huey to the rescue. Koranda and his crew transported the woman, family members, and medics — part of the steering column was still embedded in the woman’s body — to University Hospital. The helicopter ride probably saved the woman’s life.

On another occasion, a privately-owned T-28 trainer, a single-engine propeller-driven aircraft with a high bubble-style cockpit canopy, crashed on takeoff from Dane County airport as Koranda and co-pilot Henry Luxem watched from an A-1H Cobra helicopter

hovering nearby. The T-28 came to rest upside-down in a swamp. Koranda, asked by the control tower to investigate, landed near the inverted trainer, jumped out, ran to the aircraft, and pounded on the fuselage. No response came from inside, and he could not see inside the canopy, which was buried deeply in muck.

The Guard pilots returned to base, swapped their Cobra for a Huey, and flew back in time to serve as a shuttle firefighters and equipment into the swampy site. The plane was raised by inflating airbags under its wings. The pilot and his young son were rushed to a hospital. After hanging upside-down for an hour or more in a cockpit nearly filled with high-octane fuel, both made full recoveries and attended the EAA air show in Oshkosh two days later.

Wisconsin’s Hueys also took part in many searches for lost hikers or hunters and even hauled materiel for conservation projects in remote areas.

In the past ten years, the 832nd Medical Company has provided real-world installation support at Forts Benning and Stewart, Ga. (1997); Fort Sill, Okla. (1999); Hohenfels, Germany (2002 and 2005); and Fort Lewis, Wash. (2003-2005).

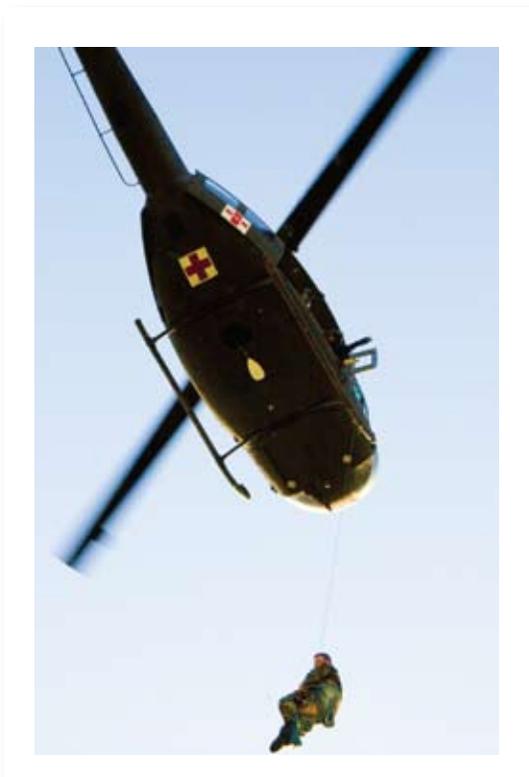
At Fort Lewis, the Wisconsin air medics made many rescues of Soldiers and civilians — freeing a firefighter surrounded by forest fire flames one day, plucking an injured climber off a dizzying mountain face another.

And of course, in September 2005 the unit flew to New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina struck. The 832nd rescued dozens of stranded residents over what became a four-week deployment to the Gulf Coast.

The 832nd continues to operate its nine Hueys, all built from 1970 through 1974. Eight are “V” models, upgraded to medevac standards with rescue hoist and revised avionics; the ninth is a standard “H” model.

But Huey, like other veterans, can look forward to a well-earned retirement. On June 30, 2006, the Army announced the selection of a new light utility helicopter from among four finalists. The winner of the competition, the UH-145 from EADS/Eurocopter, will be produced in the U.S. by a European company. It has the latest in avionics, navigation, and a state-of-the-art design.

But, until UH-145s are fielded, Huey will continue to *whomp, whomp, whomp* his way through the skies. ■





From a UH-1 Huey air ambulance, Sgt. Eric Leukert, 832nd Medical Company, scans the flooded streets of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina, September 2005.

Tech. Sgt. Paul Gorman



At ease during formation



Unit Locations

Company A - Stevens Point

Company B - Oshkosh

Company C - Sussex

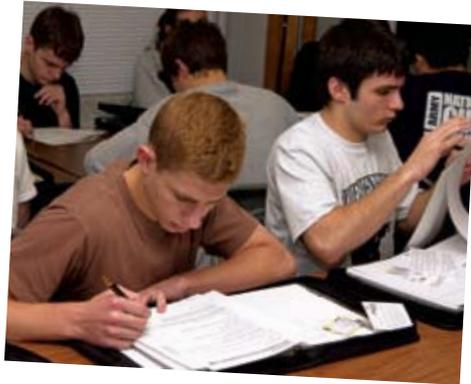
Company D - Fort McCoy

Company E - Chippewa Falls

Weapon instruction



Studying



Red Phase: First Guard drill. Recruits are required to pass a general military knowledge test before proceeding to White Phase.

White Phase: Recruits 60 days or longer from their Basic Training ship date.

Blue Phase: Recruits within 30 days of shipping.

Green Phase: Basic Training graduates waiting for Advanced Individual Training.

Water survival training



Weapon assembly

Getting their feet wet

Story and photos by Sgt. Jim Wagner
At Ease Staff

Two hundred recruits, formed up as two platoons: In one, Soldiers with close-cropped hair and pressed battle dress uniforms listen with stoic gazes as their commander speaks. In the other, shaggy youths in jeans and shorts glance nervously at one another, shifting uncomfortably, wary of doing wrong.

Welcome to the Recruit Sustainment Program.

The RSP, a National Guard Bureau Recruiting and Retention Command effort launched in March 2005, is designed to avert "training pipeline losses" — swift attrition of new enlistees, caused by not preparing Soldiers for Basic Training, or by failing to keep them engaged in military life in those long months before they ship to Basic Training.

The program stresses three core tenets: physical fitness, mental preparation and administrative correctness.

In the past, raw recruits sometimes felt like fifth wheels as their units prepared for rigorous Annual Training periods or overseas deployments. Busy officers and NCOs didn't always have time to orient the new troops to Army life. Bored recruits wound up as Basic Training no-shows.

Those who signed up, but didn't stay in the Wisconsin Army Guard long enough to get to Basic Training, amounted to about 30 percent of new enlistees.

"We lose a battalion (each year) before they even get to basic training," said Master Sgt. Jeffrey Lytle, NCO in charge of recruiting.

The RSP is changing that picture dramatically.

"If I hadn't gotten in this program I honestly don't think I would have made it more than a week," said Pvt. Jennifer Arendt, one of nearly 1,000 Wisconsin Army National Guard recruits in the fledgling program.

At her first RSP drill in April 2005, Arendt was hard-pressed to do one push-up, let alone the 19 required for her to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test. Less than a year later, having passed the test, she helps other new female recruits get in shape and pass the test.

RSP participants also learn basic Soldier skills like executing an about-face, disassembling an M-16 rifle and treating combat injuries. The program is an equal mix of serious Soldier skill training and fun team-building activities to keep recruits, who are mostly teenagers, engaged and excited about the Guard.

Infantrymen stand at one area, teaching recruits to tear down and re-assemble an M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon. At another, recruits learn how to treat a sucking chest wound. In a classroom off to the side, first-time attendees learn Army 101: Do you salute NCOs? How do you address an officer? What is a left-face?

It's a new generation of Soldiers entering the National Guard — one that's more concerned with staying active than collecting a

paycheck, recruiters say.

"We're in a different age nowadays with these young soldiers," said Lt. Col. Tim Lawson, the Wisconsin Army National Guard recruiting and retention manager at the time the program started. "If they're not busy or engaged they could care less whether they're getting paid or not — they'll just walk off."

State-level recruiting officials run the program and are responsible to build, grow and maintain the program as they see fit. They're given a lot of leeway in the setup; what matters are the results.

Wisconsin leaders chose a battalion setup, with five RSP companies throughout Wisconsin. Located so recruits don't have to drive more than two hours, the companies accommodate everyone from recruits attending their first drill in the Guard to Soldiers who've already completed Basic and are waiting to attend Advanced Individual Training.

Mixed in with the basic Soldier skills are activities tailored to make Army training more interesting. One month RSP members at the Oshkosh unit went to a shooting range to practice urban house-clearing exercises, another month they went to the local YMCA to conduct water-survival training.

Instead of going home on Saturday nights like most Guard Soldiers, RSP participants are kept engaged with movies, tournaments of the popular video game Halo, and competitions using night-vision goggles in a darkened room.

Key to making the program work are the Wisconsin Guard's recruiters. After a month of visiting schools, calling leads and making house calls, they spend a drill weekend serving as the backbone of the training cadre for the five RSP companies.

"I'm real proud of the recruiting force; they came together," Lawson said. "Most recruiters will drill twice a month; this has been a huge, huge burden on the recruiter force but it's something we've owned up to and know has to happen or we'll never get to where we need to go."

While the program is little more than a year old, initial reports are encouraging.

In January 2006, the Wisconsin Army National Guard shipped 60 more soldiers to basic training than it did in January 2005.

"We are very confident that the program is working," said 1st Lt. Shannon Kilcoyne, former RSP coordinator and marketing director.

The program works because of what it does for recruits like Pvt. David Yang. Taking part in his first RSP drill in January, Yang discovered there's a lot he'll need to accomplish before he's ready for basic training.

"At first when I saw the videos (of basic training), I was nervous," he said. "But now that I've been here I know that by doing things repetitively I'll do well." ■

Logistics operations have an essential role in the Global War on Terrorism and several Wisconsin units have contributed to the effort. The Soldiers of the Wisconsin National Guard have managed plans and operations throughout the theater; escorted and protected convoys; and delivered essential supplies, equipment and fuel to our war fighters. Here is just one of their stories:

on the road again

By Sgt. Crystal Rothermel
143rd Transportation Command

➤ **They traveled more than 2.5 million miles** transporting more than 7,500 pieces of equipment during their year-long tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, but their mission tested more than their ability work as transporters — it also tested their Soldier skills as well as their personal courage and perseverance.

Approximately 280 Wisconsin National Guard members of the 1158th Transportation Company, completed their tour of duty in Southwest Asia late last year. These transporters spent three to 10 days on each mission, moving equipment and supplies daily from southern Kuwait throughout the dangerous roads of Iraq. The deployment presented its share of challenges; however none were too large for these dedicated soldiers.

“The 1158th Transportation Company’s primary mission was to transport equipment from Kuwait to units in various bases around Iraq,” said Capt. Jason Stebbins, commander of the 1158th Transportation Company. “The unit moved any and all equipment needed to support theater operations in Iraq.”

➤ **Sunrise Inspections and the ‘W’**

Regardless of what they were moving or where they were going each convoy began the same in a sandy lot at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Before sunrise the Soldiers began the thorough process of inspecting

ABOVE: A convoy stops along a road in Iraq so a shifted load can be adjusted. Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry provided security for this convoy, along with many others traveling into Iraq during their deployment from 2005-2006.

LEFT: Sgt. Miranda Kaempfer, driver with the 1158th Transportation Company, unloads equipment and supplies at a northern camp in Iraq. Kaempfer is a veteran driver with more than 20 missions during the deployment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Sgt. Crystal Rothermel



Staff Sgt. Joseph Streeter

their Heavy Equipment Transporters, humvees and weapons and loaded equipment onto the trailers. Some missions involved visiting one camp, while others required stopping at two or three — for the job of a transporter never ends.

Then the Soldiers would gather for safety briefings, briefings they know like the back of their hands but realize the true intent is to prevent complacency, an enemy as silent and deadly as any other while traveling on the roads.

Once inspections were complete and briefings accomplished, the trucks with the big red “W” hit the roads.

“We painted a ‘W’ on the hoods and goosenecks of our trucks and on the doors of the rest of our vehicles,” Stebbins said. “We did this to ensure our soldiers could easily identify another one of the units convoys while on the road. We were proud of our vehicles and the state we represented!”

➤ Lock and Load

But when the convoy crossed the border, from the safety of Kuwait onto the dangerous roads of Iraq, the mood changed.

“In Kuwait you do not lock and load your weapons — once you cross the border you do. Once you’re in Iraq you get in the mindset that ‘this is it’ and you really have to pay attention, focus and be ready for anything,” Kaempfer said.

“On my first mission I sat up and wrote a will in my journal,” said Kaempfer. “But as time went on we wouldn’t think twice about it (the mission.) Although, I still worried when we stopped at night because of the improvised explosive devices.”

“Every time you had to stop whether it was day or night, you worry about the enemy,” Kaempfer said. “At night it is more of a threat to stop only because it is a lot harder to know what is going on out there. You always drive at night with your NVGs (Night Vision Goggles) ready and accessible in your truck because once you stop you scan the area. IEDs hit when the convoy is moving usually. The enemy usually aims for smaller vehicles such as the

gun trucks or maintenance vehicles. They know that the HET is bigger and it probably wouldn’t do as much damage.”

➤ The Pack, gossip and DVDs

There were other challenges as well. Trucks broke down, radios failed to operate, Soldiers got sick...but they kept on trucking. Mile by mile the Guardsmen focused on the mission but also looked forward to the things that helped them get their mind off the dangers they could encounter.

As the convoy rolled from camp to camp conversation between the driver and assistant driver was often lighthearted and personal...comparing notes about family at home, critiquing their favorite football team (the Green Bay Packers), or just catching up on the gossip of the day. Conversation also helped keep those in the truck awake and alert. Some found conversation to be therapeutic; others looked forward to bundling up in their sleeping bags with a good book or movie – rejuvenating for the next leg of the trip.

A second home while on the road, Soldiers packed personal hygiene items, extra uniforms and movies, music and books into their truck’s cab.

“Our families would send us DVDs in packages or we could buy them outside of a couple bases that were in Iraq,” said Sgt. Miranda Kaempfer, one of the unit’s truck drivers. “Usually family and friends would send books or things that they knew their soldier liked, that way if we did get some down time on the road we would be able to stay busy.”

The 1158th parked their trucks for the last time in December 2005 and returned to Wisconsin. However, the transportation mission continues in Kuwait and Iraq as an active duty unit replaced the 1158th in theater and assumed the mission utilizing the equipment the unit left behind. More than 1,000 trucks are on the road daily and while the Wisconsin Guardsmen are no longer the drivers – the big red “W” continues to roll down the road. ■



A Wisconsin National Guard Airman patrols the south perimeter of the Point Beach Power Plant during a June exercise.

Photo by Sgt. Jim Wagner

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