

at ease

Wisconsin National Guard



March 2009

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On the Cover:

Retired Col. Tommy Makal, left, and Platoon Sgt. Pete Smoczyk, 32nd Division veterans of World War II, escort the 32nd Brigade colors as honorary color guards at the start of the brigade's send-off ceremony, in Madison Feb. 17. Makal enlisted in 1937 and saw combat with the Red Arrow in North Africa and Europe. Smoczyk joined the Wisconsin National Guard's horse cavalry in 1936 and fought in the Southwest Pacific as part of the division's 127th Infantry Regiment. *Photo by Staff Sgt. Joe Streeter*

I hope you enjoy this updated and modernized At Ease magazine. Our Public Affairs office, led by Lt. Col. Tim Donovan (now on deployment to Iraq) evolved this award-winning publication to a more modern format; and under the leadership of our new state public affairs officer, Maj. Jackie Guthrie, will guide its ongoing transformation.



Brig. Gen. Donald P. Dunbar

I will contribute periodically as the adjutant general to share issues, items of significance, commentary and vision.

Your Wisconsin National Guard performed magnificently in 2008. Our deployment activity peaked at about 5 percent, with as many as 500 Soldiers and Airmen deployed in the combat zone at various times throughout the year. Fifteen years ago, that would have seemed breathtaking, but not today. Our contribution in 2008 was significant, but not remarkable.

2009 is already fulfilling its promise to be historic.

The Wisconsin National Guard will participate in its largest operational deployment since World War II, as the famed "Red Arrow" deploys again. The 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team will deploy approximately 3,200 Soldiers to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. After an All-Wisconsin send-off Feb. 17, the brigade traveled to Fort Bliss, Texas, for additional training, and is expected to arrive in theater in late April.

As the 32nd Division prepared to deploy to the Pacific in World War II, Life magazine ran a cover story entitled "Red Arrow Division gets the call back to duty," and the cover depicted many of our Soldiers in various stages of deployment preparation. As I viewed this piece of history, I asked myself — what has changed?

Well, everything has changed. The National Guard is now operational and involved in rotational combat operations, we are receiving brand new equipment, and we are leaner and more lethal following transformation.

But as I reflected on it, despite the changes above, nothing has changed. The Wisconsin National Guard still represents the best that Wisconsin has to offer, and our Soldiers and Airmen continue to be ready, willing and able to defend our nation when called. The Wisconsin National Guard represents enduring value for our citizens.

A few things you need to know about this historic deployment. First, although it is the 32nd flag that is deploying under Col. Steve Bensed's leadership, we have Soldiers deploying in significant numbers from each of our major commands, including the 157th Maneuver

From the top, *continued*

Enhancement Brigade, the 64th Troop Command and the 426th Leadership Regiment. I am grateful to Col. Mark Michie, Col. Darrel Feucht and Col. Ken Koon for their leadership and support. Col. Michie's 157th was also tasked with substantive training responsibilities to prepare the 32nd's Soldiers for mobilization and they have excelled in this critical role.

Second, the Army National Guard headquarters under Brig. Gen. Mark Anderson's leadership has performed superbly. There are a lot of moving pieces required to get a deployment of this size out the door. It takes vision and leadership — both were amply supplied. Col. Kevin Greenwood, chief of the Army Guard staff; Col. Mark Bruns, deputy chief of staff for Personnel (G1); Col. Tim Lawson, deputy chief of staff for Operations (G3); Col. Tom Gregar, deputy chief of staff for Logistics (G4); and Wisconsin's U.S. property and fiscal officer, Col. Pete Seaholm, were tireless as they formulated a superb plan and executed it flawlessly. Key elements of my personal staff were also deeply involved, in particular, the Judge Advocate Corps under Col. Julio Barron and the Public Affairs Office, first under Lt. Col. Donovan and then under Maj. Guthrie.

Lastly, it is not just the Army National Guard deploying this year. We will also send both of our flying wings back in to harm's way as the 115th Fighter Wing and the 128th Air Refueling Wing participate in Aerospace Expeditionary Force missions in 2009. At various times in 2009, the Wisconsin National Guard will have approximately 40 percent of our forces deployed in combat operations. I hope you are as proud as I am of your Soldiers and Airmen.

As to the past year, 2008 cannot be summed up in terms of deployments only. There are other areas of significance as well:

- Congress has fully funded the Yellow Ribbon program for family support, and DoD placed the responsibility for this robust program under each state's adjutant general. Under our Joint Staff, we have created the Joint Family Support Assistance Program (JFSAP), partnering with service organizations, counselors, the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) and the Military OneSource referral program to provide a framework of support to all reserve component personnel and their families.
- There has been a shift in our nation's military center of gravity. It culminated in December with the promotion and pinning of Craig McKinley to four-star flag rank. Gen. McKinley is the first chief of the National Guard Bureau in our nation's history to wear four stars, and this historic event was the result of the Guard Empowerment Act of 2008. Additionally, Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum transferred from chief of the National Guard Bureau to the deputy commander position at United States Northern Command. Secretary Robert Gates has twice commented publicly that this transfer positioned a National Guard officer to possibly be the next commander of USNORTHCOM. He further commented that the actual decision would be up to the next secretary; however, President Barack Obama has asked Secretary Gates to stay on in his current position, which could result in the National Guard having two four-star general officers.

This is significant, to be sure. However, the reason for the center-of-gravity shift is directly related to the nation's reliance on an operational Guard to meet mission requirements and the extraordinary performance of our Soldiers and Airmen in answering the call. The National Guard has significant "skin in the game," and our nation's leaders have both recognized and codified this shift.

Further evidence of this shift is the quantity and quality of equipment flowing to the National Guard. In 2008 we began receiving a significant amount of new, front-line, state-of-the-art equipment that is on par with that issued to the active Army and Air Force. If the current programmed budget is executed, we should have at least 77 percent of our authorized equipment on hand by 2013, as opposed to the less than 75 percent equipment level most states had prior to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks; and more to the point — an unprecedented percentage of it will be top-of-the-line equipment.

Looking forward, 2009 will obviously bring a high operations tempo among other challenges. Our nation is facing a fiscal crisis, and both the federal and state governments are facing persistent deficits. This could impact the National Guard in several ways, possibly reducing projected equipment purchases and reducing National Guard recruiting and retention programs.

The Air Force is advocating significant force structure cuts in our fighter inventory at a time when the F-35/F-22 programs may be in jeopardy. It is not clear what impact this will have on the Air National Guard, but current projections would likely be negative. We are engaged at every level to work these issues and solve them in the best way to serve our state and nation.

Although it is too early to forecast what impact the fiscal crisis may have on your National Guard, I can assure you that whatever comes our way, we will remain committed to our core values. We will meet any challenge with professionalism and the dedication to duty that Wisconsin is known for. We will remain Wisconsin Citizen Soldiers and Airmen serving state and nation, highly motivated, well-trained and ready to answer the call.

Since the last issue of *At Ease* was published, 11 Wisconsin service members have lost their lives in service to their country:

- Army **Sgt. Louis Griese**, 30, Sturgeon Bay
- Army **2Lt. Tracy Alger**, 30, New Auburn
- Army **Cpl. Jason Lemke**, 30, West Allis
- Army **Pfc. Timothy Hanson**, 23, Kenosha
- Army **Sgt. 1st Class Matthew Pionk**, 30, Superior
- Army **Pfc. Keith Lloyd**, 26, Milwaukee
- Air Force **Staff Sgt. Christopher Frost**, 24, Waukesha
- Marine Corps Reserve **Cpl. Richard Nelson**, 23, Racine
- Marine Corps Reserve **Lance Cpl. Dean Opicka**, 29, Waukesha
- Army **Sgt. Steven Christofferson**, 20, Cudahy
- Army **Sgt. Daniel Thompson**, 24, Portage
- Army **1Lt. Nick Dewhirst**, 25, Onalaska

Your thoughts on *At Ease*, please

You are holding the largest issue of *At Ease* yet – a full 92 pages – packed with news, information, and photos about the Wisconsin National Guard.

As the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard continues to transform and change, so too does *At Ease* – and we would like to hear from you, our reader.

1. What articles/photos do you like to see in *At Ease*, and what would you like to see more of?
2. What ‘big story’ are we missing? What could we do better?
3. Would you prefer to see more stories/photos online? Would you still like to receive a print edition of *At Ease*?
4. Any other comments or suggestions?

Please email your responses to kelly.j.bradley@us.army.mil, or mail them to **Joint Force Headquarters, Attn: Kelly Bradley, 2400 Wright Street, Madison, WI 53704.**

Thank you!

New Army, Air Deputy Adjutants General

The Wisconsin National Guard started 2008 with new leaders incoming on both the Army and Air sides of the house. Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, adjutant general since Aug. 1, 2007, announced on Jan. 4 the appointment of Brig. Gen. Mark Anderson and Col. John McCoy to command the state’s Army and Air National Guard, respectively.

The new assignments became effective Feb. 29, when Anderson succeeded Brig. Gen. James Krueck as deputy adjutant general, Army, and McCoy succeeded Brig. Gen. Gerald C. Olesen as deputy adjutant general, Air. Both officers assumed command at the same time, receiving the flags of the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard in a joint ceremony at state headquarters in Madison.

Anderson was previously commander of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. McCoy was director of staff in Wisconsin Air National Guard headquarters. Though a colonel at the time of his assignment as deputy adjutant general, he was promoted to the rank of brigadier general in February 2009.



Brig. Gen. Mark Anderson



Brig. Gen. John McCoy

Veterans and Retirees

The Military Salute

Military veterans are now lawfully permitted to render a salute during the raising, lowering or passing of the U.S. flag.

The formal enabling language was included in the fiscal 2008 National Defense Authorization Act signed earlier this year by the president.

It amended the U.S. Code to read, “Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute,” when in the presence of the U.S. flag.

“All other persons present,” it continues, “should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, or if applicable, remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.”

- *National Guard Magazine*

Retiree Appreciation Day

The 2009 Wisconsin National Guard Retiree Appreciation Day will take place at Fort McCoy Oct 2-3, 2009. Social events, speakers, TRICARE information and other retirement services will be presented. The Retiree Council puts on this biennial event, and will send out invitations this summer.



F-16, chief hit 3,000 hour milestone

In the care of crew chief Master Sgt. Brian Carroll, and at the hands of pilot Lt. Col. Erik Peterson, aircraft 87-260 surpassed 3,000 flying hours while assigned to the 115th Fighter Wing, Madison. Carroll has been the crew chief for that aircraft since its arrival in Madison. Three other crew chiefs have previously hit that milestone with their aircraft — Master Sgt. Bob Dederich, Master Sgt. Darrell Miller, and Master Sgt. Mike Myers.

Disney, others, offer new military discounts

Guard members with orders showing active status after Jan. 1, 2008, and retirees are eligible for free multiday admission to Disney's U.S. theme parks, reduced rates at select Walt Disney World Resort and Disneyland Resort hotels, and additional special ticket offers for family members and friends.

The Disney Armed Forces Salute is offered through June 12 at Disneyland Resort in southern California. It includes one complimentary three-day ticket and reduced rate for family members.

At Walt Disney World Resort in Florida, where the offer is available through Dec. 23, each eligible military member may receive a complimentary five-day ticket and reduced rates for family members. More information is available at www.disney-world.com/military.

Also, Shades of Green, a resort hotel at Walt Disney World Resort in Orlando, Fla., is available only to service members and their families, retirees and Defense Department civilians.

Throughout 2009, members of the military and as many as three direct dependents may enter any one of Anheuser-Busch's SeaWorld, Busch Gardens or Sesame Place parks with a single-day complimentary admission. More information is available at www.herosalute.com.

Airmen go beyond call of duty

Senior Master Sgt. Mark Lipinski, an instructor boom operator with the 128th Air Refueling Wing and Milwaukee firefighter, received the Milwaukee Fire Department's Class B award and the American Legion's William Schaefer award in Nov. 2008, for saving the life of a two-year-old child. At an apartment fire in May, 2008, Lipinski heard the whimpers of a young girl. Blinded by smoke and using touch alone, he found her tucked behind a dresser.



Lipinski

Maj. Michael Guch, a pilot with the 128th Air Refueling Wing, was awarded the American Red Cross Brave Hearts award in the emergency response category at an awards ceremony in March, 2008. Guch was recognized for his heroism in response to a motorcycle accident he and his wife, Lynn, witnessed. Guch provided on-site emergency care to one of the motorcycle riders who was suffering from a compound leg fracture and bleeding profusely.



Guch

Soldiers named 2008 Wisconsin Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer and Soldier of the Year

Staff Sgt. William L. Becker, 257th Brigade Support Battalion, Oak Creek, was selected as the Wisconsin Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Spc. Fabian P. Suchy, 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade was selected as the Wisconsin Army National Guard Soldier of the Year.

Staff Sgt. Bradley J. Jarosinski, 229th Horizontal Engineer



Spc. Suchy and Staff Sgt. Becker receive both the Wisconsin Army National Guard Enlisted Association Outstanding Soldier/Noncommissioned Officer of the Year Award and the USAA Defenders of Freedom Coin from Sgt. Major (Ret) Gary Hans, WNGEA. Photo by Mr. Larry Sommers

Company, Prairie Du Chien, was selected as the 1st Alternate Wisconsin Army National Guard Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Spc. Grant R. Bendix, 950th Engineer Company, Superior, was selected as the 1st Alternate Wisconsin Army National Guard Soldier of the Year.

The 2008 Soldier and NCO of the Year competition were held in May, 2008 at Fort McCoy. A total of 8 competitors participated in the annual event.

All competitors at this level have already been selected as the Soldier of the Year (SOY) or Noncommissioned Officer of the Year (NCOY) at company, battalion, and brigade level. Candidates are required to submit an administrative packet which includes a chain-of-command endorsement, a resume and an essay.

In addition to the essay, soldiers take a written test, conduct a 4-mile road march, do hands-on Warrior Task testing, weapons qualification, both day and night land navigation, perform a mystery task, and appear before a panel of ruthless sergeants major for a personal appearance board, where candidates are asked questions at the rate of about 3 per minute for close to 30 minutes. All of these events are evaluated and scored. The SOY and NCOY both receive plaques, the USAA Defenders of Freedom Coin, the State CSM coin, the coin of the Commander of the Wisconsin Army National Guard, a plaque presented by the Wisconsin National Guard Enlisted Association as well as a 1-year membership in the Enlisted Association, and the Army Commendation Medal.

Volk Field CRTC airfield ops named tops for 2007

The Air Traffic Control and Airfield Management sections of Volk Field CRTC have been named the 2007 Air National Guard Operations Complex of the Year.

"I'm very proud of both our Air Traffic Control and Airfield Management sections," said Lt. Col. Brendan Smith, Volk Field CRTC director of operations.

The complex has nineteen people assigned to the control tower, radar approach control, and airfield management facilities. The CRTC competed against several other complex nominees throughout the ANG.

Volk Field's complex directly supports ten midwest flying units on a regular basis within their 12,000 square miles of airspace, including the 115th Fighter Wing. In addition, they supported seventeen deployed flying units and airlift support requirements for five major non-flying deployments with a 100% safety record.

The airfield and controllers handled more than 750 transient aircraft. A large portion of these aircraft were supporting Volk Field's aerial port of embarkation mission for soldiers mobilizing and demobilizing at nearby Fort McCoy. All of the flights continued despite a \$2.1 million dollar construction project which closed both arm/de-arm areas during the summer, an airspace realignment project, apprentice controller training, and



limited staffing.

"They continue to provide absolutely top-notch service and support to a wide spectrum of customers," said Smith. "They couldn't be more deserving of this prestigious award."

Events

Fort McCoy Open House

Fort McCoy will host its annual Armed Forces Day Open House, on Saturday, May 16 from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Activities scheduled for the open house include: military equipment and demonstrations; camouflage face painting; interactive marksmanship gallery; personalized dog tags; narrated installation bus tours; refreshments; and much more. For further information call (608) 388-2407 or go online to www.mccoy.army.mil.

A Tribute to the Armed Forces at Country USA

All military personnel and veterans are invited to a special salute at Country USA in Oshkosh, Wis., Wed., June 24 and Sat., June 27, 2009.

Come in uniform and present a valid military I.D. to receive two free general admission tickets.

- Jimmy Wayne and Taylor Swift on June 24
- Diamond Rio, Julianne Hough, Rodney Atkins and Dierks Bentley on June 27

Also featuring The Country USA Military Zone, The Virtual Army Experience, a special performance by The Volunteers of the Army Field Band on June 27, and a mass swearing-in ceremony on the Ford Mainstage on June 27.

For more information go to www.countryusaoshkosh.com.



Guard's first four-star ready to take Minutemen forward

As his wife Cheryl McKinley holds a bible, Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley is sworn in by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates as the 26th chief of the National Guard Bureau during a ceremony at the Pentagon, where he was also promoted to his current rank, Monday, Nov. 17, 2008. McKinley is the first Guard officer to be promoted to the four-star rank, and succeeds Army Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, who served some five and a half years as chief of the Bureau and is now deputy commander of U.S. Northern Command, the first Guard officer to hold that position. U.S.

Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy



Left: Tech. Sgt. Marland Sherman, an aircraft structural craftsman with the 115th Fighter Wing in Madison, applies a final clear coat finish to the new F-16 tail art design celebrating the unit's 60th anniversary. First established in 1968 as the 176th Fighter Squadron flying the F-51 Mustang, the unit has since transitioned through eight different airframes to become one of the highest rated F-16 units in the U.S. Air Force. *Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman*

Below: Maj. Scott Mistlebauer, left, assists Japanese Army soldier Sgt. Noriko Shimoyama with proofing a speech, while Sgt. 1st Class John Juen, right, updates battle board slides. In December, 35 Soldiers from the 64th Rear Operations Center and other Wisconsin Army National Guard units participated in Yama Sakura, an annual exercise conducted in Japan. *Photo by 1st Lt. Shane Bradley*





Above: Guard youths enjoy sun and swimming at the Wisconsin National Guard Youth Camp held in August. *Photo by Officer Candidate Emily Yttri*

Above Right: Senior Airmen Thomas Twohig, left, and Phillip Givens adjust the guidance fins on an AIM-120 missile. Twohig and Givens were deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq, in 2008. *Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman*

Right: Several members of the Wisconsin National Guard played the role of Indiana National Guardsmen for the filming of the 1930s-era film "Public Enemies" that was shot in several locations throughout the state last spring. Relaxing with other extras in Columbus, Wis., they await Hollywood's cameras to roll for a scene where John Dillinger escapes from an Indiana jail (hint, Dillinger gets away). Wisconsin filming wrapped up last June and the film, starring Johnny Depp and Christian Bale, opens in theaters nationwide July 1.



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Below: Staff Sgt. Jerry Vogel, a survey team member of the 54th Civil Support Team, rides to the site of a mock Weapons of Mass Destruction attack in a joint exercise with the U.S. Coast Guard, held in Green Bay in May 2008. *Photo by 54th Civil Support Team*

Right: Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers and Airmen fire a ceremonial howitzer at the 2008 Rhythm and Booms Independence Day fireworks celebration at Warner Park, Madison, June 28, 2008. *Photo by Officer Candidate Emily Yttri*







Above: A B-2 Spirit Bomber moves into refueling position behind a KC-135 Stratotanker from the 128th Air Refueling Wing, Milwaukee, during a low visibility training exercise using night vision technology over Wisconsin Sept. 9. *Dept. of Defense photo by Staff Sgt. Jeremy M. Wilson, U.S. Air Force*

Right: Maia Kramer, 3, Jackson Kramer, 4, partially hidden, and Natalie Kramer, 6, pin their mother, 2Lt. Christine Kramer, during the Wisconsin Military Academy graduation ceremony at Fort McCoy Aug. 23. *Photo by Officer Candidate Emily Yttri*



LOOK OUT, LOOK OUT, HERE COMES THE 32ND

By Larry Sommers
At Ease Staff

Wisconsin sent off the Red Arrow with tears and smiles Feb. 17, in the Wisconsin National Guard's largest operational deployment since World War II.

Thousands of family members and more than a hundred civilian and military officials converged on Dane County Veterans Memorial Coliseum in Madison to bid farewell to some 3,200 members of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team on its way to eventual service in Iraq.

"Not since World War II has so much been asked of our soldiers," said Gov. Jim Doyle. "Almost every Wisconsin county can name a student, a mother, father, son or daughter, who is part of the 32nd."

The brigade is the direct descendant of the 32nd Division, which earned its "Red Arrow" patch by piercing every enemy line it faced in four World War I campaigns. The division also logged 654 days of continuous combat in World War II, more than any other U.S. Army division in any war, and played a key role in capturing the enemy stronghold at Buna, Papua New Guinea, in early 1943.

After service at Fort Lewis, Wash., during the Berlin Crisis of 1961-62, the 32nd Division was deactivated and reorganized as the 32nd Separate Infantry Brigade.

Since Sept. 11, 2001, many of the brigade's units and individuals have deployed for duty in Iraq or Afghanistan, to the extent that approximately half of the Soldiers deploying now are veterans of one or more recent combat deployments. More than 14,000 members of the National Guard and Reserve have been called to active duty from Wisconsin communities since 9-11.

The brigade has trained intensively for its mission in Operation Iraqi Freedom since it received the first alert order in late 2007.

"They have been training relentlessly for 14 months now as we mobilize under a new model that forces us to complete many training requirements prior to entering active status," said Col. Steven J. Bensed, brigade commander. "We're one of the first brigade combat teams to do this.... That training was conducted by our own NCOs and junior officers, instead of at mobilization stations by active Army trainers.

"We know that the active Army can't train our soldiers any better than our own NCO force, now bulging with combat veterans."

The entire deploying force occupied the floor of the coliseum, surrounded by family members and by the many dignitaries honoring their service, including Doyle, U.S. Sens. Herb Kohl and Russell Feingold, top national leaders of the other reserve components, and dozens of mayors and state legislators.

Music was provided by the Wisconsin National Guard's own 132nd Army Band, and also by members of the University of



Sgt. Jesse Wanta enters the Dane County Veterans Memorial Coliseum, Feb. 17, for the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team send-off ceremony. Photo by Sgt. Alfredo Rodriguez

Wisconsin Marching Band.

Military and civilian officials and representatives of community groups signed "Wisconsin's Military-Community Covenant," pledging the efforts of all to support the deploying troops and their families (see sidebar).

During the 90-minute send-off ceremony, which was televised live by Wisconsin Public Television, brigade Soldiers cased the colors of two recently deactivated 32nd Brigade units — Troop E, 105th Cavalry, and 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry — and unfurled the flag of a new unit — 1st Squadron, 105th Cavalry — which inherits much of the distinguished lineage and honors of the two deactivated units.

Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general of Wisconsin, put the deploying Soldiers' commitment into a solemn historical perspective.

"Many have said, 'It's not fair' — And you know? It's not fair" Dunbar said. "It's never been fair. That's what makes these soldiers special." ■

A COVENANT TO SUPPORT YOU: Wisconsin pledges coordinated effort

By Staff Sgt. Jon LaDue
115th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

At a Feb. 17 send-off ceremony for 3,200 deploying members of the Wisconsin National Guard's 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, community, state and national leaders signed "Wisconsin's Military-Community Covenant," pledging a joint effort to provide support and care for Wisconsin's service members and their families.

"When you have a governor, two senators, congressmen and chiefs of all the reserve components, all penning their name to one document — that's pretty significant," said Lt. Gen. Jack Stultz, Chief, U.S. Army Reserve. "I don't think it's ever happened before and I think that makes a statement to everybody that we mean what we say."

The actual covenant commits all signatories to "building programs and partnerships that support the strength, resilience and readiness of service members and their families."

Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general of Wisconsin, has accepted overall responsibility to provide Wisconsin's service members and their families support and assistance throughout the deployment cycle, and to facilitate access to information and services supporting their continued health and well-being.

"The key here is that we are in a new era. This covenant is about resiliency, readiness and sustaining the military member through some difficult times," said Dunbar. "What we've come to realize is that readiness encompasses more than just soldiers or airmen skills. Readiness is about family, finances and mental health."

Those who signed the covenant during the send-off

ceremony were: Gov. Jim Doyle; Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general; Sen. Herb Kohl; Sen. Russ Feingold; U.S. Reps. Paul Ryan, Tammy Baldwin, Ron Kind and Steve Kagen; Maj. Gen. Kelly McKeague, chief of staff, National Guard Bureau; Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief, U.S. Army Reserve, and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command; Lt. Gen. Jack W. Bergman, chief, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve, and commander, Marine Forces Reserve; Vice Adm. Dirk J. Debbink, chief, Navy Reserve, and commander, Navy Reserve Forces; Col. Merle Hart, commander, 440th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command; Rep. Mike Sheridan, speaker of the State Assembly; acting secretary Ken Black, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs; Jim Tipple, mayor, Wausau, Wis., representing the state's mayors; Mike Lemmon, Logistics Health Incorporated, representing the state's employers; Denise Rohan, 3rd District commander, American Legion Department of Wisconsin, representing Wisconsin veterans service organizations; Judy Anderson, AT&T Pioneers, representing Wisconsin Service Organizations; and Evonne Koeppen, mother of a 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldier, representing Wisconsin military families.

While the covenant promises support, it's the programs and people under the Wisconsin National Guard's federally-funded Service Member Support Branch that are tasked with carrying out the lion's share of that support. The SMSB hosted a training event called "Community Resiliency: A Coordinated Effort" Jan. 13 for many of the same support organizations that signed the covenant. The training provided a road map for the consolidated programs and services that Wisconsin's service members and their families can go to for help.

For more information on the programs offered under the SMSB, visit www.wingfam.org or call 1-800-292-9464.



Top military and state officials gather before the 32nd Brigade send-off ceremony. From left: Col. Merle Hart, commander, 440th Airlift Wing, Air Force Reserve Command; Maj. Gen. Kelly McKeague, chief of staff, National Guard Bureau; Lt. Gen. Jack C. Stultz, chief of the U.S. Army Reserve and commanding general, U.S. Army Reserve Command; Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general of Wisconsin; Jessica Doyle, first lady of Wisconsin; Jim Doyle, governor of Wisconsin; Vice Adm. Dirk J. Debbink, chief of the Navy Reserve; and Lt. Gen. Jack W. Bergman, chief of the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve and commander, U.S. Marine Forces Reserve.



32nd Brigade Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Hansen, on floor in front of podium, accepts reports from battalion command sergeants major as the brigade forms. *Photo by Larry Sommers*



'TRAIN AND 'TRAIN AGAIN

By Maj. Jackie Guthrie
and Larry Sommers
At Ease Staff



Members of the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion, Wisconsin Army National Guard, practice urban combat at one of Fort McCoy's military urban training sites. Photo by Officer Candidate Emily Yttri



Members of the 32nd Military Police Company, move out in a convoy of Humvees to practice convoy operations. Photo by Officer Candidate Emily Yttri

Wisconsin Army National Guard Soldiers rolled into Fort McCoy for an extended, *three-week* Annual Training, Aug. 2-22, in a run-up for the Wisconsin Guard's largest operational deployment since World War II. Less than six months later, they did it again, but with a southern locale.

Approximately 3,200 Soldiers of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team and six other units are scheduled to deploy to Iraq in early 2009. The six other units are the 32nd Military Police Company; 108th Forward Support Company; 1158th Transportation Company; 257th Brigade Support Battalion, 829th Engineer Company; and Battery A, 1st Battalion, 121st Field Artillery.

"Our focus right now is on Army Warrior Tasks," said Col. Steve Bensend, commander of the 32nd Brigade. The training includes fundamental skills such as weapons proficiency, tactical communications, urban operations and combat lifesaving. In addition, the troops work and live in simulated forward operating bases, conduct offensive and defensive lane exercises, qualify on individual weapons, and get in the battlefield mindset.

"Being able to shoot, move and communicate" is the main point, said Lt. Col. Brad Anderson, commander of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, a 32nd Brigade unit.

To keep deployments to a reasonable length for reserve component Soldiers, much pre-deployment training is now rolled into units' routine weekend and annual training prior to mobilization, with unit NCOs and officers doing the training and evaluation. And that's just fine with commanders like Anderson.

"I think my guys do a better job of training their own Soldiers than having somebody else training them," he said. Wisconsin National Guard units are rich in combat veterans who have already served one or more tours in Iraq or Afghanistan and can train other Soldiers

based on their personal combat zone experience.

Getting Wisconsin's Soldiers ready for battle is everyone's responsibility, said Lt. Col. Dan Pulvermacher, operations officer for the 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, tasked by the Wisconsin Guard for logistics and sustainment support throughout the 32nd's AT.

"We provide support and services so the deploying Soldiers can focus on their battlefield training," he said.

In addition, a 53-Soldier Pre-mobilization Training and Assistance Element serves as "eyes and ears" for the adjutant general, says its commander, Lt. Col. Richard Borkowski. "We don't do the evaluation," Borkowski said; "we do the certification of training to ensure that it was done according to Task Condition Standard."

Deploying units, logistical support units and the PTAE work together to provide the best training for Soldiers.

"They're picking it up quickly — a lot of very bright people," said Sgt. 1st Class Todd Smrz, Wisconsin Rapids, a 132nd Brigade Support Battalion member who has already served two combat tours.

After the August AT, brigade Soldiers continued training at their local armories while getting their personal and professional lives in order and completing military education requirements.

In early January, a convoy of 75 buses transported the Red Arrow troops to Camp Blanding, Fla., for another extended AT. before mobilization station training at Fort Bliss, Texas, in February and deployment to Iraq in early Spring. ■



Top: A mock Iraqi villager, portrayed by Staff Sgt. Brian Varn, Wisconsin Rapids, is surprised and captured by members of the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion. Photo by Larry Sommers

Middle: Troops of 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, make their way through the rooms and corridors of Fort McCoy's Live Fire Shoot House, a building that simulates Middle Eastern urban combat environments. Elevated walkways and strategically placed cameras allow trainers and exercise controllers to observe how the Soldiers maneuver and react in the cramped, warrenlike space. Photo by Officer Candidate Emily Yttri

Bottom: Sgt. 1st Class James Bryce, Headquarters Company, 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, conducts a familiarization class on improvised explosive devices. Photo by Larry Sommers



SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Red Arrow brigade trains

By Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens
107th Mobile
Public Affairs Detachment
Florida National Guard

What does it take to pick up and move an entire brigade 1,300 miles for three weeks? A whole lot of coordination and planning, according to Col. Steve Bensend, commander of the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. The brigade is conducting nearly three weeks of training at Camp Blanding Joint Training Center, Fla., to brush up on the skills they will use during their upcoming mobilization to Iraq in February.

When planning the unit's Annual Training this year, the leaders of the 32nd considered the many Soldiers who attend college and the Wisconsin winters — cold, snowy winters when weather conditions can halt training and keep Soldiers indoors. They decided to conduct the training in a warmer climate to allow Soldiers maximum training time on the ground.

"We could have done Fort McCoy in the fall," Bensend said, "but that would have taken another semester away from our Soldiers who are in school."



Sgt. Stan Grandt, an infantry team leader for 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, conducts physical training during the unit's stay at Camp Blanding, Fla. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael Baltz, 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

To facilitate the brigade's training, Wisconsin's 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade is taking charge of much of the 32nd Brigade's support services while they are training, as well as running rifle ranges so the 32nd can focus on training.

"We are trying to be a force multiplier for the 32nd," said Col. Mark Michie, commander of the 157th.

The Wisconsin Soldiers didn't get the warmth and sunshine they were hoping for in Florida. But even with temperatures dipping into the 30s with drizzling rain and fog, the

Left: Red Arrow Soldiers wind down after completing training for the day.

U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael Baltz, 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



IRE: in Sunshine State



Above and Left: Soldiers of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team train at Camp Blanding using XCTC — Exportable Combat Training Capability. Photos supplied by SRI International



weather still topped the subzero numbers coming from the Badger State.

“The brigade will have a diverse mission in Iraq which will be challenging as well as rewarding,” Bensend said. The infantrymen in the brigade will be tasked with security force operations.

The training at Camp Blanding will help the Soldiers not only to improve these skills, but also to train together as a team. During their training, the Soldiers will take part in army warrior training, collective task training, weapons qualification and staff and leadership training.

The training has been augmented by the eXportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC), the latest in battlefield training technology. XCTC provides a realistic, instrumented battalion field training exercise, complete with role players and scenarios. Individual Soldiers wear GPS-enabled gear allowing leaders to see what is going on in the battlefield in real time. From a central location, leaders can now tell where each Soldier is and whether that Soldier has received a simulated wound or fatality in the training scenario.

Many of the Soldiers, even the youngest, face their second or third deployment.

“We’ve always had high quality Soldiers,” Bensend said, “The difference now is the experience level.”



Top: Spc. Pa Vang, a supply specialist for Company A, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, makes corrections to her M-4 assault rifle before qualifying at the marksmanship range at Camp Blanding, Fla. Photo by Sgt. Carmen Gibson, 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Left: 32nd Brigade Soldiers receive a briefing from a contractor’s representative after being issued Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System gear for use in the XCTC training environment. Photo supplied by SRI International

The brigade leadership is also battle-tested. Approximately 60 percent of the unit's non-commissioned officers have combat experience. For the leaders, this training is an opportunity to improve upon lessons they learned on previous deployments.

"All of my sergeants major have deployed previously," Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Hansen said. "The Soldiers and noncommissioned officers bring a lot of experience to the fight."

For Bensend, experience isn't the only asset the 32nd has to offer. As a National Guard infantry brigade, the Soldiers of the 32nd bring a unique outlook for a changing mission, one where fighting is being replaced with rebuilding.

"The National Guard brings to the fight more than just Soldiers, but civilian skill sets and a civilian mindset," Bensend said. ■



Top: Red Arrow Soldiers conduct an after-action review during training at Camp Blanding. *Photo provided by SRI International*

Right: Not only Soldiers, but also equipment including this armored Humvee, are decked out with MILES sensors to simulate combat action as the 32nd Brigade trains at Camp Blanding. *Photo by Staff Sgt. Blair Heusdens, 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*



BLOOD TIES AND SERVICE STRIPES

Deployment is a family affair

By **Sgt. Carmen Gibson**
107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Florida National Guard

Soldiers depend on them, protect them, and rely on their protection in return; in the military environment, strangers become battle buddies. For some members of the Wisconsin National Guard, however, their family members — the people they have known their whole lives — will stand beside them in combat.

New Richmond natives Bruce and Victor Wozniak are venturing off on a father-son trip of a rare sort, as the two Guardsmen deploy with their unit — Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team — for a year-long deployment to Iraq.

Pfc. Victor Wozniak could have opted to continue with his studies at the University of Wisconsin—River Falls, but instead volunteered to deploy with his unit. Victor's father, Staff Sgt. Bruce Wozniak, a Wisconsin State Trooper, recently returned home from a Guard deployment to Iraq but signed up to go back with his son's unit.

"I'm excited to go over with my dad," said Victor Wozniak. "It will be nice to have a little bit of home while I'm there."

Staff Sgt. Barbara Boehm has proudly served in the Wisconsin Guard for the past 19 years and now gets to share the deployment experience with her son and daughter, both of whom have chosen to follow in her footsteps.

"They have exceeded my expectations," Barbara said of her two children, "and that is a good feeling."

Barbara and her daughter, Sgt. Natasha Boehm, will deploy as members of the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion; and Barbara's son, 1st Lt. Nathan R. Boehm, will deploy with the 1st Squadron, 105th Cavalry.

This is the second deployment for both children. Nathan deployed to Kuwait around the same time Natasha deployed to Afghanistan. For Barbara, this is the first combat deployment in almost 20 years of Guard service.

Also deploying with the 32nd Brigade are two sets of identical twins, Spcs. Kelly and Kyle Hendrickson, and Sgts. Sara and Heidi Peronto, all serving as motor transport operators for Company A, 132nd Brigade Support Battalion, of Janesville.

"The deployment will be much easier since the unit is going to keep us together," said Kyle, intentionally distinguished from his brother by a mustache and a pair of glasses.

The 23-year-old brothers from Pardeeville were activated together for hurricane Katrina relief in 2005, providing mobile security for medical personnel in Louisiana. While the mission lasted three weeks, it helped them test their working relationship.

Sara and Heidi, of Appleton, have already perfected

the art of serving together. The pair volunteered for deployment in 2006, for a 15-month tour in Taji, Iraq. Just like the Hendrickson siblings, the Perontos look forward to their second deployment with excitement and confidence, knowing that they will be serving together.

The 32nd IBCT is training at Camp Blanding, Fla., in preparation for its upcoming deployment to Iraq. ■



Sgt. Natasha Boehm, left, Lt. Nathan Boehm, center, and Staff Sgt. Barbara Boehm take time out for a family photo. The three were training at Camp Blanding, Fla., in preparation for deployment to Iraq with the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team. *U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Michael Baltz*



The 132nd Brigade Support Battalion's two sets of identical twins — Spcs. Kelly and Kyle Hendrickson and Sgts. Sara and Heidi Peronto — flank their battalion commander, Lt. Col. Leah Moore. *Photo by Sgt. Carmen Gibson, 107th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment*

**End of Annual Training Summary
for Company G (-) 132nd BSB
By: SSG Christopher J. Banks, Readiness NCO**

So many good things happened during this year's 3 week annual training that it's hard to include everything. Company G (-) focused on Base Defense for 4 solid days. The soldiers' training focused on tower operations, ECP (entry control point) operations, QRF (quick reaction force) operations, BDOC (base defense operations center) operations and TCP (traffic control point) operations. Golf Company was divided into two platoons and each platoon was evaluated on each of the aforementioned tasks.

... Convoy Operations was executed without a flaw. Radio communications and security were the two main focus points during this training.

... We also enrolled many of our deployable soldiers into new equipment training, which included the CPOF (command post of the future) training, SKL (simple key loader) training which is replacing the ANCD, the AN/PSS-14 Mine Detector and the BlueForce Tracker system which is currently being used world wide in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

... Every Golf Company soldier qualified with their assigned weapons as well as many other weapon systems which included the .50 caliber machine gun, the M-249 Squad Automatic Weapon, the M-203 grenade launcher and the 9 mm pistol.

Dear Editor,

The Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery completed another successful Annual Training at Fort McCoy, WI this week.

... The training focused on individual weapons qualification with the newly issued M-4 machine gun, equipped with a close combat optic (CCO), and other heavy weapons. The weapons training was just a small part of the required Army Warrior Tasks that place a strong emphasis on a set of forty tasks and skills that every Soldier should be proficient in. However, [training also included] instructional classroom training on new equipment that is currently being used overseas to fight the war on terror.

— Capt. Dustin Cebula, 1st Battalion,
120th Field Artillery

From: Anderson, Trevor P SGT NG NG NGB
To: Donovan, Timothy D LTC NGWI;
Guthrie, Jacqueline A MAJ NGWI
Sent: Thu Aug 28 22:30:07 2008
Subject: AT 2008

In our battalion, about half of us have some kind of combat experience and the other half are still waiting for their first. During this AT, us veterans shared our past experience with other soldiers who haven't deployed yet and also shared our own insight with training to help make the best out of training. We also got some new equipment in, like new vehicles, house raid kits, new sights for our weapons, and more. So some of the training was new for all, in which then we had to go back to our units and train others on our new equipment and tactics.

SGT Anderson, Trevor
2-127th IN BN, S-1

LETTERS FROM ANNUAL TRAINING

Submitted by Unit Public Affairs
Representatives
32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Dear Editor,

... Soldiers from across the 32nd Brigade received training on a new mortar ballistic computer (which figures out the mathematical computations for firing solutions for indirect firing artillery) and on an updated 120 mm mortar system. Some of us spent five days in a classroom learning about and practicing with the new computer.

Other members of the Brigade received the updated mortar systems, with which they performed maintenance, practiced crew drills and conducted a gunner's exam. All of this training and practice came together on a live-fire day when our newly acquired skills were put to the test.

Those of us that attended the mortar computer class received data from forward observers, entered it into the computers and passed on the firing solutions to the mortar gun crews. The gun crews adjusted their mortars accordingly and then fired the missions. The new computers streamline the process of adjusting indirect fire and provide a higher degree of speed and accuracy, something that is critical on the battlefield.

Respectfully submitted,
SFC Paul Wagner, Mortar Section Leader



VIETNAM VETS

An NCO for all seasons

By Maj. Jacqueline Guthrie
At Ease Staff

"I always knew I wanted to be a soldier," said Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Hansen.

It came naturally to him: Fighters of the Civil War, World War I and World War II adorn his family tree. Hansen himself recently served in Afghanistan and Iraq and may also be the sole Vietnam veteran remaining in the Wisconsin Army National Guard.

Now the old Soldier is packing his duffel bag one last time. He's bound for Iraq as senior enlisted advisor of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

"I know all the CSMs (in the brigade), and all of them have deployed — and I think together we know what to look for to make sure the Soldiers are being trained properly and are well-equipped," he said. "Soldiers expect to be given information, they expect to be heard when it's proper to be heard, and they need and want competent leadership."

Hansen enlisted in the U.S. Army in 1968, fresh out of Manitowoc's Lincoln High School. After basic and advanced training at Forts Campbell and Knox, he went straight to Vietnam. Hansen had trained as an armor crewman, but the

battlefield needed infantry. So he learned on the job with his comrades in the 187th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, patrolling for enemy fighters, searching for weapons caches, securing bases and calling in artillery strikes.

Then came the Battle of Hamburger Hill — a ten-day struggle for control of a high point astride the A Shau Valley. If U.S. and South Vietnamese forces could take and keep Hill 937, they would block North Vietnamese army units infiltrating from Laos and the Ho Chi Minh trail.

Hansen's company was part of a follow-on task force assigned to secure Hamburger Hill.

As they were establishing their base camp, "all hell broke loose." Hansen was watching a recon patrol that had just returned to camp, and as he turned to look at the jungle, "there were five or six guys that stood up with pith helmets on... and they all had RPGs [rocket-propelled grenade launchers] on their shoulders.... Then the whoosh of the RPGs coming into our perimeter." One Soldier was killed and three wounded.

"That was my first day of combat. It's one of those things you'll never forget."

Hansen served about 18 months in Vietnam and a total of two-and-a-half years on active duty before returning to Wisconsin. He left the service to attend the University of Wisconsin — Oshkosh.

But in his heart he continued to be a Soldier.

"I really never felt comfortable in civilian society so then I went back into the Army," Hansen said. He served 10 more years in Korea, Fort Knox and Fort Polk working in various armor assignments and earning the rank of sergeant first class. Then a divorce left him with custody of his son and made it difficult to continue on active duty.

"I got out on a 'sole parent' discharge," he said. "I tried to get in the Guard but I couldn't unless I gave up custody of my son, and I wasn't willing to do that."

So he pursued civilian goals, obtaining a bachelor's degree in business administration, with a minor in communications, from Silver Lake College. "My dad was retired and was my son's fulltime babysitter," he said.

In 1989, almost 10 years later, Hansen still wanted to serve and was at last able to join the Wisconsin National Guard. He spent most of his Guard career with 2nd Battalion, 127th Infantry, as a platoon sergeant, first sergeant, operations sergeant and eventually command sergeant major.

He also maintained a full-time civilian job at a computer company and raised his son, who went



Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Hansen stops to enjoy the view while serving in Afghanistan with the 45th Brigade, Oklahoma National Guard, from 2003-2004.

Photo provided by Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Hansen

SOLDIERS ON

on to serve four years in the Marine Corps. Hansen also earned a master's degree in management and organizational behavior from Silver Lake College.

Then came Sept. 11, 2001.

"We were attacked, and I wanted to do something for my country.

"I really wanted to go with the 2-127th," Hansen said — but at the time it didn't look like the unit would be deploying, "and I wasn't getting any younger." So he volunteered to go to Afghanistan with the Oklahoma National Guard. For nearly 12 months he worked in a joint environment, side-by-side with coalition forces training and mentoring the Afghan national army.

"It was one of those missions you can really believe in," he said.

When he returned from Afghanistan, Hansen quickly volunteered to join Wisconsin's already-deployed 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry, in Iraq, where the unit had need for trainers. He spent another six months in combat, mentoring battalion sergeants major in the Iraqi army.

After his return, Hansen was assigned as command sergeant major of the 32nd Brigade. At nearly 60 years of age, he was about to retire from the Guard when the brigade's mobilization was announced. The last thing he wanted to do was leave his Soldiers right before deployment, so he requested to stay through the mobilization.

With three combat tours in nearly 40 years of military experience, Hansen is more than ready.

"I've been there," he said. "I've done it."

Combat vets, whether with three combat tours or one, have a responsibility to share their insight and experiences, he said. But he stressed that all Soldiers need to train hard and learn from one another, because all bring skills and talents to the table.

As senior enlisted advisor to Col. Steve Bensed, brigade commander, Hansen said the most important part of his job is taking care of the enlisted Soldiers and their families.

"I take that very seriously," he said. "I'm constantly looking at what's going on, what can be done better and how I can be involved to make this an easier transition for the Soldiers and the families."

He also feels a responsibility for the wartime legacy handed down by earlier leaders whose portraits line a wall at brigade headquarters.

"I look at that wall of men every day," he said, "hoping that I am living up to that standard that all of them have set for the brigade.

"I remind all our NCOs that we've got a history behind us and we are writing a chapter now and we can't let down those Soldiers that came before us — that fought and died for our country.

"That's why at almost 60 I am still a Soldier; because I am with comrades that understand. It is a brotherhood and sisterhood that you just don't experience anywhere else." ■



A young Ed Hansen at Fire Base Rakkasan in Vietnam with the 187th Infantry, 101st Airborne Division, in 1969.

Photo provided by Command Sgt. Maj. Ed Hansen

Red Arrow Legacy

Soldiers answer WWII bugle call

By Staff Sgt. (Ret.) Tom Doherty
Wisconsin Army National Guard

On Tuesday evening, Oct. 15, 1940, the lights went out in Marshfield, Wis.

Earlier, sidewalks along a six-block stretch of Central Avenue had filled with families bundled against the autumn chill.

Children on their fathers' shoulders gazed down toward Seventh Avenue. Teenagers snaked through the crowd. Middle-aged couples stood quietly at the curb.

At 7:30 sharp the fire bell clanged and the streetlights went out. All the bright storefronts darkened.

It was the sort of gathering that presages disaster: crowds huddling in darkness as a volcano trembles, barbarians mass at the gates, clouds of locusts approach. Or, in cities across the oceans these days, as the cosmic static of distant bomber fleets grows into a brain-rattling roar.

In Marshfield the ground was firm; no invaders threatened; the sky offered nothing more ominous than slow-moving clouds under a full moon.

Most everyone knew the blackout was prearranged, the melodramatic brainchild of some Rotarian or Elk on the organizing committee. Still, people were quieted by a vague, otherworldly sense of threat. A few were inspired toward pranks and feeble jokes — a need to whistle in the dark. Figures moved along the street, stooping at intervals and igniting flares. These were the Great War vets, according to the schedule in the newspaper.

Sirens screamed through the darkness. Fire trucks flashed by in the red glow of the flares.

Minutes later the lights came on, then a sound of drums, cymbals, marching music, and down Central Avenue strolled Mayor Leonhard and other city officials, looking left and right, acknowledging individuals in the crowd — but not too gaily or eagerly. This was a serious occasion, after all, and a historic evening.

The 135th Medical Regiment Band followed, a feature in Marshfield parades since the days of the Spanish-American War.

Finally, along came the guests of honor — C Company, 123 men strong, 1903 Springfield rifles on their shoulders, Capt. Lupient in the lead, then Steger, Steger and Cherny, and another Steger back in the ranks somewhere with guys like Rapp and Laufenberg, Pankratz and Markee.

Scattered among the marchers were newcomers in



October, 1940: Sporting duffle bags and bravado, two Red Arrow Division soldiers board a southbound train as a fellow Guard member gazes wistfully from the car behind. Photos courtesy of the Wisconsin National Guard Museum, Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs.

civvies, some just out of last spring's high school class. They gazed self-consciously at the heels of the men in front, their own uniforms stacked and waiting in warehouses down south.

Most of the men managed to compose themselves as befits soldiers embarking upon serious business, but a few hopeless amateurs beamed into the crowd, and others snuck occasional glances, seeking eye contact with a fellow shoemaker from Thorogood or veneer maker from Roddis, a girlfriend, a younger brother.

Young men's options fading

The options open to single, healthy young men were fading fast.

Tomorrow, men between 21 and 35 years of age were to report to fire stations and schoolhouses across the nation to register for the draft.

Sooner or later nearly all the men lining the streets of Marshfield would have to choose — Army, Navy, Air Corps, or the local National Guard units. And within days that last option would be gone.

The Guard was being activated — the first great influx into an army just coming alive after 20 years. There would be no more hometown units to join, just the great body-processing system on the federal level.

But tonight belonged to those who had already made their choice.

A week ago, formal notification had finally come from Washington, and representatives of all the civic clubs in town gathered at the firehouse to plan the send-off gala. At eight this morning the unit was officially inducted into the Army. No longer were they Marshfield's Company C. As of this day they were C Company, 1st Battalion, 128th Infantry Regiment, 32nd Division, United States Army.

Grim news

News from all over was grim that month. Kids were dying from polio. Al Capone was seen cruising the streets of Hurley, Wis., in the back of a big sedan. Cowboy actor Tom Mix was killed in an auto accident near Florence, Ariz.

News from overseas was less lurid but far from encouraging. Ever since the Japanese signed the Tripartite Pact, allying themselves with Hitler and Mussolini, Americans had been packing up to leave the Far East. Both the Navy and Standard Oil were forbidding employees from bringing families to Asia. Church groups called in their missionaries. Offices of steamship lines in Shanghai were swamped with Americans eager to get out.

On the other side of

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the world, the Battle of Britain was over but the Blitz was on. Frustrated in his attempt to destroy England's air force, Hitler's deputy, Hermann Goering, turned his attention to London. If he could not break the British sword, he would go for the heart and guts.

Beginning Sept. 7 an average of 200 German bombers made nightly runs over London, 57 continuous nights of fire bells and ambulances, of endless hours in crowded basements and subways, of emerging at daybreak into smoke, rubble and flooded streets.

The only good news from England was that invasion was no longer possible, at least not this year.

U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt and his challenger in the election next month, Wendell Willkie, repeatedly told the nation the U.S. would not become involved in war, but evidence of our growing military strength was apparent in every community and cast a shadow over their assurances.

In Wisconsin, hundreds of big Army trucks were rolling off assembly lines in Janesville. Briggs and Stratton and the J. I. Case plants in Milwaukee were turning out millions of dollars worth of artillery shells. The Peterson Boat Works in Sturgeon Bay was making motor launches for the Navy. Woolen mills in Chippewa Falls and West Bend were weaving blankets for the War Department.

Across the country dance bands were playing "There's Something About a Soldier," and indeed, after two decades in the shadows, the soldier was back in the limelight. For young Guard members it was a heady experience.

Milwaukee songs, tears

In Milwaukee, the 160 men of Company K, 127th Infantry, a Polish-American outfit from the South Side, went on stage



If one enlisted man can peel 50 spuds an hour, then three enlisted men can peel...well, quite a few. Kitchen police duty, 'KP' for short, was a staple of military life.



High spirits: More volunteers than strictly necessary load gear from a 32nd Division truck into a baggage car of the Chicago and Northwestern Railway.

before their families and neighbors at the Modjeska Theater. Individually and in groups they sang, danced and recited poetry, remembering a homeland that no one in the theater had heard from since the German invasion a year earlier.

At the Eagles Club across town, 10,000 young Milwaukeeans attended a farewell dance for local units of the 121st Field Artillery. Governor Julius P. Heil led the grand march with the 14-year-old daughter of a Guard officer. Young women in party dresses got teary-eyed and young soldiers' chests swelled as Milwaukee's mayor, Carl Zeidler, led them in singing "God Bless America."

At the North Shore Country Club officers of the 121st and their wives held a dinner-dance of their own. Signs of patriotism were more muted here and career opportunities more openly

discussed. Many had spent years preparing for command. Soon they would have a chance to show their stuff and take whatever rewards came their way.

And so it went throughout the country for those few days in mid-October before the trains and convoys started south. A few old-timers failed their physicals and reluctantly joined the observers on the sidelines, while some young men rushed to the recruiters before the deadline.

No kiss for the Dairy Queen

In Marshfield at 7 a.m. Monday, Oct. 21, 1st Sgt. Steger marched the men of C Company to the Miller Building for breakfast, then dismissed them for the morning. Most went home



Three mobilized Guardsmen exercise the soldier's age-old prerogative to snatch forty winks while in transit. Louisiana was only a temporary destination on a journey that would eventually take 32nd Division soldiers to combat in the Southwest Pacific.

to say goodbye for the last time, but a few hurried to the depot to see Republican presidential candidate Wendell Willkie.

His campaign train was making a stop, just time enough for the local Dairy Queen to go on board with a longhorn cheese and a "Marshfield Cheese Week" cap. She did not get far. The gifts were accepted by an aide, and when the candidate emerged, capless, he could only wave at well-wishers. Rumor had it he'd lost his voice. So there was no speech, no kiss for the Dairy Queen, no cheese cutting ceremony, just a wan smile and a tired wave. Probably the only person who was not disappointed was state senator Melvin Laird, father of the future congressman and defense secretary, who boarded the train and traveled to Wausau with the first family-to-be (or so he hoped).

At noon the troops arrived at the Chicago and Northwestern railroad station after a full-dress parade through town. Now the tears flowed. Only after a few blasts from the train whistle did men break free and climb aboard.

The windows were thrown open and the faces that crowded them were suddenly very sober.

The sadness they had been fighting off for a week had settled inescapably upon them. The throng on the depot platform saw a blur of khaki arms as the train picked up speed.

Eau Claire getaway

In Eau Claire, Battery D of the 126th Field Artillery, formerly a mounted machine gun unit until its conversion a few

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weeks ago, marched to Omaha Depot cheered by the whole student body of Eau Claire High School. Both the commanding officer, Capt. William Sherman, and his executive officer, Lt. Claude Craemer, were teachers at the school, and many of the troops were present or former students, and so classes were dismissed in their honor.

The soldiers would miss the school's production of "Our Town," scheduled for the next two days.

Sherman was determined to avoid the trap that had snared his colleague, Capt. Marshall Lassek of B Company: Lassek had been mobbed at the station the day before by tearful parents seeking last-minute assurances. Sherman did not linger on the platform but quickly disappeared into the train, leaving Craemer and the other lieutenants to hustle the troops aboard. Minutes ahead of schedule and well before the dazed citizens knew what was happening, the train began to move.

A clean getaway, Sherman exulted: no overlong good-byes; no maudlin, shaken-up soldiers. Gone before the gloom could set in.

But suddenly the train jerked to a halt. He leaned to the window. Back on the platform two uniformed men were moving on a sea of hands and shoulders to the baggage car. They'd almost been left behind.

No gaiety at Madison depot

In Madison, the late afternoon of Oct. 20 was cold and gray, the air dense with smells of coal fires and wet leaves. The



“For some men the melancholy of departure lasted...but others were up to old tricks” — even before their train left the station. Four artillerymen from Milwaukee’s 1st Battalion, 126th Field Artillery play cards in a baggage car, amid wisps of cigarette smoke and puffs of locomotive steam, on the battalion executive officer’s footlocker. Capt. Everett C. Hart had been promoted to the rank of major before this photo was taken.

for a round of hurried clinches — a delirious melding of lust, patriotism and pride in the local team.

Shortly after 6 p.m., the three coaches filled with Madison men slid out of the floodlights into darkness, until the last windowsill of wide-eyed, open-mouthed faces was gone, and 5,000 townspeople were left amid the glaring lights and the plates of donuts, gazing down empty railroad tracks. No one was ready to face the prospect of one less place at the supper table.

South by train and truck

For four days the trains swept southward, picking up companies of the 128th Infantry Regiment from the western side of the state; the 127th from the eastern side; and medical, service, band, supply and some artillery units from all over. Of the 10,000 men — from 82 units in 58 Wisconsin towns — most went south by train.

For some men the melancholy of departure lasted the whole two days of the trip, but others were up to old tricks as soon as the station was out of view. Decks of cards were unlimbered. Forbidden bottles materialized.

The troops traveled in style. Pullman cars for most, with a cook stove and walls of canned goods in the baggage car. Three hot meals per day.

One night three trains bearing nearly 700 Guardsmen converged on Janesville, near the Illinois border. Families and girlfriends who had driven from Stoughton, Whitewater, Edgerton, Monroe and Platteville swarmed over the platforms of two separate Janesville stations, searching out the right train, coach and window for a last glimpse of their soldier.

Members of the 32nd Division’s Tank Company, a Janesville unit that was not to be mobilized for another month, had been called out to help police keep the crowds back from the trains.

They knew they would not be going south to join the division. The Army was in a rush to catch up with the German model of an armored force. Companies like theirs were being combined into battalions — concentrated armor attack forces — but still sadly deficient in tanks, training, and a thorough comprehension of armor’s aggressive new role.

Given the events of the past year — the piecemeal

crowds were still, the soldiers somber as G Company, 128th Infantry, marched from the armory on Market Place, around the domed magnificence of the State Capitol building and all its watching statuary, and down West Washington Avenue to the Milwaukee Road station.

There was no small-town gaiety in the music of the drum and bugle corps that followed, only a resounding march-time beat. The parading units were all military — veterans, reservists and Guard members.

Of the 86 men of G Company, 30 were newcomers. They dimly perceived the onlookers walling the parade route but could not make out faces. They concentrated on footwork, on keeping time and looking good.

At the station, in the unearthly glow of floodlights, Mayor Law spoke, echoing the sentiments of parents and Guard members around the nation: “If we show enough strength, there will be no need for further effort.” Comforting thoughts for young men leaving home for the first time.

Then the sober business was over. There was a sudden crush of soldiers and families, a roar of voices. Spirits were suddenly high, the mood unaccountably gay in spite of the tears.

Hundreds and hundreds of donuts appeared, and a few lost-looking men, those who had already said good-bye, or who had no families stood around eating them.

After rifles and packs were stowed on the train, men filled the open windows, and young women were hoisted to them

annihilation of every resisting force in Europe by the Germans, the entry of Italy's huge and modern military machine as Germany's land-hungry ally, then Japan's joining forces with Italy and Germany in the Far East — they had reason to regret being separated from the home state organization they had trained with for two decades. Eighteen months later on the Bataan Death March they would regret it even more.

The two veteran field artillery regiments, the 120th and 121st, took their guns and heavy equipment south by convoy. Most batteries of the 121st collected at the regiment's Whitefish Bay headquarters and set out from there, a modern wagon train of green, smoke-belching trucks carrying troops and gear under ribbed canvas canopies, 75mm field guns in tow, weaving through big city suburbs and small towns, through corn fields in the North and cotton fields in the South.

Up in Chippewa Falls, the local battery of the 120th paraded through town behind a flag that had been presented to the militia unit in 1897, the gift of the Women's Relief Corps. The last time it had been carried through the streets of Chippewa Falls was in 1917, when the hometown unit started its journey to the Western Front.

Way up in the port city of Superior, men of the 120th's Headquarters Battery were up at the crack of dawn on a cold bright Sunday morning, loading frosty trucks lined up beside

the armory.

A few well-wishers had gathered, reluctant to leave their cars on this fiery morning, a sharp wind off the lake rattling the elms overhead; and so the men ran back and forth among the cars, shaking hands, leaning briefly through the windows, then jogging back to the armory to haul more file cabinets and personal gear to the trucks.

There was no pretense of military discipline. Men wore red flannels under their uniforms.

At eight o'clock the convoy moved slowly away amid cheers and the braying of auto horns. Then it was cruising along quiet streets of ramshackle, turn of the century houses where the air was laced with the smells of bacon and coffee, rumbling through a town just coming awake on a Saturday morning.

With 10,000 men from Wisconsin and 4,000 from Michigan, a total of 75,000 from the upper Midwest flooded south to learn how to soldier, a tidal wave about to break over an old National Guard post in Louisiana called Camp Beauregard and a sedate, Old South metropolis nearby named Alexandria.

Their route paralleled Huck Finn's travels down the Mississippi a century earlier. Like Huck, most were about to begin their education out in the world a staple of military life. ■



"For it's 'Hi, Hi, Hee' in the Field Artiller-ee...." Badger State gunners strike a relaxed pre-war pose around a 75mm towed howitzer.



Impact of Deployment on Families

- Deployment Cycle
- Financial
- Life Style
- Family Members
- Family Readiness Groups FRGs (Volunteers)
- Family Assistance Centers (FACs)
- Red Cross

Wisconsin revamps family support programs

New Service Member Support Branch will be 'one stop shop' for care

By Staff Sgt. Jon LaDue
115th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Starting when a Wisconsin service member is notified of a deployment, and continuing for up to a year after that deployment, countless ripples of change occur. These changes can carry heavy burdens that affect not only the deploying member but also his or her family, employer and community.

Help is available through the many agencies and programs, but deploying members and their families don't always know where to turn. Through Wisconsin Joint Force Headquarters' newly formed Service Member Support Branch, that will soon change.

The SMSB was created in the fall of 2008 in accordance with the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 and encompasses Wisconsin's three major servicemember support programs — Badger Yellow Ribbon, the Family Program Office and the newly created Joint Family Support Assistance Program.

These three programs host a network of trained service providers — government, non-government, veteran and volunteer agencies that consolidate all the resources available to Wisconsin service members. Their mission is to promote stability and



Vicki Edgren, Wisconsin State Family Program deputy director, speaks to family members and 32nd Brigade Soldiers at a mobilization briefing in Wausau in October. The Family Program has held more than 19 mobilization briefings around the state in support of the 32nd. Photo by Kelly Bradley



Sydney Kaluzny makes a craft at the Ready Family Seminar in Aug., in Madison. Youths were split into different age groups, with the oldest having a roundtable discussion about being in a military family.

Photo by Kelly Bradley

The three component programs can provide support not only to the servicemembers and their immediate families, but to parents, grandparents, siblings, etc. Employers can also look to the SMSB for information on their obligations to servicemembers during training and deployments.

The Badger Yellow Ribbon will host more than 15 Ready Family Events in 2009 throughout Wisconsin. These events cover an array of topics and are open to all service members and their families. They range from four to eight hours in length, with topics like combat stress and coping skills, time management and financial readiness. Family members can be reimbursed for mileage to the events and child care may even be provided for children under age six.

The Joint Family Support Assistance Program includes six primary agencies:

- The Military Family Assistance Center refers family members of deployed members to community organizations that offer services and support.
- The Transition Assistance Advisor provides information on benefits, education assistance, employment and other services.
- The Military One Source Consultant conducts outreach and coordinates partnerships with organizations to continually build a broader support group for military families.
- Military Family Life Consultants provide short-term and

success throughout the deployment process.

The SMSB will assist all deploying service members, especially those of the reserve components. National Guard and Reserve forces comprise the majority of the 12,000 Wisconsin servicemembers who have deployed since 2001.

The overall goal of the SMSB is to provide Wisconsin's service members and their families "mobile, high quality, effective and efficient assistance" throughout the deployment cycle as well as an avenue to access information and services that contribute to continued health and well-being.

"Many of the improvements already existed in Wisconsin, and we were actively using them," said Lt. Col. Meg Blankschein, SMSB chief. The new defense authorization act, she said, "allows us to expand these programs due to increased funding and staff."

The program places a heavy emphasis on programs to help Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines make successful transitions back into their families, lifestyles and civilian careers.



Maj. Carl Meredith and his wife, Nicole, enjoy some time together during the Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP). The class is designed to assist couples with reintegration and reunion by enhancing communication skills. *Photo by Carolyn Morgan*

solution-focused counseling to individuals, couples and families. They also provide life skills information and education, as well as referral to other community resources.

- The Child and Youth Consultant offers child development information and education and help with parenting techniques.

- Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve is a committee that provides education and consultation about employment and re-employment rights and responsibilities for Guard and Reserve servicemembers and their employers, and sometimes even mediates between the two.

The Family Program Office has been around for years supporting Wisconsin's military families. The office facilitates communication, involvement, support and recognition between families and service members. It also operates a 24-hour support line, at **(800) 292-9464**.

Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, Wisconsin's adjutant general, pledged his full support for the programs and said he expects Wisconsin's "operations tempo" to keep steady.

"Today what you have is an 'operational' Reserve," Gen. Dunbar said. "This program answers the question: 'How can I help?'"



Military family members register at the Ready Families Seminar, Aug. 19 in Madison. See the sidebar (below) for more Ready Family seminars. *Photo by Kelly Bradley*

Wisconsin stakeholders will soon sign Memorandums of Understanding to outline and solidify every organization's pledge to support Wisconsin's military families, said Col. Blankschein.

For more information on the many programs and services available to service members and their families, contact the SMSB at **(608) 242-3480** or go to **www.wingfam.org**. ■

2009 Service Member Support Branch Events

■ Prevention and Relationship Enhancement Program (PREP)

Apr. 17-19, 2009 Landmark Resort, Door County
May 15-17, 2009 Holiday Inn, Stevens Point

■ Premarital Interpersonal Choices & Knowledge (PICK)

Apr. 17-19, 2009 Landmark Resort, Door County

■ Family Readiness Group Training

May 16-17, 2009 Fort McCoy
Aug. 15-16, 2009 Camp Douglas

■ Military Kids Youth Camp

July 31-Aug. 2, 2009 Volk Field

■ Ready Family Connections and Ready Family Maintenance

Apr. 8, 2009	Oconomowoc	Info Session
May 1, 2009	Antigo	Info Session
May 2, 2009	Stevens Point	Info & Deployment
May 6, 2009	Hayward	Info Session
May 16, 2009	Milwaukee	Info & Deployment
May 29, 2009	Eau Claire	Info Session
May 30, 2009	Tomah	Info & Deployment
June 10, 2009	Madison	Finances
June 13, 2009	Appleton	Deployment Topics
July 15, 2009	Milwaukee	Deployment Topics
July 18, 2009	Eau Claire	Deployment Topics
Aug. 19, 2009	Rice Lake	Deployment Topics
Aug. 22, 2009	Wausau	Deployment Topics
Sep. 16, 2009	Tomahawk	Reunion Topics

For more information go to www.wingfam.org or call (608)-242-3480



ESGR supports troops, assists employers

By Maj. Jackie Guthrie
At Ease Staff

Answering the call to serve involves sacrifice not only for Guard members and their families but also for their employers. However, ESGR — the Wisconsin Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve — is here to help.

ESGR is part of a nationwide network of state committees established in 1972 by the Department of Defense. Its sole purpose is to gain and maintain active support from all public and private employers for the men and women of the National Guard and Reserves.

“Today, supportive employers are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the nation’s National Guard and Reserve units,” said retired Maj. Gen. Al Wilkening, chairman of Wisconsin ESGR. A retired commander of the Wisconsin National Guard, Wilkening brings to his job a wealth of experience on the challenges members of the Armed Forces face. Soldiers or Airmen who leave Wisconsin on military duty also leave their civilian jobs, and ESGR works to make that transition as smooth as possible for both service members and their employers, he said.

Since September 2001 more than 80 percent of Wisconsin Guard members have deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism; and with more than 3,500 Soldiers and Airmen mobilizing in 2009, ESGR takes that job seriously.

“The Guard and Reserve couldn’t work without the support of the employers of our men and women in uniform,” Wilkening said. “Employers have our profound thanks; they are making an important contribution — not only to the employees and their families — but also to the U.S. armed forces and to the security of the nation.”

Most of the committee’s work consists of explaining the vital role of the Guard and Reserves in the Global War on Terrorism and the reemployment rights that reservists have under the law.

The committee coordinates employer visits to military sites to see the important jobs service members do for their nation; educates service members on their obligations and responsibilities to employers; and recruits and develops volunteers to promote military-friendly personnel policies in the civilian world.

This year alone ESGR hosted “Open Armory Nights” in communities that house deploying units, to give employers a chance to meet local commanders, ESGR regional representatives and senior leaders of the Wisconsin National Guard. The goal is to keep employers informed about mobilization plans and training requirements, answer questions, listen to concerns and provide assistance with issues that may arise.

Employers show their support in a variety of ways, such as providing differential pay, continuing family medical benefits, sending care packages to deployed troops, providing transition assistance, and giving extra time off and even paid vacations. But the support doesn’t stop there.

“I have asked all Wisconsin employers to review and amend their current human resources policies to ensure compliance with USERRA, the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act,” said Wilkening. As a result more than 700 Wisconsin employers have publicly signed “Statements of Support” pledging to:

- Recognize, honor and enforce USERRA ;
- Equip managers and supervisors with the tools they need to effectively manage employees who serve in the Guard and Reserve; and
- Continually recognize and support



servicemembers and their families in peace, in crises and in war.

Gov. Jim Doyle pledged his support on behalf of the State of Wisconsin in May.

“When these brave men and women answer the call to serve, they leave their families, friends, and employers behind,” Doyle said. “They are making great sacrifices to serve their country – and they couldn’t do it without the tremendous support of their employers. As governor, I am pledging the state’s continued support of our Guard and Reserve troops.”

To recognize employers who support their citizen-Soldier employees, ESGR also sponsors a multi-tiered awards program.

Any service member can honor his or her employer with a Patriot Award certificate by completing a form online at the ESGR Web site, said Mike Smith, ESGR’s executive director.

“There are plenty of supportive employers out there who have not yet been recognized,” Smith said, “but they could be if their employees would go online and nominate them. It only takes about ten minutes. Every request will be honored, and this simple way to thank a boss can result in positive effects at the workplace.”

Annually the Wisconsin committee selects up to fifteen Patriot Award recipients for the Over and Above Award, and one of these also receives the Pro Patria Award, the highest recognition within the state.

In addition, the secretary of defense annually recognizes the nation’s 15 most supportive employers. Wisconsin companies so honored include Schneider National Trucking, American Family Insurance, Midwest Airlines, Miller Brewing and Harley Davidson, making the Badger State a leader in employer support.

Even with increased mobilizations, smart employers continue to seek out service members to work for their organizations, said Rob Reich, vice president of enterprise recruiting for Schneider National.

“What sets veterans apart is that they are accustomed to working in an ambiguous environment where they need to make decisions on their own,” Reich said. “This work experience is similar to the daily experiences a truck driver may face, because many work alone and make their own decisions on how best to get freight delivered to customers on time.”

Schneider is active in ESGR, encourages other employers to hire Guard and Reserve members, and supports employee participation in reserve component units.

“Schneider offers numerous programs for military employees, including extended benefits,” he said. “Soldiers maintain their benefits while on military leave and receive the difference between military pay, if less than their Schneider base pay, for 18 months.

“Schneider also supports families of deployed associates and guarantees associates’ jobs upon their return,” Reich said.

Schneider’s history of recruiting from the military dates back to 1935 when its founder, Al Schneider, a long-time member of the Wisconsin National Guard, recruited Guard members and veterans. ESGR would like to see all Wisconsin employers emulate that Schneider tradition. ■

ESGR and You

Communication is the key to building and maintaining employer support for members of the Guard, according to the executive director of the Wisconsin Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Guardmembers should “give as much notice as possible about mobilizations and deployments — and be up front about the possibility of date changes or cancellation of mobilization orders,” says Mike Smith, Wisconsin ESGR executive director.

You should also understand your rights, and your employer’s rights, under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act of 1994, Smith says. “Lack of knowledge is far more often the root cause of employer-employee conflict than intentional violations of the law,” he explains.

If your employer is not familiar with reemployment rights for reservists, you may benefit from providing the boss information about ESGR programs and USERRA — available at www.esgr.org.

ESGR gives information on the law to members of all seven reserve components, especially those preparing for deployment or recently returned. “Those who suspect they may have an issue at work are most likely to be listening to our message at those times,” according to Smith, “but troops should also be prepared for the unexpected.”

If the information is not needed now, Smith says, “put it in your ‘readiness kit.’”

If you feel your employer is not meeting the requirements of the law, ESGR can provide an ombudsman to help both sides reach a solution. The ESGR ombudsmen receive special training in interpreting the law and working as mediators.

“We’re not an advocate for either party,” Smith says. “We’re there as a mediator, helping to clarify what the law requires and trying to find a solution.”

If the dispute cannot be resolved through mediation, you have the right to take legal action by filing a civil suit in court or a labor law complaint through the Department of Labor.

“Fortunately, only a handful of cases go to that level,” Smith says.

Employers, he says, understand the increased reliance on the reserve components, and most of them want to support our defense efforts. At the same time, employers feel the impact of frequent deployments, especially when a critical employee is called away. Fortunately ESGR stands ready to help employees and employers and can be reached at 1-800-336-4590 or www.esgr.org.

WHAT'S IN THE CARDS?

Equipment: Brand-new gear, and lots of it!

By William Matthews

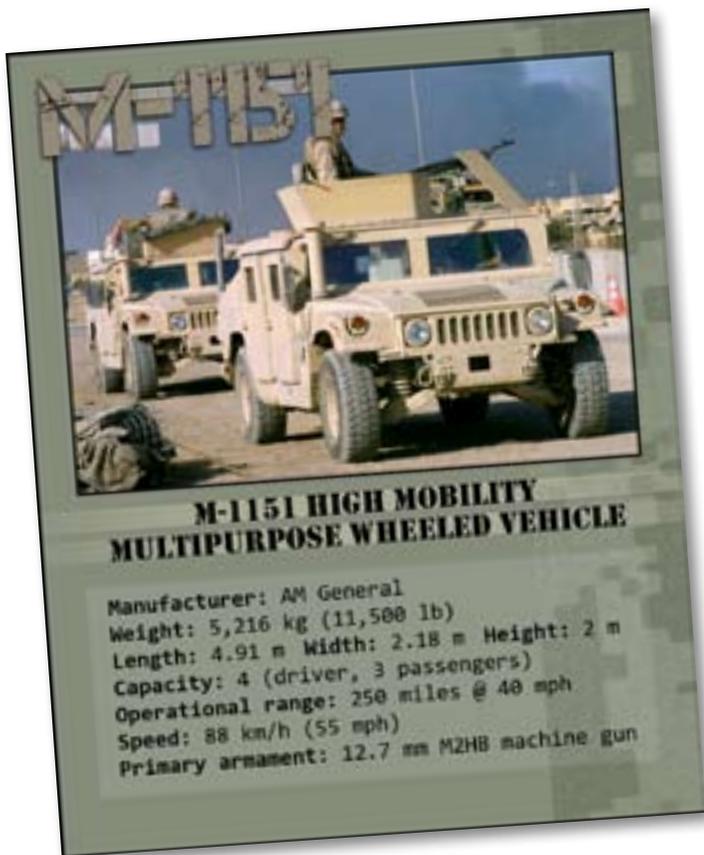
Originally featured in January 2009 National Guard magazine; reprinted with the magazine's and the author's permission.

Almost every morning lately, when Col. Elizabeth Austin arrives at work at the North Carolina National Guard headquarters in Raleigh, there's at least one tractor trailer full of new Guard equipment waiting for her.

Often, there's an empty tractor trailer too, waiting to load up obsolete equipment and haul it away.

For Austin, the North Carolina Guard's logistics director, these are clear signs of big changes that are coming to the National Guard.

After years of skimpy budgets and chronic equipment shortages — problems made worse by six years of war — the National Guard is starting to arm and modernize in a big way.



Equipment is streaming in to certain Guard units (including those in Wisconsin), and over the next seven years, Guard officials say they expect \$34.1 billion worth of new gear to be delivered to Army Guard units nationwide.

It will be a wide range of new weapons and materiel, from the most modern digital M-1 tanks and unmanned aerial vehicles to the newest armored security vehicles and WIN-T satellite communications systems. There's a lot of more ordinary gear on the way as well — night vision systems, thermal sights, small arms, radios, trucks, helicopters and more.

At the National Guard Bureau, they're calling it "the equipping tidal wave."

"That's not an official name," said Paul Brown, the Army Guard's deputy chief of logistics. It's just the best description of what's beginning to happen.

It's not obvious in a lot of places yet.

Officials at the Maryland National Guard, for example, say they're not inundated with new gear. Nor is Texas or Indiana.

But by 2010 that will change, Guard Bureau officials assure. And they have assembled an Army National Guard Equipping Working Group to help the states deal with the deluge.

"A lot of the states don't have experience dealing with the quantity or some of the systems" they're going to be receiving, said Joe Billman, a consulting specialist with Serco, Inc., a Virginia-based professional services firm hired to help navigate the equipment tidal wave.

"It's very important that we follow disciplined business practices or we will lose control of the fielding process," a Guard Bureau document warns.

It's not as easy as simply opening the armory gate to let the tractor trailers in.

Guard leaders in the states have to start thinking ahead — and soon, Billman said.

The working group has developed an eight-category check list to help Guard units prepare for "the mass influx of new equipment."

First the states need to find out what equipment they're going to be receiving and in what quantity. The Guard Bureau has a pretty good idea of that.

Once they know what they'll receive, states next must figure out whether they'll need new personnel, and how much additional training will be needed for current Guard soldiers.

Then: Will new equipment need new maintenance and storage facilities? Will environmental assessments be necessary? What will units do with old and obsolete gear?

And who's going to pay for all this?

Last fall the equipping working group began working through these questions with three states: Minnesota, which has a large Army Guard and combat units; Missouri, which has a medium-sized Guard presence; and Alabama, whose Army Guard is dominated by combat support and combat service support units.

Experience with those three states will help set procedures for dealing with equipment flowing into the rest of the states and territories, Billman said.

So what's coming? Everything.

Unmanned aerial vehicles; M-1 tanks with digital command and control suites; Win-T high-speed, high-capacity communications gear; the Army Battle Command System, Prophet battlefield electronics surveillance systems; digital topographic support systems for computerized terrain analysis and map-making.

It's not all about high technology, though.

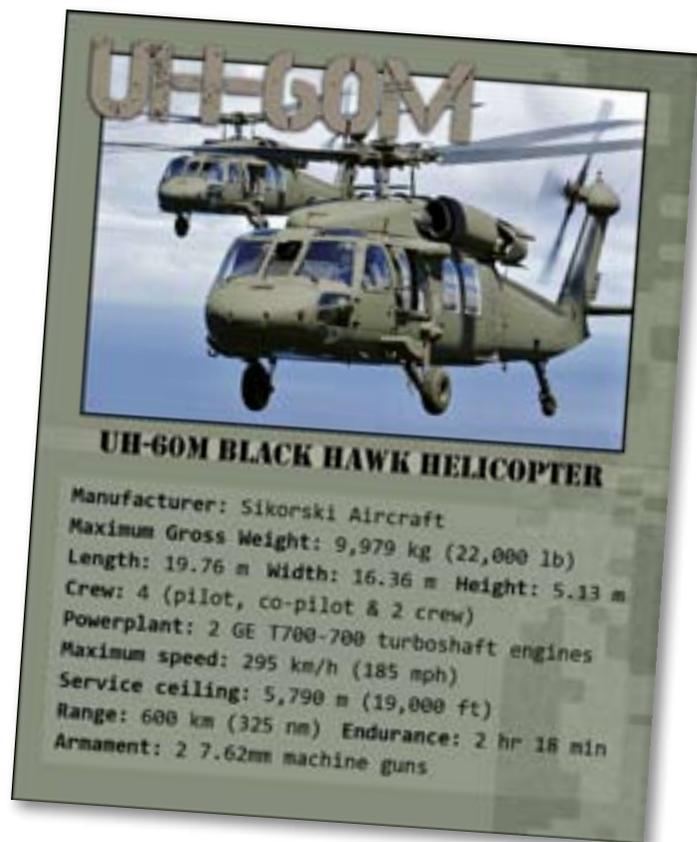
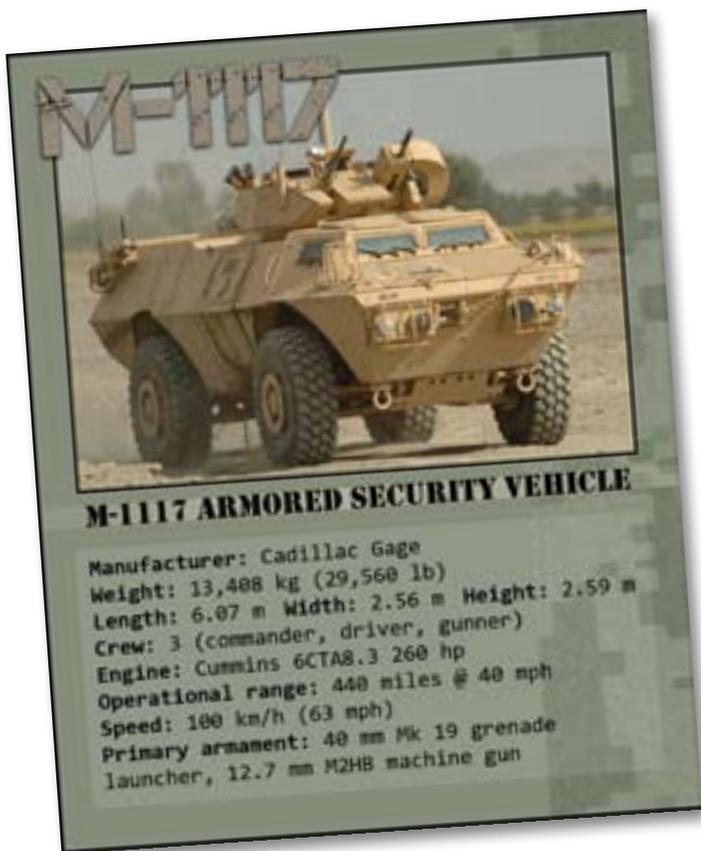
Army Guard units will also be receiving fire trucks, medium and heavy tactical vehicles, tactical trailers, armored security vehicles, helicopters, field hospitals, field kitchens, SINCGARS (Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System) radios, generators, M-4 rifles, pistols and more.

Lt. Gen. H Steven Blum, who stepped down as chief of the National Guard Bureau in November, said the Army has to agree on 342 line items of equipment that the Guard will receive.

The goal is to provide Guard units with at least 77 percent of their authorized equipment by 2013.

That compares to the Guard's 75-percent equipment level prior to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Over the next seven years as more Guard units went to war in Afghanistan and Iraq, equipment levels fell dramatically, leaving some states with as little as 40 percent of their required gear.

Ultimately, the Guard hopes to equip its units to 100 percent



of authorized levels, and the Army has agreed to that goal, said Col. Michael Fortune, the Army Guard's chief of materiel operations at the Guard Bureau.

But reaching 100 percent won't be easy. "Requirements continue to grow, equipment becomes obsolete, there will be battle losses and damage," Fortune said. In addition, the Guard is likely to have to leave some equipment behind in Iraq as U.S. forces withdraw in 2009, 2010 and possibly later.

"So even though we'll have all this money pouring in, we'll still be fighting a battle" to ensure that equipment arrivals outpace losses, Fortune said.

Maj. Jim Jones, a member of Guard Bureau's equipping working group, said the plan is to have all maneuver brigade combat teams fully equipped by 2015 and all support brigades fully equipped by 2019.

But even Blum's vision of an Army Guard with 77 percent of its authorized equipment by 2013 would be an enormous improvement.

In early 2007, Blum warned the House Armed Services Committee that some states had as little as 40 percent of the equipment needed to respond to domestic emergencies and 49 percent of what was required for war.

A year later the picture had improved substantially.

In April 2008 Blum testified to Congress that Guard units on average had 61 percent of the equipment they needed, and would have about 65 percent by the end of the year.

"Real, tangible money was authorized and appropriated," explained Blum, who has since been assigned as deputy commander of the U.S. Northern Command.

In 2005 the Army Guard received just \$1.7 billion for equipment. In 2006 that sum jumped to \$4.1 billion. By 2007 it was \$7 billion. Funding for 2008 dropped back to \$4.2 billion in the regular defense budget, but at least \$2.7 billion more for

equipment was included in wartime emergency supplemental appropriations.

For 2009, Army Guard equipment funding is \$5.9 billion in the regular budget with more to come in supplementals.

Defense Secretary Robert Gates assured the Senate Armed Services Committee last year, "We will push \$17.5 billion worth of equipment to the Guard over the next 24 months."

The equipment itself will arrive more slowly.

Once ordered, it typically takes two to seven years for weapons to be built and delivered, according to the National Guard Bureau. So equipment bought with the big 2007 funding increase won't start arriving until sometime in 2009, and some of it will still be straggling in 2013.

The crest of the tidal wave won't sweep over the Guard until mid-2010, said Fortune, the materiel chief.

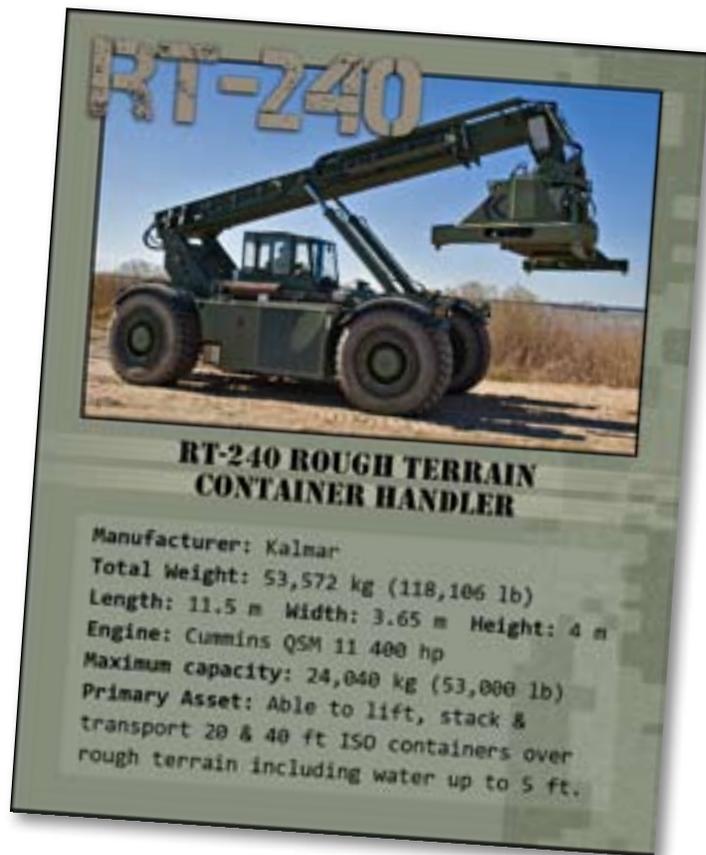
Blum said the 2013 goal of an Army Guard equipped to 77 percent of authorized levels will produce a much better force than the equipment percentage implies.

"That 77 percent is not hand-me-down equipment. It's first-line, brand new state-of-the-art equipment, so the capabilities of the Guard will be much higher than the 77 percent would suggest. The quality increase is substantially higher than that," he said.

The intent is to make Army Guard units as much like their active-duty Army counterparts as possible, said Brown, the Army Guard deputy logistics chief.

"It shouldn't matter to a combatant commander if an active brigade or a Guard brigade shows up." They should be interchangeable, he said.

That means Guard combat brigades must become proficient with the same weapons and technology that the active-duty Army uses. One such piece is the RQ-7 Shadow tactical unmanned aerial vehicle.



This 11-foot-long aircraft has a 14-foot wingspan, and can cruise more than two miles above a battlefield for six hours, providing U.S. commanders with real-time video images to locate targets, spot enemy locations and watch enemy movements day and night.

Guard crews will have to learn to operate and maintain the Shadow's digitally-stabilized, liquid nitrogen-cooled electro-optical camera and infrared sensor.

And to handle the Shadow's sensitive technology, some Shadow crew members will be required to obtain top secret clearances. That will be a challenge, Fortune said.

"These people are cream of the crop intel-wise. They're hard to recruit and hard to hang on to," he said.

Shadow training begins with 10 weeks of equipment training. Then comes 21 more weeks of training for operators and 44 more weeks for maintainers, Fortune said.

Another high-tech item with demanding training requirements is the Prophet battlefield signals intelligence and electronic warfare system.

Prophet is a Humvee-based system of mobile antennas and electronic signals receivers. Its mission is to detect, identify, locate, track and electronic communications signals on a battlefield.

In addition to 44 weeks of learning to operate the system, some Prophet crews will have to learn foreign languages, Fortune said. Language school is 18 weeks.

Then there's DTTS, the Digital Topographic Support System. It's a truck full of gear that gathers geospatial information — maps, photos, infrared images, topographical data and the like — and turns it into usable hard copy and digital battlefield maps.



NEW EQUIPMENT INFLUX

By Robert Giblin
At Ease Staff

Wisconsin is among the first states to receive what's described as a "tidal wave" by officials at the national level. Here in the Badger State, it seems more like a Great Lakes seiche — a large, persistent swell sustained by the prevailing climate.

"It's bigger than I ever imagined, and it has been a long time coming," said Chief Warrant Officer Philip Kilbane, Wisconsin's force integration readiness officer. Like a gathering seiche, the influx of new gear to Wisconsin units, which has already started, is causing some ripples — challenges that Wisconsin Guard units and their Soldiers are delighted to have.

The influx not only will bring equipment that Wisconsin Guard units never had, but some units may see new structure, facilities and skill sets. For example, Wisconsin's military intelligence unit — Company B, Brigade Special Troops Battalion — is slated to receive the Shadow, a power-launched unmanned aircraft system. The Shadow requires special storage facilities, and its Soldiers will have to be able to transport the aircraft to Fort McCoy or other areas with the restricted airspaces where it can be flown. To operate the system, the unit will have to fill slots and train Soldiers in a new military occupational specialty.

The 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team already has received a lot of new equipment, ranging from new weapons to the Raven, a smaller, hand-launched unmanned aircraft, which was issued to the infantry battalions.

The long list of additional new equipment Wisconsin Army National Guard units are receiving includes:

- Small arms, from the 9 mm pistol to the M-2 machine gun, and everything in between.
- Warfighters Information Network-Tactical (WIN-T) communications system, and the Secure Mobile Anti-Jam Reliable Tactical Terminal (SMART-T).
- Personnel Services Delivery Redesign (PSDR)

DTTS is something the Guard hasn't had before, Fortune said. So units that receive it will start from scratch recruiting and training crews.

WIN-T, the new high-speed, high-capacity digital communications network, requires a shorter training period — 13 weeks — but many more troops must be trained to use it, Fortune said.

Training is just one task Guard units must tackle. Some new equipment will require new facilities — new hangars, maintenance bays and storage areas.

Shadow UAVs, for example, have "storage issues." They require "unique facilities," Jones said. They will also require

system to manage personnel issues at the unit level.

- UH-60M utility helicopters and UH-60A medical evacuation helicopters. (See *related story on page 70.*)
- Numerous battlefield communications systems.
- New vehicles, including various configurations of up-armored Humvees.
- High Mobility Artillery Rocket System (HIMARS), which replaces the Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS).

Kilbane said the new equipment should add some excitement at all levels, including the motor pool and maintenance. "Think back to the days when we used

to have the Number One Common Tool Set in the motor pool. Soldiers would have to fabricate something to haul it and load it on trucks," he said.

"Now, they're going to have the Standard Automatic Tool Set with a

trailer-mounted CONEX container. It's complete, and not just home-made." CONEX containers are large, steel shipping containers that can be loaded and sealed on ships, trucks, airplanes and railroad cars.

Wisconsin also is receiving the Forward Repair System, a flat-rack system with a crane, generator, CONEX, welder, compressor and other tools designed to be hauled on the back of a palletized load system. "It's like a maintenance shop that can be dropped into place in the field. They can open the doors, complete repairs and pick it up and move it," said Kilbane.

The new Set Equipment Contact Maintenance (SECM) system is mounted on an up-armored Humvee.

While some new equipment is already in place, other equipment will arrive over the next several years, said Kilbane. "Several factors will have an impact on how quickly new equipment arrives, but in general, the timeline is: first to deploy; next to deploy; and everyone else. There are still going to be some units with equipment shortages in the short term, but their turn is coming. From a new equipment standpoint, we're going to be very, very busy for the next few years."

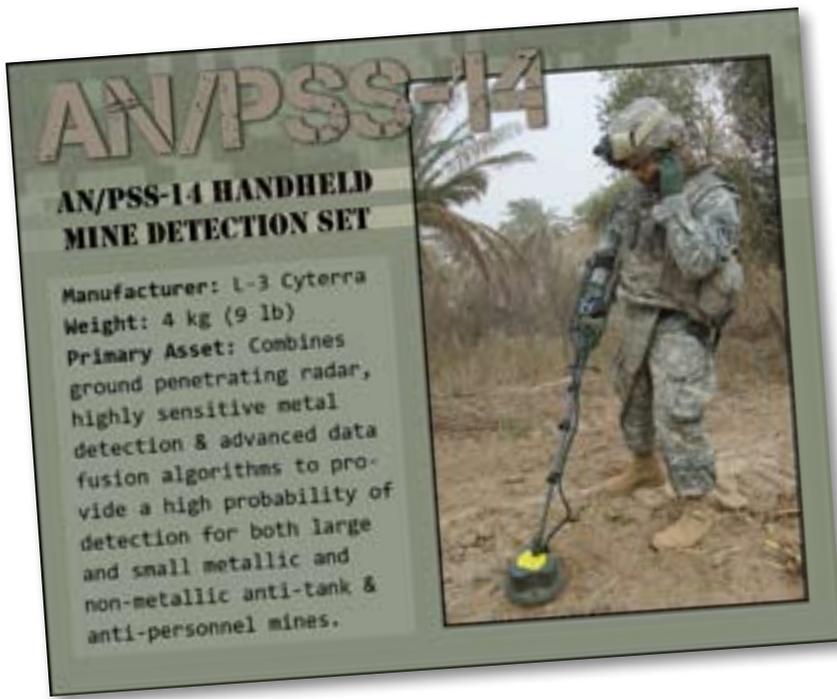
restricted airspace for flying.

New trucks and armored vehicles won't fit in some of the Guard's current maintenance facilities. Some new battlefield systems will require greater security than is provided for existing Guard gear. And some new acquisitions, such as chemical and biological warfare gear, will require environmental impact assessments.

The Equipping Working Group's job is to anticipate these hurdles and help Guard officials in the states overcome them. In the coming year, the working group will urge Guard leaders in the states to begin developing detailed equipment fielding plans that run through 2015.

"From a new equipment standpoint, we're going to be very, very busy for the next few years."

~ Chief Warrant Officer Philip Kilbane



“It’s like synchronizing an opera,” said Tony Skivo of the working group. “Everyone has to be brought in at the right time.”

It’s been an opera with little drama so far for the North Carolina National Guard. New equipment has been arriving at an accelerating pace for about a year, said Austin, the state logistics director.

The state was pushed to the front of the new equipment receiving line because its 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team is preparing to deploy to Iraq this spring. A steady stream of new gear for the 30th includes night vision equipment, thermal sights, radios and new trucks. The state has received some armored Humvees for training purposes, as well as WIN-T communications equipment and Prophet electronic warfare gear for the coming deployment, Austin said.

“We have been building new maintenance shops” to accommodate new maintenance requirements and because some new equipment wouldn’t fit into old work bays, she said.

“It’s been challenging,” Austin said, but North Carolina Guard leaders are determined to make it work. “If parking is an issue, we’ll find a place to park it. If security is a problem, we’ll find a way to secure it. North Carolina’s not going to turn away any piece of equipment the Army throws at us,” Austin declared.

Second in the equipment receiving line after states with units that are preparing to deploy to war are states with C-CMRFs — Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear-Consequence Management Response Forces. These units are critical for responding to terrorist attacks and other disasters in the United States.

Hurricane-prone states are third in line, Fortune said. They’re followed by states with units that are likely, but not yet designated, to deploy overseas.

This \$34 billion equipment tidal wave was a long time coming.

It took years for Blum and Lt. Gen Clyde Vaughn, director of the Army Guard, to convince the Army and “educate” the Congress about the Guard’s dire equipment needs, Brown said.

The National Guard Association of the United States was part of that effort, too, returning to Capitol Hill year after year with long lists of unfunded Guard equipment requirements.

“The National Guard is being used more that at any time since World War II,” Brown said. Finally, the Army now recognizes that Guard units “have to be equipped just as well as the active component,” he said.

Defense Secretary Gates has been convinced, too.

“Spending on Guard equipment, critical because of its dual use for overseas and homeland missions, is projected to be at \$32 billion over the next four fiscal years,” Gates told cheering Guardsmen at the National Guard Association conference in Baltimore last September.

“As a result, nearly 80 percent of Army National Guard equipment on hand will be fully modernized by the end of fiscal year 2013. For the first time ever, the Guard will receive the latest equipment provided to the active force, a change that is long overdue,” Gates said.

With Gates on board, what could go wrong?

Well, the defense budget for one thing.

With the U.S. economy in recession and a new president in office, how solid are the promises to spend tens of billions of dollars on Guard equipment over the next five to seven years?

“You can really only count on the execution year,” Brown said, referring to the 2009 budget that’s already been locked into law. The 2010 budget seems pretty safe, too. It’s in the final stages of drafting and is probably far enough along that it won’t be changed dramatically, he said. It will be sent to Congress in early February.

But 2011 and beyond are a lot less certain. “In the out years, things could be at risk,” Brown conceded. ■



M 107



M 107 ANTI-MATERIEL RIFLE

Manufacturer: Barrett Firearms Company
 Weight: 13.6 kg (29.98 lb)
 Length: 1450 mm (57.1 in)
 Cartridge: .50 BMG (12.7 x 99 mm NATO)
 Action: Recoil operated, rotating bolt
 Effective range: 1,850 m (1.45 mi)
 Maximum range: 6,800 m (4.23 mi)
 Feed System: 10 round detachable magazine
 Optics: Leupold 4.5 x 14 Vari-X scope

FGM-148



FGM-148 JAVELIN ANTI-TANK MISSILE

Manufacturer: Lockheed Martin & Raytheon
 Total Weight: 18.2 kg (40.1 lb)
 Length: 1.2 m Diameter: 1.27 m
 Crew: 2 (gunner, ammo bearer)
 Propulsion: 2 stage solid fuel rocket
 Guidance System: Infrared homing
 Effective Range: 2,500 m (1.5 mi)
 Warhead: 8.4 kg tandem shaped charge
 Detonation Mechanism: Impact force

HIMARS



HIGH MOBILITY ARTILLERY ROCKET SYSTEM

Manufacturer: Lockheed Martin & Armor Holdings
 Total weight: 10,886 kg (24,000 lb)
 Length: 7 m Width: 2.4 m Height: 3.2 m
 Crew: 3 (driver, gunner, section chief)
 Operational Range: 480 km (298 mi)
 Speed: 85 km/h (53 mph)
 Primary armament: Six MLRS series rockets or one ATACMS missile

MVC 910



MVC 910 MINE CLEARING VEHICLE

Manufacturer: Hydresa
 Weight: 18,000 kg (39,600 lb)
 Length: 8.5 m Width: 2.8 m Height: 2.7 m
 Crew: 2 (driver, flail operator)
 Engine: 2 Perkins 1006-6TW 178 hp each
 Speed: 35 km/h (22 mph)
 Primary Asset: 400 rpm rotating weighted chain flail capable of clearing a path 3.5 m wide at up to 12 km/h (7.5 mph)



Above: A Wisconsin Guard UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter carries Gov. Jim Doyle, Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the heads of FEMA , and the Small Business Administrator on an aerial tour of flooded lands along the Interstate 90/94 corridor June 14, 2008. *Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman*

Right: Spc. Jeremy Smith opens a barricade to let a Humvee through a traffic control point near Madison June 13. The Soldiers are members of Troop B, 1st Squadron, 105th Cavalry, tasked with diverting northbound traffic on the Interstate because of high waters during the June 2008 flooding. *Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman*

Flood relief a joint effort

Larry Sommers
At Ease Staff

After 2007, you'd think the rain would find somewhere else to fall.

No such luck, as the skies opened up again in June 2008: Rivers and creeks lost track of their banks, corn crops drowned, and piled-up waters gnawed at the footings of earthen and concrete dams.

The Wisconsin National Guard — of course — took the call.

In just a few days, more than 30 southern and central Wisconsin counties were seriously affected by the storms of early June.

On Monday, June 9, Lake Delton drained itself. The dam that pens up the lake held fast, but a nearby causeway was eaten through. Property owners watched their lakeside houses drift down a 600-million-gallon torrent that emptied the resort lake into the Wisconsin River in two hours.

At the same time, dams and bridges were under threat in many places, and more than 100 roads were impassable due to high waters.

The 147th Command Aviation Battalion sent out three UH-60 Black Hawk helicopters for aerial damage assessments to aid local decision-makers in Sauk, Dodge and Vernon counties, and the 32nd Infantry Brigade provided a water buffalo to the city of Reedsburg. With more than a hundred Guard members already on duty, Wisconsin requested an RC-26 aircraft from Mississippi with special sensors and live download, to replace the state's own RC-26, which was deployed for overseas operations at the time.

The Mississippi plane arrived the next day. After offloading a special antenna, which was swiftly installed on the roof of Joint Force Headquarters in Madison, the RC-26 took to the sky and sent back real-time images of the Lake Delton devastation and trouble spots all over the state. (*See story, p. 51.*)

The National Guard Joint Operations Center and the State Emergency Operations Center, located side-by-side at Joint Force Headquarters in Madison, coordinated a wide-ranging civil and military response, as Guard members delivered more than half a million sandbags from storage at Volk Field to endangered sites; helped fill and place some of those sandbags; brought cots, meals and drinking water to citizens displaced from their normal lives;



assessed flood damage and evaluated the stability of threatened dams and highways; flew UH-60 helicopter missions to give officials an overview of the flooding; re-routed traffic when highways were closed by flood waters; and repaired washed-out roads.

Wisconsin Air Guard units participating in the response were the 128th Air Control Squadron, the 115th Fighter Wing, and Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center. On the Army side, members of the 229th Engineer Company, the 106th Quarry Team, the 924th Engineer Detachment, the 257th Brigade Support Battalion, the 832nd Medical Company, the 32nd Military Police Company, the 107th Maintenance Company, the 147th Aviation Battalion, the 105th Cavalry (*see sidebar*) and the 132nd Brigade Support Battalion provided timely assistance. In addition, the 54th Civil Support Team and the Counterdrug Program, both joint organizations, took part. From outside Wisconsin, the state received assistance from the Mississippi Air National Guard's 186th Air Refueling Wing and a Joint Enabling Team sent by National Guard Bureau to assist with flood response operations. ■

How do we get there from here??

That was the question of the day on June 11 for several members of the Wisconsin National Guard. Motorists across Wisconsin, particularly in south central portions of the state where the flooding was at its worst, had to find alternate routes to their destinations due to closed interstate and other highways.

Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 105th Cavalry, were called up to provide assistance to the Wisconsin State Patrol as its resources were being stretched thin due to the closures.

"Our mission is to control access to the interstate in the wake of the flooding," said Pfc. Brad Hopwood, a forward observer with the 105th Cavalry in Madison. "While we are here to control access, we have also become detour directions specialists by helping drivers with alternative routes."

Wisconsin National Guard were called to help respond to flooding in ways that ranged from sandbagging to aerial reconnaissance to traffic control. All contributed to the entire mission the Guard was called in to do, said Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general.

"This is my second disaster relief mission on an interstate," said Hopwood, a traditional guardsman who was called out to assist stranded motorists during a major snowstorm in early February. "After doing the snow storm disaster relief, I learned better situational awareness skills to keep what I need to keep under control; that has helped me on the current mission."

Guard members controlled checkpoints along almost 100 miles of Interstate Highways 90, 94 and 39 during the June floods, freeing up the State Patrol and other authorities for disaster relief roles.

By Tech. Sgt. Don Nelson
115th Fighter Wing

EYE IN THE SKY



Mission system operator Lt. Col. Tim Howell from the 186th Air Refueling Wing, Meridian, Miss., operates a console aboard an RC-26 aircraft, specifically designed for viewing and transmitting high quality video and still imagery to military and civilian operations centers in real time.

Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Richardson

RC-26 delivers live video to civil responders

By Tech. Sgt. Don Nelson
115th Fighter Wing

Flying at 8,000 feet above flood-ravaged Wisconsin in mid-June, Wisconsin National Guard members got a lift from Guard units in Mississippi and Arkansas and provided “eyes in the sky” to help with disaster relief efforts.

Heavy rains left Wisconsin rivers and lakes swollen and in many cases the surrounding areas flooded. With disaster relief efforts ongoing, the Madison-based 115th Fighter Wing worked with the Mississippi Air National Guard’s 186th Air Refueling Wing to bring an RC-26 from Mississippi that could fly over a flooded area and send back live video and still pictures. With technical help from the Arkansas Guard’s 314th Airlift Wing, the aircraft flew over more than 25 locations across Wisconsin for on-the-spot assessments of the flood situation.

The Mississippi plane was sent on short notice as a substitute for Wisconsin’s own RC-26, which was deployed in the Global War on Terror.

It was a more advanced version of a similar mission Wisconsin Air Guard members undertook during Hurricane Katrina relief efforts. At that time, Wisconsin Task Force Katrina used an RC-26 to photograph bridges, highways and associated infrastructure in and around New Orleans. The Katrina mission required the RC-26 crew to land the plane in order to process the photos, but the June mission in Wisconsin took advantage of a “Katrina Mod” that allows for instantaneous transmission of images and video.

FULL-SCALE DISASTER

The modification was tested in 2007 in support of the California and Florida wildfires. The Wisconsin floods mission was the first full-scale use of the technology in a disaster. The system helped coordinate relief efforts by providing immediate assessments of flooded areas including highways, bridges and dams.

Real-time images were sent to an antenna array temporarily set up on the roof of Joint Force Headquarters in Madison. Inside the building, the Wisconsin Joint Operations Center and the state Emergency Operations Center used the still and motion images, to coordinate relief and recovery efforts.

“It’s all about accurate information,” said Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general of Wisconsin. “With this type of aircraft able to stream live video to the governor holding a cabinet meeting or a county official meeting with first responders, they can see first hand exactly what’s going on and figure out how to deploy their assets in the best way possible.”

The RC-26’s normal mission includes drug interdiction support for local and state law enforcement agencies.

“The communications and the relationships we have built



RC-26 Pilots Lt. Col. Scott Craver, left, of the 186th Air Refueling Wing, Meridian, Miss., and Lt. Col. Steve Dunai of the 115th Fighter Wing, Madison, fly an initial flood awareness assessment mission in the skies over Wisconsin in June. Imagery captured during this mission was used to assess the integrity of several area dams and provide flood damage assessment in the hardest hit regions of the southern half of the state.

Photo by Master Sgt. Dan Richardson

up over the years doing the counter-drug missions in Wisconsin apply directly to emergency response situations,” said Lt. Col. Stephen Dunai, RC-26 program manager for the 115th Operations Group. “This greatly enhances our ability to provide support whenever called upon.”

FIXED-WING ADVANTAGE

While officials commonly use helicopters in assessing damage over a particular area, the RC-26 offers advantages when there is widespread damage.

“The RC-26 is a fixed-wing aircraft which can get to the scene fairly quickly and can easily be redirected to other sites that officials would like to see,” said Col. Dave Romuald, 115th Operations Group commander.

Summer storms in Wisconsin created a need for rapid visual data to emergency responders, Dunbar said, and providing that data was the primary goal of the mission.

“It is not about the particular cause of the event, whether it is Mother Nature or a terrorist threat; it is about all-hazards response, and this capability for homeland defense is irreplaceable,” Dunbar said. ■

Raise Your Right Hand



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1. Rachel, Julie, and Amanda Zalusky, not necessarily in that order, effortlessly achieve a blended look on a January drill weekend. The Pine River triplets, seniors at Weyauwega High School, enlisted in the Wisconsin Army National Guard last fall and enthusiastically attend drills of their Recruit Sustainment Program company while awaiting a September 2009 ship date for Basic Training and Advanced Individual Training. They have three siblings, two older brothers and a younger sister, who all have joined the Guard within the past two years. Rachel, Julie, and Amanda were born in 1991... on July 4 — no kidding. *Photo supplied*

2. Capt. Jeremy O'Leary administers the reenlistment oath to Pfc. Daryal L. Butkovich at his workplace, Holiday Automotive in Fond du Lac, May 8, 2008. Butkovich, a member of the 108th Forward Support Company, Sussex, "reenlisted for 6 years knowing he is going to get deployed in 2009," said Sgt. 1st Class Donald E. Grundy.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Donald E. Grundy

3. Brig. Gen. Anderson presides over a pre-race Wisconsin Army National Guard re-enlistment ceremony, June 20, 2009, at the Milwaukee Mile. *Photo by Sgt. Jessica Sosa*

4. Capt. John Matz, left, a member of the Winnebago County Sheriff's Department, receives the oath of enlistment in the Wisconsin Army National Guard from Maj. John Oakley. Matz, a 21-year Guard veteran, chose to re-join the Guard in order to deploy to Iraq alongside his 18-year-old son Johnathon as a first sergeant in 1st Battalion, 120th Field Artillery, a unit of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

Photo by 2nd Lt. Johnny K. Simmons

5. New 128th Air Refueling Wing recruit Justin Henrichs, 18, is the fourth member of his immediate family to currently serve in the unit. Mom, Janice, and dad, Craig, are both master sergeants working in Maintenance, while sister, Kristin, is a staff sergeant working in Finance. *Photo by Senior Airman Nathan Wallin*

6. Country singer Laura Bryna, "the new voice of the Air National Guard," enjoys an orientation flight in a Wisconsin National Guard KC-135 Stratotanker July 16. Tech. Sgt. Pete Gauwerke, center, was the boom operator for the refueling mission, while Master Sgt. Rob Trubia captured images of the action. Bryna and other passengers were invited along on the scheduled refueling mission to gain an understanding of the role the 128th Air Refueling Wing and the Wisconsin National Guard play in the war-on terrorism.

Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Rohloff



2008 By the Numbers:

250
new
Airmen

1,680
new
Soldiers

101.7%
Army Guard
strength

101%
Air Guard
strength

101.7% 101%

Wisconsin Army National Guard

Wisconsin Air National Guard



MILWAUKEE AIRMEN
PROVIDE SECURITY IN
AFGHANISTAN

Story by Senior Airman Ryan Kuntze
Photos by Staff Sgt. Nathan Wallin
128th Air Refueling Wing

Thirty-two members of the Security Forces Squadron, 128th Air Refueling Wing, departed for Afghanistan in early July. This is the squadron's third deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and the largest deployment for the squadron in recent years.

Securing mission-critical flight line areas is job one for the deployed element, but another frequent mission is mobile security for individual aircraft and assigned air crew. As an additional task, members carry out security escort operations for personnel whose duty assignments take them off base.

Support for the deployed members is very generous, with families and the military community providing an essential link to those home experiences that can, at times, seem too distant while overseas. The 128th Family Support Program maintains constant and courteous telephone and email contact with stateside family members. Moreover, Family Support personnel were proactive in giving calling cards to deployed members and providing spouses with a list of volunteers willing to mitigate the stresses of everyday household maintenance.

All deployed Security Forces personnel returned in early 2009. ■



Opposite Page: Ellen Swanson waves good-bye to her son, Senior Airman Travis Swanson, at the 128th Security Forces send-off ceremony in July.

Above: Senior Airman Matthew Schmidt holds his niece, Emma Grace Staples, while she makes a call before the 128th's send-off ceremony.

Left: Senior Airman Travis Swanson gives a lift to, Lindsay Sobczak, after returning from his deployment in February.

Below: Family members are ready to welcome home their Airman at the welcome home ceremony.





Left: Capt. Kenneth Van Horn, 54th Civil Support Team, explains the operation of an anthrax laboratory to military and civilian Weapons of Mass Destruction responders attending the annual Red Dragon exercise, Fort McCoy, Wis., Aug., 2008.

Photo by Officer Candidate Emily Yttri

Below: Sgts. Mark Warren, and Austin Ryan, transport equipment to the decontamination site during a training exercise simulating a chemical incident. Soldiers are participating in Exercise Viking Shield 08, that brings together CST teams from four states and several federal and state governmental agencies.

Army Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Mark Bell



WHO YA GONNA CALL? 54TH CST THREAT BUSTERS!

By Sgt. Matt Tracy
54th Civil Support Team

Madison's joint Army and Air National Guard weapons of mass destruction unit, the 54th Civil Support Team, combined training scenarios and real-world missions for a fast-paced 2008.

Training missions included a January trip to the Y12 National Security Complex in Oak Ridge, Tenn., for extensive radiation training and practice; a May joint exercise with the Coast Guard and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources in Green Bay, focused on a simulated water-borne emergency in Lake Michigan; an October unit-level exercise in Wisconsin Dells based on a simulated WMD incident at an Easter Seals camp; and a training scenario in November that included Illinois' 5th Civil Support Team and various local hazardous materials responders.

In April, the 54th CST was called to Richland County to help identify – rapidly and safely – suspected hazardous materials found on a compound owned by a person recently involved in a confrontation with law officers.

Some team missions involve chemical, biological and radiological protection for dignitaries visiting Wisconsin and nearby venues. Such visitors included the Dalai Lama in July, and a full complement of presidential candidates through the political season. The 54th worked with federal agencies to make sure all stops on the campaign trail were secure. The unit's real-world operations culminated in the Republican National Convention at St. Paul, Minn., Sept. 1-4, where the 54th trained and worked with the U.S. Department of Energy, FBI, Secret Service and civil support teams from Indiana and Minnesota to keep the proceedings safe. ■

At the end of a political rally in Madison, 2008, Sgt. 1st Class John Oehme and Sgt. Mark Warren retrieve a sample from an air capture device. The sample was tested for the presence of biological contaminants. Photo by 54th Civil Support Team



LEARNING FOR LIFE

TECHNICAL COLLEGES, GUARD TEAM UP FOR LIFE-CHANGING GED PROGRAM

By **Todd Finkelmeyer**
The Capital Times
(Reprinted with permission)

Steven Nelson admits he was on the fast track to nowhere. So the 23-year-old former high school dropout finally decided it was time to peel himself off his mother's couch and attempt to alter the course of his life.

"I can pretty much say there was a moment, an epiphany, for me," said Nelson, who dropped out of high school five years ago because he got tired of the two-hour bus ride -- each way -- to attend the Milwaukee School of Entrepreneurship. "I was sitting at my mother's house, and I saw an Army commercial, and my brother starts going off about, 'I can't see anybody doing that. That just seems so stupid to me.'"

"And I was like, 'You know what, if I don't do something like that I'm probably going to end up 10 years from now sitting on my mother's couch and looking at Army commercials. So it was like, 'Let's do this.'"

While joining the Wisconsin Army National Guard late this summer was the first step toward starting a new life for Nelson, he credits "Learning for Life" -- an intense two-week GED

preparation and career advising project run by both the Guard and staff at Madison Area Technical College -- for giving him an exciting new outlook on his future.

"I guess what's taken me by surprise is, I didn't know until we were finished with the first group of students in June that this project was going to be a life-changing event for some people," said Jane Griswold, MATC's basic skills training liaison who worked with the Wisconsin National Guard to implement the Learning for Life program. "These are individuals without high school diplomas who had experienced some measure of failure in various ways in their life. And completing this program is a license to feel like they can be productive and successful for the rest of their lives."

In order to complete basic training and become active with the National Guard, a person either needs a high school diploma or must pass the General Educational Development (GED) tests that certify that a person has high-school-level academic skills.

To help high school dropouts earn their GEDs, the Wisconsin National Guard teamed with both MATC and Milwaukee Area Technical College to offer an intense, two-week course. The first such program was held last March in Milwaukee, while MATC hosted the program in June and again Oct. 13-24. In June, each of the 24 people who took the class passed all five of their tests -- in math, science, reading, writing and social studies -- to earn their GED. It's too soon to know what percentage of those who finished the class last week will earn their GED, but all those interviewed for this story said they believed they would.

"I'll admit that getting back in the habit of learning again was tough," said Derek Hensel, a native of Burlington and a high school dropout who recently completed the program at MATC. "I know it was hard for me to roll out of bed at 5 in the morning and learn for eight straight hours. But this class was a great push in the right direction. It's learning for life."

To a person, those interviewed for this article had no problem joining the National Guard at a time when the U.S. and its troops are involved in wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

"Basically, all the benefits of joining the Guard outweigh the cons," said Nelson. "They paid me to get my GED. They'll pay for me to go to college. I get dental and health coverage.

"I mean, you can't even work at McDonald's these days without a GED. So for me, this is all worth it."

A month prior to the two-week program, the National Guard members who hope to earn their GEDs are tested to evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the classroom. Instructors then develop a curriculum based on those test results and place the students in groups of five or six when they arrive at MATC.

Part-time Adult Basic Education instructor Lindsey Snyder, right, teaches student Lisa Lomasney how to solve word problems in algebra. Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman



The general idea is to put, for example, a person who excels in math but struggles in writing with someone who might struggle in math but excel in writing. That way, the group members can help each other when studying in the evenings.

For the first Monday through Saturday of classes at MATC, the students are in the classroom from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., with a break for lunch. The students then all head to the same area hotel and spend two more hours reviewing coursework together at night.

That first Sunday of the program is then a light study day, before students work hard again Monday through Friday, and the course finally concludes. Students take their five GED tests during the second week.

"This program is phenomenal," said Justin Scott, a former high school dropout and native of Boyceville, who is 20 years old. "You go through four years of high school in 10 days, and it's not like you're going too fast. It's perfect the way the faculty and MATC staff help each other and help us."

The Learning for Life program has several advantages over other GED programs.

First, it's very regimented in an effort to take away all outside distractions. Among other things, students aren't allowed to carry their cell phones during the day, and they have virtually no contact with people from outside the program. And even when they head back to the hotel each night, they aren't turned loose -- instead they must attend the group study sessions.

It also must be noted that students don't pay to take Learning for Life -- instead, they get paid by the National Guard.

"It depends on your rank, but I'm getting \$300 per week to be here," said Nelson.

Add it all up, and the program is working.

According to Jim Durkin, the education program adviser for the Wisconsin National Guard, only 53 percent of those statewide who take GED courses even get to the point where they take the tests to earn their degree. And of those who do test, just 43 percent earn their GED, said Durkin.

Through the first two sessions of the Learning for Life program, all the students have taken their exams, and 83 percent have passed.

"And now, once these students complete their GED, we stress the need to continue moving forward and to continue on with their education," said 41-year-old Kere Knautz, a former high school dropout who earned her GED through the Learning for Life program in June. Knautz, who has since earned her High School Equivalency Diploma and who now plans to go to college to become a registered nurse, returned to the classroom the previous two weeks to help train others to earn their GED.

The Learning for Life program also differs from other programs nationally that help National Guard members earn their GED in that it offers 18 to 20 hours of career planning. Among other things, the students are shown how to search for jobs, put together a resume and write cover letters for when they apply for jobs.

"The Guard is community-based," said Durkin. "One of the ideas of the Guard is to get someone on-the-job training and an education, so these people can go learn the basic skills



Wisconsin Army National Guard recruits Benjamin Sommerfield, left, and Steven Nelson study for their General Educational Development certificates at Madison Area Technical College. Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman

to find a decent-paying job and be an asset in their community."

Although the goals and dreams of those taking part in Learning for Life are varied, several indicated that they now plan to attend college.

"I come from a poor background and so my parents never had the money to send me to college," said Matthew Ukasick, an 18-year-old high school dropout from Milwaukee. "But after signing up for the National Guard, I'll get 100 percent of my tuition paid for -- and that's on top of my good signing bonus."

Nelson, Hensel and Ukasick, for example, each received a \$20,000 signing bonus to join the Guard. But they had to commit to six years of service in the Guard, plus two years of active duty service in one of the Armed Forces.

Nelson and Hensel both signed on with the college-first option, which would allow them to earn their college degrees before being shipped overseas to fight. Nelson, however, noted that "if my country needs me," he'd be willing to ship before finishing his college degree.

Durkin is hopeful that the Learning for Life pilot project, which has one more session in March, can become a permanent part of the Wisconsin National Guard's offerings.

"You get on-the-job training and an education, and you can take that back to your community and have a better life," said Durkin. "The kids have done things they didn't think they could. They've succeeded where they didn't think they could."

In addition, Griswold said MATC is starting to wonder if it should look into running a similar program for the general public.

"Part of the beauty of this plan, which was Jim's (Griswold) vision, is it introduces people who often have some sort of school phobia to a college setting," said Griswold. "And these people are here for two weeks and eating in the cafeteria and seeing other students who look like them and they grow to feel like, 'Gosh, I can do this. I could go to college.'"

"And until going through this program, they hadn't really considered that they could do something like that. That's pretty powerful." ■

PARTNERS IN P



Wisconsin Army Guard Command Sgt. Maj. George Stopper greets Nicaraguan soldiers at their training site. Wisconsin has a longstanding sister-state relationship with Nicaragua, and the Wisconsin National Guard is paired with the Nicaraguan armed forces in the National Guard State Partnership Program. *Photo by Maj. Jackie Guthrie*

PROGRESS



Maj. Jackie Guthrie
At Ease Staff

Nearly six years after its inception, the partnership between the Wisconsin National Guard and the state of Nicaragua continues to prosper.

“They have built confidence with their public,” said Wisconsin’s adjutant general, Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, speaking of the Nicaraguan *ejercito* (military). “When there is a problem they step up and help the community — much like the Guard does here in Wisconsin.”

Dunbar and other Wisconsin Guard officials traveled to Nicaragua in early December to meet with Nicaraguan civilian and military leaders and get acquainted with their soldiers and airmen.

“The people there know they can trust their *ejercito*. They have enormous standing in the country of Nicaragua and it’s making a difference,” he said.

The National Guard State Partnership Program began in the 1990s as a way to assist Eastern European countries just emerging from the Iron Curtain. The program grew later in the decade by adding Central American nations affected by Hurricanes Georges and Mitch.

The SPP matches state Guard units with national militaries to help countries modernize their forces, provide an example of civilian control of the military, and promote civil-military relationships. It also fosters civilian ties between local business

and government officials.

The Wisconsin National Guard partnered with the Republic of Nicaragua in 2003, but the two states have a relationship that goes back more than 40 years. Wisconsin/Nicaragua Partners of the Americas, Inc., began “people-to-people exchanges” in 1964 and helped establish at least 18 sister-city relationships — an outgrowth of President Kennedy’s “Alliance for Progress” initiative of the early 1960s.

Even before the formal partnership was established, Wisconsin Guard units were helping Nicaragua. In the aftermath of 1998’s Hurricane Mitch, Wisconsin Guard units deployed for Joint Task Force Sebaco in 2000 and Joint Task Force Chontales in 2002 — to build or rebuild schools and clinics in the country’s mountainous rural areas.

“Wisconsin has established the model of the right way to conduct an SPP exchange,” said Lt. Col. Michael Regan, Southern Command’s Military Group commander and U.S. Department of Defense representative in Nicaragua.

In the past six years the Wisconsin National Guard and the Nicaraguan *ejercito* have held more than 40 exchanges of education, experiences, support and care. Of 21 partnerships in the U.S. Southern Command area of operations, only one has conducted more events than the Wisconsin-Nicaragua partnership, Regan said.

In 2008 alone, Wisconsin Guardmembers have traveled to Nicaragua to exchange expertise on maintenance of vehicles and equipment, share field artillery tactics and techniques, and



Students at the Nicaraguan Non-Commissioned Officer Academy give a rock drill for Soldiers of 64th Troop Command during their Annual Training last year. From left to right is Maj. Doug Hedman, Command Sgt. Maj. Jeff Mand, Col. Darrel Feucht, an interpreter and Master Sgt. Deb Sohns. Photo provided by 64th Troop Command

conduct marksmanship training. Nicaraguan officials also made several trips to Wisconsin to learn about public affairs and NCO education.

Wisconsin's 64th Troop Command sent 24 Soldiers to Nicaragua for three weeks in June for Peace Keeping Operation North, a multinational exercise incorporating civil and military officials from 22 nations.

About 32 Wisconsin Guardmembers also participated in the 2008 iteration of the annual Medical Readiness Training Exercise, providing medical care to more than 5,000 Nicaraguans and vaccinations to 1,000 animals.

"The Wisconsin-Nicaragua State Partnership Program is a true partnership of sharing knowledge between not only the armed forces, but also civilian organizations — and all continue to benefit," said Maj. Eric Leckel, Wisconsin SPP coordinator.

"More important than the knowledge gained, is the relationships formed between Nicaragua and the soldiers/citizens of Wisconsin," Leckel said. ■



Right: Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar inspects a Nicaraguan military vehicle during a visit to the country in 2008. *Photo by Maj. Jackie Guthrie*

Below: Editor Dave Zweifel, at head of table, shares information with Nicaraguan and Wisconsin National Guard public affairs officers in the conference room of *The Capitol Times* in Madison, April 1, 2008. The Nicaraguan military public affairs officers were on a visit hosted by their Wisconsin Guard counterparts. *Photo by Larry Sommers*





Staff Sgt. Mary Flynn of the 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment operates a camera to help a U.S. TV reporter tape a “stand-up” outside the fence of Camp Delta at the Guantanamo Bay detention facility. Flynn heads a team of military journalists assigned to assist news media representatives who visit Guantanamo to cover detainee operations and military tribunals. *Photo provided by JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs*



Same mission, different battlefield

The Global War on Terror evokes austere images. The hot winds and sand of Iraq and Kuwait. The rugged terrain of Afghanistan. Heavy body armor and up-armored vehicles.

Mortar and rocket attacks.

Roadside bombs.

Coconut trees framed against the Caribbean Sea, by comparison, make an unlikely backdrop to war.

Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn R. Larson
112th Public Affairs Detachment

Even though Guantanamo Bay is far removed from the dangers faced daily by troops in Southwest Asia, it is central to the fight against terror.

Helping the public understand the role played by Joint Task Force Guantanamo, on a U.S. naval base situated only a couple hours' flight from the United States, is the mission of the Wisconsin Army National Guard's 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. The 20-person unit, based in Madison, began a year-long Gitmo deployment in April 2008.

First Lt. Adam Bradley, executive editor and officer in charge of *The Wire* — a weekly newspaper published for the Joint Task Force — acknowledged what many service members may think about this particular tour of duty.

"If there ever was a deployment to be forced to go on, this was it," he said. "My last deployment overseas was a long, hot year living in tents in the middle of the desert."

Sgt. Sara Roeske, one of four unit members who deployed to Mosul, Iraq, in 2004, expanded on other critical differences of this deployment.

"I am not wearing a flak vest or Kevlar," she noted, "carrying a weapon and 270 live rounds, riding in up-armored Humvees and wondering if I will live to see another day."

(Perhaps the greatest threat to the unit here is from hurricanes. The 112th has weathered two of them, Gustav and Ike, in 2008.)

But will this unique mission continue? Candidate Barack Obama promised during the presidential campaign to close down detainee operations here, and news outlets regularly report about how those plans are proceeding and what changes may be required.

"There's a lot of uncertainty about the future," said Rear Adm. David M. Thomas, Jr., commander of JTF Guantanamo. "Of course we're going to close detainee operations. Both candidates said we would. The challenge is how."

"I'm on two-year orders, and I'm six months into them. People who show up here will do their full tours — that would be my bet."

If life at Guantanamo Bay is different from that of Southwest Asia, so is the battlefield. The war here is cerebral, advances or

setbacks measured in increments of information. Intelligence gained from the approximately 250 detainees held here, for example, has aided the United States.

Similarly, information about those detainees — their treatment, their legal status, their threat potential — shapes public opinion about the mission here and those who conduct it.

Staff Sgt. Mary Flynn, another unit member who deployed to Mosul, noted that operational security concerns can hinder the unit's mission of getting the most information out with minimal delay.

"The product we turn out, and that of the media for whom we're responsible, is subject to OPSEC review," she explained. "It's hard to be the 'transparent' organization we claim to be and get the information and images out there — you have to be very careful what you say and do."

Flynn is the non-commissioned officer in charge of the media relations team, tasked with coordinating, escorting and facilitating civilian media at Guantanamo Bay. This has proven to be an extremely challenging task. For example, her team has successfully supported up to 60 representatives of national and international media covering the arraignment of the five alleged Sept. 11 co-conspirators.

"Seeing the Gitmo coverage on national news networks, and knowing we helped make it possible, is pretty cool," Flynn continued. "It's rewarding on a local level, too — I get compliments on my Soldiers, their professionalism and hard work, a lot."

But in spite of efforts to provide the best information available, common perceptions about Gitmo are often different from what unit members observe at first hand.

"It's mind-boggling what the international community believes about the conditions here," Bradley said.

It's also frustrating, added Staff Sgt. Emily Russell, an assistant editor for *The Wire*.

"We work in such a political environment that anything we write or say is subject to being taken out of context or misconstrued," she explained.

Army Staff Sgt. Brian Jopek, another veteran of the Mosul deployment and NCOIC for the public information team, said he has developed a real appreciation of the Soldiers and Sailors who make up the guard force in the detention camps here. Roeske agreed.

"No matter their individual political stance or feelings toward the controversy over this place, they all get up each day and do their jobs honorably," she said.

Staff Sgt. James Wagner, a veteran of Operation Desert Storm and of Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, echoed those sentiments.

"The military does its job regardless, professionally and to the best of its ability," he said.

Members of the unit spoke of this deployment as an opportunity to grow professionally and also to witness history in the making.

Spc. Meghan Phillips, a military broadcaster on her first deployment, put it this way: "We are a very important part — as is every other service member on this base — to a very important piece of our history." ■



Capt. Kim Kleiman, left, and Staff Sgt. Mary Flynn take a moment during a media tour of Camp X-Ray to discuss logistics. Camp X-Ray, the original detention site for enemy combatants held at Guantanamo Bay, was in use only four months and has been closed since 2002. The site remains part of media tours to contrast current conditions for detainees against the images most commonly associated with detainee operations here. Photo provided by JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

Been there, done that, got the patch

Petty Officer 2nd Class Nat Moger, U.S. Navy
JTF Guantanamo Public Affairs

They're called combat patches. Worn on a Soldier's right sleeve, they tell a story of time served in a combat zone. In the 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, like many other Wisconsin Army National Guard units, the majority of unit members are authorized to wear one.

Capt. Kim Kleiman has the most combat deployments in the unit. She first deployed from October 1990 to July 1991 for Operation Desert Storm and earned the 7th Corps patch.

"We hauled ammo and supplies to wherever the 82nd Airborne went," said Kleiman. "We moved every month... built a berm around us everywhere we went... made our showers by putting a pallet on the ground, a tarp around it and a box of water on top."

She returned to Iraq in December 2004 with the 1158th Transportation Company, Wisconsin Army National Guard, moving heavy equipment from Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, to convoy support centers and forward operating bases in Iraq. When the unit returned in December 2005, she stayed on as battle captain for an active-duty transportation brigade, finally returning in July 2006.

Spc. Christina Beerman, whom Kleiman did not know at the time, was also in Arifjan, shepherding embedded media for Armed Forces Network Europe from December 2004 to February 2005 as an active duty Soldier, and earning her 1st Infantry Division patch.

Staff Sgt. Jim Wagner deployed to Kandahar and Kabul, Afghanistan, with the 109th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, covering the 82nd Airborne Division as editor of the base newspaper from December 2002 to August 2003.

"History was unfolding and the Taliban just fell," said Wagner. "We were making positive steps to rebuilding the country."

Meanwhile, Staff Sgt. Emily Russell was at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, to do logistics and supply work for Special Operations Command from March to July 2003, earning the right to wear "the tip of the spear" on her right arm.

Another Operation Enduring Freedom veteran is 1st Lt. Sarah Cleveland, who deployed to Bagram from October 2005 to January 2007 as part of Wisconsin's 232nd Military Intelligence Company under the 10th Mountain Division.

"I can say I grew spinach in Afghanistan," said Cleveland. "We lived in these wood huts and someone mounted a TV stand and filled it with dirt. People sent me seeds in the mail and we made a garden."

Back in Iraq, Sgt. 1st Class Vaughn Larson served with the 121st Field Artillery Battalion, repurposed for convoy security missions, from July 2006 to July 2007. He had to make sure his people, who were escorting 45-truck supply convoys, had proper training, rest and equipment.

Larson was no stranger to the area. After flying out of Milwaukee on Christmas Day, 1990, Larson earned his first combat patch as part of Wisconsin's 132nd Military History Detachment, documenting 7th Corps activities in Operation Desert Storm. The 7th Corps was disbanded in the early 1990s, shortly after the First Gulf War.

"Seventh Corps did the sucker punch," said Larson. "They were the guys that got up and moved around and came in from the North."

Spc. Erica Isaacson worked in the 3rd Army personnel shop in Doha, Qatar, compiling strength reports for U.S. Army Central Command from February 2004 to February 2005.

"If you were a Soldier in Iraq and lost your ID card, you had to come to my office to get one," said Isaacson. "We would be the first girls that a lot of these Soldiers had seen in six months, so I heard a lot of stories that they probably didn't tell their friends."

Staff Sgts. Brian Jopek, Mary Flynn, Gretel Sharpee and Sgt. Sara Roeske deployed with the 139th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment from February 2004 to January 2005 and were attached to Task Force Olympia in Mosul, Iraq. "We did stories on everyone," said Jopek. "1st Stryker Brigade, 3rd Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division, 1st Brigade of the 25th Infantry Division."

First Lt. Adam Bradley deployed with Wisconsin's 128th Infantry Battalion from late 2005 until late 2006 at Camp Navistar at the same time Larson's convoys were making their way through the area.

The patches adorning the right arms of these Soldiers embarking on their second, third and even fourth deployments tell of a unit rich in experience, like most units in today's real-world, 24/7 Wisconsin National Guard.



Right-arm patches represent Soldiers' times serving with particular units in combat zones. Photo by Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Nat Moger

“Mike” brings future to Madison helicopter unit

By Lt. Col. Tim Donovan
At Ease Staff

In a Jan. 10 ceremony at Army Aviation Support Facility 2 in Madison, the State of Wisconsin formally accepted the first five of 15 brand-new UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters destined for the 147th Air Assault Battalion.

The Mike models came to Madison directly from the Sikorsky factory in Stratford, Conn.

“With the latest technology and capabilities this helicopter has, it will put our unit on the cutting edge of Army aviation,” said Lt. Col. Joni Mathews, commander of the 147th. “All of our flight personnel are enthusiastic about the challenges and opportunities that this new aircraft will present.”

The new model improves on the unit’s UH-60A model

aircraft with greater lift capacity, computer-based monitoring of onboard systems for timely maintenance alerts, and a new advanced cockpit design for more control and greater situational awareness by the flight crew.

Tom Nicollet, director of National Guard business development for Sikorsky Aircraft Corporation, was on hand to sign off on the aircraft, which Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton and Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general, officially received on behalf of the Wisconsin National Guard.

A dozen pilots and crew chiefs from Madison’s 147th Air Assault Battalion travelled to the giant Sikorsky plant last June to see the unit’s first Mike model at the beginning of its assembly (*see “Factory Fresh,” At Ease Express, September 2008, p. 7.*)

The new model’s improved features include:

- An active vibration control system that reduces



Lt. Lisa Hendershot, left, Maj. Scott Bush, center, and Staff Sgt. Rick Karls listen to a Sikorsky employee explain the daily production schedule. Photo by Lt. Col. Tim Donovan



vibrations by generating vibratory loads out of phase with main rotor vibrations.

- More powerful T700 series engines.
- Foldable stabilator, allowing aircraft to be more quickly prepared for transport or storage.
- 16 percent increase in rotor chord width, providing 500 pound increase in lift.
- Ballistically tolerant airframe structure, flight control system, and drive system to improve survivability.
- Integrated “glass cockpit” flight instrument system.
- Vehicle health management system — monitors aircraft systems and alerts crews of out-of-tolerance conditions.

All of the unit’s original UH-60A aircraft will be rebuilt as upgraded UH-60L models for assignment elsewhere.

Wisconsin Army National Guard officers visit the Sikorsky helicopter factory to observe the assembly of new UH-60M Black Hawk helicopters. The Madison-based 147th Air Assault Battalion will be one of the first units in the nation to receive the new “Mike” models.

Photo by Lt. Col. Tim Donovan

We stand corrected:

In the September 2008 issue of At Ease Express, we said the 147th’s acquisition of 15 new UH-60M aircraft would be “the first time a Wisconsin Army Guard unit has ever received a brand-new helicopter direct from the factory.” In fact, the Wisconsin Army National Guard years ago received both UH-1 Huey and OH-58 Kiowa Scout helicopters directly from the Bell Aviation factory, according to retired Chief Warrant Officer 4 Darold Hoelz. Hoelz, former state aviation officer, should know — he checked the new planes in when they arrived in Wisconsin.

ARE YOU READY?

By Susan Burleigh

Wisconsin Emergency Management

Individual and family preparedness is everyone's responsibility. But as a Guard member, in addition to seeing to your own family's safety and well-being, you also serve a critical role in modeling and promoting individual and family emergency preparedness in your community.

Local officials and relief workers will be on the scene after a disaster, but they can't reach everyone immediately. Basic services such as electricity, gas, water, sewage treatment, telephones and cell phones may be cut off for days, a week, or longer. Your family may need to evacuate at a moment's notice. It could be difficult if not impossible to shop or search for the supplies you may need, such as medications.

That's why it is important to develop a family emergency plan, which

includes preparing a fully-stocked disaster kit to help your family ride out the disaster, plus a separate "go-kit" with prescriptions, extra eyeglasses, cash including coins, minimum clothing essentials and other items you'll need if forced to evacuate your home.

Here are some tips to consider:

- Start out thinking about the basics of survival — fresh water, food, safety, warmth, sanitation and clean air. Supplies such as food and water should last for at least three days.

- Add items for special needs — babies and small children, the disabled, individuals dependent on medical equipment, seniors and pets.

- Prepare a waterproof, portable container with important family documents.

- Set aside a supply of cash and coins.

- Pack items to keep family

members entertained — toys, books, playing cards or games.

When developing a family emergency plan, address these questions:

- Have you posted, in a conspicuous place in your home, contact information for all family members and emergency service agencies?

- Does your family know how to escape from your home in an emergency? Do you have at least two escape routes from every room in your home? Have you practiced?

- Have you designated a family meeting place near your home where you can gather and ensure all have escaped safely?

- Have you identified a family meeting place farther away from your home in the event you're not together when an emergency occurs?

- Do your young children know

BASIC HOME EMERGENCY SUPPLY KIT CHECKLIST

- Water, one gallon per person per day for at least three days, for drinking and sanitation
- Food, at least a three-day supply of non-perishable food
- Manual can opener
- Mess kits, paper cups, plates and plastic utensils, paper towels
- Battery-powered or hand crank radio and a NOAA Weather Radio with tone alert and extra batteries for both
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- First aid kit
- Wrench or pliers to turn off utilities
- Fire extinguisher
- Bedding and warm clothes
- Matches in a waterproof container
- Sanitation supplies
- Dust mask, to help filter contaminated air
- Plastic sheeting, scissors and duct tape to shelter-in-place

WISCONSIN?

your full names?

- How will you communicate with each other if you can't get together?
- Have you identified a particular out-of-town family member or friend you can all contact to let them know where you are and that you are safe?
- Are you familiar with the emergency plans for your family members' day care centers, schools, workplaces and special facilities?
- Do you have a plan to protect or evacuate your pets?
- Have you worked out arrangements to transport mobility-impaired individuals?
- Have you checked in with neighbors who might need special assistance?

Please complete the "What's Your RQ" (readiness quotient) survey at <http://readywisconsin.wi.gov> to see how your preparedness efforts measure up. Making a plan and putting together a kit will help keep you and your family safe. ■

PREPAREDNESS ON THE WEB

Ready Wisconsin

<http://readywisconsin.wi.gov>

Military Family Preparedness

www.ready.gov/america/getakit/military

FEMA Preparedness

www.fema.gov/plan

American Red Cross

www.redcross.org



A sample of an emergency preparedness kit includes bottled water, a weather radio, medicine, pet supplies, food and a flashlight, among other things. Photo courtesy of Wisconsin Emergency Management

Happy



The 176th Fighter Squadron as of 1951. Even though the pilots seem properly equipped for flight, the early Wisconsin Air National Guard had a severe shortage of uniforms, especially for cold weather. Retired Senior Master Sgt. Richard "Tiger" Martinson recalls, "One of the pilots, Jim Bultman, had a B-15 leather jacket he left in the ops shack, and whoever flew borrowed it." Life on the line wasn't any better, with the maintenance troops wearing whatever they had in order to keep warm — jeans, hunting jackets, farm clothes, and so on.



Buses took the unit to summer camp at Alpena, Mich. The buses in this picture are waiting for the car ferry at Manitowoc to take them across Lake Michigan. It was a 15-hour trip in buses so old, that some had chain drives.

Happy Anniversary!

2008 marked the 60th anniversary of Madison's 115th Fighter Wing, based at Truax Field, Madison. It was organized as the 176th Fighter Squadron, an F-51 Mustang unit, in 1948.

Over the intervening years, the unit has grown from a squadron to a wing of roughly 1,000 personnel and has flown a wide variety of aircraft:

- F-51 Mustang
- F-89 Scorpion
- F-86 Sabre
- F-89 Scorpion — again!
- F-102 Delta Dagger
- O-2 Skymaster observation plane
- OA-37 Dragonfly observation plane
- A-10 Thunderbolt (also known as "Warthog")
- F-16 Fighting Falcon

Since 9/11, the wing and its F-16s have been in high demand for real-world missions at home and abroad. But amid the rush and clamor of today's high-otempo environment, *At Ease* gladly devotes a couple of pages to celebrating this 60-year-old unit and remembering how far it has come.



Madison's "Rhythm and Booms" fireworks illuminate the night sky behind an F-16 on June 28, 2008, during the 60th year of the 115th Fighter Wing.

Photo courtesy of Joe Oliva



In 1974 the 176th Fighter Squadron became a tactical air support squadron with a forward air controller mission when it switched from the F-102 Delta Dagger to the O-2 Skymaster observation aircraft. The unit came back into the jet age five years later with a transition to the OA-37 Dragonfly, shown here in foreground. In 1981, the 176th became the 128th Tactical Fighter Wing, returning to a fighter role with the much larger A-10 Thunderbolt, in background, an effective close air support fighter. The 128th would fly the A-10, widely known as the "Warthog", until 1992, when it converted to the F-16.



WMA GRADUATES 50TH



Cadets in an early Wisconsin Military Academy class march. Photo provided



Officer Candidates from an early WMA class sit ramrod-stiff and eat a 'square' meal with West Point-like precision. Photo provided by the Wisconsin Military Academy



2nd Lt. Jamison Clark sounds off at Officer Candidate School. Photo provided by 2nd Lt. Michael Olson

50 YEARS OF FACTS

- Class 3 had the first and only set of identical twins to begin and graduate the program, Gerald and Harold Matteson.
- Class 31 had the program's first foreign national candidate, Wilfred Massidas. He became a citizen on August 17, 1988, and graduated with his class in August 1989.
- Class 12 included 22 graduates from the U.S. Army Reserve, the highest number of USAR cadets to graduate in any one WMA class.
- The first Air National Guard cadet graduated from the WMA OCS program in 1975 in Class 17.
- Class 18 had the first two female cadets to attend the program, Susan Danforth and Christina Leavitt. Both graduated in August 1976 with 32 of their classmates.

H CLASS

By Officer Candidate Emily Yttri
At Ease Staff

On August 23, 2008, 17 Soldiers raised their hands in Dailey Hall, swore an oath and were commissioned as second lieutenants in the Army.

They were members of the Wisconsin Military Academy's 50th class of officer candidates since Flag Day morning, 1958 — when 55 Soldiers entered the hospital area of what was then called Camp McCoy to become the first cadets of the state's new Officer Candidate School.

Until then, the only avenues to a commission for Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers were the Reserve Officer Training Corps for college students, active-duty OCS, the "10 Series" correspondence courses from the Army Command and General Staff School, or four years in residence at the United States Military Academy, West Point, N.Y. The newly established Wisconsin Military Academy with its in-state OCS program made it more practical for a Guard member to aspire to officer status and helped give the Wisconsin National Guard a steady supply of commissioned officers.

OCS was conducted in three phases: Phase I at Camp McCoy for a two-week Annual Training, Phase II at the Wright Street Armory in Madison for nine weekend drills, and Phase III at Camp McCoy the following summer for another two-week AT.

Flexibility sometimes ruled the day. Shortly after the fourth class completed Phase I, the 32nd Division was called to active duty for the Berlin Crisis and sent to Fort Lewis, Wash., for training. Wisconsin Guard leaders placed 74 cadets on active duty to attend an accelerated OCS at the Wright Street Armory in Madison; 55 cadets graduated in October 1961.

With the 32nd Division, Wisconsin's largest unit, still on active duty in 1962, the academy was temporarily relocated to Fort Lewis and conducted Phase I training there. Phases II and III were completed in Wisconsin upon the division's return.

In 1963, Phase II was extended from nine to 12 drill weekends.

In 1968 the academy moved to Camp Williams, adjacent to Volk Field at Camp Douglas, Wis. In 1995 the present Wisconsin Military Academy was built at Fort McCoy. Over the years, the academy has played host not only to Wisconsin National Guard Soldiers but to those from nearby states and U.S. Army Reserve troops as well.

Despite refinements to the curriculum, the basic OCS formula including academics, leadership training, physical training and tactical exercises has remained stable. Subjects covered include protocol, military justice, land navigation, warrior tasks and battle drills, and leadership, as well as foot marches, formation runs, and combat water survival training.

"The traditional program in Wisconsin allowed me to develop and enhance my leadership and management skills," said 2nd Lt. Jamison Clark, "while giving me the opportunity to spend more time with my family." Clark is a 2008 graduate.

The Wisconsin Military Academy has graduated over 1,600 men and women of the Wisconsin National Guard and the Army Reserve, some of whom have gone on to become top leaders.

"Graduation marked the beginning of a new Army experience and career that I would not change for the world," Clark said. ■

Based on historical notes by retired
Chief Warrant Officer 5 Ron Bieker



Officer Candidates practice land navigation skills. Photo provided by 2nd Lt. Michael Olson



Tactical maneuvers are taught on a sandtable in a classroom at WMA 08 APRIL 1995. From left are OC Chad Buchanan, Instructor CPT Brent Anderson, and OCs Jon Freyer, Richard Dandrow, Wayne Dutton, William Fay and Stephen Cook.



A DECADE OF SUCCESS

By Lou Ann M. Mittelstaedt
The Real McCoy Staff

The Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy at Fort McCoy celebrated its 10th birthday with a ceremony, tours and a luncheon Aug. 27, 2008.

“Since our beginning, the academy has graduated 1,620 cadets, with 1,401 of them earning their High School Equivalency Diploma, and all of them leaving our academy with life prospects better than when they arrived,” said Challenge Academy director Michael G. MacLaren.

Several people with ties to the academy spoke at the ceremony.

“Before I came to the academy, I was clearly headed for trouble — using drugs, skipping school, failing classes,” said Kenneth Holub, a 2002 academy graduate. “Teamwork was one of my hardest struggles, but it became my most important lesson.... I realized my actions don’t affect just me, they affect everyone in my life.” Holub is now married and the father of

two children and is a top sales representative for TruGreen ChemLawn.

Sue Rustebakke spoke as the parent of a child whose life was changed by the academy. Rustebakke’s son, Adam, had made poor choices.

“Adam was a smart, personable kid — a little stubborn, but he had such great potential,” she said. “We did counseling, conferences, anger management classes — just about everything we could think of — and nothing seemed to have an impact. He’d given up on school. Life at home was horrible.”

Adam applied for admission to the academy at the end of 2001. By the time he was to start in July 2002, there was another challenge: The fate of the academy hung in the balance of budget and funding issues.

“Thank you to all of you who were instrumental in keeping the program going at that time,” she said. “I am one of over a thousand families who have benefited from the program since that point in time.”

Adam Rustebakke graduated as the class Military Honor Graduate and for the past five years has been a Soldier in the U.S. Army. He is currently assigned as an aviation mechanic at Hunter Army Airfield, Ga.

Another speaker was Jennifer Harrison, a 2002 graduate of the academy. She is a disabled Army veteran who currently cares for people with Alzheimer’s and other forms of dementia. In addition to her work, she is attending college full-time with the goal of becoming a social worker. She has come full-circle with the Challenge program by serving as a mentor to an academy cadet.

Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general of Wisconsin, recalled that the late Sen. Daniel Patrick Moynihan of New York coined the phrase “defining deviancy down” — meaning that when things get bad, society lowers the standards so it doesn’t look so bad, so that what once was abnormal becomes normal and is accepted.

“We don’t define deviancy down in Wisconsin,” Dunbar said. “We define deviancy up. We take kids who are struggling, and we give them things to believe in. We give them guidance to move them forward in life. We create productive citizens.... It’s just that simple.”

“Our state is facing a huge budget challenge, just as the students here are facing an incredible challenge,” said State Sen. Kathleen Vinehout, Alma. In 2002, state funds for the Challenge program were placed under the Department of Public Instruction so they would be protected, she said. The academy receives 60 percent of its funding from federal sources and 40 percent from the state.

Vinehout said the program, which claims a 77 percent graduation rate, is one of the most successful programs in the country at targeting the problems of at-risk youth. It is cost effective as well, she said, adding that four students can attend Challenge for the cost of processing one teen through the juvenile justice system.

MacLaren closed the ceremony by recognizing and thanking the many individuals, organizations and corporations that have had roles in bringing the academy to where it is today. ■

ABOUT THE ACADEMY

Mission: The Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy is a 17-month program for at-risk youth ages 16 years 9 months through 18. Academy cadets complete a 22-week residential phase during which the cadets can earn their High School Equivalency Diploma and change their outlooks and viewpoints on life and character.

After graduation, each cadet participates in a 12-month post-residential phase as the cadet moves on to a job, post-secondary education, or military service. During the post-residential phase cadets meet regularly with adult mentors and work to put into action the values and concepts learned during their schooling.

Cadets come from all socioeconomic groups and all backgrounds, but all must be at risk of not graduating from high school as defined by the State of Wisconsin. Usually, cadets are high school dropouts, habitual truants, expelled students, or students critically deficient in credits. Cadets must be free of drugs, mentally and physically healthy, not on probation and not be awaiting sentencing, be convicted of, or have charges pending for a felony.

History: The National Guard’s Youth Challenge Program began in 1991, when the House Joint Armed Services Committee tasked the National Guard to develop a plan to help at-risk teens and “add value to America.” By providing values, skills, education, and discipline to young people using the structure and esprit de corps of the military model, the Youth Challenge Program began a three-year pilot program in 1993.

Fifteen states participated in the pilot program, which became a permanent National Guard program in 1996.

(From the Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy Web site. For more information, visit www.challengeacademy.org.)

WHAT SCHOOL? WOC SCHOOL!

By Officer Candidate Emily Yttri
At Ease Staff

In 2008, for the first time, aspiring Wisconsin Army National Guard warrant officer candidates completed the first two phases of their training without having to leave the state.

“The flexibility to complete a warrant officer program while fulfilling other demanding civilian and/or military full-time positions” is the great advantage to the state’s new Reserve Component Warrant Officer Candidate School, said Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joseph McGrath, senior advisor for the program.

Previously, Soldiers hoping to become warrant officers had two choices: Attend the active Army’s Warrant Officer Candidate School at Fort Rucker, Ala., or travel out-of-state for the second and third phases of Reserve Component Warrant Officer Candidate School.

“[Unlike previous classes,] we didn’t have to travel to Minnesota or Iowa each month for five months,” said Warrant Officer 1 Nicole Krahenbuhl, a member of the Wisconsin program’s first graduating class. “Being able to train at Fort McCoy was perfect.”

Army-wide, warrant officer training is a rigorous three-phase program. So when Wisconsin Guard officials wanted to add a flow of home-grown warrants to the mix, careful planning was required.

“In order to stand up the program, we had to have certified Warrant Officer Candidate School TACs [Teach-Advise-Counsel instructors],” said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Lynn Ryan, Command Chief Warrant Officer of the Wisconsin Army National Guard. Would-be TACs had to complete online courses, spend two weeks

at Fort Rucker “shadowing” TACs in the active-duty program, and complete the Total Army Instructor-Trainer Course.

The process, from assembling a staff and allocating facilities at the 426th Regional Training Institute (Wisconsin Military Academy) to pinning the first graduates, took just 18 months.

The first phase of warrant officer training is online; the second is now taught at Fort McCoy over a span of five drill weekends; and Phase III is an annual training at Camp Atterbury, Ind. On completing the final phase in 2008, the four initial graduates were pinned as warrant officers in a ceremony at Camp Atterbury’s Indianapolis War Museum. An in-state ceremony was also held Aug. 23 at the 426th RTI, where family and friends could attend and participate.

“Most of our Wisconsin soldiers have dedicated 12 to 18 months at a time to mobilizations and deployments —some more than once. This can result in Soldiers being torn between loyalties to their families, their employers and the Guard, affecting their ability to progress their military career,” said Ryan. “This new school is designed to better serve our soldiers’ needs.” ■



Top: Soldiers participate in a sand table drill at Fort McCoy during Warrant Officer Candidate School. Submitted photo



Left: Members of Class One of the Wisconsin Army National Guard Warrant Officer Candidate School join other candidates on a 4-mile ruck march at Camp Atterbury, Ind. Submitted photo

Brick and mortar at Camp Justice

By Tech. Sgt. Dawn Putzke

128th Air Refueling Wing Civil Engineering Squadron

The 128th Civil Engineering Squadron deployed Airmen to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, to help build a secure facility for military commission proceedings planned there.

The Milwaukee-based unit, part of the 128th Air Refueling Wing, sent 23 members to work from September 2007 through February 2008 on the \$10.2 million project for Phase I of the Expeditionary Legal Complex at an unused airfield on the 45-square-mile U.S. naval base. The project was ordered when the Bush administration decided to provide trials by military commission to Guantanamo-housed detainees accused of terrorist activities. Construction encompassed several buildings that would include all amenities needed to facilitate the work of the Office of Military Commissions. At the heart of the complex were a highly secure courtroom, holding cells and a walkway between them.

The Milwaukee engineers joined a construction team of about 100 Guard members from six states, grouped together as the 474th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron. Ground was broken on September 11, 2007.

Members of the 128th used their skills and experience to overcome unforeseen obstacles, especially the challenging logistics of acquiring materials by plane or barge from Florida. They returned to Wisconsin in February 2008. The Expeditionary



Legal Complex became the site for military commissions until proceedings were ordered suspended by President Obama in January 2009.

Two Airmen from the 128th, Senior Airman Bradley Wiskowski and Master Sgt. Corey Bialcik, were recognized for outstanding performance with the quarterly deployed member awards of the U.S. Southern Command Air Forces. ■



This page: Members of the 128th Refueling Wing Civil Engineers pose for a photo at Camp Justice, Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. *Submitted photo*

Top: Unit members pour concrete into forms for the Camp Justice sign. *Submitted photo*

Badgers in Iraq...

the 115th Fighter Wing answers the call of duty

By Tech. Sgt. Don Nelson
115 Fighter Wing Public Affairs

Approximately 350 members of Madison's 115th Fighter Wing set aside their civilian lives from January to March and temporarily said goodbye to their families as they set up shop at Balad Air Base, Iraq.

It was the wing's third full-scale deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom. In addition to the unit-wide deployments, smaller contingents of 115th members have deployed to many locations in support of current operations.

Specific preparation for the Iraq deployment culminated with a November 2007 deployment to Arizona.

"The Snowbird deployment was our opportunity to go to Davis-Monthan Air Force Base, where they have a facility set for Air National Guard units from northern regions to go and

prepare for their wartime tasking in a desert environment," said Brandemuehl.

To fully prepare for the Iraq mission, the wing deployed more than 165,000 pounds of equipment and nine F-16s to the Arizona base, and dropped over 100,000 pounds of munitions on its ranges.

While in Iraq, the wing's primary mission was to provide air support for ground forces, including reconnaissance flights, weapons delivery to specific targets and monitoring vehicle movements in a particular area.

The 115th Fighter Wing's unique capabilities were an asset to the overall mission shared with other units, Brandemuehl said.

Since returning from Iraq, the wing continues to hone its skills to be ready for the next Air Expeditionary Force deployment that comes its way. ■



This page: An F-16C Fighter Aircraft from the 332nd Expeditionary Wing, Balad Air base, Iraq performs an afterburner takeoff on its way to fly a combat mission in the skies over Iraq. *Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Richardson*

Left: A Maintenance crew from the 115th Fighter Wing, meets to discuss the days flying schedule while deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq, Feb., 2008. *Photo by Master Sgt. Daniel Richardson*

TROOP E COMPLETES THE RUN

By Lt. Col.
Tim Donovan
At Ease Staff

April 2008 saw Troop E, 105th Cavalry, safely home from 8 months in Iraq. The 180-Soldier unit, based in Merrill and Antigo, accomplished more than 360 combat missions.

They conducted convoy security operations throughout Iraq, out of Logistics Support Area

Anaconda near Balad, using 19 M-1117 “Guardian” armored

security vehicles and about 30 armored Humvees. The troopers drove more than half a million miles and engaged repeatedly in combat.

The unit escorted 10,000 vehicles including tankers that hauled 13,110,400 gallons of fuel, performing significantly more missions than any other element in its task force.

Troop E Soldiers on security missions experienced 20 improvised explosive device detonations, 16 small arms fire attacks, two complex attacks, and six attacks using mortars or rocket-propelled grenades. They also discovered three roadside



Troop E, 105th Cavalry in Iraq. Photo courtesy of 105th Cavalry

bombs that were disabled before they could be detonated. The cavalry troops also endured attack by 900 mortar rounds fired at or into LSA Anaconda during their eight months at the base.

One of Troop E’s soldiers was wounded in action and was awarded a Purple Heart Medal. Unit soldiers were also awarded 31 Bronze Star Medals, five Meritorious Service Medals, more than 100 Army Commendation Medals or Army Achievement Medals, more than 100 Combat Action Badges or Combat Infantryman Badges, and several Combat Medical Badges.

But the commander’s ultimate goal wasn’t achieved until the unit arrived at Volk Field April 19: Everybody came back from Iraq safely.

“I have never commanded better Soldiers in my life,” Lt. Col. Mike Murphy told troopers and family members. “I’ll tell you, every time we left the gate the insurgents threw everything they could at us, but we were blessed because we brought everyone home.”

The Iraq of 2008 was different from the country the Soldiers found when they got there in 2007.

“Unfortunately the public doesn’t see it,” Murphy said, “but when you can go to places and be dismounted, or you see water being turned on or read about the schools that are opening up or the teachers that are being trained over there... there’s still a lot of work to be done but things are definitely changing.” ■



Wearing traditional cavalry hats, Lt. Col. Mike Murphy and Command Sgt. Maj. Paul Easterday — the last commander and first sergeant of Troop E, 105th Cavalry — solemnly furl the unit’s guidon before sheathing it in a canvas case to signify the inactivation of the unit. Photo by Staff

Sgt. Joe Streeter

332nd ROCs Iraq

By Lt. Col. Tim Donovan
At Ease Staff

The 332nd Rear Operations Center returned stateside in April 2008, after an 8-month deployment to Iraq.

The 332nd left Wisconsin June 19, 2007, for about two months of training at Fort Hood, Texas, then deployed to Iraq in August 2007. While deployed overseas, the 332nd was stationed at a forward operating base known as Q-West, about 50 miles south of Mosul near the city of Al Qayyarah. The Wisconsin Soldiers operated the “mayor cell” at the base and were responsible for base administration, logistics, and security, among other missions.

Eighteen of the unit’s 29 Soldiers returned to Wisconsin in April. Four volunteered to continue their tours in Iraq with other units; four others attended Army schools during their mobilization and returned home before their comrades; two stayed at Fort Hood to complete Army courses, and one officer stayed with the unit’s equipment to escort it home.

The unit previously served in Afghanistan, from Dec. 2, 2002, to July 11, 2003. Some members of the 332nd



Sgt. Ryan Wallis, left, and Spc. Wilmer Valladares play an Iraqi version of “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star” on flutes at a school in Iraq. *Photo supplied*

were also called up to support Hurricane Katrina response efforts in New Orleans in 2005.

For the 18 homeward-bound troops of the Berlin-based 332nd, the last day

was arguably the longest: They were scheduled to return on four separate flights to Outagamie County Regional Airport near Appleton. Soldiers on three of the flights made it to Appleton as planned, but the final flight didn’t work out. So the unit’s commander, Lt. Col. Julie Gerety, and three other Soldiers rented a car and headed to Madison from Chicago to receive a rousing, though improvised, welcome home at 1:30 a.m. at Joint Force Headquarters in Madison.

“We are extremely proud of all that you have done,” Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general, told the troops on their return. “You continue to take the Wisconsin reputation as having a National Guard second to none and move that bar even higher.” ■

Capt. Sarah Bammel, left, and Sgt. Shannon Doty visit with Iraqi mothers and children. The Soldiers brought special care packages for the ladies containing lotions, soaps and perfume. *Photo supplied*





Department of Military Affairs

Mobilizations and deployments. Training. Domestic responses for winter storms and floods. Modernization and reorganization. Recruiting and retention. Humanitarian aid. Managing change. Community support.

These are just a few items on the long list of missions, accomplishments and highlights of the Wisconsin Department of Military Affairs. Here is a look at the organization and some 2008 highlights.

ORGANIZATIONAL PROFILE:

The Department of Military Affairs provides essential, effective, and responsive military and emergency management capability for the citizens of our state and nation. DMA includes Joint Force Headquarters–Wisconsin, the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard, and the Wisconsin Division of Emergency Management.

Leadership:

The Wisconsin Constitution designates the governor as the commander-in-chief of the Wisconsin National Guard. The department is directed by the adjutant general, who is appointed by the governor for a five-year term and may serve successive terms. He is responsible for the federal and state missions of the Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard and the Wisconsin Division of Emergency Management. He is also the governor’s Homeland Security Advisor and chairs the governor’s Homeland Security Council. The governor also appoints the administrator of Wisconsin Emergency Management.



Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar
The Adjutant General

Division of Emergency Management:

Wisconsin Emergency Management coordinates with local, tribal, state and federal agencies, as well as the volunteer and private sectors, to plan for, prepare for, and respond to natural disasters or man-made emergencies. Some of WEM’s programs are planning for disaster response, training and exercising, radiological emergency preparedness, hazard mitigation, emergency fire and police services, the State Disaster Fund, and the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act. WEM’s central office and the state Emergency Operations Center are located in Madison.

The Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard:

The mission of the Wisconsin National Guard is to provide fully capable citizen-Soldiers and citizen-Airmen prepared to deploy anywhere, at any time, to support community, state and federal missions. The federal mission is to provide trained units, Soldiers and Airmen in time of war or national emergency, as directed by the President of the United States of America. The state mission is to assist civil authorities in protecting life and property, and in preserving peace, order and public safety during emergencies, as directed by the governor of the State of Wisconsin.

The composition of Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard units is authorized by the U.S. Secretary of Defense, through the National Guard Bureau. The federal government provides arms and ammunition, equipment and uniforms, major training facilities, pay for military and support personnel, and training and supervision. The state provides support personnel, conducts training and shares the cost of constructing, maintaining and operating armories and other state military facilities.

The Wisconsin National Guard operates on an annual budget of about \$82 million — with \$22 million coming from the state of Wisconsin and \$60 million from federal or other sources — plus nearly \$260 million in federal funding primarily used for pay, training and benefits for the Guard’s citizen-Soldiers and citizen-Airmen.

Joint Force Headquarters–Wisconsin:

Joint Force Headquarters–Wisconsin, located in Madison, is made up of a staff of both Army and Air Guard members, who provide comprehensive command-and-control and response for domestic emergencies and who staff a 24-hour Joint Operations Center and manage military resources for immediate initial response as well as long-term recovery.



Brig. Gen. Scott Legwold
Director of the Joint Staff

2008 Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard Highlights:

- 2008 was a busy year for domestic operations. The Wisconsin National Guard provided assistance and support for responses to events including spring



An Overview: Wisconsin National Guard



2008 Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard Highlights Cont'd:

and summer flooding; winter storms; Hurricane Ike; Hurricane Gustav; a shooting spree in Marinette; a tribal disturbance in Lac du Flambeau; explosive ordnance incidents; a major fire in Arcadia; white powder and propaganda incidents; the USS Freedom commissioning; and the Republican and Democratic national conventions.

- The evolution and transformation of the Wisconsin National Guard joint staff — which combines both Army and Air National Guard leaders — continued in 2008. The joint staff brings together the Army and Air National Guard, Wisconsin Emergency Management and other agencies, to meet ongoing responsibilities of recruiting, training, mobilizing and retaining our Soldiers and Airmen, while simultaneously supporting the global war on terror, and supporting domestic missions.
- The Manpower and Personnel Directorate was significantly re-aligned in 2008, creating a new Service Member Support Branch. The branch combined three programs — Badger Yellow Ribbon, the Wisconsin National Guard Family Program Office and the new Joint Family Support Assistance Program. Though run by the Wisconsin National Guard, the new branch will offer help to families and employers of service members of all components, whether active-duty or reserve. The overall goal is to provide “mobile, high-quality, effective and efficient assistance” throughout the deployment cycle, and a gateway to information and services that contribute to continued health and well-being. The Service Member Support Branch and the three agencies within it comprise a large and diverse network of trained service providers, government, non-government, veteran and volunteer agencies that consolidate all the new and existing resources available to Wisconsin service members.
- The Wisconsin National Guard Drug Control Program continued to provide three focus areas of support with training programs, as well as efforts to reduce drug supply and demand. DCP hosted 42 training courses and trained more than 1,400 law enforcement and drug education and prevention professionals in 2008, and provided facilities to conduct specialized training for more than 2,000 others. DCP also opened the new High Risk Training Facility at Volk Field. The Leadership Education Adventure Program provided students in the fifth, seventh and ninth grades with adventure-based alternatives to drug and alcohol use; and DCP is providing support to the “Stay On Track” program for sixth and eighth graders. DCP intelligence analysts support local, state and federal agencies,

2008 Wisconsin Army and Air National Guard Highlights Cont'd:

along with the Milwaukee High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area. Analyst support in 2008 contributed to 1,806 drug arrests and to seizures totaling more than \$66.7 million. In addition to counter-drug activities, the Wisconsin National Guard RC-26B reconnaissance aircraft and crew also provided vital support with national disasters, including California wildfires, Midwest floods in June, and hurricanes affecting southern states.

- The joint staff continues to be involved in planning for future operations. Staff members have attended planning conferences, participated in training exercises, developed training plans, evaluated past operations, coordinated with civilian agencies on multiple levels, and ensured that organizational and facility infrastructure continues to meet the Joint staff’s developing mission.
- The Wisconsin National Guard Challenge Academy at Fort McCoy celebrated its 10th anniversary. Since its inception in 1998, the Challenge Academy has re-shaped the lives of “at-risk” teens, graduating 1,728 young adults statewide. It uses a structured, military-style environment and state-certified teachers and counselors to build cadets’ academic abilities, character, self-confidence, and personal discipline. More than 86 percent of academy graduates earned High School Equivalency Diplomas and more than 70 percent stayed clear of the law and obtained full-time employment or continued their education after graduation. The academy also trained more than 2,200 mentors in the ten years of its existence. The cost of keeping one juvenile in custody for one year is \$90,900, but the cost of the Challenge program is only \$5,981 per youth enrolled.

Wisconsin Army National Guard:

The Wisconsin Army National Guard is made up of approximately 7,700 soldiers including a headquarters staff in Madison and four major commands located in 67 communities throughout Wisconsin: 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 64th Troop Command, 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade and 426th Regiment (Leadership).



Brig. Gen. Mark Anderson
Deputy Adjutant General – Army



Department of Military Affairs *cont'd*

2008 Army National Guard Highlights:

- The Wisconsin Army National Guard and its Madison-based headquarters remained heavily engaged in missions throughout the United States and other countries, including Iraq and Afghanistan.
- With changes to the composition of the Wisconsin's Army Guard units and new missions, the headquarters staff has been working to rebalance the state's force structure, facilities and equipment.
- In addition, the Wisconsin Army Guard headquarters provided natural disaster relief and support for humanitarian missions at home and abroad.
- To sustain units with high-quality Soldiers, the state headquarters focused on recruiting and retention, with innovative programs such as the Army Guard Active First Program and the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program.
- Families are the key to retaining Soldiers, and the Wisconsin Guard fosters and supports programs to help Guard families cope with the stress of military service and to enhance their quality of life.
- With the 1,453 new Soldiers recruited in 2008, the Wisconsin Army National Guard starts 2009 in a stronger position than at the beginning of 2008.

2008 Air National Guard Highlights Cont'd:

faced difficult staffing challenges in taking care of those who were displaced and in identifying and training people for newly created positions. Partly due to these changes, Wisconsin Air National Guard strength dipped below 100 percent for the first time in years, but a focused effort restored strength to 100 percent by year's end.

Wisconsin Air National Guard:

Approximately 2,300 men and women serve in Wisconsin's Air National Guard, including a headquarters staff in Madison and four major commands: 115th Fighter Wing, 128th Air Refueling Wing, 128th Air Control Squadron and the Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center.



Brig. Gen. John McCoy
Deputy Adjutant General – Air

2008 Air National Guard Highlights:

- The Air National Guard and its Madison-based headquarters staff assisted with several domestic military support operations and deployed Wisconsin Air Guard units for missions overseas.
- As the result of major manpower changes at the unit level during 2008, Wisconsin Air Guard headquarters



Operation Jump Start ended in July of 2008. This nearly two years mission sent thousands of Guard members to the southwest border to assist the U.S. Customs and Border Patrol. Several hundred Wisconsin National Guard soldiers and airmen participated in the mission provided administrative support and medical services, manned observation points and built barriers. Photo by Lt. Col. Tim Donovan



Wisconsin Division of Emergency Management

Mission:

Wisconsin Emergency Management is the lead state agency charged with coordinating the state's planning, preparedness, mitigation, response and recovery efforts for natural and man-caused disasters. WEM operates a 24-hour emergency hotline for requesting state assistance in search and rescue missions and for reporting hazardous materials spills, severe weather events, public health problems, and other threats to public safety.

WEM programs include hazard mitigation, warning communications, emergency planning, emergency police services, emergency fire services, disaster response and recovery, hazardous materials and the Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act, radiological emergency preparedness, exercise and training, and personal preparedness. WEM also has six regional offices that work closely with tribal and local emergency management programs.

Following a natural or man-made disaster, local officials work through their county emergency management director to contact WEM's 24-hour duty officer system. WEM contacts appropriate state and federal agencies and coordinates any requested state assistance, such as National Guard or State Patrol resources. In addition, WEM regional directors, emergency police services and emergency fire services coordinators may respond to the scene to serve as field liaisons for the State Emergency Operations Center in Madison and to help coordinate response efforts.



Johnny Smith
Director - Wisconsin
Emergency Management

2008 Emergency Management Highlights Cont'd:

Jim Doyle ordered an investigation and a report on the emergency response to the incident. The report, prepared by Brig. Gen. Don Dunbar, the adjutant general, recounted the storm response and addressed issues such as coordination and communication among multiple agencies, accurate and timely assessment of the situation, and communication to the public.

- Record snowfalls prompted Gov. Doyle to request a federal emergency snow declaration. Eleven counties were named in the emergency declaration, and more than \$8.5 million in public costs were reimbursed to eligible communities for snow removal and protection measures. The Federal Emergency Management Agency's Public Assistance program pays 75 percent of eligible costs. The state of Wisconsin pays 12.5 percent, with the local government responsible for the remaining 12.5 percent.
- June brought torrential rainfall and extreme flooding to southern Wisconsin, extending up toward the Green Bay area. Many rivers remained above flood stage into July, and 38 river gauge sites exceeded the previous all-time crests. Cities and villages along some rivers sustained considerable damage to buildings and roads. Additionally, there were widespread crop losses. Many southern Wisconsin roads were closed, along with parts of the Interstate system. President George W. Bush approved a federal disaster declaration for 32 Wisconsin counties. FEMA reported that 40,811 households applied for federal disaster assistance, and more than \$54 million in assistance to individuals was issued. In addition, another \$47.2 million in federal assistance was provided to communities for debris removal, emergency response costs, and damage to public infrastructure. Long-term recovery and mitigation efforts continue.
- In July, WEM assumed responsibility from the Office of Justice Assistance for operations of the Regional All Climate Training Center, a first responder training facility and program housed at Camp Williams. The REACT Center is a national training facility to help first responders learn to work across jurisdictions and disciplines in responding to terrorist acts and other catastrophes.
- In 2008, WEM offered 165 classes with a total of 5,923 students. In addition, there were 90 exercises, ranging from tabletop to full-scale exercises, with a total of 4,178 participants. The State of Wisconsin participated in two FEMA-evaluated exercises involving the Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Plant and the Point Beach Nuclear Power Plant.

2008 Emergency Management Highlights:

- During the 2007-2008 winter season, southern Wisconsin saw new snowfall records. A massive winter storm pounded the region in February, leaving nearly 2,000 vehicles stranded on Interstate 39/90 between Janesville and Madison, some for almost 20 hours. Immediately afterwards, Gov.



32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team

Mission:

With more than 3,400 Soldiers and units based in 36 Wisconsin communities, the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team is the largest unit in the Wisconsin Army National Guard. Brigade combat teams are the basic deployable combat maneuver units in the U.S. Army today. The 32nd IBCT resembles a small-scale combat division, with infantry, cavalry, field artillery, and special troops units for intelligence, signal, military police, and combat engineers.

The 32nd IBCT is descended from the 32nd “Red Arrow” Division. In 1967, the 32nd Division was inactivated and reorganized as the 32nd Infantry Brigade (Separate) (Mechanized). The 32nd was again reorganized into the 32nd IBCT in 2007 to reflect the needs of the U.S. military for operations in the Middle East and Southwest Asia.



Members of the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team depart Volk Field by chartered jet Feb. 23, bound for pre-deployment training at Fort Bliss, Texas. Photo by Chief Warrant Officer 5 Lynn Ryan

2008 Highlights:

- The 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team spent 2008 training and preparing for a mobilization and deployment. The unit was alerted in late 2007, and it received a mobilization order in December that called up more than 3,000 Soldiers for an active duty mission in Iraq, beginning in 2009. Eight other Wisconsin National Guard units were tapped to augment the brigade. This is the largest operational deployment of Wisconsin National Guard forces since World War II. The 32nd will have a security force mission and will be assigned tasks to assure freedom of movement and continuity of operations in Iraq.
- As part of the brigade’s preparation for deployment, 32nd Soldiers underwent a three-week training period at Camp Blanding, Fla., in early 2009, where they had access to some of the latest technology used to prepare infantry units for the battlefield — the Exportable Combat Training Capability, known as “XCTC.” XCTC uses global positioning systems worn by individual Soldiers, with other high technology systems and enhanced three-dimensional video surveillance to track all training and movement, and then to allow Soldiers to review each exercise, evaluate their training and recommend improvements. XCTC technologies and scenarios are updated continuously, using lessons from previous exercises and information gained from other Soldiers returning from combat.
- Soldiers of Troop E, 105th Cavalry, returned from Iraq in April 2008. Troop E was mobilized in June 2007 and completed 360 convoy escort missions throughout the Iraqi theater of operations. Troop E, which traces its lineage to 1924, has since been inactivated.
- The brigade’s 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry, also was inactivated. The unit was mustered into service in 1861 for the Civil War and again saw service in the Spanish-American War, World War I, World War II, and the Berlin Crisis of 1961-1962. The unit also was activated in 2005 for Operation Iraqi Freedom, and served a year in Kuwait.
- The 32nd activated a new unit, 1st Squadron, 105th Cavalry, which inherited the lineage and honors of Troop E, 105th Cavalry, and 2nd Battalion, 128th Infantry.



64th Troop Command

Mission:

The 64th Troop Command provides administrative, training and logistical support to unique, specialized or smaller Wisconsin Army National Guard units that are not part of other major deployable units. With an authorized strength of more than 1,700 Soldiers, the command includes aviation, sustainment and support, personnel, military police, band, transportation, maintenance, public affairs, rear area operations command, and medical units. The 64th Troop Command roles are to enhance personnel, training and equipment readiness; to transform units to meet new requirements for modularity within the Army; and to assist units during mobilization, demobilization and reintegration following deployments or active-duty mobilizations.

2008 Highlights:

- Members of the Troop Command headquarters participated in a peacekeeping operations exercise in Nicaragua, as part of their Annual Training.
- Several units completed pre-deployment training in anticipation of 2009 mobilizations: the 32nd Military Police Company; the 732nd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion headquarters; and the 1158th Transportation Company.
- The 107th Maintenance Company and the 1157th Transportation Company each completed two Annual Training periods in 2008, to provide support and assistance to the 32nd Brigade in its preparations for mobilization.
- The 112th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment deployed to Guantanamo Bay in April to support the Joint Task Force Guantanamo public affairs office.
- The 832nd Medical Company provided medical support in January during the Pacific Lifeline training exercise in Hawaii.
- The 132nd Army Band conducted annual training at Fort Sill, Okla., to replace a deployed active Army band. They also participated in about 25 community events in Wisconsin throughout the year.
- The command activated a new unit, the 1967th Contingency Contracting Team.
- The 135th Medical Company assisted in providing medical processing for more than 1,300 Soldiers in Vicenza, Italy.
- The Wisconsin Medical Command, from Madison and Marshfield, provided dental and medical support to a Medical Readiness Training Exercise in Nicaragua.
- Soldiers from the 332nd Rear Operations Center returned in April from a 12-month tour of duty in Iraq.



Family members and friends of Theater Aviation Company 6 wave good-bye March 31, 2008, as the unit departs in its C-23 Sherpa aircraft for a six-month deployment to Iraq. The eight-member company was a temporary unit formed of four pilots and four engineers from all three Wisconsin Army National Guard aviation units. *Photo by Larry Sommers*



157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade

Mission:

The 157th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade provides a versatile, flexible combat force that can be tailored to a wide spectrum of military combat and support missions, and it can provide specialized forces to support brigade combat teams and other combat units.

The unit, formerly the 57th Field Artillery Brigade, began transformation into a maneuver enhancement brigade. This type of brigade is relatively new to the Army; its concepts and doctrines are being refined as part of U.S. Army strategic transformation initiatives. The 157th includes units specialized in communications networking, chemical detection and decontamination, and forward support, as well as High Mobility Artillery Rocket System firing batteries and combat engineers. The 157th is headquartered in Milwaukee, and has an assigned strength of more than 2,100 Soldiers.

The 157th MEB largely is made up of units that were formerly part of the 57th Field Artillery Brigade and the 264th Engineer Group.

2008 Highlights:

- The 157th made significant progress in the transition into a maneuver enhancement brigade. The 157th participated in conferences and exercises to help develop and refine MEB doctrine, and this is the first year that the units worked together under a unified brigade headquarters.
- The unit provided support to assist the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team in preparing for its mobilization for duty in Iraq. This support included logistics; operation of individual and crew-served weapons ranges; and provision of training in land navigation, convoy operations, and defeating improvised explosive devices.
- Several 157th units — including the 829th Engineer Company; Battery A, 121st Field Artillery; the 108th Support Company; and some Soldiers from the 257th Brigade Support Battalion — prepared to be mobilized to augment the 32nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team during its deployment.
- The 951st Engineer Company (Sapper) was mobilized Nov. 30 and trained at Camp Shelby, Miss., in preparation for its deployment to Afghanistan.
- The 724th Engineer Battalion provided flood relief to Wisconsin in June and July. The 924th Engineer Detachment provided command assistance elements, which are advance teams that assess needs and damage and prepare response plans.



Wisconsin officials including Lt. Gov. Barbara Lawton; Brig. Gen. Donald Dunbar, the adjutant general; and Brig. Gen. Mark Anderson, deputy adjutant general, Army, visit the 951st Sapper Company, at Camp Shelby, Miss., for a military send-off ceremony in November, prior to the unit's departure for Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. *Photo by Maj. Jackie Guthrie*



426th Regiment (Leadership)

Mission:

The 426th Regiment (Leadership) is the Wisconsin National Guard's educational institution, providing a professional learning environment, quality instruction and training support. Through the Wisconsin Military Academy, housed at Fort McCoy, the 426th trains future leaders through its Officers Candidate School and Warrant Officer Candidate School. It also provides technical education for the basic field artillery Military Occupational Specialty qualifications and field artillery noncommissioned officer education system, as well as truck driving, combat lifesaving and other courses. The 426th has an assigned strength of more than 115 Soldiers.

2008 Highlights:

- Trained 2,249 Soldiers in Combat Lifesaver Course, plus first aid skills not taught in the lifesaver course.
- Completed Wisconsin's first-ever Warrant Officer Candidate School, graduating four new warrant officers for the Wisconsin Army National Guard.
- Sent instructors to Kosovo to teach nearly 100 Missouri Army National Guard Soldiers in both the Infantry Military Occupational Specialty qualification course and the new Infantry Leader Training Course.

1st Battalion, 426th Regiment (Field Artillery):

- Instructed the Artillery Weapons Maintenance Course to active-duty Soldiers at Fort Lewis, Wash., and to Alaska Army National Guard Soldiers north of Anchorage.

Training Site Command (Wisconsin Military Academy):

- Upgraded the Fire Arms Training System to the most recent model and added the M-4 wireless simulation weapons. FATS is a small arms trainer using lasers and large screens to simulate everything from weapons zeroing to scenario-based "shoot-don't shoot" tactics. The M-4 simulation weapon is identical in look, weight and feel to the weapon being used in Iraq and Afghanistan. It uses Bluetooth technology to communicate with the computer system, and its magazine holds enough CO2 to fire 30 times, bringing realistic reloading to the simulation.
- Added the United States Army Operator's Driving Simulator.
- Sent field artillery instructors to Nicaragua to continue an information exchange that began with a visit to Wisconsin in 2007 by Nicaraguan field artillery officers. While in Nicaragua, Wisconsin instructors received briefings and participated in discussions involving field artillery tactics and techniques.



Soldiers participate in a field training exercise, during Warrant Officer Candidate School, Aug. 2008. *Photo supplied*



115th Fighter Wing

Mission:

With its F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft, the Wisconsin Air National Guard's 115th Fighter Wing engages in air-to-air combat, close air support and precision-guided bombing. The 115th also maintains an Air Sovereignty Alert force of armed fighter aircraft and personnel ready at a moment's notice to defend domestic airspace. The 115th and its subordinate units have an assigned strength of more than 1,000.



Members of the Wisconsin Air National Guard participate in The Junior Enlisted Orientation Program (JEOP), held in August. JEOP is a three-day event which allows junior enlisted Airmen to gain an awareness of unit missions and experience various careers within the Air Guard. Photo provided

2008 Highlights:

- The 115th celebrated its 60th birthday in ceremonies and activities Nov. 1, with a celebration dinner held in the newly refurbished Hangar 400. The event brought current and past members of the wing together to celebrate the history of the Wisconsin Air National Guard.
- Nearly 300 members of the 115th Fighter Wing deployed from January through May for another tour of duty in Iraq.
- Air Force Chief of Staff, Gen. T. Michael Moseley, identified the 115th Fighter Wing as a potential future base for the next-generation fighter, the F-35 Lightning II, as part of the U.S. Air Force "Roadmap to the Future."
- The 115th Services Flight returned from a 120-day deployment to the United Arab Emirates.
- Northern American Aerospace Defense Command conducted an alert forces evaluation of the 115th Air Sovereignty Alert mission, and overall, 115th alert forces were rated "NORAD Mission Ready."
- The 115th Fighter Wing Environmental Management Office received the Air National Guard Environmental Restoration Award for Team Excellence. One of the accomplishments of the team was identifying a former petroleum, oil and lubrication facility and removing its abandoned fuel lines, thus clearing the way for the future expansion of the Dane County Regional Airport fire station.
- The 115th received another Distinguished Flying Unit award from the director of the Air National Guard.
- Col. David Romuald, Col. Michael Fantini and Col. John Dolan each completed their 3,000th flying hour in an F-16 in December, joining about 150 F-16 pilots Air Force-wide who have surpassed the 3,000-hour mark.
- The 115th also responded to the widespread flooding last spring, using its RC-26 aircraft to downlink real-time video to the state's Department of Emergency Management. This capability allowed our state leaders to deploy resources more effectively.

128th Air Refueling Wing

Mission:

The 128th Air Refueling Wing, based at General Mitchell International Airport in Milwaukee, provides aerial refueling and airlift support to the U.S. Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps, as well as aircraft of allied nations. Composed of about 900 military members, the 128th includes a headquarters; a refueling squadron; and maintenance, security, civil engineering, communications, support, weather, medical and operations units.

The unit's KC-135R tankers are the military versions of the Boeing 707. Each can carry more than 31,000 gallons of fuel, and deliver 1,000 gallons of fuel per minute to receiving aircraft.

2008 Highlights:

- The 128th completed construction of a new 33,000 square-foot aircraft maintenance facility.
- The unit hosted a tactical response exercise for 50 local law enforcement officers from five agencies. Anti-terrorism Force Protection education programs also trained local area law enforcement agencies on national "hate groups" and related hate crimes.
- The unit flew numerous U.S. and Pacific Air Forces aero-medical missions transporting wounded military personnel.



Air National Guard Combat Readiness Training Center/Volk Field

Mission:

The mission of the Air National Guard Combat Readiness Training Center at Volk Field is to provide a year-round training environment for Air National Guard units to enhance their combat readiness. The CRTC allows training to be done which cannot be accomplished at their home station. The facilities resemble a Forward Operating Location and provide a realistic setting for the conduct of unit Operational Readiness Exercises and Inspections. The center also manages the operations and scheduling of weapons firing ranges and airspace training areas.

The Volk Field CRTC is one of four such sites in the United States established and funded by the National Guard Bureau. More than 200 units from the Army and Air National Guard, Air Force and Air Force Reserve, Marine Corps and Naval Reserve use the facility each year. Other users include federal, state and local law enforcement agencies, Civil Air Patrol and youth organizations.

Volk Field is entirely owned by the Air Guard. It consists of 2,336 acres near the Village of Camp Douglas. The single runway can accommodate all military aircraft and has both precision and non-precision navigational approaches, along with a tower and radar approach control.

2008 Highlights Cont'd:

- More than 500 Air National Guard senior leaders and safety experts met at the Volk Field Combat Readiness Training Center in August for the Air Guard's 2008 leadership summit to discuss what is working well for the Air Guard and what could work better.
- A new High Risk Entry Training Facility opened at Volk Field on November 10, 2008. This facility is designed to enhance training through the Wisconsin National Guard's Drug Control Program.
- The Volk Field Security Forces section received and put into use a new Warrior Skills/Engagement Skills training system designed to simulate the experience of driving a Humvee in combat. Much like an IMAX, a 280-degree screen portrays realistic scenarios that put a four-person fire team through the paces of an actual convoy mission.
- The center also stood up a Laser Convoy Counter Ambush Training System, which trains troops in the use of lasers to eliminate targets.
- Volk Field also completed nearly 200 missions as an aerial port of embarkation, moving more than 22,000 passengers and 7 million pounds of cargo.



Maj. Richard Svardahl, left, a C-26 pilot from the 115th Operations Group, and 2Lt. Paul Borke, an Intelligence Officer for the 115th Fighter Wing, Madison, signal their position to a nearby A-10 close air support aircraft during a practice search and rescue (SAR) mission at Hardwood Range, in July, 2008. As part of the 2008 Patriot Exercise, the SAR mission allowed Air and Army National Guard aircraft to work in tandem to locate, protect, and extract friendly personnel from a potentially hostile environment. *Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman*

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Lt. Col. Glen Messner, 115th Fighter Wing, flies an F-16 Fighting Falcon over the state capitol in Madison October 18, 2008. *Photo by Master Sgt. Paul Gorman*