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DISPATCH

THE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE FOR THE LOUISIANA ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

SPRING 2008



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Sgt. Heath Stoute, B Company, 2-156th Inf. Team Leader

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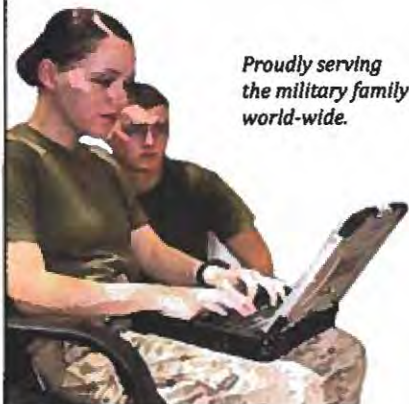
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From the Adjutant General

My fellow Guardsmen,

On behalf of the governor, I want to personally thank each of you for working so hard to support our great organization and this state. I also want you to know how honored I am to have the privilege to continue serving our organization as your adjutant general.

It has taken each and every one of our Soldiers and Airmen to accomplish some truly remarkable feats that define who we are. This inaugural edition of the Pelican Dispatch captures just a few of those remarkable stories that will become our history for future Guardsmen, not unlike stories of Louisiana Militiamen who have come before us.

The lineage of the Citizen Soldier is a proud one and dates back to the 18th century when a militia was formed from among the civilian inhabitants of Colonial Louisiana to assist Royal French and Spanish troops in protecting the colony and preserving the peace. This is a lineage that each of you is now a part of and I ask that you stand proud as you carry on this heritage.

Each of you has answered the call to duty and carries on the legacy of our forefathers by defending our homeland and helping those in need. In times of emergency, whether

it be from flood, fire, hurricane or our nation's Global War on Terror, our commitment to the citizens of this state and nation remains the number one mission. In the past 12 months, our Louisiana National Guard has answered the call on numerous occasions when our fellow citizens needed our help. Our Soldiers and Airmen have served our citizens with modesty and distinction.

My top priority is personnel readiness and to supporting our families. And with more than 10,000 Soldiers and Airmen who serve part time and full time in one of the oldest traditions in America, you have shown your commitment to those same goals.

As the Adjutant General, I ask that each of you stand proud of what you accomplish every day, keep up the great work and I thank you again for proudly serving our communities, this great state and our nation.

Sincerely,

Major General Bennett C. Landreneau, The Adjutant General



Soldier spreads the word for \$10,000

By Capt. Barry D. Riley, 256th Brigade Special Troops Battalion Unit Public Affairs Representative

"It's all about talking to the right people at the right time," said Pfc. Eric Givens, a native of Port Allen. He said his success in recruiting can be attributed to talking to people who are looking for a program like the Louisiana National Guard, just when they need it.

A member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 256th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, he signed up for the Guard Recruiting Assistance Program immediately after swearing in as a Soldier for the Guard.

Givens said his recruiter told him about the G-RAP program, which awards Soldiers \$2,000 for every enlistment they bring into the Guard. He has made \$10,000 to date, and says he has three more people interested in joining, a potential \$6,000 for him.

The program began as an incentive for Soldiers to spread the word about the educational, medical and financial benefits of the National Guard to their peers. For Givens, spreading the word has equated to a new car, a gift he bought himself with his G-RAP earnings. He does not rely on the program for his income, however. As a future student at Louisiana State University, he currently works in Brusly, La., at Sonic.

He said bringing information about the benefits of the Guard to the public was an easy task for him, because he believed so strongly in the cause.

"It's all about finding a common bond with the individual you're trying to inform," Givens said. "You can't make someone join the Guard if they don't want to, but you can give them all the information and the opportunity."

Givens said when he first started the program he did not even talk about benefits or money; he simply talked to the potential Soldier about his or her plans after high school.

After that he simply shared his own story with them.

"If they didn't have a clear plan I just told them what I did, gave them the information they needed to research the Guard, and told them after that to call me if they were interested," Givens said.

He added that if you give someone the opportunity to choose and simply inform them rather than push something on them, they feel less like they are obligated.

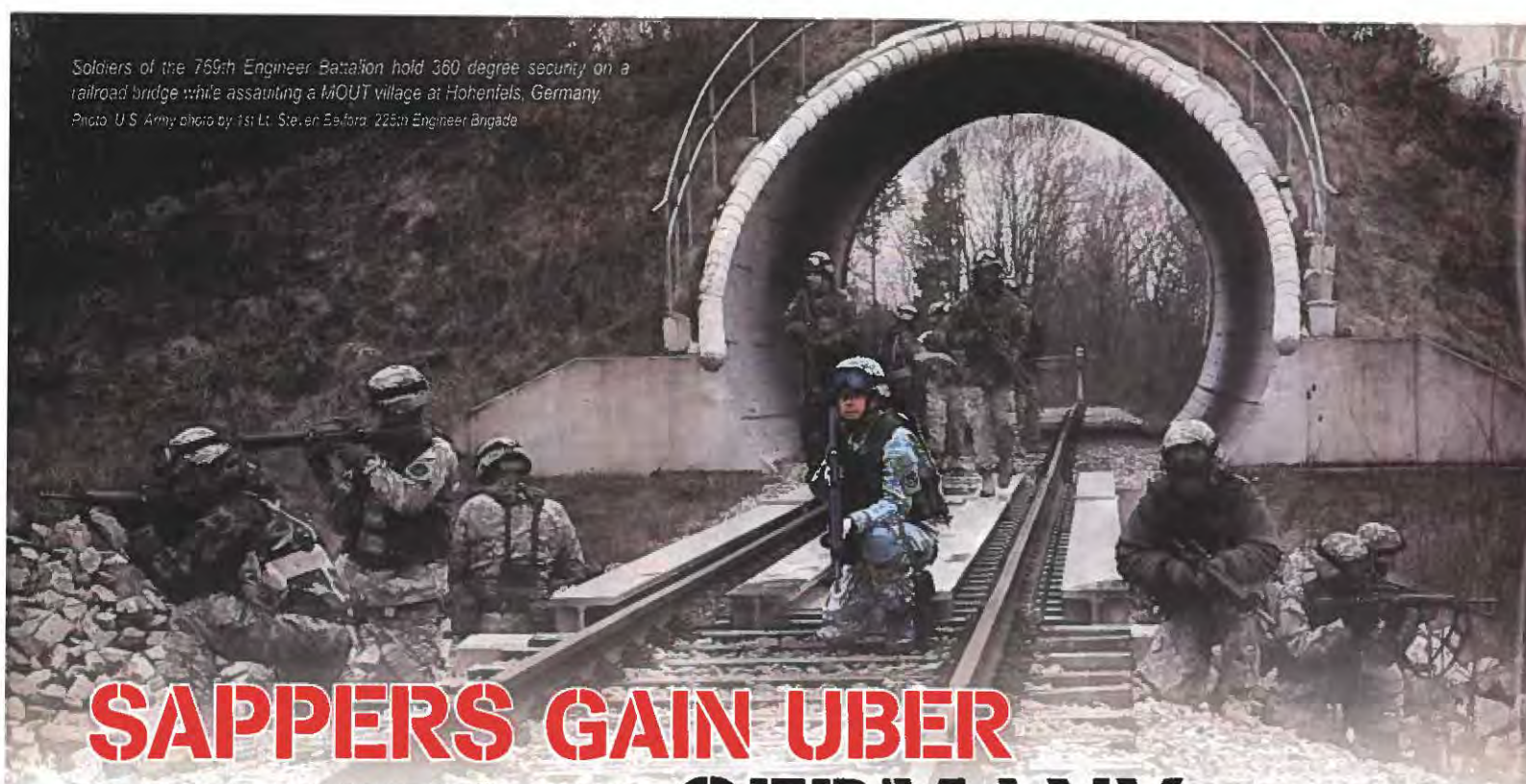
"The main thing is to just be honest," Givens said. ■



Pfc. Eric Givens

Photo: U.S. Army photo by Capt. Barry Riley,
256th Brigade Special Troops Battalion Unit

Soldiers of the 769th Engineer Battalion hold 360 degree security on a railroad bridge while assaulting a MOUT village at Hohenfels, Germany.
Photo: U.S. Army photo by 1st Lt. Steven Esford, 225th Engineer Brigade



SAPPERS GAIN UBER TRAINING IN GERMANY

By Staff Sgt. Denis Ricou, 769th Engineer Battalion Public Affairs Representative

While most of the state was enjoying the relatively warm winter that Louisiana offers and basking in yet another college football championship, members of the Louisiana National Guard's 769th Engineer Battalion were busy putting on as many layers of clothing as possible.

Three companies—including the 928th Sapper Company, the 926th Mobilization Augmentation Co. and the 922nd Horizontal Construction Co.—were combined to form Team Tigator and spent three weeks training at the Joint Multi-national Readiness Center in Hohenfels, Germany, at the beginning of the year.

Their mission—teamwork.

Due to the recent deployments of three other 769th companies, many Soldiers volunteered to go overseas leaving their parent companies with dwindling numbers. The 928th Sappers, scheduled for overseas duty training in Germany, invited the remaining companies of the battalion to join them. Having never worked together, the ODT proved to be a successful melding mission.

Various instructors from the 928th taught classes on the different aspects of being a combat engineer, the duties,

roles, and the responsibilities inherent with the missions they encounter. Just some of the duties may be demolition, breaching, construction of obstacles and dismounted maneuvers.

Other training missions in Germany included vehicle rollover drills using an electronic life-size Humvee, land navigation, advanced drill and ceremony, combatives; and engagement skills training using an interactive combat simulator. All of this, along with training of military operations

on urban terrain—led to the capstone event of assaulting a MOUT-site village.

Although heavily weighted on the training side, Soldiers were afforded many morale and welfare opportunities such as trips to Munich and Regensburg, bowling, barbecues and other activities on post. ■

Members of the Louisiana National Guard enjoy German culture while on a morale and welfare recreation trip to Munich, Germany, during their carnival season.

Photo: U.S. Army photo by Capt. William Sawit, 928th Sapper Company Commander



For 6th-12th Grade BEHIND THE FACES

Parkway High School students were very interested in the message of "Behind the Faces," a motivational film recently brought to area schools by the Louisiana National Guard and the Louisiana State Police.

Photo: U.S. Army photo, Sgt. Robin Carpenter, 165th Combat Sustainment and Support Battalion Unit Public Affairs Representative

Students meet the people "Behind the Faces" National Guardsmen and State Police seek to inspire

By Sgt. Robin Carpenter, LANG PAO UPAR and Suzanne Chaillot, LANG Air Guard PAO Staff Journalist

Once the lights were dimmed in the school auditorium, a nervous chatter rose from students waiting for the show to start. It didn't take long for the audience to quiet down and focus on the triple screens flashing images and music of their generation.

The Louisiana State Police, Louisiana National Guard, Louisiana State Troopers Association and the Louisiana Troopers Charities have partnered to bring "Behind the Faces" to the state's middle and high school students, and most recently spent a week in northwest Louisiana visiting area high schools.

"Behind the Faces" is a film produced by Motivational Productions out of Garden Ridge, Texas, which focuses on teaching students the importance of choosing positive friends, and the destructive consequences that can result from surrounding themselves with friends who make poor decisions.

Sgt. 1st Class Anna Baca and Sgt. 1st Class Tommy Rainbolt, both with the 165th Combat Sustainment and Support Battalion in Bossier City, were the coordinators of this section of the tour for the Louisiana National Guard. It is part of their unit's efforts to remain involved in the community and to present positive role models for the city's youth.

Master Sgt. Melissa Hughes, a paralegal with the 159th Fighter Wing, and a member of the Counter Drug Task Force, was contacted by Capt. Donna Jones, Louisiana National Guard Demand Reduction coordinator to be one of the faces with a message.

"I traveled to San Antonio to film a segment about peer pressure," said Hughes. "The first time I saw the complete film, I got goose bumps—it was powerful."



Haughton High School students pose with members of the Louisiana National Guard and the Louisiana State Police after watching "Behind the Faces," a motivational film about the importance of choosing friends carefully.

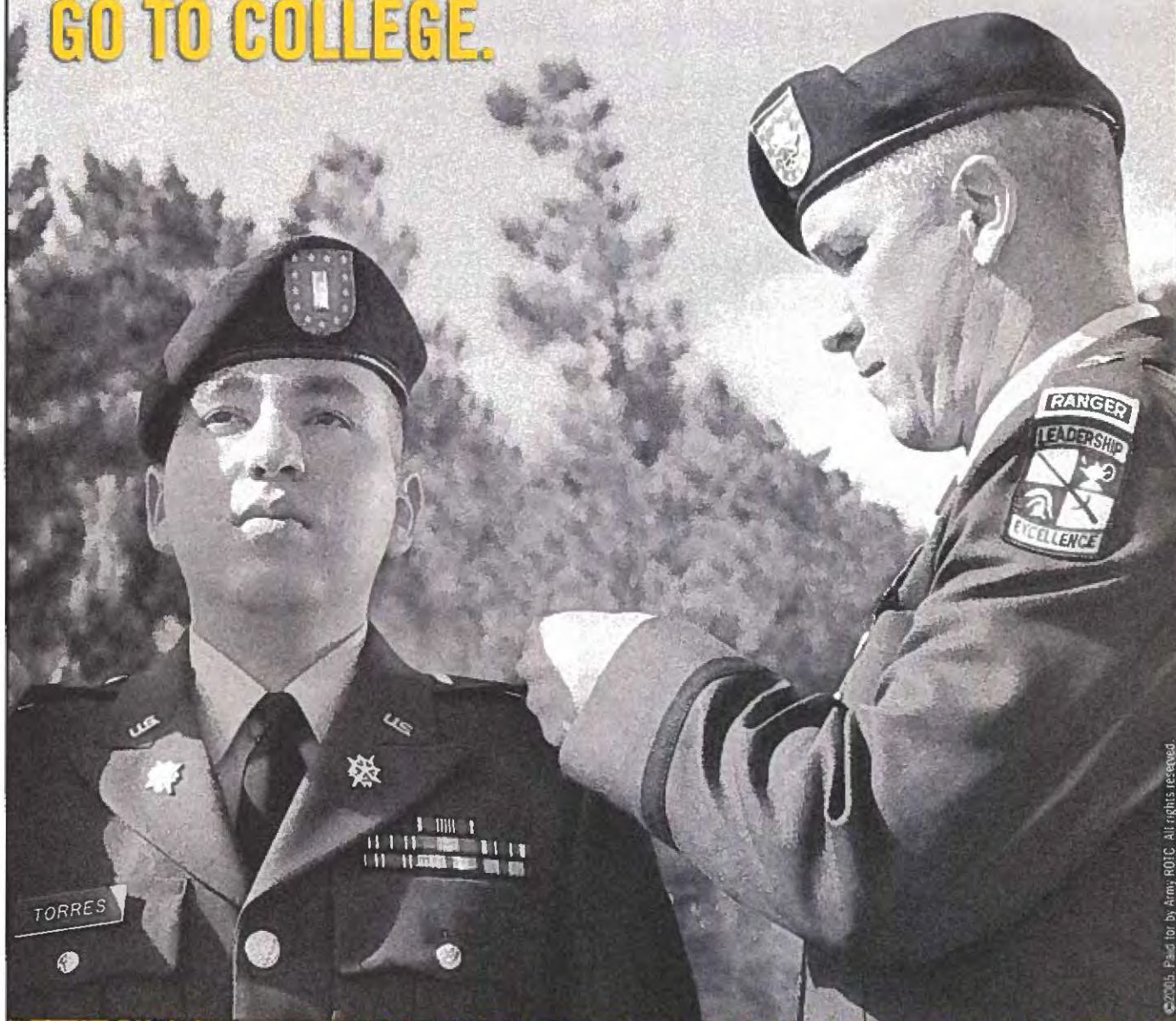
Photo: U.S. Army photo, Sgt. Robin Carpenter, 165th Combat Sustainment and Support Battalion Unit Public Affairs Representative

The 45-minute-long film features three real-life stories of teens whose friends dramatically influenced their lives—for better and for worse. Shown on three 42-inch-wide, multi-media screens, it was well-received by the local students. They said the dramatic cinematography and selection of current chart-topping music captured their attention and presented its message in a format they could relate to.

"The kids seemed to get something out of the film, and it provokes conversations," said Hughes. "At one of the showings, some of the girls got up and said they didn't realize how much their actions influence each other."

"Behind the Faces" made stops at Haughton High School, Benton High School, Airline High School, Plain Dealing High School, Parkway High School, Red River High School and Bossier High School. ■

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Blue Star Mothers of Louisiana

answer the call

By Sgt. Rebekah L. Malone, 225th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs Representative



Members of the Blue Star Mothers of Louisiana march in a parade in Baton Rouge, La., to show support for the troops. The BSM-LA works to promote patriotism for the deployed troops as well as support each other during the difficult time their loved ones are deployed.

Photo: Courtesy of Janet Broussard

National Guard Soldiers in Louisiana have their mothers to thank for their strength.

"We take pride in the fact that we have children protecting our freedom during a time of war," said Janet Broussard, leader of the Blue Star Mothers of Louisiana, Baton Rouge chapter.

Numerous community service projects have been completed and are an ongoing commitment of the moms.

"We host a Gold Star Mother's Luncheon every May before Mother's Day, attend the funerals of our fallen heroes, put on public events that raise awareness for our Armed Forces and promote patriotism," Broussard said. "We do card and letter drives, send care packages, participate in Veterans Day events and take part in the Wreaths Across America."

Blue Star Mothers of America Inc. dates back to World War I, when mothers started putting a blue star in their window if they had a child deployed, and a gold star if they lost a child in war.

"We do more service to support the troops instead of supporting ourselves," said Broussard. "In doing that, we support ourselves as well because it helps to get out there and feel like you are making a difference. Mostly we are just here for each other. If [one of us] is having a rough day, we just call and lift each other up."

Broussard started the first chapter in January 2005, after joining the national organization and realizing the need for a chapter in Louisiana. BSM-LA has now grown to 97 members

in Chapter 1. Additional chapters were started across the state and continue to grow in Houma, Monroe and St. Francisville.

"If it could help other moms, then yes, I think more chapters would be a good thing," said Broussard. "Our chapter is the building block. If we could spread out and do more chapters, maybe in Lake Charles or Alexandria, we could help more moms that way."

Staff Sgt. James Scaruffi of Metairie, La., deployed with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 156th Infantry Regiment of 256th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, out of Houma, La., in 2004. It was then that his mom, Janet, turned to BSM-LA for support.

"It gave my mom something to relate to," said Scaruffi. "It kept her busy and gave her a different mindset. She was more focused about getting the Soldiers what they needed rather than worrying about me."

In 2006, BSM-LA was also instrumental in getting legislation passed under Senate Bill 50 and House Bill 1304 to protect funerals from protestors as well as protect the use of deceased Soldiers' names without authorization.

"We attend a lot of the funerals, and I just couldn't imagine our moms having to go through that; having people there picketing them. So we asked Senator Rob Marionneaux for legislation to protect the family of the fallen, and we were there when they voted," Broussard said proudly. "Sometimes we cause a ruckus, but sometimes a ruckus needs to be caused!"

Broussard stated that their projects wouldn't be possible without the generosity of the communities of Louisiana.

The shipping for the care packages that are sent overseas for the last year have been paid for by Eatel Communications in Gonzales, La. Curves for Women, LSU and many other businesses and organizations have all held care package drives.

"For me, this started out as a way to get support for dealing with my son being deployed, but it has developed into so much more," Broussard explained. "It makes me feel better knowing I am doing something and I'm serving my country in this way, supporting the moms and families, veterans and Soldiers on active duty." ■

DOCTORS SAVE WAR VETERAN'S LIFE

Local physicians perform surgery
for free on Guard Soldier

"I didn't realize how scared I was until I told everyone, 'hey, I'm going down to have my surgery,'" said Jason Borland, a sergeant with the Louisiana National Guard's 831st Engineer Detachment from Pineville, La.

Borland, a veteran of Operation Enduring Freedom, never imagined the lump he felt in his neck was a tumor. After a visit to his family physician, he was diagnosed with neurofibromatosis, a tumor that follows the path of a nerve.

In July 2006, Borland had a surgery to remove the tumor, but the complexity of the damage to the nerve caused complications that paralyzed the entire right side of his face.

"People take a smile for granted," he said. "You never know how much something means to you until you don't have it."

Finding a doctor to perform a surgery to remove the tumor and do a nerve graft from Borland's tongue to the removed facial nerve was a difficult task.

"I went to multiple doctors throughout the state and even other states," said Borland. "At St. Jude's Children's Hospital in Memphis, Tenn., they did a 3-D cat [CT] scan, and that's when they told me that the tumor had spread from just being a small spot in my facial nerve to following the nerve up into my brain."

At 25 years old, Borland was too old to be treated at St. Jude's. A doctor there who wanted to help put Borland in contact with Dr. Daniel Nuss, a physician located in Baton Rouge.

"Dr. Nuss is just a very compassionate man about what he does," said Borland. "He truly wanted to help me. It was different. When I saw Dr. Nuss, fixing my smile was his big concern. He told me, 'We're going to get the tumor, but I'm not settling for anything less than getting your face back too.' And that's what he did."

In March 2007, Dr. Nuss partnered with Dr. Kelly Scrantz, also of Baton Rouge, to perform the surgery.

"Basically they ended up working together to get this surgery done for me, to get the tumor removed and to do a nerve graft," stated Borland. "They cut the facial nerve completely out because it was fully engulfed with the tumor."

They not only felt confident about doing the surgery and getting it taken care of, but money was not an issue with them. Borland should have paid 20 percent of the total cost of the surgery, but in the end he did not pay a cent.

"They completely wrote it off," the Soldier explained.

Now, nearly a year after the surgery, the tumor is completely gone and the nerve graft has started to take. Reflecting on that time in his life is a very emotional experience for him and his wife, Alicia, but Borland feels it is important to tell his story in an effort to showcase the generosity of the doctors who saved his life. It is also his way to thank the family and friends, and his military family who supported him through everything.

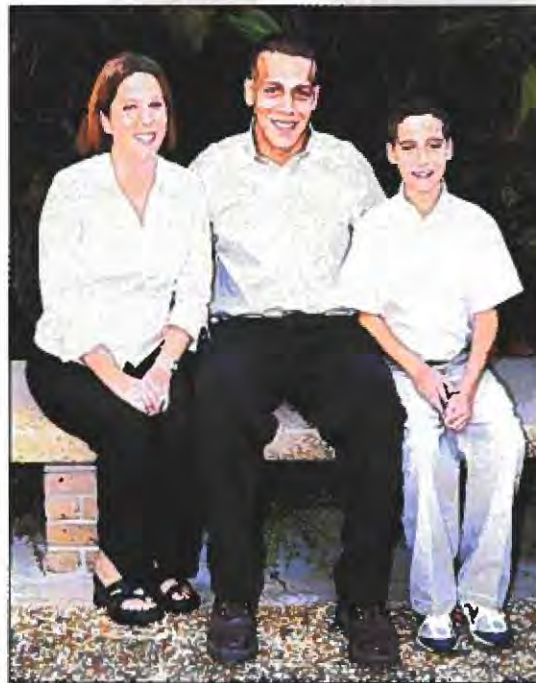
"My wife was my rock; she didn't show any negative emotion," Borland reflected. "I was the one who was scared. She kept saying, 'Jason it's going to be ok.'"

"Staff Sgt. Jeff Bennett actually took time off of work as a full-time Soldier to drive to Memphis and stay with me so my wife wouldn't have to use her leave days. You don't find people who would do that very often," explained Borland. "I just had a huge support system behind me."

When asked what Borland would say to the doctors who performed the life-saving surgery at no cost, he said, "These two doctors have a special place in my

heart. I thank God for Dr. Nuss and Dr. Scrantz. If it wasn't for them, I may not be able to wake up and see my wife and kids every morning and I just thank Him for this chance to move on and appreciate life."

He added, "God has a special place in heaven for them. People like that don't come along every day." ■



Sgt. Jason Borland, a resident of Pineville, La., is pictured with his wife, Alicia and stepson, Austin, on Christmas Eve 2004, before being diagnosed with a neurofibromatosis tumor. The tumor took over his facial nerve and from complications from the first surgery, caused paralysis on the right side of his face. Borland said, "People take a smile for granted. You never know how much something means to you until you don't have it."

Belief in Guard turns into \$24,000 for Soldier ...

and a Meritorious Service Medal

By Sgt. Rebekah Malone, State Public Affairs UPAR

When Spc. Colt Miller, with the 2228th Military Police Company heard about and received training on the Guard Recruiter Assistant Program, he never dreamed it would turn into \$24,000 and the opportunity to purchase a Ford Explorer for his new bride, as well as a GMC truck for himself. And all of this in only 18 months.

"I'm successful at recruiting because I believe in what I do. I believe in the missions I've been on and I believe in the cause of what the National Guard is here for. We protect, defend and serve. That's what it means to me," Miller said as he explained his philosophy on his success recruiting Soldiers into the National Guard.

Even more than the vehicles, Miller received accolades from his battalion commander of the 773rd Military Police Battalion headquartered in Pineville, La. Lt. Col. Kenneth Donnelly recently presented him with a Meritorious Service Medal for encouraging the enlistment of 12 Soldiers into the Louisiana National Guard.

"I felt honored [winning the MSM]. That made me proud. Soldiers now realize that you will be recognized for your accomplishments," said Miller. "Lt. Col. Donnelly told me I was the first E-4 he ever handed an MSM to."

Though Miller has only been in the Guard for three years, it has done a lot for the young Soldier.

"I feel the Guard serves a bigger purpose," he stated. "The Guard serves a state and fed-

eral mission, natural disasters, state policing missions and also overseas combat zones. I enjoy my job because I move around and I feel like I'm serving a bigger purpose. I've worked in my home state for a year and a half and now I'm going overseas."

It is this kind of outlook that helps Miller to approach potential candidates. His focus is on communicating the flexibility of the Guard, learning a job skill that provides a monthly paycheck and having the opportunity to serve a higher mission.

Miller explained, "One guy was flunking out of school, and didn't know what he wanted to do with his life. I sat down with him ... and told him look, you can get your education paid for if you keep up your grades in high school for the next year. It's changed his life. He passed his senior year and is going to Nicholls State."

"Every Soldier serves a purpose, whether he's a cook, engineer, mechanic, MP, it doesn't matter. To me, it's about benefiting the National Guard and the United States." He continued, "I'm benefiting the cause of what we're doing. We have a war going on. We're a very active state in the war and in state missions ... I'm benefiting everybody by helping people have the opportunity to be a Soldier in the National Guard." ■



Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Stiefvater shakes the hand of Meritorious Service Medal award winner, Spc. Colt Miller, of Chacahoula, La., at Camp Beauregard, La. Miller participated in the Guard Recruiters Assistant Program and successfully enlisted 12 Soldiers into the Guard. Miller received \$24,000 for his hard work.

Photo: U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Rebekah Malone, 225th Engineer Brigade Public Affairs Representative

OPERATION ORIENT SHIELD

Training Japan

O R I E N T

Photos: U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Nathaniel Orphey, 3-156th Inf. Bn. Unit Public Affairs Representative.



Soldiers of 3-156th Inf. Bn. demonstrate stacking procedures to Soldiers of the Japan Ground Self Defense Force. The Soldiers recently trained with the Japanese army to learn different tactics and procedures.



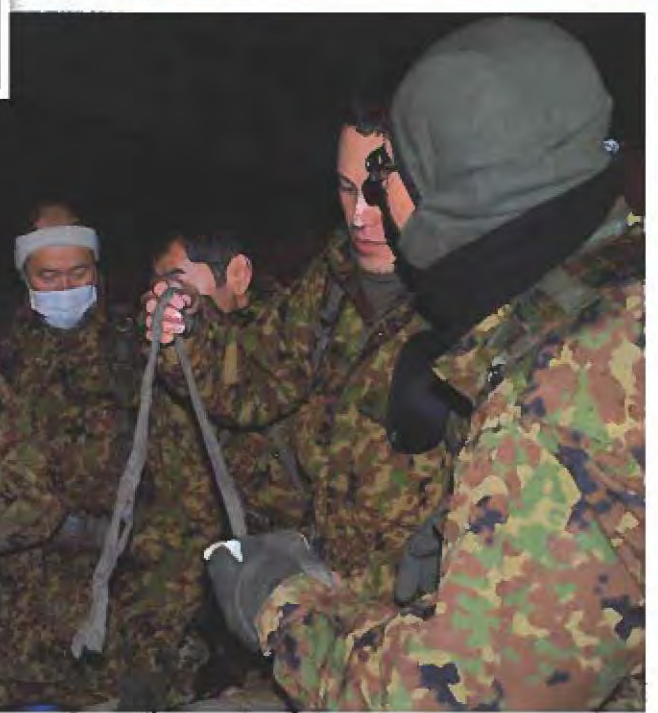
Sgt. Joshua Leonards show Japan Ground Self Defense Force soldiers the needle that is used to administer intravenous therapy. The Soldiers recently trained with the Japanese army to learn different forms of tactics and procedures.

Coxique I

A Japan Ground Self Defense Force soldier practices applying a tourniquet on Staff Sgt. Steven Hullett. The Soldiers recently trained with the Japanese army to learn different forms of tactics and procedures.



A Japan Ground Self Defense Force soldier practices applying a tourniquet on Staff Sgt. Steven Hullett. The Soldiers recently trained with the Japanese army to learn different forms of tactics and procedures.

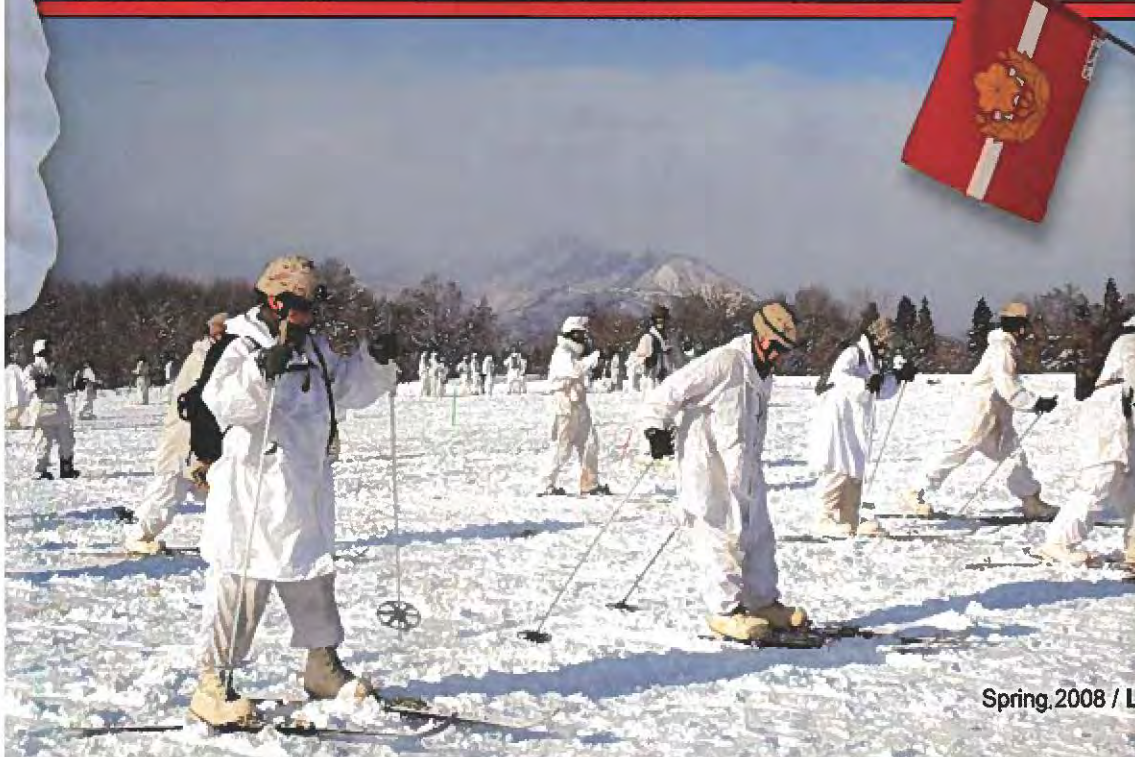


Japan Ground Self Defense Force Soldiers examine the contents of a typical medical bag. The Soldiers recently trained with the Japanese army to learn different forms of tactics and procedures.

OPERATION ORIENT SHIELD

Training Japan

Baton Rouge, La., resident Capt. Cameron Magee and the commander of B Company 3-156th Inf. Bn., stands at parade rest during the opening ceremony. The Soldiers from the 256th IBCT and the 2nd Infantry Regiment of Japan units recently conducted bilateral training at Camp Sekiyama, Japan.



Lt. Col. Michael Pryor and Col. Toshiro Anakubo, commanders of 3-156th Inf. Bn. and Japan's 2nd Inf. Regiment respectively, shake hands at the end of the opening ceremony of Operation Orient Shield in February. The Soldiers from both countries recently conducted bilateral training at Camp Sekiyama, Japan. (above)

Baton Rouge, La. resident Capt. Cameron Magee and the commander of B Company 3-156th Inf. Bn., stands at parade rest during the opening ceremony. The Soldiers from the 256th IBCT and the 2nd Infantry Regiment of Japan units recently conducted bilateral training at Camp Sekiyama, Japan. (left)

Soldiers from the Louisiana National Guard's 256th IBCT stretch before learning how to snow ski with the Japanese army. The Soldiers recently trained with the Japanese army to learn different forms of tactics and procedures. (opposite left)

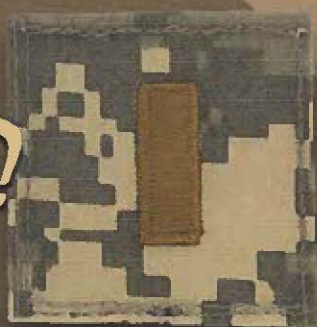


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Recently, the Louisiana National Guard Education Service Office has experienced several changes in both personnel and education programs. One of our newest and most exciting benefits is the use of Federal Tuition Assistance for privately funded High Schools. Please see our current point of contact listing below along with the new policy for Federal Tuition Assistance usage for privately funded High Schools.

Look for our complete listing of Education Benefits in the next publication!

Education Service Officer Capt. ALFRED HORRIDGE • (225)255-8532 • alfred.horridge@us.army.mil

Guidance Counselor
GI Bill Manager Capt. EBONY CARTER • (225) 255-8661 • ebony.carter@us.army.mil
Testing Officer

Federal Tuition Assistance 1st Lt. AUSTIN PARKER • (225) 255-8355 • austin.parker@us.army.mil

State Tuition Exemption Sgt. TALANTIA CARTER • (225) 255-8304 • talantia.carter@us.army.mil

Bonus / Incentives Sgt. 1st Class KEVIN POTIER • (318) 641-3294 • kevin.potier@us.army.mil

Student Loan Repayment Sgt. ROBERT WALKER • (318) 290-5558 • robert.walker24@us.army.mil

Are you eligible for federal tuition assistance to pay for high school?

Federal Tuition Assistance usage for privately funded High Schools

- The Louisiana National Guard Education Services Office is authorized to fund privately funded High Schools that are recognized by the Louisiana State Department of Education through the Federal Tuition Assistance Program. You must be in an active drilling status in order to be eligible.
- To find out if a school is recognized by the Louisiana State Department of Education go to: www.doe.state.la.us/ide/directory/1758.html and click on the alphabetical listing of non-public schools.
- For further instructions on how to register for Federal Tuition Assistance or to have a school approved for use of this program, please contact CPT Alfred Horridge at (225) 255-8532 or SGT Olivia Pike at (225) 255-8355.

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Louisiana National Guard PLEDGES FAMILY COMMITMENT

Top leadership signs Family Covenant

By Sgt. Rebekah Malone, State Public Affairs UPAR

Louisiana's top military leaders reaffirmed their commitment to service members' families at a ceremony during the Annual Family Programs Volunteer Workshop this past weekend in Alexandria, La.

Top leaders of the Louisiana Army and Air National Guard, along with representatives and families from the seven major commands in Louisiana, signed the National Guard Family Covenant, a pledge to support and honor families as Louisiana Soldiers continue to fight the Global War on Terrorism.

The Louisiana Guard has joined other states across the country in sending the powerful message that taking care of families is a priority. More than 90 family members and Guard leaders were present to witness the signing.

The covenant "recognizes the commitment and increasing sacrifices that our families are making every day." The goals of the covenant include standardizing and funding existing family programs and services, increasing accessibility and quality of healthcare, improving Soldiers, Airmen and family housing, ensuring excellence in schools, youth services and child care and expanding education and employment opportunities for family members.

The honorable Pete Geren, Secretary of the Army, has encouraged public signing events to be held in all states, to show the commitment and public acknowledgement of \$1.4 billion to continue, improve and expand programs for the families of our Nation's Soldiers and Airmen. Louisiana will be receiving \$419,795 of the allocated funding.

"The Secretary of the Army realizes the strength of the Soldier is based on the strength of the family," explained Maj. Gen. Bennett C. Landreneau, the adjutant general of the Louisiana National Guard. "The senior leadership in this country recognizes the importance of family, which allows Soldiers and

Airmen to be more effective. We are committed to providing a quality of life commensurate to their quality of sacrifice."

The funding allocated includes the addition of a full-time military life consultant and professional counselor, as part of the National Guard Bureau's pilot program.

"Louisiana is one of the next 10 states getting military one source personnel. It gives us the ability to provide full-time counseling as a result of deployment or family crisis," stated Col. John Angelloz, re-integration officer for the Louisiana Na-



Top leaders of the Louisiana Army and Air National Guard reaffirmed their commitment to the families of the Soldiers and Airmen during the opening ceremony for the National Guard Family Workshop at Camp Beauregard, La. Some of the funds allocated to Louisiana will provide a full-time professional counselor and military life consultant.

Photo: U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Thomas Benoit, State Public Affairs Photographer

tional Guard. "This is a really great help, the type of resource we need to help families."

The funding necessary for these professional positions is important and excitedly awaited, but the Louisiana National Guard has moved forward independently to start a re-integration office.

"We are one of a few states that have stepped out on its own to head a re-integration office using our existing resources," Landreneau said. "Under Col. Angeloz's lead, we look for opportunities to help Soldiers who have redeployed, [are looking for] jobs, or medical care, and coordinate with the VA on benefits available to help any Soldier or family that needs help."

"Maj. Gen. Landreneau has taken resources and applied tremendous commitment towards this program," Angeloz said. "The VA partnership is proving instrumental for education of reintegration; this isn't a one to two week event. It's a process."

FAMILY PROGRAMS WORKSHOP

During the workshop, classes were taught to focus on useful tactics for dealing with stress, laughter, deployment, re-integration and many other areas of concern to military families.

"The family workshop gets the people who volunteer to meet each other and eventually work together," explained Capt. Catarina Donnelly, the state family readiness program coordinator. "It builds a better family readiness for those

units now, rather than when they deploy. Our program is designed to keep families in mind, because without the families, how can the Solider focus out there?"

Kim Landry, of Abbeville, La., volunteers to help the families due to her experience with her husband, Capt. Scott Landry's deployments.

"To know you have backing and people who can give you that extra hand, it's just wonderful!" she said. "There's always an answer to your question."

The Office of Family Programs recognized the numerous and dedicated volunteers across the state, without which family readiness would not be possible.

The awards presented were 2008 Air National Guard Family Readiness Volunteer of the Year to Mrs. Alicia Herbert, 259th Air Traffic Control Squadron; Army National Guard Newsletter of the Year to Forward Support Company, 528th Engineer Battalion; Air National Guard Newsletter of the Year to 159th Civil Engineer Squadron; Army National Guard Family Readiness Group of the Year to 769th Engineer Battalion; Air National Guard Family Readiness Group of the Year to 259th Air Traffic Control Squadron; Army National Guard Family Readiness Volunteer of the Year to Mrs. Elizabeth Leatherwood, Embedded Training Team No. 2; Army Guard Family of the Year to The Wall Family, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 225th Engineer Brigade; and Air Guard Family of the Year to The Watkins Family, 159th Air Craft Maintenance Squadron. ■

TECHNICIANS DO IT AGAIN

National Guard maintenance crew saves the state thousands

By Spec. Tresa Allemang, 199th Brigade Support Battalion Public Affairs Representative

Soldiers from MATES, or Maneuver Area Training Equipment Site, No.71 did it again! According to the Sustainment Maintenance Manager, Lt. Col. LaDenna Piper, these technicians are notorious for coming up with better ways of maintaining vehicles and saving the military thousands of dollars in the process.

Master Sgt. Charles Woodham, Sgt. 1st Class Michael Barnett and Staff Sgt. John Doolittle came up with a safe way to remove the M242, a receiver on a Bradley fighting vehicle.

Piper says damaging the fragile part is a common and easy mistake to make. "When a mechanic tries to remove it by himself, with it being heavy as well as awkward, he tends to over balance and drops the receiver," he said. "When

this happens, you can't just replace the damaged part, the whole thing has to be replaced and it cost about \$48,000 for just one receiver."

These technicians came up with a four-step plan, wrote it down and submitted it to PS Magazine and found themselves published in the February issue. The story was in the style of a comic strip and titled: "No Damage M242 Removal."

PS Magazine is a "how-to" informational publication and is used by the military to maintain equipment.

Their four-step plan goes into detail about an easy, fast and efficient way to remove the part without damaging it. Pictures were provided in the "comic strip" to walk the Soldiers through the process.

Not only will these steps save the Louisiana National Guard money, but

every military installation in the country, including active duty and Reserves, with personnel looking at this particular issue will benefit as well.

Piper said if you multiply a few mistakes by \$48,000, one can quickly grasp just how much money the removal technique is saving the state of Louisiana, and ultimately, the taxpayers.

Piper also said this is not the first time they have come up with money saving ideas like this. According to her, there were a few times that the technicians put the Louisiana Guard on the map.

"In spite of their uncharted circumstances, these Citizen Soldiers continue to take pride in themselves, their abilities and they continue to make the state and the Louisiana Army National Guard proud." ■

BLUE FORCE

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Fort Sill, Oklahoma -
244th Aviation Battalion:
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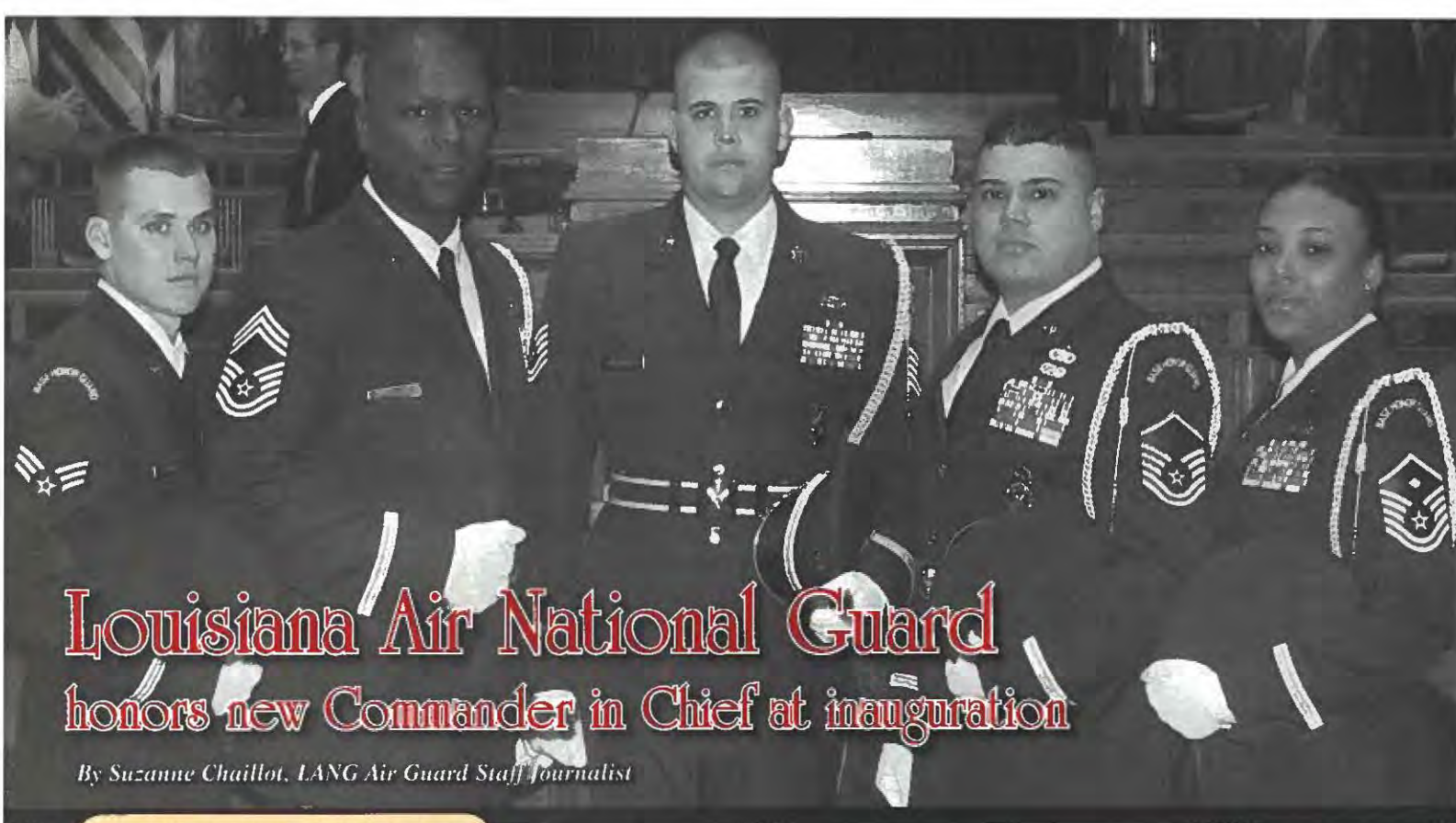
Afghanistan -
Embedded Training Team #3

Taji, Iraq - 165th Combat Sustainment
Support Battalion, Headquarters and
Headquarters Company



Baghdad, Iraq - 769th Engineer BN,
Forward Support Company & Head-
quarters Support Company

Operation Iraqi Freedom



Louisiana Air National Guard honors new Commander in Chief at inauguration

By Suzanne Chaillot, LANG Air Guard Staff Journalist

Airmen with the Louisiana Air National Guard served as the honor guard for the historic inauguration of Gov. Bobby Jindal, Jan. 14.

Photo: Courtesy of the 159th Fighter Wing, Louisiana Air National Guard

On Jan. 14, history was made and the Louisiana Air National Guard was a part of it. Thirty-six-year-old Bobby Jindal was sworn in on the steps of the state capitol as governor of the state of Louisiana, the youngest and first Indian-American governor in the nation.

The Republican was in his third term in Congress when he won the governor's election in the first primary in October. Members of the Louisiana National Guard were in attendance to honor the day by serving as the honor guard and escorts, and providing a canon salute and an F-15 fly by.

An honor guard opened the legislative session on the morning of the inauguration. Additional Airmen lined the red carpet as Jindal and his wife, Supriya, descended to take his oath of office.

Master Sgt. Chantel Theodore remarked that it was an honor to open up the House and Senate. "It was the first time I had ever been in the Senate chamber," she said.

Gov. Bobby Jindal, six other statewide elected officials, 39 state senators and 104 state representatives took office that day for four-year terms.

"This is something I can tell my children and grandchildren about," said Master Sgt. Milton Ramirez, who also

served as part of the honor guard. "I would say being part of the opening session was one of the milestones in my military career."

The swearing in of statewide elected officials led into the swearing in of Jindal, followed by his inauguration speech, the playing of the national anthem, and on cue with the final notes, four F-15s from the Louisiana Air National Guard flew over the capitol crowd while canons fired salutes. The flyover was significant that day in more ways than one. Just 24 hours earlier the grounding of the F-15 fleet was lifted.

The 159th Fighter Wing resumed its flying operations on Jan. 9, at Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base, Belle Chasse. This follows more than two months of stand-down actions after an Air National Guard F-15C aircraft experienced catastrophic structural failure and broke apart in flight during a basic fighter maneuver training sortie in Missouri.

The honor guard also presented the colors at the Inaugural Ball at the Baton Rouge River Center that evening. "It was really nice to be at the ball," said Theodore. "We had someone come up to us and thank us for being there in support of our state and our new commander in chief." ■

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