



Connecticut Guardian

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November is National Adoption Month

Guard families open arms and hearts to adopt children and expand families

Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton
State Senior Panco

"The whole process is pretty much like giving birth," said Master Sgt. Christine Pelletier. "It's like being on a very big roller coaster. Your emotions are all over the place. Up one day, down the next."

But, it's an experience she and her husband, Master Sgt. Dave Pelletier wouldn't trade for anything in the world.

Nor would Lt. Col. Michael Vasile and his wife, Barbara.

Nor would Maj. Ralph Hedenberg and his wife, Laura.

The experience is adopting a child.

All three couples had their own reason for adoption. For some it was a combination of reasons. It could have been age, it could have been the inability to have a child naturally, it could have been not wanting to go to extreme measures to have their own biological child.

Whatever their reasons, all said it was an experience they would go through all over again. In fact, one couple is in the process of their second adoption, and another is considering it.

For the Vasiles, the adoption process began in 1999 when they started "shopping" for an agency, said Mike Vasile.

"We had been married for 18 years and hadn't really looked at having a family until about four or five years ago," said Vasile. "We wanted to have a bigger family than just the two of us and instead of pursuing extraordinary measures, adoption seemed palatable. It was a great, great process."

The Vasiles decided to look at international adoption because from their perspective, they were looking for an orphaned child.

"We didn't want any issues for the child that would cause confusion about who the parents were."

After exhaustive research, they chose the New Hope Christian Services agency in New Hampshire, and settled on Romania as the country to adopt from because of the couples' Eastern European background.

As with the other two couples, the Vasiles went through an extensive application process including home studies, interviews, background checks and home visits. Fingerprints were taken and lengthy biographies were written before the Vasiles were accepted into the program.

Then the agency began sending videotapes of prospective children to the Vasiles.

"We knew we wanted a child as young as possible," said Vasile. "The second tape we saw was of Stephanie and we accepted her without looking at any more tapes."

That was in May 1999 and Stephanie was six-weeks-old at the time.

By the time the paperwork was completed through Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration (formerly INS) and the Romanian courts finalized the adoption, it was March 2000 when the Vasiles picked their daughter up at the embassy in Romania and brought her home. They had to spend four days in Romania finalizing the paperwork and having a final medical check before Stephanie could come to the United States.

The Pelletiers also decided on international adoption. But their reasons were very different.

Both are in their second marriage, and Chris has two boys from her first, Royce, age 17, and Matthew, age 12.

"We wanted to add to our family," said Chris. "Something was missing, and we realized it was a little girl."

The Pelletiers, like the Vasiles, went through an exhaustive search for an agency. They finally settled on Wide Horizons for Children in West Hartford after attending an open house.

They, too, had to go through extensive paperwork and interviews before being accepted as adoptive parents.

"Even the boys had to go through the process," said Dave. "Everytime we turned around we needed another copy of our certified



Laura Hedenberg, (in blue shirt) watches as Jennifer feeds newborn Aislyn her first bottle in the hospital. Open adoptions in the United States take on various degrees of "openness," and in this case, adoptive mother and birth mother shared many of the first moments of Aislyn's life in the hospital. (Photo courtesy of the Hedenberg family)

New vice chief of staff takes office

JENNIFER GUNN
ARMY NEWS SERVICE

Gen. George W. Casey, Jr. was sworn in at a Pentagon ceremony as the 30th vice chief of staff of the Army by Les Brownlee, acting secretary of the Army.

The ceremony began with Casey's promotion to general as Air Force Gen. Richard B. Meyers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, proclaimed it "a great day for the Armed Forces, a great day for the state of Massachusetts, and a great day for the Casey family."

An emotional moment came when the chairman pinned on Casey's stars. They included the stars worn by his father, the late Maj. Gen. George W. Casey, who was killed in a helicopter crash in 1970 on his way to visit wounded soldiers hospitalized at Cam Ranh Bay. Maj. Gen. Casey was the commanding general of the 1st Cavalry Division in Vietnam.

In his remarks, Casey said he is grateful to the Army's leaders for their courage and dedication of the last two years.

Reserve Affairs top enlisted advisor selected

The Department of Defense has announced that Army Reserve Command Sgt. Maj. Lawrence W. Holland has been selected as the seventh senior enlisted advisor to the assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs.

Holland will serve as the principal enlisted advisor to the assistant secretary of defense for all seven branches of the military Reserve components.

"Command Sgt. Maj. Holland's 34 years of distinguished Reserve component military service, and his background as a business owner and employer, will bring a unique and valuable perspective," said T.F. Hall, assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs.

The current senior enlisted advisor to the assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs, Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Leonard, leaves the Department of Defense to become the first senior enlisted advisor to the chief of the National Guard Bureau.

Up Front with the Adjutant General

Thanksgiving and the continued focus on Families



Maj. Gen.
William A. Cugno
Adjutant General

November marks the start of the busy holiday season for Americans everywhere. As members of the Connecticut National Guard family, we know that our Guard has been very busy since the tragedies of Sept. 11, 2001, and the beginning of the Global War on Terrorism.

Our members have been called to serve in various capacities. Whether as part of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Noble Eagle, our force is strong, professional and more publicly supported and respected than ever before.

The Guard's contributions to the efforts in Iraq have not gone unnoticed. The extended deployments have resulted in an obvious increase to time away from loved ones back home.

During this holiday season we are entering, the impact of time away from home will increase greatly. Birthdays and anniversaries have come and gone. Thanksgiving is upon us and Christmas will follow shortly thereafter. Strength will come from the friendships and relationships formed throughout the family support network.

The military family suffers from the separations most during the holiday season and this year will be especially difficult. Mothers and fathers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters have now been deployed for more than six months. It is my hope that you can take comfort in knowing that the work they are doing is of benefit to

our State, the Nation and the World. More importantly the Governor of our great state and the leadership of the Connecticut National Guard recognizes that without the love and support of a member's family, their service would not be possible.

As our Connecticut Guard Families celebrate Thanksgiving, and as their loved ones are deployed many miles away from home, we must reflect on the many blessings we enjoy individually and share as Americans.

From its pilgrim heritage, Thanksgiving has come to signify the American spirit: a spirit that is one of both of self-reliance and of gratitude for the abundance in our land. That spirit, more than anything, helps to nurture the freedom and prosperity that Americans hold so dear. That same spirit sustains our membership, their families and the citizen soldiers who continue today to defend our freedom.

George Washington made Thanksgiving his first proclamation for our new nation and this holiday has become America's oldest tradition. We continue as a nation the values of our founding fathers; to affirm our love of family, friends and community, and bestow blessings upon one another for the bountiful harvest that we share.

So as we celebrate the holidays over the next several weeks, let us keep our deployed soldiers, airmen and women everywhere in our thoughts and prayers, for we in the military are part of one large and extended family.

May we also be reminded of what's most important in life: our families, our friends, their love and undoubtedly, our liberty.

As we offer thanks with family and friends this holiday, let us remember those less fortunate and the countless others who cannot celebrate the day with their loved ones.

Make no doubt about it, these will be tough times, for many the first time that loved ones have been away from home during a holiday season.

Make no doubt about it that I have directed my staff to focus on each and every family member of those deployed, to reach out and contact them, to support their needs and to ensure they know that they are truly a part of our extended family. If you are not hearing from anyone, I urge you to contact me.

Proudly we will continue to serve as our Governor and President call on our competent and well-prepared organization. To all families- my thanks for your patience, your contributions, your continued understanding and certainly for your service. We know our Guard could not survive without your support.

Carolyn and I wish you and your families all the very best this Thanksgiving holiday. May God bless all of our service members, our families and America.

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Second Company Governors Foot Guard

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Perspectives

What message would you like to send to your deployed loved one?



MARY BETH
CORCORAN
To: SPEC. TIMOTHY
CORCORAN
143RD MPs
I love you and miss you. Come home soon.



JODI DETRICK
To: CAPT. ROBERT
DETRICK
Co. G 104TH AVN
I'm really proud of you. Stay safe. I love you.



JERRY AND NANCY
GIUFFRE
To: SPEC. KATHY
GIUFFRE
143RD MPs
Take care of yourself. We love you and miss and look forward to you coming home.



BARBARA AND PETER
HAYES
To: PFC. MATTHEW
HAYES
143RD MPs
We're proud of you. We love you. Keep your head down.

NICOLE, MARCY AND
RON KLATTENBERG
To: SGT. MICHAEL J.
KLATTENBERG
Co. G 104TH AVN
We miss you and love you and want you home...now.



See MORE PERSPECTIVES Page 21

Stefanko takes command of ASG

MAJ. JOHN R. WHITFORD
STATE PAO

Col. Thomas S. Stefanko became the new commander of the largest Army National Guard command in the state during a change of command ceremony at Camp Rowland in Niantic.

Stefanko will lead the Guard's 143rd Area Support Group in Newington, a brigade-size unit composed of more than 2,200 full and part-time soldiers.

He will oversee Infantry, Engineer, Medical, Signal and Logistics units throughout the state and the 143rd Area Support Group maintains the lineage of the

43rd Infantry Brigade.

Stefanko assumed command from Col. Joseph Perkins of Niantic, who had commanded the unit since 1999.

Stefanko was chosen for this senior assignment by Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, the Adjutant General and Commander of the Connecticut National Guard.

"Tom has earned this position through his outstanding performance, his leadership and dedicated service to the Connecticut Guard," said Cugno. "Joe did an outstanding job and I look to Tom to continue where Joe left off and move the 143rd ASG forward as a ready force for federal and state missions."



Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno (second from left) passes the colors of the 143rd Area Support Group to Col. Thomas Stefanko during change of command ceremonies held at Camp Rowland. (Photo by Maj. John Whitford, State PAO)

New commander talks history, sets goals, makes pledges for future

COL. THOMAS STEFANKO
COMMANDER, 143RD ASG
TEXT OF SPEECH FROM CHANGE OF COMMAND CEREMONY

General Cugno, General Zembrzuski, distinguished visitors and friends:

I'd like to thank you for sharing this special day with us. I'd also like to thank the senior leadership of the state for placing their special faith and confidence in my ability to assume this once-in-a-lifetime leadership opportunity. Let me just say that it feels good to be home again, and in many ways, it feels as if I've never left.

To my predecessor, General Joe Perkins, I give special thanks and acknowledgement for an exceptionally well-trained, mission capable unit, deployable world-wide in support of the Global War on Terror.

Brig. Gen. Perkins, you've done a phenomenal job as the Group Commander, taking the unit through three major training exercises within the past four years. I want you to know that I will strive to build upon your outstanding successes. My challenge will be to maintain the high standards that you have established here at the Group.

This command represents a continuation of the One State Major Command Concept; a concept successfully executed at the 85th Troop Command following the largest mobilization of Connecticut Guardsmen since World War II.

We are reminded daily that we are a nation at war. As part of the Global War on Terror, we've seen a dramatic shift from peacekeeping to warfighting in recent years. The sole purpose of our existence is, plain and simple, to deploy, fight and win this war. Everything that this unit does will be geared towards maintaining and improving our capability for success on the battlefield.

While this is fairly obvious for the line units, it is equally important for our soldiers in the support role as well. Every soldier assigned to this command contributes to the mission. Every soldier is a member of the team.

As leaders, it is our primary responsibility to ensure that the preparation and execution of training meets or exceeds standards. As leaders, it is our job to deploy physically, mentally and professionally fit soldiers

whose conduct, carriage, speech, appearance and attitude are soldierly at all times, and reflect the high standards of this headquarters and the 367 years of lineage that it represents.

The vision for the Group is to have cohesive units that run themselves and support the missions of this State and Nation. Training is the key to accomplish this, and training will only be successful if the leadership remains focused and maintains their self-discipline.

I conclude today's remarks with four pledges for this command:

To the Officers, I pledge leadership and mentorship throughout the chain of command. "Can-do" is the motto, and complaints will not be tolerated.

To the Noncommissioned Officers, I pledge a command environment that emphasizes decision making at the lowest possible levels. Mistakes made in training will be valuable learning tools if properly applied.

To the soldiers of this command, I pledge a realistic and demanding training environment where every member feels that they are part of the team.

And Finally...

To the family members, I pledge the care and safeguarding of your loved ones as my number one priority. And if deployed, a safe and speedy return.

During these demanding times if you're ever in doubt concerning this mission, look to the organizational colors and the battle-streamers that we so proudly carry.

Thousands have fallen supporting those freedoms that we hold so dear. Soon, new streamers will be added demonstrating our resolve and ultimate victory in this war.

And finally, I would be remiss if I didn't not recognize my wife, Sandy, and the support that she has given me throughout the years. It's not easy being both mother and father in my absence, and for that, I am grateful.

I'd also like to recognize the many NCOs and Officers who have been faithful friends and allies for many years.

Thank you again for coming and thank you for your continued support of this organization.



Connecticut JAG looks for weapons cache

Capt. Mark A. Tallo, (second from right), a member of the Connecticut Army National Guard Judge Advocate General Corps, stands with soldiers and an Italian specialized police officer, or Carabinieri, outside a bar in the city of Ferizai after they conducted a search of the business for a weapons cache. The other soldiers are Maj. Greg Sandherr and Maj. Marc Ferraro of the 28th Infantry Division. On the outer building wall behind them is an "In Memoriam" poster depicting the World Trade Towers as lit candles. (Photo courtesy of Capt. Mark Tallo, CTARNG)

Senior enlisted Guardsman, EANGUS president visit Connecticut, talk issues with Soldiers, Airmen

SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO

Soldiers and Airmen from the Connecticut National Guard had the opportunity to make their voices heard to national leadership members when the senior enlisted Army Guardsman and the president of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) came to the state in October.

Command Sgt. Maj. A. Frank Lever, command sergeant major of the Army National Guard, and Master Sgt. (Ret.) Terry Dell, EANGUS president, spent two days in the state meeting with senior Guard leadership, junior enlisted Soldiers and Airmen, spouses and retirees discussing issues and concerns.

They also met with several Soldiers from the Connecticut Army National Guard who had served in Iraq and had either returned from their deployments, or were home on medical leave.

Lever and Dell had been invited to the Senior NCO Dining In by the National Guard Association of Connecticut and took the opportunity to spend two days here to meet with Soldiers and Airmen.

On the first day of their visit, they met with Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, the adjutant general, and discussed optempo, deployment and redeployment, funding and various other issues with the state's senior military leader.

Following that meeting, Lever and Dell hosted a luncheon in the Officer's Club for several junior enlisted members of the Army and Air Guard and heard about issues that affect those young Soldiers and Airmen.

Lever and Dell invited an open and frank discussion with the junior members of the Guard, wanting to know exactly what was on their minds and what they thought could be done to improve benefits for members as well as how the Guard does business both daily and long-term.

The luncheon meeting proved to be so successful, it was moved to a conference room when the Officers' Club closed so it



Command Sgt. Maj. A. Frank Lever, command sergeant major of the Army National Guard, and Master Sgt. (Ret.) Terry Dell, president of EANGUS, on an office visit to Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general, to discuss issues and legislation that impact on Connecticut Guardsmen, their families and retirees. The two came to Connecticut to attend the Senior NCO Dining In and to meet with Soldiers and Airmen. (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, State Senior PA NCO)

could continue.

That night, Lever and Dell had the opportunity to meet with many senior NCOs from the Army and Air Guard, as well as Reserve units from all components around the state during the Senior NCO Dining In.

Once again, issues such as deployments, redeployments and optempo dominated discussion. However, because the crowd was older than the group the two had spent the afternoon with, discussion also turned to medical care, concurrent receipt and earlier retirement ages.

The discussions continued in depth the next morning at a breakfast honoring the two, sponsored by the National Guard Association of Connecticut (NGACT).

"We are very honored to have these two men with us," said NGACT President Joseph Amatruda. "These are two people that can take our issues and concerns back to Washington and who can help us in our efforts to get legislation passed that will benefit our Soldiers, Airmen, retirees and families."

The NGACT breakfast was run in a very informal style, with no speeches, so that those in attendance, as well as the honored guests, had every opportunity for frank discussions of issues and concerns.

Nearly 50 people attended the breakfast held in the Officers' Club. They included senior leadership members, junior enlisted Soldiers and Airmen, retirees, deployed Soldiers home on medical leave, spouses and members of the EANGUS Area I Caucus from New York.

Again, TRICARE, concurrent receipt, earlier retirement and day-to-day operations issues dominated the conversations.

At the time of the breakfast, it appeared that all proposals at the national level for any type of health care for Guardsmen and Reservists was a dead issue for this year. Many of those in attendance wanted this issue pushed as there are many Guardsmen who do not have health insurance, or if they do, they don't have enough.

"It's amazing to me how much a small state like Connecticut, with a relatively low number of Soldiers deployed, had to spend on medical and dental issues to prepare the Soldiers for deployment," said Lever after a lengthy discussion with Chief Warrant Officer 2 William Cusack. "But it doesn't surprise me."

(Editor's Note: Since the breakfast, several versions of TRICARE health benefits have been proposed by Congress. As of deadline, a limited, one-year trial of TRICARE for uninsured Guardsmen and Reservists had been passed by Congress and had been sent to President George W.

Bush for signature as part of the Iraq spending package.)

Concurrent receipt was also another high priority issue for Connecticut Guardsmen and retirees. Right now, if a retiree receives a military disability payment, he or she has their retirement pay offset by the amount of the disability payment, except if the disability was the result of an injury which earned the Soldier or Airman the Purple Heart.

Legislation is pending now to increase the number of people allowed to keep more of their money. Many of the Guardsmen in attendance want to see that increased so that all retirees who receive a disability payment are allowed to keep all of their retirement pay.

"It's apples and oranges," said one retiree to Dell. "Disability pay is an entitlement for having been injured serving your country. Retirement pay is a benefit of having served your country for 20 years. Why shouldn't you get the full amount on both?"

Also an issue for many, whether retired or not, was earlier retirement pay or earlier retirement ages.

Lever and Dell discussed the many proposals being made in Washington with several of the attendees.

"There is one proposal that would graduate the retirement collection date based on the number of years served," said Dell. "It is basically a one-for-two proposal, for every two years over 20 that you are in the Guard, you subtract one year from your age for receipt of your pay. For example, if you serve 22 years, you can begin collecting at age 59 instead of 60. If you serve for 30 years, you can begin collecting at age 55."

Both Dell and Lever have been to Connecticut before for various events. This, however, was Lever's second visit to meet with Guardsmen for issues and concerns-related discussions, and Dell's first. Both say they plan on coming back.

"Connecticut is a small state, but it is just as important when it comes to taking care of its Soldiers and Airmen and legislation as is a state the size of California," said Dell.



Master Sgt. (Ret.) Terry Dell, president of EANGUS, talks with Sgt. 1st Class Mike Straite, First Sgt. (Ret.) Chester W. Morgan and First Sgt. Daniel Morgan about legislative issues concerning Guardsmen during a breakfast sponsored by NGACT. (Photo by Maj. John Whitford, State PAO)



Chief Warrant Officer 2 William Cusack discusses health care issues and costs with Command Sgt. Maj. A. Frank Lever, command sergeant major of the Army National Guard during an October breakfast sponsored by NGACT. (Photo by Maj. John Whitford, State PAO)

Understanding Stop Loss: What it is, who it affects

SGT. 1ST CLASS DEBBI NEWTON
STATE SENIOR PA NCO

With unprecedented numbers of Guardsmen and Reservists being activated and deployed in support of the Global War on Terrorism, many uncommon phrases have now become commonplace in our military language.

One of the most often discussed, and according to many, misunderstood phrases, is Stop Loss.

"Simply put, the purpose of Stop Loss is to prevent the voluntary separation of Soldiers through ETS, non-mandatory retirements or getting out early," said Lt. Col. William S. Sobota, Military Personnel Officer (MILPO) for the Connecticut Army National Guard. "Stop Loss preserves skills needed for the warfight."

There are two kinds of Stop Loss: Skill-based, which targets specific MOSs and specialties; and Unit-based, which applies to units that have received their alerts for mobilization.

"At the beginning of the Stop Loss cycle, there were 50 MOSs identified as being critical to the warfight," said Sabota. "Among them were MPs, engineers, aviation and Special Forces."

According to Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Godburn, Plans and Actions Branch Chief, in January 2002 there was one officer specialty, two warrant officer specialties and nine enlisted MOSs, all in the Special Forces arena that were targeted for Stop Loss. In February 2002, those numbers grew to

include MPs and aviation-specific soldiers, eventually growing to 50 specific MOSs.

In February 2002, the 143rd Military Police Company of the Connecticut Army National Guard fell under the Stop Loss provision.

What that meant for Connecticut's MPs was that unless they were slated for mandatory removal

from the Guard for reasons such as age, medical or other adverse personnel reason, the individual soldiers were not going to be able to get out of the Guard.

In October 2002, a 12-month policy letter came out in regards to Stop Loss. What the policy said was if a Soldier was placed under Stop Loss on Feb. 1, 2002 and was

slated to retire on July 1, 2002 he or she had 12 months from the latter date before he or she could retire, making the new retirement

date July 1, 2003. If Stop Loss was lifted before that, then the Soldier would be eligible to retire earlier. The same holds true for Soldiers who have ETS dates that fall after Stop Loss went into effect for his or her MOS.

When a unit receives its alert order, unit Stop Loss immediately goes into effect to prevent soldiers from getting out. A unit is alerted because that unit is needed in the warfight, said Godburn, and implementing Stop Loss helps keep the unit strength at the level needed.

Stop Loss does not extend to Soldiers in the rear detachment of a mobilized unit, however. According to Godburn, the

assumption is that if the Soldier in the rear detachment were a mobilization asset, he or she would be with the mobilized unit.

"If a Soldier has his ETS come up while they are deployed, he stays in," said Sobota.

Godburn said that has happened to several soldiers while overseas, and that they have extended their enlistments while in theater. If a Soldier does nothing when his or her ETS arrives, they are released from their Guard commitment upon release from Title X duty plus 90 days.

When the unit returns home and is off Title X duty, the Soldiers fall back into NGB rules and are once again eligible to ETS, retire or get out of the Guard.

"Many people are concerned, especially in the media, that there will be a mass exodus of Soldiers from the Guard when they return home," said Sobota. "Looking at our numbers, I don't see that happening."

According to Sobota, of the hundreds of Connecticut National Guard Soldiers currently deployed only 188 whose ETSs or retirement dates fall during their deployment fall under the rules of Stop Loss, and only an additional 63 have ETS dates in 2004.

"Look at the numbers from the SFOR 10 rotation to Bosnia," said Sobota. "The units that went there have a better than state average for retention. There was no mass exodus."



A quick look at the Stop Loss policy and frequently asked questions

The intent of Stop Loss is to preserve the personnel readiness of the force as the Nation engages in various hostile and/or peacekeeping operations. The Army's skill based approach to Stop Loss does not fully support unit readiness in the Army National Guard. The Guard provides mobilized units in support of various operations, rather than providing individual replacement Soldiers.

To date the Guard has taken individual replacements from other units, borrowing volunteers to backfill losses, which has cascaded adverse unit readiness. A skill-based Stop Loss, by officer specialty and enlisted MOS, is appropriate for the Active Army, but does not preserve the personnel readiness of ARNG units.

On Nov. 4, 2002 the Assistant Secretary of the Army (Manpower and Reserve Affairs) Reginald J. Brown approved a new RC unit Stop Loss policy. ARNG Soldiers who are members of currently mobilized units as well as those that will subsequently be mobilized are subject to Stop Loss. They will be subject to Stop Loss upon official alert and throughout the period of mobilization. They will be released from Stop Loss 90 days after the date of unit

demobilization and release of Soldiers from active duty.

ARNG Soldiers presently affected by the skill-based Stop Loss will remain under the Army's 12-month soldier Stop Loss policy. Upon release from the skill-based Stop Loss or the completion of the 12 months under Stop Loss, these soldiers will then only be affected by Stop Loss again if their respective unit is subsequently mobilized at a later date.

Stop Loss does not affect most involuntary separations or retirements, nor does it generally limit laws, regulations or policies that lead to involuntary separations, retirements or releases from active duty.

The Army continues to reevaluate Stop Loss on a monthly basis and to use it as a tool to maintain unit readiness.

Unit Stop Loss

ALERT PHASE: Unit Stop Loss is effective upon official unit alert

MOBILIZATION PHASE: Everyone assigned to the mobilized unit is subject to Stop Loss

DEMobilIZATION PHASE: Utilize 90-day Stop Loss after demobilization.

Q: Under the new RC unit Stop Loss policy, is the policy retroactive to RC units already mobilized?

A: Yes. The policy goes into affect for currently mobilized units and then for all RC units mobilized after the policy's effective date.

Q: How will Soldiers currently affected by the Army's 12-month Soldier Stop Loss policy transition to the new RC unit Stop Loss policy?

A: RC soldiers presently affected by the skill-based stop loss will remain under the Army's 12-month Soldier Stop Loss policy. Upon release of the specialty from the skill-based Stop Loss or completion of 12 months under Stop Loss, these soldiers will only be affected by Stop Loss again if their respective unit is subsequently mobilized at a later date. Active Army Soldiers presently assigned or who may be assigned to RC mobilized units in the future will remain under the Army's 12-month Soldier Stop Loss policy.

Q: What does Stop Loss mean?

A: The Stop Loss program is authorized by statute and allows the Military Services to retain trained, experienced and skilled

manpower by suspending certain laws, regulations and policies that allow separations from active duty, including retirement. Stop Loss can only be executed during a Presidential call-up of Reserve Soldiers, partial mobilization or full mobilization. Those affected by the order generally cannot voluntarily retire or leave service as long as Reserves are called to active duty or until relieved by proper authority, whichever is earlier. Exemptions include members being involuntarily discharged and those waived by the service because of specific circumstances. Stop Loss generally freezes Ready Reserve Soldiers if they are currently on active duty or are called up in the future under emergency mobilization authority. In addition, this increment of Stop Loss applies to Ready Reserve and freezes most reserve component Soldiers not on active duty, who have certain critical skills and specialties. Stop Loss must end upon the cessation of the National Emergency and release of mobilized Reserve Component Soldiers and units.

Engineers shake Fort Dix during training exercise

CAPT. CHARLES JAWORSKI
AO, 242ND ENGINEER BATTALION

"Fire in the hole!" was a phrase commonly heard during the September drill of the 242nd Engineer Battalion (C). The unit conducted demolitions training at Fort Dix, NJ, using their annual allotment of different types of explosives, including C4, TNT, military dynamite, shape charges and Bangalore torpedoes.

The soldiers of the 242nd look forward to demolitions training each year, partly because it gives them a chance to do what many of them joined for, "to blow things up." The 242nd has combat missions that include mobility, counter-mobility, survivability, general engineering and stability and support operations.

"Our engineers require a high level of specialized individual training in order to fight and win on the battlefield. Demolition training is a core skill of the Combat Engineer", said Lt. Col. Michael A. Vasile, commander of the 242nd Engineer Battalion (C).

It is important for the engineers to stay current with the tools of their trade, as equipment changes with new technology. Today, demolition training is conducted using Modern Demolition Initiators, or MDI.

Over the last ten years, the engineering community has switched from a choice of either electric or non-electric blasting caps,

some of which had to be individually crimped on the end of detonation, or "det" cord, to a primary system of non-electric initiation, in which the blasting caps already come attached to shock tubes that initiate the explosion. MDI allows for ease and quickness of demolition operations, in addition to increased safety for the soldiers.

In order to make the training as realistic as possible, Engineers simulate several situations that they may encounter on the battlefield. Bangalore torpedoes were used to blow through triple standard concertina wire fences, to represent wire obstacles. Shape charges were used to blow hasty craters in a simulated road.

C4 blocks were used for several purposes, including simulating an abatis by emplacing timber cutting charges on two rows of telephone poles as trees, then later attaching them to each side of large concrete blocks to simulate a counter-force charge on a bridge abutment.

With more than 150 soldiers deployed in support of Operation Noble Eagle, and with the battalion using its normal training load of explosives, each Combat Engineer had the opportunity to get more than their share of "hands-on" training over the MUTA-5 weekend. Soldiers ended the successful drill commenting on both the quality and quantity of the training they received.

Not only were several members of



Twenty-five pounds of C4 is detonated by the engineers. (Photo by Capt. Charles Jaworski, AO, 242ND Engineer Battalion)

Detachment 1, Bravo Company (serving on Title 10 with Operation Noble Eagle) able to join the Battalion during the drill, but several NCOs of the 1st Battalion, 102nd Infantry who participated in the MDI training as well. The infantry has a squad mission to deploy Bangalore torpedoes, but rarely gets to work with them.

"This training was incredibly beneficial

to us, and we look forward to working closer with the Engineers in the future", said Master Sgt. Bryan Gran, operations sergeant for the 1/102nd Infantry.

The infantry was able to provide some instruction of their own during the crew served weapons familiarization training also conducted during the drill weekend. They provided detailed instruction on the MK-19 and M249 weapon systems, and the engineers also trained with the M2 machine gun and M203 grenade launcher. The battalion carries these weapons systems in its inventory, and has an annual mission to familiarize its crews on each of them.

Ft. Dix is frequently used to conduct this training because of its availability of ranges and facilities, and of course its short distance from Home Station. By conducting both crew served weapons familiarization and demolitions training during the same weekend at the same location, the Battalion was able to effectively increase its level of readiness.

"Overall, it was a successful weekend that resulted in safe and realistic training. My goal is to increase the combat readiness of this battalion through training that is properly planned, resourced and executed," said Vasile.



Members of the 242nd Engineer Battalion are taught the specifics of a 15-pound shape charge during training at Fort Dix. (Photo by Capt. Charles Jaworski, AO, 242ND Engineer Battalion)



Engineer and infantry soldiers prepare a Bangalore torpedo for firing during training exercises at Fort Dix, N.J. (Photo by Capt. Charles Jaworski, AO, 242ND Engineer Battalion)

Connecticut unit selected to put equipment to the test

MAJ. GEORGE H. WORRALL III
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

The Connecticut Air National Guard's 103rd Maintenance Squadron is hosting a 6-month Engineering Evaluation to replace the aging A-10 avionics test system in use today.

The evaluation will test the feasibility of using the current F-16 avionics test system to test two systems common to both aircraft and one exclusive to the A-10.

"This is an evaluation study to see if we can test multiple 'boxes' (avionics equipment) on the A-10: the IFF (identification friend or foe transponder), signal processor and CADC (central air data computer)," said Senior Master Sgt. Kevin F. Abbey, avionics intermediate level supervisor, 103rd Maintenance Squadron.

"The current test equipment for the A-10's central air data computer is the A-10 IATS. It is getting to the point where IATS has supportability problems for replacement parts."

The CADC is the part of aircraft avionics that updates air speed and altitude to the pilot, the inertial systems and the weapons systems.

"The CADC is the number-one MICAP (a critical part designation) product for the A-10," said Senior Master Sgt. Albert Parent,

avionics element chief, 103rd Maintenance Squadron.

"The present IATS can only test two of our boxes due to aircraft improvement. Simply by bringing on something from another aircraft we can test three boxes instead of two."

Before the test could begin Aug. 18, two weeks of training were required for those involved.

"We trained IAS authorized people, ECM people, and sensor people from Bradley Air Base, Willow Grove and Barnes (two other A-10 units)," said Master Sgt. Robert Turner, AIS supervisor, 138th Fighter Wing, Oklahoma Air National Guard, who conducted the training at Bradley ANG Base.

"The National Guard Bureau, AFMC (Air Force Material Command), the A-10 community, and the ALC (Air Logistics Center) at Hill Air Force Base are working together to validate this system for A-10 use. This is the only one of these systems in an A-10 unit right now."

According to Turner the implications go beyond having a supportable tester for the A-10.

"An extension is you will be able to take an F-16 person to run A-10 parts and vice versa," said Turner.

For the F-16 equipment manufacturer, the

dual use adds more positive elements to the equation.

"Since the A-10 is now starting to have support problems with existing test equipment our approach was the Air Force could use existing equipment already in inventory at some of the areas the two aircraft are collocated, like Eielson (Alaska), Korea, Spangdahlem (Germany), and not have to buy new test equipment," said Thena Fantasia, Program Director, DoDATE (automated test equipment) Programs, BAE Systems.

"That is what this test is really supporting showing that you can use one tester to support the two weapons systems.

"The key thing is that because there are so many of these test stations out with the F-16s and so many international customers there is an infrastructure already in place and funding to support the systems until 2023," said Fantasia.

"So what would be nice would be for the A-10 to leverage the infrastructure that is already there so they can ensure their support will last until at least 2023."

Although a final report is not due for months initial feedback has been good.

"The new one is a lot faster and it can do a lot more," said Master Sgt. David Leduke, electronic sensors shop chief, 103rd

Maintenance Squadron. "It is a lot more maintainable, if what we use now breaks we have to fix it ourselves."

In Baltimore, Maryland another test is in progress with the C-141 and C-5 test equipment to see if it too is compatible with the A-10.

The test began there in May and was originally scheduled for Bradley but the testing the site was moved due to the 103rd's deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom. A deployment the unit took the current test system on which highlights another advantage.

"The new system is only a quarter of the size," said Parent. "Then I can go into theatre with a smaller footprint and even greater capability, that is what is exciting right now. It also has forward testing capability and meets all the new automated test equipment requirements."

The 103rd Maintenance Squadron at Bradley has one of the only operational A-10 CADC test stations in the Air Force, which is needed to validate the tests with the new system.

"Daily and monthly we will report to Guard Bureau how many boxes we tested, and at end of six months complete the report," explained Abbe.



Staff Sgt. Rome S. Baldwin (left), integrated electronics mechanic, Staff Sgt. Peter Demakis (center), electronic warfare system journeyman, and Master Sgt. David Leduke, shop chief electronic sensors (right), all from the 103rd Maintenance Squadron, complete their training with the F-16 Automated Test Equipment at Bradley Air National Guard Base August 15. (Photo by Maj. George H. Worrall III, 103 FW/PA)

MPs are restoring law and order in Baghdad

1st LT MICHAEL V. ROSSI
2nd PLATOON, 143rd MP COMPANY

It has been a long, hot summer for the men and women of second platoon, 143rd Military Police Company. The early September weather in Iraq is starting to offer a respite from the 130° temperatures that plagued the city during the height of the summer.

The MPs, already acclimated to the weather, are finding the beginning of the fall season here more comfortable. Temperatures ranging in the high 90s to low 100s are easier to bear for a platoon that has spent the better part of the last five months in a climate 20 to 30 degrees warmer.

Since arriving in the Persian Gulf and entering Baghdad, second platoon has been working hard to support Operation Iraqi Freedom. They have been assigned to the 709th MP Battalion and tasked with restoring law and order to the western half of the war-torn city.

Working closely with the Iraqi Police Service (IPS), the MPs have been patrolling the streets and working to restore the IPS as an effective law enforcement organization. It is a difficult and dangerous job. Many times, the platoon has come under direct fire from criminal or terrorist elements. The soldiers have seen poverty on a scale unequalled in the United States. They have also frequently seen the ugly and brutal results of violent crime.

Most of these soldiers are in their late teens and early twenties. Many of them

are fresh out of high school. Quite a few of them were taken out of college courses to deploy here.

Despite their young age, these soldiers have served with professionalism and competence. They have not been given a difficult task and not only met the standard, but exceeded it. The platoon has drawn praise from the 1-13th Armor Battalion of the 1st Armored Division for their performance while serving as a direct support MP platoon. Second platoon, along with the rest of the 143rd MP Company, have set the standard in West Baghdad when it comes to patrolling and law and order operations in the 709th MP Battalion area of responsibility.

Despite their success, the MPs are growing weary from their labors. While morale continues to remain high, the casual observer cannot help but notice the fatigue that has slowly begun to creep into the young soldier's faces. Eyes that were once innocent now have a hard edge to them. Thankfully, they retain their sense of humor and their dedication to looking after each other. Somehow, they always find some humor in every situation.

The soldiers of second platoon, 143rd MP Company are tired. They are worn. But they know that there is still a mission to accomplish. Since their platoon's arrival in Baghdad, they have made significant strides to reduce crime and improve security. While they may not know how long it will be until they see home again, they know that they are making a tangible difference in the Iraqi people's lives.

Connecticut MP's assist Civil Affairs in Iraqi Civilian Relocation

SGT. TIMOTHY J. RICHMOND
3rd PLATOON, 143rd MP COMPANY

After the war in Iraq, many Iraqi civilians were left with no place to live. They have resorted to making government buildings, police stations, and factories their new homes. There are two major problems with this.

The first problem is a number of the buildings are to be used for the new Iraqi Government and Army. They are needed for local city councils, police stations, training centers, and various government ministries.

The second problem is several of the buildings are destroyed from bombing. They are unsafe and could possibly contain unexploded ordnances inside them.

The 143rd MPs have been assisting Civil Affairs to relocate about 30 families from a future police station in North West Baghdad to an apartment complex in Eastern Baghdad. The complex already has running water, a sewage system and electricity. 3rd platoon of the 143rd MP Company provided

security for Civil Affairs, Iraqi Police, and three of the heads of the families to see where their new home will be.

The displaced civilian relocation program is a combined effort of Civil Affairs, Military Police, Iraqi Police, Iraqi City Council, and civilian family heads. Each group plays a vital role in the successful relocation of displaced civilians.

Along with the daily joint patrols with Iraqi Police, MPs provide security escorts for Infantry, Civil Affairs, Psychological Operations, and other Coalition Forces. Members of the 143rd often work with Civil Affairs in the effort to make Iraq a better place for its own people. They have provided security for missions including food distribution, displaced civilian relocation, and reimbursement for property damage caused by bombing during the war.

The 143rd Military Police Company is a major part of the rebuilding and security of Iraq, and are making history for both the U.S. Army and the Connecticut National Guard.



Members of 3rd Platoon of the 143rd Military Police Company stop to take a picture with relocated Iraqi children. (Photo courtesy of the 143rd MP Company, CTARNG)

Into harms way: Just another day at the office for the Military Police

1st LT. MICHAEL GRUBE
4th PLATOON, 143rd MILITARY POLICE COMPANY

On the night of Aug. 13, 3rd squad, 4th platoon, 143rd Military Police (call sign Voodoo 3) was on a routine patrol with the Iraqi Police in the Yarmuck section of Baghdad when they spotted an older model pickup truck driving erratically. The truck was out after curfew and out of place in this relatively affluent section of Baghdad.

As Voodoo 3 and the Iraqi Police pulled the vehicle over, the passenger threw a cement block out the window. The two occupants of the vehicle, both Iraqi males were ordered to step out of the vehicle where they were immediately searched. Although the search turned up negative for firearms the two individuals seemed highly agitated.

The Iraqi Police questioned the two individuals while Sergeants Zettergren, Muravnick, and Magrey searched the vehicle. When the search turned to the cement block everyone realized that this wasn't an ordinary cement block.

The center of the block had been filled with explosives and there were wires sticking out of it. This was an IED (Improvised Explosive Device). IEDs are usually hidden along the side of the road and detonated when Coalition Forces travel by. They are also the single biggest threat to soldiers in Baghdad.

As soon as Sgt. Zettergren saw the IED he took the two suspects into custody and secured the scene. A further interrogation and search of the detainees' homes revealed that one of the detainees was a member of the former Republican Guard. The search also turned up explosives, fuses, and other bomb making material as well as large amounts of money.

For their actions Sergeants Zettergren and Muravnick were recognized at an awards ceremony by Col. Gold, the brigade commander of the 1st Armor Division, 3rd Brigade Combat Team.



Improvised Explosive Device (IED) recovered by Sgt. Zettergren's squad.

143rd MPs fighting crime in a far away land

SGT. JAN C. PETRIE
1st PLATOON, 143rd MP COMPANY

On Sept. 6, 1st platoon of the 143rd MP Company took over the operations of the Abu Ghraib police station on the outskirts of Baghdad. Selected for their law enforcement expertise, 1st platoon was all too willing to step up to the plate.

Abu Ghraib, a particularly troubled section of Baghdad, has long been renowned as a hotbed of criminal activity. Coupled with continued attacks on coalition forces within this impoverished suburb, one did not know if the men and women of the 1st platoon would see the challenge before them as daunting.

"I feel that it's a big challenge, but with all of our experience as civilian police and corrections officers we should be able to meet the task at hand", said Staff Sgt. David Rosati, a police officer for the town of Winsted.

"I never would have thought that a National Guard unit would be assigned such a challenge!"

Prior to the war in Iraq the police departments in Baghdad were plagued with corruption. During the post war rebuilding of the government and its agencies, the Iraqi police have been trained using American standards. From refurbished stations, modern equipment, and a uniform to be proud of, the Iraqi police represent the bright new future of Iraq.

The men and women of 1st platoon work side by side with the new Iraqi police force. They have provided their expertise in many cases ranging from petty larceny to murder.

"I watched the IPs grow from unorganized cowboys policing the Wild West, to a maturing police force right before my eyes," said Pfc. Simon Dubba, a college student from New Britain.

When the time comes that the 143rd redeploy home, they feel confident that the hard work done will leave a lasting effect on the streets of Baghdad. The sacrifice by both MPs and IPs has forged a professional relationship that is reflected in their fine work.



Sgt. 1st Class Porter of the 143rd Military Police Company questions an Iraqi taxi driver while on duty in Baghdad. (Photo courtesy of the 143rd Military Police Company, CTARNG)

The 143rd MP Company immortalizes Connecticut National Guard

SGT. ROGER C. ROBERGE, JR.
WITH SPEC. DARRYL MESAROS

The 143rd Military Police Company (Combat Support) (Wolfpack) is setting the standard for all National Guard units, not only in Connecticut but nationwide. The Hartford, Conn. based unit has been making history in grand proportions since their arrival in the Middle East on April 16, 2003.

The 143rd was the first Connecticut National Guard unit in Iraq, and was also among the first National Guard Military Police companies in Baghdad.

While assigned to the 709th Military Police Battalion, the company has been instrumental in reestablishing Iraqi Police stations and patrol stations, as well as training the Iraqi Police Services (IPS) in proper police techniques and procedures. The unique experience that many of the members bring to the unit (the company has over fifty soldiers with law enforcement backgrounds in civilian life) has been of great value to that end.

However, the Military Police personnel are not the only ones contributing to the unit's success; the company's support personnel have had a hand in missions also.

The administrative and supply sections assisted in the effort to issue the IPS new uniforms and ID cards, the first time in a decade that such an attempt had been made, according to several IPS officers.

The maintenance section has had the arduous task of keeping the company's aging fleet of vehicles and generators running through constant use in a climate hard on anything mechanical.

The medics have constantly had their finger on the pulse of the soldiers' health. The culinary expertise of our mess section, making Army rations taste like real food, continues to baffle our taste buds.

The communications section has managed the never-ending job of keeping our antiquated radios running and in communication with all units very well indeed.

And last but not least, our Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical (NBC) NCO went to extreme lengths to ensure that the unit was prepared, both in equipment and in training, to deal with any chemical warfare threat in the theater of operations.

The soldiers of the 143rd are no different from any other unit, except that we know that we must complete the missions that we are assigned before we can go home. Each mission that we complete gives us a sense of pride in knowing that we have done the best we can in the situation that we are in.

Like any family, we have complaints, ribbing and disagreements, especially over whose job is more difficult, but in reality, deep down we all know that we are all here

supporting one another, no matter what. Whether we realize it now or later, this dysfunctional little family has forged a bond that will remain with each of us.

Although the current Army policy is to recruit for an "Army of One," we understand that no one individual job is more important than another, and that in order to complete the mission, we have to work as a team.

Although pride is one of the seven deadly sins, I confess that when this latest chapter of American history is written, I will be proud of the accomplishments of the 143rd Military Police Company in Baghdad.

I will be proud and honored to serve with these soldiers, patriots and comrades in arms.

Last but not least, I will be proud of the American people for all the support that they have shown to us.

That leads me to say something about our families. They have had the additional burden of carrying on without us, fulfilling our obligations and commitments in our absence. For completing these tasks I feel that the following prayer is suitable to our situation:

Prayer for Home

Far from home and those I love, I find my thoughts turning to them with affectionate longing. O God, You who are with my loved ones who are distant

even as You are with me here; You hear their prayers as you hear mine. Bless us and keep us united in spirit until we meet again. Let me so remember them that it will seem we are together, and that I may be warmed by their love for me and my love for them. May my thoughts of those I love so move me that I do them honor with my deeds, even far from them in a strange and foreign land. Dear God, keep me mindful of the blessing of their love, that I may never yield to despondency. Help me to cheer my comrades who are also far from their families, their homes, and their loved ones. You, O God, are the father of all; You are the source of all love. No one who puts his faith in You will ever feel forsaken. Amen.

Mired as we are in our daily routine, it is sometimes difficult to remember the sacrifices of those we left behind. We remember them as they remember us.

As stated by the late John F. Kennedy, "Let the word go out that from this day forward a new torch has been lit." With the establishment of a new Iraqi nation, we in the 143rd Military Police Company are ready to pass this torch on to another unit, so that we may come home to our families, loved ones, and country. God bless America, and the 143rd MPCO (Wolfpack).

Reporting from the front: A soldier with the 248th tells their story

2ND LT. CHRISTOPHER MORGAN
248TH ENGINEERS

My engineer company and the platoon I lead specialize in horizontal construction. I need to give you a little background information because if I were to leave it at that the picture would be woefully underdeveloped.

Engineers are known for shaping the battlefield and up here where I am, in many respects, it really is a battlefield. There is no force in the world capable of matching us face-to-face and that certainly is the case here in Iraq but this battlefield is of the unconventional type.

In general, engineers deal with missions that affect an Army's mobility, counter-mobility, survivability, sustenance and the often overlooked subject matter of topography and terrain analysis.

Engineers hardly ever work independently. Instead they are often part of a task force or even attached to the infantry directly. In my case, I am working for an engineer task force named Task Force Able that is attached to the 4th Infantry Division's (4th I.D.) task force called Task Force Iron Horse.

In one shape or form, horizontal engineers deal with all the missions I mentioned above and like all engineers, they are trained to also fight like the infantry. In fact, every day I lead my troops in infantry based operations. We are in an infantry rich operational environment yet the 4th I.D. is an armor heavy division.

Anyway, getting my men to our various objectives and then back again is a mission within a mission that has very little to do with horizontal construction. We do this in convoys and they have been the single most dangerous operation within my range of operations.

Not counting the numerous bombings or the sundry mortar attacks that occur separately, convoys have been specifically targeted by the paramilitary forces. The enemy uses some very sophisticated tactics, techniques and procedures and they are getting trickier by the day.

Preparing for convoy is like suiting up for that big game and we do it every day. Unfortunately, the enemy controls the time and place of these ambushes. Nothing can be overlooked in planning and preparations. Some of the time, we deal with a very strange reality. This is best explained through one of my experiences.

In one convoy, through a less than friendly town, we heard small arms fire to the left and behind us (as the platoon leader, I ride in the lead vehicle). My driver executed perfectly, accelerating just as planned.

The rest of us switched our weapons off safe and whirled around looking to engage the threat in order to suppress the enemy thus allowing my convoy to exit the engagement zone or kill zone. Well, we

couldn't locate the source but managed to make all the civilian vehicles around us screech to a halt as they saw us searching for a target.

The awkward reality is in having the power to make people screech to a halt (unintentionally) while at the same time being totally powerless in the face of an unseen enemy.

This is a good description of the environment we work in. It is also a great example of the professionalism of American soldiers that not one of my soldiers fired their weapon during that particular incident.

While it may appear that we are sitting ducks when my unit convoys from mission to mission, there are other units taking a proactive role in hunting down the enemy and they have been very successful in disrupting ambushes before they are carried out. They are doing a great job.

My unit has unique assets so they are called on often...hence the many, many convoys that I lead. When we reach our objective, our mission actually becomes much safer although never threat free.

Since my arrival in theatre, we have worked extensively on doing the earth-work in creating forward operating bases (F.O.B.s) but not exclusively. One ongoing mission is the repair of a thoroughly bombed runway.

We construct better living space for sustenance, access roads for mobility and entry control points for counter-mobility. Force protection or survivability, understandably, takes a priority and involves building eight-foot high perimeter berms, the digging or building up of carefully located fighting positions (that take into account the terrain and weapons systems) as well as the general hardening of the base through use of traditional sand bags or by other means.

Orchestrating men and equipment efficiently while making sure there is sufficient local security (as we call it) is a whole other consideration and responsibility. My operators are experts with their equipment so, I get first class feedback.

These missions are pretty interesting and very fulfilling, especially when non-engineers see us making their area of operation more livable and measurably safer. In this sense, every time an engineer steps foot on a forward operating base, the soldier on the ground experiences a boost in morale thus making us force multipliers too.

This work is certainly an education in itself with all the on-the-job training that I am

gaining but what is not measurable is how my exposure to the various regions of Iraq and its people, expand my world view. I am genuinely grateful for having been raised in New Canaan but never have I seen a family with a donkey as the family mode of travel.

These people are remarkable in their strength to say the least. Their ignorance of a better life is shocking and from the Christian charitable point of view very disturbing if not humbling. My own comforts and luxuries haunt me as I see the most beautiful children almost destined to backwardness. We are definitely here serving some higher humanitarian purpose.

I am grateful for the many encounters with villagers yearning for hope and being the symbolic if not direct messenger of that hope in the form of the United States Military.

I have experienced that classic liberation of Europe moment in the form of giving candy to Iraqi children. I feel a connection to these people and America's greatest generation I never could



have imagined before. I will never forget the little boy with a soccer shirt who laughed with me when I told him, using body language, that I played soccer.

My unit is in Tikrit stationed at a former Iraqi airbase now named Camp *****. Tikrit is of course, Saddam's home town and a big part of the daunted "Sunni Triangle." Camp ***** however, is totally safe despite being fairly dilapidated. We are not living in palaces even though there are many in Tikrit proper.

In fact, as a result of my missions, I have been sleeping mostly under the stars. When at Camp ***** though, I have my own room in a former Saddam Youth barracks. My troops have air conditioning running off a diesel engine generator. This is our only form of electricity but there are plenty of generators creating both electricity and enormous amounts of exhaust.

The previous tenants made sure when they went through here that my room had no door, my ceiling had a hole and my windows were missing. I have natural air conditioning and an open door policy I guess you could say.

There is no running water and we do our best to stay clean but this country is arid, exceptionally hot and the wind covers you in dust. I am generally dirty all the time. What's new you say, well, try 16-day stretches without a shower. I'm not sure,

but after these stretches, some of the chemical warfare guys think I am a weapon of mass destruction.

From a completely objective point of view, I am glad to be here for a number of reasons. There is no denying the many inconveniences or risks but they amount to a hill of beans when you get to see the progress first hand as I do. Not just the progress with my soldiers or the start and finish of a mission well-executed but the progress underway way for these long suffering Iraqi people.

It is true that many of the areas we convoy through greet us with middle fingers or the slit throat sign but not the children and certainly not the majority. It is so impressive to see the steely-eyed determination of our soldiers while they exercise restraint and discipline.

Imagine what I have seen with my own eyes when one-by-one, American soldiers with their weapons at the ready, convoy past civilians and then lower their muzzles for each and every one. I have seen the astonishment in the Iraqi eyes as they acknowledge our consideration. Simply put, it is an awesome sight to behold.

Our respect for innocent life and the courteousness with which we operate makes us all ambassadors of our great nation's values every time we are seen.

I am so proud to be here representing those values. I would be miserable if I were back home knowing that my friends were here and I wasn't.

Everyday I see new and different Iraqis working to upgrade their condition and nation. I was blown away by the new Iraqi soldiers I saw at a checkpoint previously manned by Americans. They looked sharp, decisive, committed and above all professional. The toppled power lines around here are being re-erected not by Americans but by Iraqis.

Little victories like this are being won every day without fanfare. Every time I see them working, I get fired up and reflexively cheer. These are the moments I would regret never experiencing.

Please note that I have many colleagues over here that mean the world to me. With all the support I have gotten, please keep them in your mind too. One in particular had to deal with the devastation of a 4-year-old girl and her two brothers after they were forced by their parents to emplace an improvised explosive device meant for U. S. soldiers. The device detonated on them ripping them to shreds.

My friend took it very hard. We are all heartbroken for him and those poor children. They were the victims of our enemies.

Rest assured though, despite the insanity, we are making a difference over here. Our fallen colleagues have not fallen in vain. Their memory gives us cause for pause but fills us with resolve. Please remember them most.

Leadership reaction course prepares ROTC cadets

PV2 JORDAN E. WERME
65th PCH

Army Junior ROTC students from Connecticut high schools participated in the Leadership Reaction Course (LRC) at Stone's Ranch Training Facility in Niantic, Oct. 4.

The students from West Hill School, Stamford, Hill House H.S., New Haven and New Britain H.S., New Britain, took part in the LRC as part of the Army's commitment to leadership training and teamwork building.

"The program is designed to foster and fine-tune team cohesion and to enhance leadership potential," said Master Sgt. William C. Bernard, LRC Field Noncommissioned Officer in Charge and recruiting supervisor for the New Haven region.

"ROTC participants learn the basics of leadership during their day-to-day training and come to the LRC to get some hands-on experience with the skills they've been learning," said Bernard.

The LRC is very similar to an obstacle course, using physical challenges to help bring out the best in future leaders, but it is much more involved than just the use of physical strength, according to Bernard.

"LRC focuses on more conscious, logical thinking to accomplish the mission. Each event has a military scenario to accomplish," said Bernard.

The LRC course consists of up to 17 team-building obstacles that simulate military situations ranging from moving a team and ammunition crates across a blown-out bridge, to working as a team to cross a booby-trapped section of terrain.

"It's good to be a part of the training," said Staff Sgt. Toriano Riberio, recruiting NCO for Waterbury. "Helping the cadets learn these important skills is exciting."

The LRC course is conducted about four times per year with between 40-50 participants each time. The groups are made up of students ranging from enlisted to officer ranks.

"(The LRC) is very effective," said Bernard, "and learning to work together is very important."



Junior ROTC students from programs throughout Connecticut spent two days on the National Guard's Leadership Reaction Course at Stone's Ranch learning teamwork and problem-solving skills. The students had to work together to come up with creative ideas to solve the myriad of problems laid before them during the training. (Photos by Spec. Joseph Waller, 65th PCH)

Record of Connecticut Men in the War of Rebellion

Editor's Note: In 1889, the Connecticut National Guard published a summary of the events of each unit's service during the Civil War in 38 chapters, entitled RECORD OF SERVICE OF CONNECTICUT MEN IN THE WAR OF REBELLION, 1861 TO 1865. The following is a copy of the first segment of that history. Subsequent chapters will be published in The Connecticut Guardian on a regular basis. (Transcribed by Staff Sgt. Brett W. Wilson, Administrative Assistant to the USPFO for Connecticut)

The First Regiment of the three months' men was recruited under the proclamation of President Lincoln, issued Monday, April 15, 1861, and the call of Governor Buckingham issued the day following.

Anticipating the call of the Governor, recruiting had begun so promptly that by the 16th many companies were ready to report with more than the minimum required, and Rifle Company A of Hartford, with George S. Burnham, Captain, Joseph R. Hawley, 1st Lieutenant, Albert W. Drake, 2d Lieutenant, had completed its organization with full ranks. This company and Rifle Company A, Captain John C. Comstock, left Hartford for the rendezvous at New Haven, April 20th. The regiment was at once organized with Dan. Tyler of Norwich, as Colonel, George S. Burnham, Lieut.-Colonel, and John L. Chatfield, Major.

The regiment was at first quartered in the buildings of Yale College and wherever shelter could be found, but soon went into camp in a vacant lot in the western part of the town, where the different companies were mustered into United States service, and immediately began work in earnest at company and regimental drill. On May 10th the regiment embarked for Washington on the steamer "Bienville," and on the same day Colonel Tyler, who was a West Point graduate and had seen regular army service, was made Brigadier-General of Volunteers; Lieut.-Colonel Burnham being promoted to the full Colonelcy of the regiment.

The First arrived at Washington via Chesapeake Bay and the Potomac May 13th and proceeded at once to camp at "Glenwood," about two miles north of the Capitol.

May 31st Lieut.-Colonel Chatfield was promoted to the Colonelcy of the Third Regiment, vice Arnold resigned.

Major Spiedel was made Lieut.-Colonel and Captain Theodore Byxbee of Meriden, was made Major.

These were days of intense excitement in Washington, and false alarms were frequent, but cool heads were in control of the Connecticut Brigade.

On the day of Colonel Ellsworth's funeral, all Washington was subjected to a false alarm, the long roll was sounded, and the First was hastily ordered out and marched to Long Bridge, when the alarm having subsided it was ordered back to

camp.

At midnight, June 1st, the regiment broke camp at Glenwood and crossing Long Bridge, marched to Roach's Mills on the Alexandria & Leesburg railroad, where it established camp, relieving the 12th New York.

About June 16th a detachment of the First, under Colonel Burnham, was ordered up the railroad as escort to General Tyler in a reconnaissance. The train was made up of miserable rolling stock, and the couplings parted so frequently that the detachment was

Regiment covering the left of the head of column as skirmishers and the Second covering the right. They bivouacked the first night at Vienna, and the second at Germantown, arriving at Centerville on the 18th.

At midnight of Saturday, July 20th, the brigade was advanced via Warrentown road toward Bull Run, and was detached to guard the Warrentown road during the detour of the flanking column via Sudley Ford. It remained in this position until about 10

dispatched its entire camp and garrison equipage, together with that of the Second Maine, which had left the brigade, to Alexandria. The three Connecticut regiments marched that night to the camp of the First and Second Ohio regiments, which they found deserted. Occupying this standing camp during the night, it spent all day Tuesday, July 23d, in packing and sending to Alexandria the camp and garrison equipage of the First and Second Ohio and the Second New York regiments, leaving not a vestige of anything useful to fall into the hands of the enemy.

General Tyler in his report says:

"At seven o'clock on Tuesday evening, I saw the three Connecticut regiments, with two thousand bayonets, march under the guns of Fort Corcoran in good order, after having saved us not only a large amount of public property, but the mortification of seeing our standing camps fall into the hands of the enemy."

Casualties First Connecticut Volunteers

	Field and Staff	Rifle Co A	Inf Co A	Rifle Co B	Inf Co B	Inf Co C	Inf Co D	Inf Co E	Inf Co F	Inf Co G	Inf Co H	Total
Wounded			2	1		1				2		6
Captured				2				1			3	6
Discharged/Disability		2	1	6	1	6	1	2	3	1	2	25
Total		2	3	9	1	7	1	3	3	3	5	37

compelled to return after passing a short distance beyond Vienna. As the train was passing Vienna on its return, it was fired into from an ambuscade, and George H. Bugbee, of Infantry Company A, was severely wounded. If we except Major Theodore Winthrop, who fell at Big Bethel seven days earlier, this was the first blood of a Connecticut soldier in the Civil War.

The next day the First was ordered on the same duty, but was relieved by the 1st and 2d Ohio regiments, the 1st Connecticut going to the grounds in the vicinity of Long Bridge, where with a large number of other regiments it was reviewed by the Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War.

As the review closed the First was ordered hurriedly to the relief of the Ohio regiments which had been fired into at Vienna. On the next day the First went into camp at Falls Church, then considerably in advance of the main lines—a position peculiarly exposed to attack, as the rebels could easily reach its rear by way of either Balls' or Bailey's Cross Roads.

The First Regiment was joined by the Second on the next day, and soon after by the Third Connecticut and the Second Maine regiments, all of which were organized as a brigade, under command of Colonel Erasmus D. Keyes.

On July 16th the entire army under immediate command of General McDowell began its advance toward Manassas, and Keyes Brigade, designated as the 1st Brigade, 1st Division, had the advance—the First

A.M., when it was beyond Youngs Branch, farther west.

Colonel Keyes in his official report said:

"The order to advance was given at about ten o'clock A.M., and from that hour to four P.M. my brigade was in constant activity on the field of battle. The First Regiment Connecticut Volunteers was met by a body of cavalry and infantry, which it repelled, and at several other encounters at different parts of the line the enemy constantly retired before us."

"Before recrossing Bull Run, and until my brigade mingled with the retreating mass, it maintained perfect freedom from panic, and at the moment I received the order for retreat, and for some time afterward, it was in as good order as in the morning on the road. Half an hour earlier I supposed the victory to be ours."

Before night-fall the entire brigade reached its former campground at Centerville in good order, and under orders, bivouacked as was supposed for the night; the men suffering much from fatigue, at once going to sleep on their arms.

About 10 o'clock P.M. peremptory orders came to continue the retreat to Falls Church. The road was now comparatively clear, as the disorganized part of the army was already far advanced on its way to Washington. About 9 A.M. the next day the regiment arrived at Falls Church, and, in a drenching rain, struck its tents and

The First remained in Washington until July 27th, when (their term of service having expired on the 22d) it started for New Haven, where, after tedious delays, it arrived and was mustered out on July 31st. The regiment was splendidly armed and equipped; eight companies with Springfield rifled muskets, and the two flank companies with Sharps rifles. The clothing was much of it very inferior, though all possible effort was made to remedy the defect.

A few of the companies were old militia organizations which preferred to retain their old regimental letters, thereby occasioning some confusion, but the exigencies of that short term of service did not warrant dallying with trifles.

Too much credit can never be accorded the members of the three months' regiments, who from pure patriotism, without promise or hope of bounty or reward, eagerly enlisted to repel the enemies of their country; and who had with still greater alacrity would have enlisted for the war had the call of President Lincoln permitted it.

This early service was an excellent school for the citizen soldiers of the State, and by far the larger part of those who participated were soon again in the service for three years or the war, fully one hundred and eighty from the 1st Regiment holding commissions.

Connecticut can always look back with pride on her three months' volunteers of 1861.

Connecticut Military Department News

2nd Co. GHG escorts famous Long Rider through Hartford on cross country ride

2nd LT. ROBERT DAHM
SECOND CO. GHG

Troopers of the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard had the pleasure recently to escort famous Long Rider Gene Glasscock through Hartford on his way to every state capital in the United States. Gene is a member of the Long Riders Guild.

The Long Riders are a worldwide group of equestrians that ride exceptionally long journeys all over the world. To be a member you must complete a journey of at least 1,000 miles.

Gene has already completed a ride back in the 1980's that took him from the Arctic Circle in Canada to the equator in Ecuador, a total distance of 12,000 miles. Gene has been featured in *Ripley's Believe It or Not*.

Gene left Denver, Colorado in June of 2002 when he began his four-to-five year nationwide tour. Gene is riding alone with his two Tennessee Walking Horses named George and Frank. Gene is duplicating a trip that was done by four horsemen that took place from 1912 to 1915. "The Overland Westerner's as they were called completed a journey that totaled 20,352 continuous miles. For more information on the long riders, refer to their Website at: www.thelongridersguild.com.

Gene is originally from Texas and now at age 68 still has quite a distance to go on his current journey.

"I know I'm older now, but I can still swing into that saddle. So

even if I have to ride a bit slower, I want older people to look at me and realize they don't have to just sit on the porch and do nothing. I'm proof positive that they can mount up, ride out and still live life," Gene told the Long Rider's Guild.



Maj. Janis Arena of the 2nd Company, Gene (in cowboy hat) receiving his proclamation honoring him for his mission from Connecticut State Representative Pam Sawyer.



Members of the 1st and 2nd Company Governor's Horse Guards escorted Gene through the streets of Hartford and to the Capitol.



Maj. Gen. William Cugno joins the First Company Governor's Foot Guard Color Guard prior to the opening ceremony for the 10th Annual Hartford Marathon. This year's marathon included 200 runners donating \$25 to the Connecticut National Guard Foundation along with a team of runners representing the Connecticut National Guard. (Photo by Cpl. Kevin Cormack, First Company Governor's Foot Guard)

Second Company Governor's Horse Guard hosts Award Night

2nd LT. ROBERT DAHM
2nd Co. GHG

Troopers of the Second Company Governor's Horse Guard celebrated with an award ceremony last week honoring both a horse, his owner and a trainer but with some very different types of awards.

The Troop has many members that have been following the progress of famous racehorse "Funny Cide" and felt that since "Funny Cide" is a dark colored bay gelding like most of the horses in the Troop's herd, that he should be made an "honorary member" of the herd. Now that the racing season is coming to an end, it was an appropriate time to honor "Funny Cide" by inviting local Connecticut resident and co-owner Dave Mahan and his wife Nadine to come and receive the award for "Funny Cide".

The Troop was in perfect military formation for the ceremony as Mr. Mahan was presented a large framed photo collage depicting photos of the entire Troop's mounts surrounding a photo of "Funny Cide". Mr. Mahan was also given a certificate naming "Funny Cide" as an "Honorary Member of the herd" and a large gift basket which contained Troop T-Shirts and Polo Shirts embroidered with the 2nd Company's insignia.

The gift basket also contained some "Breezy Bite" horse treats made especially for "Funny Cide" by Troop members. The horse treats are baked by Troop members themselves and are sold at local tack shops and stores to help benefit the Troop and the Troop's charities.

The Troop also honored Chief Charles J. Sowles (ret.) Chief Warrant Officer of the United States Army. Sowles of Alexandria, Virginia has been a valued friend and an excellent horse trainer for the Troop. Sowles recently retired after 25 years of service in the "Old Guard" or the "Caisson Platoon" of the Third Infantry Regiment based in Fort Myer, Virginia.

The Third Infantry Regiment is the official escort to the President of the United States as well as stands guard over the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery. The regiment also escorts dignitaries and has provided mounted escorts for as many as six military funerals a day at Arlington.

Sowles spent two weeks at the Horse Guard working with several of the Troop's mounts by doing some groundwork.

With his easy going and gentle ways of training, the horses quickly took to him and responded well.

How do I adopt a child from a foreign country?

Question:

How do I adopt a child from a foreign country? What are the laws regarding foreign adoptions?

Answer:

In intercountry adoptions, prospective adoptive parents need to follow the laws in their state as well as the laws of the country of origin and the policies and regulations of the Bureau of Citizenship and Immigration (formerly INS - Immigration and Naturalization Service). In the United States, you must be a citizen 25 years of age or older to adopt from another country (if married, at least one spouse must be a U.S. citizen).

In order for U.S. citizens to adopt a child from another country and legally bring the child into the U.S., the child must be considered an orphan under U.S. immigration law and all proper paperwork must be completed and approved. Children adopted through intercountry adoption must be younger than 16 (unless a sibling was already adopted by the family) and must be brought to the United States under an "orphan visa." Adoptions cannot be used to change someone's visa status. The Bureau of Immigration Services (formerly INS) has frequently asked questions regarding adoption on their Website www.immigration.gov. The State Department has an online listing of country-specific adoption requirements at www.travel.state.gov

A listing of licensed private agencies with intercountry adoption programs is available from the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse (NAIC) through the online National Adoption Directory www.calib.com. Agencies with an asterisk (*) have international placement programs. For a more complete listing of international adoption agencies, contact International Concerns for Children at (303) 494-8333. They publish an annual "Report on Intercountry Adoption." This report lists adoption agencies that work in various countries, as well as each agency's requirements, fees and availability of children. There is a fee for the report.

For more detailed information on intercountry adoption please read the NAIC fact sheet, "Intercountry Adoption" www.calib.com

Adoption adds joy, completeness

From Page 21

birth certificates. If you're getting one, you might as well get five."

Chris and Dave had decided they wanted to adopt a girl from the Phillipines because Chris' mom is from there. Unfortunately, the country closed its borders to international adoptions because of problems within the system.

After further research, they chose to adopt from Cambodia.

After choosing Sarah, the Pelletiers went to Cambodia to pick her up. They had to spend what they call five very stressful days in Cambodia.

"We waited so long for a baby," said Chris. "I almost

jumped over the counter in the American embassy when the woman there told me we were missing paperwork. It's a good thing Dave was there with me.

"But Sarah has filled that gap we had," said Chris, her face beaming with motherly pride.

"I'd always wanted a child," said Dave. "Sarah filled that gap in my life. She's Daddy's little girl. But she's also Mommy's little girl. We're thinking about adopting another girl. Older, though, because I want Sarah to always be my baby."

"But from the same country," added Chris.

In Cambodia, Dave explained, children are only kept in the orphanages through the age of seven. Then they are virtually pushed out onto the street when they turn eight and are forced to fend for themselves.

"We would like to be able to help one of those older children," he said.

"We've been very careful to keep Sarah's culture alive for her," said Chris. "She is taking Cambodian dance lessons, and we go to cultural festivals."

Before bringing Sarah home, the Pelletiers participated in a Giving and Receiving Ceremony, where representatives of the Cambodian government officially presented the Pelletiers' daughter to them. They also had her baptized in a Buddhist Temple before leaving.

Once home, they had to redo the adoption through BCI for the official U.S. recognition of the adoption and they formally changed

their daughter's name to Sarah.

Sarah's older brothers, Royce and Matthew, are very protective of their little sister, now three-years-old, said Chris.

"And they all look alike," she said. "Many people have no idea she's adopted."

Unlike the Vasiles and the Pelletiers, the Hedenbergs decided on a domestic adoption.

Ralph was attending military schooling in

are born to very young mothers, and some are born with medical problems to overcome. They also accept any kind of adoptive parent, from couples, to single parents, to gay and lesbian couples. We liked the inclusiveness of the agency."

Once Ralph and Laura were accepted by the agency, they had to write a letter introducing themselves to prospective birth mothers.

"That was the hardest part," said Laura. "We didn't want to come across as people who thought we were better than the birth mother, but we wanted them to know what we could provide for their child."

Then they went through the home study, during which every aspect of your home life is looked at. They look at the house to see if it's a safe environment to bring a child into. They look to see if it has enough room. They interview the prospective adoptive parents.

"It's like getting a stamp of approval on your life," said Laura. Afterwards, the report is sent to the couple. "It's an overwhelming thing to see...your whole life on 20 pages. It's very emotional. They

interview both partners separately and the results of those interviews, the things you've said about yourself and each other, is there for the world to see. It's very cathartic."

After the home study is complete, it, and the couples' letter of introduction are posted to the agency's website for the birthmothers



Dave, Sarah and Chris Pelletier get into the holiday spirit on the 4th of July. (Photo courtesy of the Pelletier family)

California when they started the process.

"We had done research years ago on national and international adoption," said Laura. "While we were in California, we decided to start our family, and choose domestic adoption."

They choose the Independent Adoption Agency, an organization with offices throughout the country. They, like the Pelletiers, attended an open house to learn more about the agency and the adoption process.

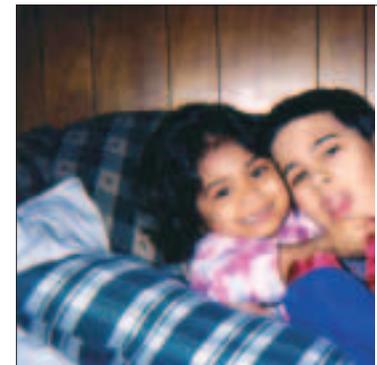
In May 2000, they had an informational meeting with representatives of the agency.

"We loved them, but we were a bit hesitant at first about open adoption," said Laura. She went on to explain that in domestic adoptions, all are open. "The birth mother chooses you, you don't choose the child."

The following weekend, the Hedenbergs attended an intensive adoption workshop. There were interviews, a parenting workshop and classes on open adoption.

Once accepted, the Hedenbergs had all the paperwork the other couples had, the fingerprinting, the biographies to write, and they had to read three books provided by the agency and answer questions on what they had read.

"We loved the agency because they accepted every type of child," said Laura. "Some of the children are multi-racial, some are born to drug addicted mothers, some



Sarah and Matthew Pelletier clown around at home. They are very protective of their younger sister. (Photo courtesy of the Pelletier family)

to read. If a birth mother finds a couple she likes, she contacts them through the agency.

In April 2001, Jennifer called the Hedenbergs. She had narrowed her search down to four couples.

"Unlike international adoptions, we didn't find or choose Aislyn," said Laura. "Jennifer

Access to Connecticut Guard families

found and chose Ralph and I for Aislyn.” After spending a great deal of time on the phone and the Internet, Jennifer came to Connecticut for a weekend visit, or match meeting. The Hedenbergs put her up in a hotel and took care of expenses while she was here.

“It happened that there was a Family Day at the Waterbury armory that weekend, just prior to Ralph’s unit going to Bosnia,” said Laura. “We took Jennifer with us. By the time she left to go home, we pretty much had an understanding that we would be the adoptive parents.”

There was no legally binding document, but the agreement was morally binding.

“We had to take it on faith, we had trust each other.” And that was tough to a degree because the Hedenbergs had already experienced two failed matches.

“But that’s ok,” said Laura. “Those brought us to Aislyn.”

A formal match meeting took place over the phone between the Hedenbergs, Jennifer and the agency. During that meeting, discussion centered on such things as who could be at the hospital when the baby was born, who could be in the delivery room, who names the child and other such considerations.

“Jennifer agreed that my mother and I could be in the delivery room with her, but Aislyn

after the birth.

“Aislyn’s birth parents are welcome to call, email or send letters anytime. They can come visit if they want,” said Laura. “What’s important is what’s the best interest for Aislyn.

“We’re (Jennifer and the Hedenbergs) connected to each other in ways we aren’t connected with anyone else in the world. I like to think Ralph and I are nurturing

and take her to hospital where we would visit Aislyn together. Jennifer gave her her first bottle while I was with them. If there were medical decisions to be made, or information to pass on, the doctors and nurses looked to me as the adoptive mother, but Jennifer was right there, too,” said Laura.

Now that Aislyn is three-years-old, the Hedenbergs are looking to add to their family. This time, though, they want to have a boy,

and since you don’t know in domestic adoptions whether you’ll get a boy or girl until the child is born, they have opted for international adoption.

And they have to go through all the same paperwork



Ralph, Laura and Aislyn Hedenberg relax in their backyard. (Photo courtesy the Hedenberg family)

Aislyn’s genetics.”

In the middle of the whole process, what some call a glitch arose. Ralph received orders that his unit was being mobilized for peacekeeping duties in Bosnia. The adoption was not complete, Aislyn had not even been born yet, and things could have fallen apart.

“It wasn’t a problem with Jennifer,” said Laura. “She was very accepting of Ralph being in the military. Jennifer’s agency had some problems with it, though.” The Hedenbergs worked with three different agencies throughout the whole process...the one in California, one here in Connecticut and the one in Jennifer’s home state.

“They asked all kinds of questions,” said Laura. “I just answered by asking them how this was different than any other military wife having a baby? Except that we wouldn’t be moving every two years. What about the pregnant military wife whose husband gets deployed? This was no different. This is my job as a military wife and I love it. Taking care of the children is an expectation of a military spouse during deploments.”

When Aislyn was born, Laura and her mother went to Jennifer’s home state as soon as they could get there. They spent a great deal of time together at the hospital as Aislyn had to stay there longer than Jennifer did because she was three weeks premature.

“The nurses there didn’t think a thing of it, but I would pick Jennifer up every day

and home studies they went through the first time. The information is only kept by agencies for three years, and once an adoption is complete, the information is no longer valid as the family and home life have now changed with the addition of a child.

The Hedenbergs are using the same agency the Pelletiers used, Wide Horizons for Children in West Hartford. They had narrowed their country selection down to Guatemala, which has suspended adoptions for now; Columbia, which requires a three-week in-country stay for both parents and was deemed too dangerous right now; and Korea.

“Korea has a great health care system and the infants are placed into foster care families until their adoption,” said Laura. “The child is then escorted to their adoptive country.”

The Hedenbergs have already completed their home study and should hear about a referral sometime in January or February 2004.

Without exception, all three families strongly recommend the adoption process to anyone “sitting on the fence,” as Vasile put it. “It’s a great way to have a family.”

But they all did warn that it’s very expensive, costing into the tens of thousands of dollars.

“Before we had her (Aislyn), I totalled up the money we spent and my heart stopped,” said Laura. “But then we got her and who cares! She’s worth a million...a million times that!”

How do I know if an adoption agency is reputable?

Question:

I am interested in adopting. How do I know if an adoption agency is reputable?

Answer:

There are several ways that you can check on the reputation of a licensed private adoption agency:

Contact the State Licensing Specialist in the state where the agency is located. The State Licensing Specialist will be able to tell you if the agency is in good standing, if there have been any complaints lodged against the agency and how long the agency has held the license. A listing of each state’s licensing specialist is available in the National Adoption Information Clearinghouse’s National Adoption Directory www.calib.com

Contact the Better Business Bureau (BBB) closest to the agency.

Addresses and phone numbers can be found on the BBB Website at www.bbb.org The site also provides a helpful tip sheet “Using an Adoption Agency.” Be sure to ask the local BBB office staff if that office covers the adoption agency’s location and if their office takes complaints on adoption agencies. If they don’t, then check with the Consumer Protection Office in the state where the agency is located for complaints that may be on file.

Contact the State Attorney General’s Office to see if any legal action is under consideration, pending or has been taken against the agency. You can find contact information for the Attorney General’s office in the government section of the phone book.

Request references from the agency. Ask the agency to provide you with the names and phone numbers of at least three clients whose adoptions were completed at least three years ago. This way you can ask those adoptive parents how the agency handled post-adoption services as well as the adoption process itself. Ask these parents if they had any problems or concerns with the agency.

Locate an adoptive parent support group in your area. In support groups you can ask for referrals and talk with other parents about their experiences with local agencies. You may encounter individuals who have worked with the agency you are considering. For a listing of adoptive parent support groups in your area, search the National Adoption Directory. (Website address above.)



Matthew and older brother, Royce, sitting on a bed. (Photo courtesy the Pelletier family)

was born unexpectedly three weeks early, so we missed the birth,” said Laura.

Open adoptions may not be for everyone, but Laura said she and Ralph are very happy with theirs. She said it takes a lot of work, faith and trust on the part of all parties before the child is born, and that must all continue

CTNG to construct new fire station

MAJ. JOHN R. WHITFORD
STATE PAO

Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, adjutant general and commander of the Connecticut National Guard, and East Lyme First Selectman Wayne Fraser have announced the construction of a National Guard fire station on the Stone's Ranch Military Reservation (SRMR).

The proposed 7,000 square foot facility will house two six-member fire-fighting teams. The facility will be sited on Stone's Ranch Road in East Lyme.

"This new unit will help facilitate our rapid response to emergencies that may arise on our military facility," said Cugno. "The fire station also bolsters emergency response in East Lyme as our military personnel will be working with members of East Lyme's volunteer fire department."

"Once again, East Lyme has a great opportunity to partner with the Connecticut National Guard. This new fire station gives the citizens of East Lyme and surrounding communities supporting resources in case of a fire emergency that stresses our volunteer departments. The potential for joint training will also be reviewed and as always, our cooperative relationship with our friends at the Connecticut National Guard will provide benefits to all," said Fraser.

A town meeting was held to discuss the fire station at the East Lyme Town Hall. The meeting was widely attended by East Lyme residents, local firefighters and law enforcement.

The new fire station will cost approximately \$2.5 million in federal dollars and the construction is scheduled to begin in March 2004 and is projected to be completed by April 2005.

Connecticut Soldier praised for his work in Kandahar community

MAJ. JOHN WHITFORD
STATE PAO

Spec. Brendan McNerney from Company G, 104th Aviation of Windsor Locks, stationed in Kandahar, Afghanistan, has been recognized for his efforts for helping lead a Praise and Worship team for his unit and the local community in Kandahar.

McNerney spends a lot of free time teaching Praise and Worship after his shift. He spends his time writing and working on songs for the local church.

"I know that the involvement in music is a Godsend for my son because he lives and breathes song and composition as well as instrumental performance. He is definitely trying to share his experience and share emotional expression through music," said Paula McNerney, Brendan's mother.

McNerney was awarded a general's coin from the 10th Mountain Division for all his outstanding work for helping lead the Praise and Worship team.

A general's coin is awarded to service members for their outstanding work and achievement.

"This is another great example of our Connecticut soldiers going above and beyond the call of duty. Our soldiers and airmen are doing great things and this is just one of many great things happening overseas," said Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, commander of the Connecticut National Guard.



Officers Club of Connecticut October Events

Monday, Nov. 10

Marine Corps Birthday Breakfast
8:30 a.m.

Tuesday, Nov. 11

Veteran's Day - Club Closed

Thursday, Nov. 13

AUSA Dinner Meeting
6 p.m.

Monday, Nov. 17

Breakfast for Congresswoman Nancy Johnson
8:30 a.m.

Thursday, Nov. 20

Board of Governors' Meeting
5:30 p.m.

Friday, Nov. 21

Club Night - Italian Night Dinner Dance
Reservations Required by calling (860) 249-3634

Bar and Lounge open daily at lunch and from 4 p.m. to....

Club open for lunch daily from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Club will be closed for Thanksgiving on Thursday, Nov. 27 and Friday, Nov. 28.

To book a party or event, call (860) 249-3634

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Semper Fi: 228 years of faithful service

SPEC. JESSE J. STANLEY JR.
65th PCH

Nov. 10, 1775, John Adams sponsored a resolution that would shape the future of the United States military forever. The resolution passed by the Continental Congress stated that, "two battalions of Marines be raised," for service as landing forces with the fleet. This resolution established the Continental Marines and marked the birth date of the United States Marine Corps.

Their emblem consists of an eagle, the symbol for the United States, a globe, which represents their worldwide service, and an anchor, which recalls the Marine's origin as a naval organization.

In the last 228 years the USMC has played a role in every major conflict the United States has been involved in from the shores of Tripoli to the halls of the Montezuma. Through their unflinching service throughout the years the USMC has embodied their motto, "Semper Fi," *Always Faithful*.

After the Revolutionary War the Marines were disbanded when the Navy's ships were all sold. However the Marines did not rest long. During 1798 the Marine Corps was

officially re-established and saw action immediately in a conflict with France and played a key role against the Barbary pirates (1801-1815).

During and after the War of 1812 the Marines were used extensively to protect American interests all over the world. From the Caribbean (1821) to Sumatra (1831), West Africa (1820-61) to Florida (1836-42), by land and by sea a Marine was always there.

The Marines demonstrated much of their diversity during the Mexican war when a battalion of Marines joined General Scott's army at Pueblo and fought all the way to "The Halls of Montezuma" Mexico City.

From the Civil War to the Spanish American War and beyond the USMC served with valor in numerous operations from the Boxer Rebellion in China to Haiti and beyond.

In World War I the 4th Marine Brigade earned the title of "Devil Dogs" for their heroic actions in several battles. It was during this time the Marines started to take to the air and offer bombing support. Of the 30,000 Marines that served in France more than 10,000 were wounded or killed.

During the time between WWI and WWII the Marines perfected their techniques of amphibious warfare and landings, something

that they are known to be experts at today.

During WWII the USMC took 85,000 casualties and injuries and 82 Marines were awarded the Medal of Honor. By the end of WWII the USMC was nearly 500,000 strong, this included six divisions and five air wings.

During the Korean War the Marines showed their skills at amphibious landings and their determination in warfare. In the five years the Marines were involved in the conflict more than 25,000 soldiers were killed or wounded. The Marines did not lose spirit, however.

The longest conflict the Marines have been involved in was the Vietnam War. At one point more than 88,000 Marines were involved at one time.

In more recent times the Marines have been ready and willing to serve at a moments notice. They are a highly mobile and quickly deployed force that is highly motivated and trained as soldiers first. They have a diverse field of soldiers to draw upon and are able to operate in nearly any environment. The United States Marine Corps can be found on land, sea or air performing their

missions with deadly precision.

For 228 years the USMC has been ever vigilant in their tasks, always ready for their mission and Always Faithful to their cause. They will continue to play an important role in all the United States future conflicts and peacekeeping mission worldwide. Happy Birthday USMC, may your next 228 years be as valorous as the last.



Two Marines from the 22nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) help a young evacuee into a flight helmet on Feb. 9, 1984 during a non-combatant evacuation operation from Beirut, Lebanon. (Official USMC Photo)



AL-FAW PENINSULA, Iraq (Oct. 13, 2003) —Cpl. Adam Bridgeford, military policeman, MP Detachment, MEU Service Support Group 13, the combat service support element of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), mans the M240G machine gun on one of the MP vehicles that provided convoy security during the 13th MEU's move into Iraq. MPs logged more than 1100 miles conducting convoy security in the first two days of operations here October 13th and 14th. The MPs provided a bulk of the convoy security as Marines of the 13th MEU traveled from Kuwait to several operational centers on the Al-Faw Peninsula where units have been conducting anti-smuggling and humanitarian operations in support of Operation Sweeney, a joint operation with the British-led Multi-National Division (South East). The convoys ranged in size from 3 vehicles to more than 20 vehicles. (Photo by Staff Sgt. April D. Tuggle)

Military Matters



Flexible Spending Accounts explained

Federal Employees (Technicians) can now benefit from Flexible Spending Accounts.

A Flexible Spending account is a tax favored program that allows you to set aside pre-tax money from your paycheck to pay for a variety of eligible expenses, like health and child care.

These are two types of accounts; Health Care, and Dependent Care.

Find out more online at www.fsafeds.com.

The FSAFEDS Program will begin accepting enrollments to participate in a health care flexible spending account (FSA) and/or a dependent care FSA beginning 11 Nov 2003 for calendar year 2004.

There are several updates to the FSAFEDS web site that you should review prior to deciding if you want to enroll.

These include:

- Detailed information on eligible expenses under a HCFA
- A Qualified Status Change (QSC) Guide, which explains the events that may allow you to change your election during the plan year.
- Many new facts.

Employees who wish to make an election to participate in a health care FSA and/or a dependent care FSA have two options to

complete an enrollment:

Online via the www.FSAFEDS.com web site. Click on the link for enrollment. Carefully read the opening page.

Since Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) is our payroll provider, you may need to have a recent copy of your earnings and leave statement in order to complete the enrollment, or

Call the toll-free number 1-877-FSAFEDS (372-3337). A Benefit Counselor will complete the enrollment with you.

You must provide your social security number to complete an enrollment.

This number will only be used to ensure that your pro-rated allotments are correctly deducted.

As you enroll, you will have the option to elect an alternate ID to be used when accessing your account.

One word of caution, employee funds saved under the FSA program and not utilized for their defined purpose during the calendar year, i.e. Health or Dependent Care, are forfeited to the FSA provider.

If you have questions or require additional information please e-mail or call the Human Resources Office, Employee Relations Specialist, Capt. James Guerrero at (860) 878-6738 or james.guerrera@ct.ngb.army.mil

Education Essentials:

Helping Soldiers achieve educational goals

The Army National Guard (ARNG) Education Support Center (ESC) serves as a centralized education support activity for all 54 states and territories by providing Army National Guard Soldiers, their spouses and federal employees of the ARNG with direct assistance in the accomplishment of their academic goals. The ARNG ESC is located at the Professional Education Center (PEC) at Camp Joseph T. Robinson, North Little Rock, Arkansas.

ARNG ESC services include an educational assessment of your previous military experience, the development of a personalized college degree plan and educational counseling designed to provide you with professional guidance to help you in the pursuit of your educational goals.

The ARNG ESC stands ready to help you achieve your academic goals. GET STARTED by applying for an assessment of your military training and civilian education. All relevant credit will then be applied towards three degree plans that focus on your educational goals.

To access the application form, go to the Virtual Armory website, click on education then link to the Education Support Center.

Attention Soldiers, Airmen and Families

The Connecticut Guardian wants your photos!

If you have photos you wish to share with the rest of our Guard family, we would like to publish them in the Guardian.

We are looking for photos of soldiers and airmen who are deployed either relaxing or working. We are looking for photos of family members at home or at play. We are looking for photos of families packing care packages to send to their loved ones. We will print them in the Guardian as space allows so they can be seen and shared by Connecticut Soldiers, Airmen and families around the world.

Please e-mail your photos to ctguardian@ct.ngb.army.mil

Avoid the myPay Website scam, enjoy new features at official site

SPEC. JESSE J. STANLEY JR.
65TH PCH

A new website has surfaced targeting members of the military and civilian employees who use myPay.

The site looks much like the real website and uses terms like "LES" and "DFAS."

If one were to click on the "Loan" link they would be taken to a payday loan vender and send them your personal information.

The fake myPay site is located at www.mypay.com. The official website is mypay.dfas.mil/mypay.asp.

The real myPay offers some real conveniences for those who use it.

Effective Sept. 17, 2003 all current myPay military users and Defense Finance and Accounting Service (DFAS) civilian employees who request or already have a myPay Personal Identification Number (PIN) and access myPay are consenting to receive an electronic W-2 instead of a paper one. They may choose to receive a hardcopy if they wish.

All other DoD civilian employees who use myPay can choose to have an electronic W-2 instead of a hardcopy.

Users can choose to receive a hardcopy or an electronic copy by using the official myPay website.

To ensure that users receive the correct copy of their W-2 there is a "no change" period from December 1 through January 31. During this time you would not be allowed to change your W-2 option. Paper W-2's can still always be requested from your local servicing finance activity.

The electronic W-2 will discontinue after a DFAS civilian employee separates from employment or after a military member separates without retirement. Military retirees can receive an electronic 1099R through myPay.

The electronic W-2 will be available for the entire year on myPay and will continue to be available online for one year after separation.

A copy of the electronic W-2 may need to be filed with State and Local tax returns.

Open season for health benefits

This year's Federal Employee's Health Benefits Open Season begins 10 November 2003 through 8 December 2003.

All changes will become effective the first pay period in January 2004 - January 11th. Please check the OPM web site - www.opm.gov/insure/health/04rates/index.asp, as well as individual carrier web sites. Books are no longer mailed to the HRO. You will be able to download them from the web sites.

There will be a Health Fair at the VA

Hospital. Due to staff reductions, health carriers do not have the manning to conduct as many Health Fairs as in the past. The Health Fair at the VA will be your only opportunity to speak to carriers face to face. The VA is having their Health Fair on 24 November in the Red, White and Blue Room.

If you would like to make changes to your present plan or change plans completely - you will need to fill out an SF 2809.

Kathie Riccio (860) 878-6735 and Capt. Jim Guerrero (860) 878-6738 are your POCs.

New: One number and Website for pay and personnel

The Air Force Customer Service Center now offers customers a single phone number to call for all personnel and pay-related questions.

Air Force Active Duty, Guard, Reserve, Retirees and U.S. serviced Civilian employees will be able to dial one number, 1-800-616-3775, for assistance with their personnel records, pay inquiries, technical support for vMPF and myPay, benefits and

entitlements counseling and employment information. This single number will ask a few quick qualifying questions and then automatically transfer them to the appropriate center. The center will also offer customers a single website,

www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/cst/ where they can access personnel and pay self-service applications and seek answers to their questions.





CHIEF MASTER SGT.
WANDA WAWRUCK

Enlisted Update Year in Review and Holiday Safety Message

As we wrap up another year and prepare for the holidays, I'd like

to reflect on our accomplishments, provide a holiday safety message, and give thanks to those who provide support.

As the State Command Chief Master Sergeant, I have many opportunities to voice enlisted concerns at the National level and interface with our Air Force leadership. It gives me great pride as I sit in these forums to hear leaders such as: Secretary Roche, Gen. Jumper, Gen. Hornburg, Gen. James, and Col. Brock Strom, to name a few; tell the tale of two A-10 units from the northeast and the great job they did in the early days of Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF).

In an earlier speech by Jumper to a National Security Forum, he defended rumors of Air Force cuts affecting the A-10. In his remarks, he stated that between Afghanistan and OIF, the A-10 community flew more than 7,000 sorties. He went on to say, "the A-10 has had a higher mission capable rate than any airplane except the F-117. There is no intent to cut the A-10."

Our Air Control members continue to serve in Afghanistan...marking their second activation since the 9/11 attacks. While many remain activated, the remainder of the squadron continues to support many joint exercises at home. Moreover, the Wing and ACS continue to receive numerous accolades from our Air Force leaders for their efforts. Never before have we been called upon as we have in the last two years.

Our airmen, like those who serve beside us (soldiers, sailors, marines, coastguardsmen, and allies) continue to perform superbly. We owe it to the teamwork and trust that is instilled in us to get the mission accomplished.

As we forge ahead, the Air Force is in the second 120-day Air Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotation, identified as Silver, designed to bring the services deployment rotation schedule back on track by March 2004. AEF Silver is in route to replace AEF Blue who deployed in July. Once

AEF Silver is completed, we expect to be back on track to resuming a more predictable steady state for 90-day rotations.

As we honor our past and present veterans and prepare for the holidays, please remember that this is a particularly stressful time for many. During the summer months (beginning with Memorial weekend) our leaders publish safety messages highlighting the "101 Critical Days of Summer."

Equally important is the holiday season. The holiday season is considered to be the most stressful time of the year for many people. Stresses such as ensuring children have the best holiday ever with gifts galore; and let us not forget that many families will spend their holidays alone.

On the other hand, for many it is a joyous time with family, vacations, parties, and outdoor sports. Overall we must remain responsible where alcohol is in use, adhering to guidelines when participating in outdoor sports, and basic safety awareness. Look out for one another by taking care of those who may show signs of depression or anxiety.

Our family support program coordinators and volunteers do a great job looking out for us...we need to continue assisting fellow guardsmen and their families in any way we can.

Over the next couple months, please consider volunteering your time by sponsoring a family or assisting our family program coordinators. Just as important as taking care of others, take time for yourself and your family.

It has been a busy year to say the least. I am very proud of everyone's efforts, professionalism, and positive attitudes during these trying times. To our veterans and families, a special thanks for your continued support towards our deployed personnel and family members. Plato said it best over 2,000 years ago, "Man was not born for himself alone, but for his country." Our military families form a strong bond that we can always rely on.

From my family to you and yours, we wish you a safe and joyous holiday season.

Visit the

Connecticut Guardian

on-line at

www.ct.ngb.army.mil

Guard Voices

A Soldier says farewell and thanks

To my fellow Guardsmen, both active and retired, with my military career in its final months I would like to thank the many Officers, NCOs, and Soldiers who have given me their advice, cooperation, and support over the last 38+ years.

During that time I have witnessed the Guard transition from "Weekend Warrior", to a highly trained efficient element of the Army. I have witnessed the female soldier become a vital part of the Guard, and soldiers who are highly motivated, demanding training that is both mentally and physically challenging. I have witnessed the careers of many

Officers go from Captains to today's Lt. Colonels and Colonels, all concerned about one key element, "Readiness".

I have at the same time witnessed young soldiers become key NCOs' across the state,

again working toward one key element, Readiness. The recent call-up of many Connecticut units shows the hard work has paid off. The Soldiers of the Connecticut Guard are respected by the active Army as a force that can be counted on.

The training, experiences, and friendships I have developed as a Connecticut Guardsman will never be forgotten. I am grateful for having been allowed the opportunity to serve with, and for, the soldiers of the Connecticut Army National Guard.

William "Ski" Skowronski
Command Sergeant Major
85th Troop Command

Connecticut Soldiers were there, too

Received the box of the latest issue of the *Connecticut Guardian*. Great article on the 10th Anniversary of the Battle of Mogadishu.

FYI - There were about 75 reserve component soldiers (total) that were involved in Operation RESTORE HOPE in Somalia.

Of that 75, five were from the 1109th AVCRAD. Three were involved with a team from the 4 AVCRAD shrink-wrapping the helicopters of the 10th Mountain Division (LI) for their return to CONUS.

The three were Staff Sgt. Michael Hinson, Staff Sgt. Daniel Guinan, and Master Sgt. Lionel Pepin.

Hinson is still serving with the 1109th AVCRAD in Kuwait. He recently returned from a mission in Afghanistan.

Guinan was a veteran of Vietnam, DESERT STORM (Saudi Arabia/Iraq), as well as

Somalia. He passed away from cancer about four years ago.

Pepin retired in 2001 with 30-plus years of service at age 60.

Two other soldiers were involved in a mission to train the Pakistani Army in the operation and maintenance of AH-1F Cobra Helicopters. They were Chief Warrant Officer 4 Tommy Schmidt and Staff Sgt. Paul Littlehale.

Schmidt retired in 1996 and Littlehale is still serving with the 1109th AVCRAD in Kuwait.

Just thought that you might want to know.

Lt. Col. William P. Shea
Executive Officer,
1109th AVCRAD
AMC-LSE-SWA

It's Simple, But it Helps Me

Our son is fighting overseas,
He serves our country well,
He left us back in April,
His return, they just can't tell.

The family swells with pride,
Each time we say his name.
Our own Sergeant Tim,
Who does not fight for fame.

He played this game in childhood,
The enemy was unknown.
Now he is an adult,
The Middle East is where he's flown.

They die for their religion,
To us this makes no sense.
To kill oneself for Allah,
Many moments are intense.

The Soldiers teach the locals,
How to govern and police,
These efforts are a struggle,
The purpose, to keep the Peace.

The fighting is getting closer,
Each day we hear the news,

The rockets and the bombing,
How long must he pay his dues?

We make our pleas to all the Senate,
Who listens we'll never know,
With hope we'll get some good news,
And end this War of woe.

It's time for us to Pray to God,
To keep our loved ones safe,
We call on all that's holy,
With a promise to keep the faith.

If everyone would listen,
The world would be OK
To get some understanding,
And find a better way.

It's time for me to go now,
My thoughts are from the heart.
His Mom and I await his return,
He must complete his part.

From the parents of Tim Richmond
presently serving in Iraq

Homefront

In defense of Connecticut's children: Red Ribbon Week Celebration 2003

CAPT. ANNE-MARIE GARCIA
DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION ADMINISTRATOR

National Red Ribbon Week Celebration is an annual event that is celebrated throughout the nation during Oct. 23–31, 2003. The kick-off began on the north portico of the State Capitol Steps, and, as always it was bitter cold, a sign of the winter's weather to come. This never stops the 100-plus students and adults that turn out each year to celebrate the memory of Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Agent Enrique Camarena.

This year DEA Resident Agent in Charge Mark Kaczynski along with Kid Fresh from WZMX Hot 93.7, were the Master of Ceremonies for the event.

What is the story behind the symbol of the red ribbon, you may ask? It started with a brave man named Enrique "Kiki" Camarena who grew up in a dirt-floored house with hopes and dreams of making a difference. Camarena worked his way through college, served in the Marines and became a police officer.

When he decided to join the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration, his mother tried to talk him out of it. The DEA sent Camarena to work undercover in Mexico investigating a major drug cartel believed to include officers in the Mexican army, police and government.

On Feb. 7, 1985, the 37-year-old Camarena left his office to meet his wife for lunch. Five men appeared at the agent's side and



Hundreds of students from around Connecticut participated in the annual Red Ribbon Week kick-off festivities at the state Capitol in October.

shoved him in a car. One month later, Camarena's body was found in a shallow grave. He had been tortured to death.

In honor of Camarena's memory and his battle against illegal drugs, friends and neighbors began to wear red badges of satin. Parents, sick of the destruction of alcohol and other drugs, had begun forming coalitions. Some of these new coalitions took Camarena as their model and embraced his belief that one person can make a difference. The red ribbon was adopted as a

symbol of the movement in honor of Enrique Camarena. Eighteen years later the campaign has reached millions of U.S. children and has been recognized by the U.S. Congress.

This year's event also had the honor of having the Bradley Air National Guard, Honor Guard Team to post and retire the National and State Colors along with The Northwest Catholic High School Pep Band who provided two students who sang the National Anthem. The band also provided music throughout the ceremony.

Some of this year's guest speakers for the event were Lt. Gov. Jodi Rell and Lt. Col. Michael A. Vasile, Connecticut National Guard Counterdrug Coordinator who was representing the adjutant general of the Connecticut National Guard. Vasile gave many words of advice on how to stay drug free, "each student today has the opportunity to honor Enrique's memory by remaining drug free and immune from the natural pressures to become part of illegal drug abuse. Through your decision to say 'no this is not for me' you truly show that 'One Person Can Make a Difference' and in your own special way become a hero in our mission to keep all communities drug free."

Motivation, Commitment and Enthusiasm for living a drug free life was contagious throughout the crowd that attended the kick-off celebration. The Connecticut National Guard in partnership with The Capital Area Substance Abuse Council (CASAC) and The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) has sponsored this annual event for the last six years. The DEA in Partnership with the Connecticut National Guard's Aviation Role Models For Youth Program (A.R.M.Y.) were conducted throughout the week during Red Ribbon Celebration, which was Oct. 23–31 2003.

If you have any questions about other Drug Free events or Educational & Leadership Programs please call 860-493-2724 and ask for Capt. Anne-Marie Garcia.

Chaplain's God's Sappers are here for you!

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CHAPLAIN (MAJ.) KEVIN CAVANAUGH
STARC CHAPLAIN

I often get the question from people outside the military: "What do you do as a chaplain?" Often people get glimpses of a chaplain's role from popular TV shows like

M*A*S*H or from movies. What they see is a small piece (often the more exciting elements) of the chaplain's life.

The chaplain's role is to care for your spiritual health, just as the doctor's role is to care for your physical health. Our function is to help build bridges between God and mankind—to be part of your lives as soldiers and airmen while representing God in your midst. In the civilian world people go to a particular church or

synagogue—in the military your chaplains bring worship to you. You might say that chaplains are "God's Sappers," building bridges between heaven and earth. As Military Chaplains we have three principle functions: to nurture the living; to care for the wounded; and to honor the dead.

How do we nurture the living? Chaplains celebrate religious rites and sacraments in both garrison and tactical environments. We are friends, counselors and sometimes just plain "shoulders." We are known for

our big ears and zipped lips. In addition to ministering to individuals, we serve as advisers to the commander on matters of religion, morals and morale.

An important responsibility is the care of those who are wounded spiritually or physically. In their times of trouble and healing we are there to serve those who have been injured and those who are suffering because of the nature of war and the lethality of the modern battlefield. Because the chaplain has shared some of their experiences, he or she is in a unique position to listen and to counsel.

When a soldier or airman has died, the chaplain plays a critical role in honoring that individual through a funeral or memorial service. And we are there for the family—both personal and military—to remind them of their faith, to offer reassurance, and to bring God's comfort and healing.

The role of military chaplain is tremendously fulfilling for me as I embrace the opportunity to do God's work among those who do so much for our country. I am inspired by your sacrifice and your devotion. It is an honor to serve you and to ask God's blessings on your behalf.

The motto of the Chaplain Corps says it all: *Pro Deo et Patria* - For God and Country.

Connecticut Airman takes oath of re-enlistment at Vietnam Veterans' Memorial Wall



Capt. Eloise Hudd, 103rd MDS, CTANG, administers the oath of re-enlistment to Staff Sgt. Clifford in front of the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. Clifford's uncle was killed in Vietnam and Clifford chose to honor his uncle's memory by extending his own service in front of the panel that bears his uncle's name. (Photo courtesy of Capt. Eloise Hudd, 103rd MDS, CTANG)

More Perspectives

What message would you like to send your deployed loved one?

From Page 2



KATHY MELANSON
 To: CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 3 PAUL MELANSON
 Co. G 104TH AVN

I love you and think about you every day. Come home soon.



PEG KOZUB **SHARON POWERS**
 To: CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 JOHN KOZUB
 Co. G 104TH AVN To: CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 4 JOHN POWERS
 Co. G 104TH AVN

Be careful. I love you. *It's a mere bag of shells - just a bump in the road. Watch each other's backs.*

CHRISTINE, CAROL AND ANDY TRIPP
 To: SGT. 1ST CLASS BRIAN TRIPP AND STAFF SGT. MARK TRIPP
 Co. G 104TH AVN

The tree stays up 'til you get home.

We love you lots.



KERRY AND KENNETH MURAVNICK
 To: SGT. KEVIN MURAVNICK
 143RD MPs

Love you, miss you and we're proud of you.



JANE McCULLOUGH, PEG AND CHARLIE McCULLOUGH AND BUTCH AND JOANNE MARUSHAK
 To: CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 MATTHEW McCULLOUGH
 Co. G 104TH AVN

Can't wait to have you home. Love you. Miss those fly-bys. Stay safe. Keep safe.

EVELYN AND JULIE PHILLIPS
 To: SGT. MICHAEL PHILLIPS
 Co. G 104TH AVN

Greetings from Stoughton Street! See you soon. Happy Anniversary, Nov. 17th.



Scholarships for Military Children program evolves for 2004

BONNIE POWELL

FORT LEE, Va. – “Org” in the grocery business might be misconstrued to mean organic, but in the case of the Scholarships for Military Children program “org” is taking on a different meaning.

The program is now open for business on a dedicated Web site at www.militaryscholar.org.

“Fisher House Foundation built the Web site just for this program,” said Edna Hoogewind, Defense Commissary Agency liaison for the program, “and it’s great because it contains all the latest information about the scholarship program and can be accessed any time students are looking for scholarship information.”

Usually, program information is only available on <http://www.commissaries.com> when the scholarship program is actively seeking applications.

“But even though the program doesn’t open until Nov. 3, questions have already been coming in,” said Hoogewind, “so it’s great to have this site available all the time.”

The Scholarships for Military Children program is administered by Fisher House Foundation and is funded by the

manufacturers and other vendors that sell groceries and perform services in the commissary system.

Since 2001, the Scholarships for Military Children program has awarded nearly \$2.5 million in scholarships to nearly 1,500 children of active duty, retired and Guard and Reserve families.

The other “big news” is that now the general public can participate in funding the scholarships by making donations through the Web site at www.militaryscholar.org.

“This program is a valuable part of



commissary outreach to the military community and the generous support from our industry partners and Fisher House Foundation has made it a tremendous success in just three years,” said DeCA Director Maj. Gen. Michael P. Wiedemer. “The additional ability of the general public to show support to military families through donations to the program is really going to add a terrific new dimension.”

“We’ve learned that individuals, as well as corporations, are interested in

supporting the Scholarships for Military Children program,” said Jim Weiskopf, Fisher House Foundation vice president for communications.

“We provide a means to donate on the Internet through a secure credit card server, and there are no administrative fees involved. In addition, all Combined Federal Campaign donations to the Armed Services Foundation are used for the scholarship program.”

Military families, customers and the general public will be able to get to www.militaryscholar.org through DeCA’s Web site at www.commissaries.com as well. Applications will be available online or at any commissary worldwide for the 2004 program starting Nov. 3. The application period runs until Feb. 18, 2004.

“Student applications increased last year by nearly 30 percent as store directors and staff really got out and spread the word about this great program,” said Wiedemer.

More than 6,500 applications were received in 2003. “We hope that trend continues for 2004 and that our commissaries will get the word out about these new features.”

Guarding Your Rights

Legal Affairs: *Standards of Conduct*

CAPT. TIMOTHY TOMCHO
JAG OFFICE

The Joint Ethics Regulation (JER), "Department of Defense Directive 5500.7-R" rescinds the Army-specific standards of conduct rules previously found in Army Regulation 600-50 and applies the Executive Branch's standards to Department of Defense (DoD).

The definition of DoD employee essentially includes everyone in the DoD, including any National Guard member while performing official duties or functions under the authority of titles 10 or 32 of the United States Code, or while engaged in any activity related to the performance of such duties or functions, including any time the member uses his National Guard status or position or any authority derived there from.

Basically, the JER applies to the National Guard in all statuses, in all military missions, formal and informal. Commanders are required to train the members of their command on the standards of conduct.

Many of the standards are considered as general orders. As such, they apply to all military members without further implementation.

Violations of such "general order" standards of conduct may be punishable as violations of a lawful order under the Uniform Code of Military Justice (title 10 status), the Connecticut Code of Military Justice (title 32 or State Active Duty status) the standards considered.

For example, JER 2-301, a potentially punitive standard of conduct, which states "**Federal government communication systems and equipment (including Government-owned telephones, facsimile machines, electronic mail, internet systems, and commercial systems when use is paid for by the federal government) shall be for official use and authorized purposes only.**"

Exceptions to JER 2-301 exist and are based upon reasonableness and minimal effect on duty performance.

Judge Advocates (military attorneys) are often charged with the duty of performing ethics counseling. It is very important to note that when functioning as an ethics counselor, communications with Judge Advocates are not protected by attorney-client privilege, as is usually the case when Judge Advocates function in a legal-assistance capacity. Judge Advocates who serve as ethics counselors must advise individuals receiving ethics counseling as to the lack of the attorney-client privilege.

Ethics counseling consists of advise and assistance on such issues as (1) acceptance of gifts and gratuities; (2) business visitors (e.g., product demonstrations and capabilities briefings); (3) ethics training; (4) participation in or dealings with private and professional associations, such as AUSA, NGAUS and NGACT; (5) review of public (SF 278) and confidential (OGE 450) financial disclosure reports, and resolving conflicts of interest; (6) post-government employment restrictions; and (7) use of Government resources and time.

Use of advice provided by an ethics counselor generally precludes disciplinary action against an employee who follows the advice.

If confronted with issues that raise ethical issues, DoD employees are well advised to contact their ethics counselor or their assigned judge advocate.

After all, public service is a public trust, requiring government employees to place loyalty to the Constitution, the laws and ethical principals above private gain.

This column is not intended as and does not constitute legal advice. Specific legal questions are unique to each person and factual situation. Persons with legal issues are encouraged to consult confidentially with an attorney.



NGACT announces 2003 scholarship recipients

The National Guard Association of Connecticut is pleased to present the winners of this year's NGACT Scholarships.

David A. Carlson is the son of Master Sgt. Kent Carlson of the Recruiting Office. He is entering his senior year at the University of Rhode Island in Kingston, RI. Working on a double major, David plans to get a degree in Marine Biology and also complete a second degree in Coastal and Marine Policy.

David spent this past summer as an intern with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the National Seashore on Cape Cod. He was involved in a salt pond restoration and intends to work towards a graduate degree in Coastal Law and Marine Affairs.

Kiley Ann Newton is the daughter of Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, the editor of the Connecticut Guardian and our own NGACT News. Kiley is a student in the Digital Arts Technology degree program at Naugatuck Valley Community College. She has helped out our association by designing and printing some of our advertising brochures and business cards. Kiley would like to work in the advertising department at ESPN or WWE.

Justin T. Krusko is the son of Maj. Tim Krusko of HHD, STARC. He will be entering the University of Dayton this fall, majoring in Engineering. Justin is an Eagle Scout who volunteers for the World Horizons program. He traveled to Iceland on this program to help with the planting of trees in an effort to enhance the Icelandic ecology.

Jamie L. Caporizo is the daughter of Col. James Caporizo, commander of the 169th Leadership Regiment. She is looking forward to entering the University of North Carolina in Charlotte this fall to pursue a career as a music teacher.

Jamie plays the flute and piano and is a member of her high school drama club. She has been involved in every drama and musical that her high school has presented over the past four years.

Some of the productions that Jamie has worked with include "Little Shop of Horrors, Cinderella, Fame, Guys and Dolls, and Androcles and the Lion". She was also the Assistant Director of Frankenstein.

Elisa M. Franco is the daughter of Master Sgt. Bob Franco of the 143rd ASG. She was on the Dean's List at Gateway Community College and will attend Southern Conn. State University with a major in Early Childhood Education.

Daniel R. Aparo is the son of Command Sgt. Maj. Joseph H. Aparo of the Forward Support Battalion. Dan was the captain of his high school football and wrestling teams. Despite this busy schedule, Dan was able to make All Academic and kept his grades up throughout high school. He was selected to attend Boy's State and was elected to their House of Representatives.

Dan will be attending Central Conn State University and studying criminology.

Brian D. Thomas is the son of two Guard members. His dad is Chaplain (Lt. Col. Ret.) Dave Thomas and his mom is Lt. Col. Diane Thomas of the 5th Medical Command.

Brian has been accepted as a junior at George Washington University where he will pursue a law degree. He is preparing for his law career with a stint as an intern at the State Capitol. He has served as the student government activities chair, secretary of his college's honor society, and New Student Orientation Host.

NGACT is proud to present these outstanding students with a \$500 stipend to help further their higher education.



RONALD E. LEE, FIRST SGT. (RET.), USAR
CT-ESGR PUBLIC AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN

Chamber of Commerce hosts Congressman Rob Simmons

On Sept. 15, members of the Connecticut Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (CT-ESGR) attended a Middlesex County Chamber of Commerce breakfast held at the Cromwell Radisson Hotel and Conference Center. The guest speaker for this event was Connecticut Congressman Rob Simmons, a Viet Nam veteran, who spoke on the topic "*Can America Be Defended?*"

Simmons began his talk by highlighting recent events beginning with the terrorist attacks of 9/11 up to the daily attacks on our military in Iraq. He mentioned the historical usage of National Guard and Reservists to assist the active components with the "War on Terrorism" as well as in providing for Homeland Security and the brave efforts and sacrifices made by these individuals.

Simmons commented on journalistic sensationalism and an article that ran in the Hartford Courant that was sympathetic to the Iraqi people who were "suffering" as a result of the on-going war. Simmons expressed his disgust in the way that the war is being reported by many agencies and called for the news to become more supportive of our troops and report the good things

that are being accomplished rather than being sympathetic towards the Iraqis and critical of our military efforts. The audience responded with a bursting round of applause in support of his statement.

Also present at the event was Connecticut Guardsman Al Kim of the 143rd Military Police. Kim, a police officer with the Middletown Police Department, was injured outside of Baghdad when an explosive device hit the HUMVEE that he was in. He was evacuated and received medical treatment for his injuries in Germany and was returned to the US for further medical treatment and recovery. Kim has been on active duty since shortly after 9/11, serving as security at Bradley Airport before he went to Iraq.

The City of Middletown has continued to support Kim and his family while he is away from his police duties and serving his country. We at CT-ESGR also wish him a speedy recovery and thank him for his devotion to duty.

Simmons concluded by thanking everyone who is serving in the military as well as those who are supporting our troops. Before leaving, he took the time to speak personally with Al Kim and other attendees and to stop by the CT-ESGR booth display, picking up ESGR flyers and to offering words of thanks and encouragement.

Inside OCS

Honor leads the way in OCS

OFFICER CANDIDATE KEVIN HORNING
OCS CLASS 49

I've been in the National Guard for 13 and a half years. My field was single channel radio operator (31C) and later I became a switch node operator (31F).

As a private I had very little contact with officers because I was always directed by my team leader. I felt like I was too low in the chain of command as a private to interact with the officers.

As I moved up in the ranks I had more contact with officers and learned more about the chain of command and the role of an officer. Seeing officer's dedication and responsibilities up close challenged me to become an officer.

When I entered Officer Candidate School (OCS), I had no idea what to expect. The only thing I did know about the OCS program was I needed to take the course to become an officer. I asked my officers about the school and I got the same responses, "you need to start now to help you get

exposed to what it's going to take to get through phase 1."

The first day I was in phase 0, I started to get a sense of what I had gotten myself into. It was like taking Basic Training again, but with an added responsibility of taking charge. After being away from the Basic Training environment for so long, I knew that in order to complete the course, I would have to be really committed to becoming an officer. After each drill my commitment to becoming an officer was reinforced.

My TAC officers had two different roles when teaching us, disciplinarian and mentor. As disciplinarians, they enforced discipline when a poor decision was made. As mentors, they would let you know how you are doing and what they expected from you. Both roles were equally effective in developing me into a better officer.

Already, I have learned a lot about being a leader. I will incorporate both teaching styles that my TAC officers used on my own platoon. I will challenge them to work as a

team and be the best that they can be.

I've learned that you can't do it all yourselves; you need help from the rest of the team so you can accomplish the mission. I also want to become a mentor to the soldiers under me. From my own personal experience, I know that it has a positive effect on performance and it boosts moral. By mentoring a soldier, I will let the soldier know what I, as the leader, expects out of him and allow the soldier to meet and excel the standards I put before them.

OCS teaches the lessons needed to become a leader. Some of the lessons are to pay attention to detail, discipline and duty. Paying attention to detail is stressed in OCS because failure to do so will mean life or death to you and your platoon. Discipline is the ability to perform one's duty under pressure. Duty is doing the assigned tasks to the best of your ability.

These and many lessons I have learned in OCS have already made me a better soldier, and I aspire to become even better.

Golden Candidates

SPEC. JEFF AUSTIN
65th PCH

On an October afternoon in Niantic, several former officer candidates will always remember the day they received their gold bars.

A small ceremony was performed for four newly commissioned second lieutenants in the Connecticut Army National Guard (CTARNG) at Camp Rowland on October 25.

The officers donned their gold bars with help from members of their families and friends but they also remembered the long journey of planning and hard work it took them to be apart of this very special day.

"It tested your commitment but I learned a lot from it," said 2nd Lt. Jeffrey R. Samy, Company A, 242nd Engineer Battalion, platoon leader. "I was an enlisted member for eight years in the 118th Medical Unit and it was there I was motivated by my sister to become an officer. I just want to help out the military any way I can."

Second Lt. William S. Warner, Company B, 102nd Infantry Battalion, platoon leader remembers how he was also influence by family members to join the military. His uncle was a West Point graduate that served two tours in Vietnam.

According to Warner, he first enlisted in the Army in 1985. He was out of the Army for seven years until the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11.

"It took me almost 18 years to get to this day," said Warner.

Second Lt. Marcin G. Baran, Detachment 3 Headquarters and Headquarters Company, served five years in the CTARNG with the 141st Medical Unit and is from Middletown, Conn. He always had an ambition to become an officer.

"I was always willing and did take leadership positions while serving in the CTARNG," said Baran.

Second Lt. Caminer Lavache, Company A, 242nd Engineer Company stood proudly alongside his fellow soldiers and reminisced about the obstacles that he had to overcome to make to Officer Candidate School (OCS).

"When I first left school and began working, my job wouldn't give me the time off. It seemed like it was always something to prevent me from going to OCS," said Lavache. "I had the mind set that the only acceptable thing was to get through the course no matter what. Failure was no option."

Looking back on his OCS experiences, Samy represented everyone's perspective in this way: "All the obstacles prepare us to become better soldiers."

Why Diversity?

2003 Hispanic Heritage Celebration 'One Culture: Many Races'

SPEC. JESSE J. STANLEY JR.
65th PCH

The Connecticut National Guard and the United States Postal Service hosted the annual Hispanic Heritage Celebration at the Fine Arts Center at Naugatuck Valley Community College, Oct. 10.

"This is a time we celebrate our legacy," said Rafael Toro, keynote speaker at the event.

Toro is the director of public relations for Goya Foods, Inc., the nations leader in manufacturing, producing and distributing Hispanic foods.

More than 200 students packed the Fine Arts Center to celebrate Hispanic Heritage.

Students from three Connecticut schools were honored at the celebration as part of a Hispanic Heritage Academics Contest.

Maj. Gen. William A. Cugno, the adjutant general, Connecticut National Guard, presented the students with their awards, which include a savings bond and a tour of a Connecticut National Guard facility.

The winners were Margaret Mary Quintana, Grade 5, from Mooreland



Rafael Toro, director of Public Relations at Goya Foods was the keynote speaker. (Photo by Spec. Jesse J. Stanley Jr., 65th PCH)

Hill School, Kensignton; Alexandra Plucenik, Grade 7, from Brooklyn Middle School, Brooklyn; and Israel Soto, Grade 12, from Foundation High School.

During the celebration Val Ramos played several of his original flamenco compositions from his CDs, drawing great applause and cheering from the gathered audience.

Following Ramos' performance Cugno and Toro unveiled a new stamp dedicated to Cesar E. Chavez.

For more than three decades Chavez led the first successful farm workers union in American History. His efforts are still felt today.

His union brought about the passage of the 1975 California Agricultural Labor Relations Act, which remains the only law in the nation that protects the right of farm workers to unionize.

A reception followed the celebration that included a sampling of authentic Hispanic foods prepared by La Cazuella Restaurant, Waterbury, Conn., owned by Addy and Maggie Vargas.

Health & Fitness

Your Health Matters: Why you should stop smoking

MAJ. SHIRLEY Y. SAMY
HEALTH PROMOTIONS OFFICER
103rd MEDICAL SQUADRON

Cigarette smoking is the number one preventable cause of death and illness in the United States.

Risks associated with smoking include: nearly all types of cancers including gynecological cancers, intestinal, bladder, and kidney cancers and of course mouth and throat cancers.

Other problems include pregnancy complications, impotence, infertility, osteoporosis (thinning of the bones), bone fractures, cataracts, glaucoma, vein problems, gum disease, dental cavities, stained teeth and bad breath, financial burden, poor exercise tolerance, and poor role model for children and grandchildren.

Risk factors for family members exposed to passive smoke include increased risk of lung cancer and heart disease in spouse and children, higher rates of smoking by children, increased risk of sudden infant death syndrome, asthma, ear infections, and respiratory infections in children.

Reaping the **Benefits** of smoking cessation can start several minutes after quitting... regardless of how long you have smoked!

Within *20 minutes*, blood pressure and pulse return to normal and temperature of hands and feet increase to normal.

Within *eight hours*, smoker's breath disappears, carbon monoxide level in blood drops to normal and oxygen level increases to normal.

Within *24 hours*, chances of heart attack begin to decrease. Within *three days*, breathing is easier. Within *two-three*

months, circulation improves, walking becomes easier and lung function increases up to 30 percent. Car and home smell better. Food smells and tastes better.

Within *one to nine months*, coughing, sinus congestion, fatigue, and shortness of breath decreases. Fine hairs called cilia that sweep debris from your lungs grow back and increase your ability to handle mucus, clean the lungs, and reduce infection. Energy increases.

Within *one year*, your risk of coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker. Within *two years*, heart attack risk drops to near normal.

Within *five years*, lung cancer death rate for a person who smoked a pack per day decreases by almost half. Stroke risk is reduced. Risk of mouth, throat, and esophageal cancer is half that of a smoker.

Within *10 years*, lung cancer death rate is similar to that of people who don't smoke.

Within *15 years*, risk of coronary heart disease is the same as a person who never smoked. The short and long-term benefits are tremendous for overall health of you, your family and especially children... not to mention the financial savings!

Strategies to quit smoking

1. **Prepare to quit:** Decide positively that you want to quit and list all the reasons why you want to stop. Tell someone you are quitting and enlist his or her support. Begin thinking about your life as a non-smoker.

2. **Choose a quit date within the next 2 weeks:** Throw away all of your tobacco, lighter, ashtrays, and other smoking-related products. Clean your clothes, car, drapes and furniture to rid them of the smell of smoke. Have your teeth cleaned. Stay away from other tobacco users and other tempting situations (i.e. alcohol). Do something special that you've been putting off to help you associate positive feelings with quitting.

3. **Prepare for urges to smoke:** Spend more time with friends who do not smoke and find activities that make smoking difficult (gardening, exercising, washing the car). Keep oral substitutes handy like carrots, sunflower seeds, sugarless gum, etc. Change your daily routine to break old habits. Use relaxation techniques such as yoga or exercise.

4. **Try nicotine replacement or Zyban-a smoking cessation pill.** Nearly everyone can benefit from one of these methods; ask your health care provider which would be best for you.

5. **Relapse:** Don't be too hard on yourself if you start smoking again. Stop immediately and get rid of all tobacco products. Get yourself back on track as soon as possible and realize that most people try several times before they successfully quit. Identify the triggers that led you to smoking again and learn from your past mistakes. Set a new quit date and begin again. You can reap the rewards immediately!

6. **Connecticut Quitline:** Whether you are ready to quit or just thinking about it, free help is just a phone call away! **1-866-END-HABIT (1-866-363-4224) Toll free.**



Air Force releases fitness standards

Air Force leaders released the fitness-scoring charts that will be used beginning Jan. 1.

"The amount of energy we devote to our fitness programs is not consistent with the growing demands of our warrior culture. It's time to change that," said Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. John P. Jumper explaining the rationale behind the change.

Officials said the fitness score will include four components: crunches, push-ups, an abdominal circumference measurement and the 1.5-mile timed run. People who are not medically cleared to run will continue to take the bike test. The component scores are then added to get a composite fitness score and determine if the person falls into the excellent, good, marginal or poor category. The charts are available online at www.af.mil/news/USAF_Fitness_Charts.pdf.

Fitness categories will determine how often a person must retest. For instance, a composite score of 70 to 74.9 places the person in the marginally fit category. This designation requires retesting at six-month intervals. A score of less than 70 places a person in the poorly fit category. That score requires a retest every three months. People at the marginal and poor levels also will participate in educational programs.

"The focus of the new fitness program is not the assessment. The program is about integrating fitness into our culture, and our members adopting fitness as a way of life," said Maj. Lisa Schmidt, the Air Force Surgeon General chief of health promotion operations.

Officials are finalizing the instruction and plan to publish it by January.

Fit for Life: Food, and creating your own diet plan

MAJ. JAMES FINN
MASTER FITNESS TRAINER

Unless you are an alien, you have at least one voluntary activity common with every other human. You eat! Magazines, television, bill boards, movies, junk mail / e-mail, even our books (including the best seller of all time) talks about "what we should eat". Sometimes what we should not!!!

Adkins, Beverly Hills, Blood Type, Exchange Plans, Fit-For-Life, Herbalife, Jenny Craig, Kashi, Mayo Clinic, Nutrisystem, Perricone, Pritikin, Richard Simmons, Scarsdale, Slim Fast, Somersizing, South Beach, Sugar Busters, Thin-For-Life, Weight Watchers, The Zone.

All diets have one issue in common. Control. By choosing a diet plan or "a life style", you decide what to consume, when, and how much. The problem we all have with our diet is determining which is best for us. We (even the medical professionals) do not understand all the intricacies of nutrition.

Common sense and a look at any group

of people, reveals something startling . . . "We are all different". Our lifestyles, our stress levels, our activities, our metabolisms, even the microscopic structures in our body's smallest cells are not only different but unique. One substance I eat (for instance peanut butter) is deadly to someone else. We list thousands of foods that produce violent reactions in some people while routinely consumed by others. "How do I determine which diet is best for me?"

Before I give you the real answer and not "media hype" I must warn you, "the diet you choose could be safe for someone else but dangerous for you".

You may not know you have food allergies, metabolic disorders, substance addictions, and "non-symptomatic" reactions (damage to your system that is not immediately observable). The "diet" you eat (i.e.: your routine foods) could be destroying your health. How can you know? By carefully becoming an "experiment of one". Read all the diet plans you want but create your own.

My wife, Diane, and I eat radically different diets. What she eats works for her and what

I eat works for me. We, gradually over many years, got rid of many foods that did not fit our life-style, budget, or body types. I refer to Diane as "my favorite carnivore". She has always needed about twice as much protein a day and a lot more iron than I.

I will crave a bean burrito with jalapenos and broccoli; while she craves a rare steak with everything (leave out the onions!). She craves shrimp while I crave PBJWW (Peanut Butter & Jam on Whole Wheat).

We have gradually increased quality protein, decreased our junk carbohydrates (especially sweets), watched the types of fats (particularly avoid hydrogenated), and added roughage.

All the diets listed above suggest similar planning. The difference: timing and quantities.

The Cave Man Diet. Years ago, doctors (particularly allergists) prescribed the "Cave Man Diet" to parents whose children displayed food allergies or degenerative diseases. The premise is "remove from the diet everything that could possibly cause a bad metabolic reaction". First, while

eating a basic diet of proteins and vegetables the body cleans itself (sound familiar?).

Second, add one item at a time, such as strawberries, or milk, or chocolate, etc; then watch for a reaction. Systematically, re-cleanse (remove the last item) then add another. Finally, list all foods; those that cause reactions and those that don't.

Reactions may not be easily seen like: hives, rash, or asthma. Mood swings, depression, anger, headache, dizziness, hyperactivity, changes in blood counts, endocrine system fluctuations, and metabolic shifts have been attributed to food allergies or substance dependence.

One example is the "caffeine headache". Anyone who consumes "caffeine rich" substances: soda, coffee, black tea, and certain candies over a period of time will develop a headache after as little as twelve hours when not given "a fix". Your mission: "Become an Experiment of One". If you need more information contact a nutritionist; not your skinny friend who thinks coffee and chocolate are proteins because they are made from beans.

Flying Yankee captures unit history in black and white

STAFF SGT. CAROLYN A. ASELTON
103RD FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Retired Master Sgt. Robert F. Kenary returned to base during the September drill, not as a security policeman, but as an artist.

"As you can see, he's a hell of an artist," said Capt. Brian M. Boeding, museum curator and weapons and tactics officer, 118th Fighter Squadron, of Kenary during an informal ceremony in front of the prints that commemorate the Flying Yankees 80th anniversary.

The former military and civilian cop has spent some of his retirement drawing, in charcoal and graphite, the nine prints that hang in the operations building as part of the wing's museum.

Kenary, who donated the prints, said drawing the different aircraft proved to be a challenge as he normally draws street scenes for office buildings and pro-racing motorcycles.

"Still Ready: 1923-2003, CT Air Guard," the last completed print in succession, shows an A-10, complete with a "Let's Roll" emblem signifying the nation's War on Terrorism, behind a uniformed pilot from the squadron's early days.

"the pilot from 1923 is still ready to fly," Kenary said. "This one ties the history of the 118th in together."

It took the artist, who spent 27 years in the Air Guard, 60 hours to complete the drawing.

During the short appreciation ceremony, Col. Dan Scace, commander, 103rd Fighter Wing, presented Kenary with his commander's coin for excellence.

"On behalf of everyone in the wing, I'd like to give you my coin as a token of our appreciation," he said. "We really appreciate this."

"Your talent and passion makes a big difference to us and the people coming through," added Lt. Col. Dennis Yount, 118th Fighter Squadron commander, as he presented Kenary with a squadron coin.

The display will eventually consist of 13 drawings. Besides the A-10, now hanging are drawings of most of the Flying Yankees' various aircraft over the years, including a JN-4D Jenny and a P-51D Mustang.



Master Sgt. (Ret.) Robert F. Kenary and Capt. Brian M. Boeding after a ceremony recognizing Kenary's artwork. Behind them hangs Kenary's "Still Ready" drawing. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aselton, 103rd FW Public Affairs)



The 103rd Fighter Wing Museum, located in the operations building at Bradley Air National Guard Base, where Master Sgt. (Ret.) Robert F. Kenary's artwork lines the wall. Inset is a close-up of one of Kenary's charcoal and graphite drawings of a vintage aircraft from the 118th Fighter Squadron. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Carolyn A. Aselton, 103rd FW PA)

Retirees' Voice

Taking a look at benefits and pending legislation for 2004

Sgt. 1st Class (RET.) JOHN BEDNARZ

Here are just a few odds and ends that I've come across during the last month or so. The Senate is in recess and will reconvene on Oct. 14, 2003.

Negotiations over concurrent receipt are still in progress, and will hopefully be more than last years CRSC, but will probably be less than full concurrent receipt. Part of the negotiations, was an idea to reform the VA disability rating system. That is not a good idea, because inevitably the requirements would be much more stringent, and would leave a lot of people out in the cold.

The Department of Veteran's Affairs has announced an increase in the monthly federal stipend that it pays to Medal of Honor recipients. In accordance with the Veteran's Benefit Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-330) the payment will increase from \$600.00 to \$1,000.00 per month. There are 136 living recipients at this time. The act also set up a formula for future increases based on the annual rate of inflation, and will no longer require a specific Act of Congress. The benefit started out at ten dollars a month in 1916 and has been increased four times before this increase. "They (the recipients) are living examples of sacrifice, love of country and dedication to duty," said VA Secretary Anthony J. Principi.

Representative Walter Jones (R-NC) has added his name as the 203rd member of the House, to the Discharge Petition on H.R. 303, a Bill for Concurrent Receipt. The Petition requires fifteen more signatures to force the Bill out of committee and to the Floor of the House. There it would come

up for debate and a vote.

The National Association for Uniformed Services (NAUS) reported that DOD has released a revised CRSC application form (DD Form 2860 Test [V2] dated Sept 2003) to replace the May 2003 edition which is obsolete. The new form should be used only for those who have not yet submitted their CRSC claim. The new form is available on their web site (www.naus.org).

DOD has announced that Express Scripts, Inc. of Maryland Heights, Missouri was awarded the TRICARE Retail Pharmacy contract. This will provide better service for beneficiaries in the 50 States, D.C., Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U. S. Virgin Islands.

It will be fully portable, allowing access to network pharmacies while traveling outside of their regions. Retail pharmacies comprise one of three venues for pharmacy services. The others being, military treatment facilities, and the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy. The transition begins on October 1, 2003 and will continue for six months. The turnover of responsibility for delivery of retail pharmacy services will occur nationwide on April 1, 2004. Express Scripts, Inc. will inform beneficiaries about network coverage and procedures for filling prescriptions at their neighborhood pharmacies.

On Sept. 30, 2003 the President signed H.R. 2658, the National Defense Appropriations Act into Public Law No: 108-87. This is the FY04 Appropriations Bill, not the Authorization Bill which normally is passed first. It appears that we have the money, but not the authorization to use it.

Do you know these guys?



If you have a picture of historical nature to share with our readers, email if possible to debbi.newton@ct.ngb.army.mil or mail to Sgt. 1st Class Debbi Newton, Public Affairs Office, National Guard Armory, 360 Broad Street, Hartford, CT 06105-3795. All photos will be returned.



Association of the United States Army
Connecticut Chapter

MEETING NOTICE

Veterans' Day Commemoration

★ ★
Guest Speaker: LTC Ronald P. Welch
Commander, 14th Civil Support Team (WMD)

The chapter will be recognizing our Korean War Veterans as we close out the three year commemoration, and CSM (Ret) George J. Ford, Jr., formerly CSM of the 76th Training Division, USAR for his many years of service as Treasurer of the Connecticut Chapter. LTG Thomas G. Rhame, USA, Retired, Vice President Finance & Administration, AUSA will make the presentation.

★ **Thursday - November 13, 2003**
4:30 p.m. - Buffet Reception/Meeting
Registration Fee - TBD

Officers' Club of Connecticut - State Armory
340 Broad Street, Hartford

For further details contact: Elaine Krauss, CT Chapter, AUSA, (203) 797-5869



1ST OCS BN, 169TH LEADERSHIP REGIMENT

*Officer Candidate School
Information Briefs:*



15 November 2003
13 December 2003
24 January 2004
28 February 2004
20 March 2004
24 April 2004

Phase 0 Dates
24-25 April 2004
22-23 May 2004
26-27 June 2004



Phase 1 Dates
17 -31 July 2004



Location:
BLDG 32 Community Room
Camp Rowland
Niantic, CT

POC:
S/LT Steven O'Dea
(860) 691-4235
sodea@camprowland.army.mil

Bring a friend, Spouse or Significant other
Information Brief will be in Building 3Community Room,
beginning at 1000 hours.
Uniform is BDU on duty, Civilian all others

*Camp Rowland Post Exchange
Start Your Christmas Shopping Early!!!!*

New toys, gloves, hats,
rock salt, shovels,
snow blowers. And
much, much more!!!

***New merchandise
arriving weekly!!!***

*Have a safe and Happy
Holiday Season from all of us
at the Camp Rowland PX.*



Coming Events

November

- Nov. 6**
Officer Dining In
- Nov. 8**
Veteran's Day Parade
- Nov. 11**
Veteran's Day
- Nov. 27**
Thanksgiving

December

- Dec. 6**
Army/Navy Football Game
Philadelphia
- Dec. 7**
Pearl Harbor Day
- Dec. 19**
Hanukkah begins at sundown
- Dec. 25**
Christmas
- Dec. 26**
Kwanzaa begins

January

- Jan. 1**
New Year's Day
- Jan. 18**
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

February

- Feb. 16**
President's Day

In the Next CG

- Volunteer Firefighters in the Guard
- JAG: More than a hit TV show
- Collecting Sweetheart Pillowcases
- MEDEVAC Training
- Officer Dining In
- NCOES Begins

Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month
previous to publication.

Postcards Home



Members of 1st Platoon, 143rd Military Police Company in Iraq. (Photo courtesy of the 143rd Military Police Company)



Members of the Connecticut Army National Guard pose with Bruce Willis (center with blue hat) after giving him an aerial tour of Kuwait.



Capt. Hudd and Capt. Joltes, 103rd MDS at the Combat Readiness Training Center, Alpena, Maine. (Photo courtesy of Capt. Hudd)



Master Sgt. Rueben Garcia of the 1109th AVCRAD.



Sgt. 1st Class Christopher Emmerson (second from left) and Pfc. Daniel Petsa (far right) of the 143rd Military Police Company's 4th Squad, escort a prisoner from the scene where 2,000 Iraqis were rioting. An Iraqi police officer accompanies them. The prisoner was seen signaling someone in the crowd and was taken into custody for the safety of others in the crowd. (AP photo by Anja Niedringhaus, used by written permission)



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