121st Medical Group provides services on Indian reservation
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CRITERIA

- Minimum of 60 transferable credit hours from an accredited college or university (specific courses required)
- Meet all eligibility criteria for appointment as a commissioned officer in the U.S. Army
- Not be older than age 48 at time of commission; approved age waiver needed for applicants older than 33
- Possess General Technical (GT) score of at least 110
- Must have at least one year of prior service with the Army National Guard

CONTACT

CPT MAUREEN DOYLE at (614) 336-7276/(614) 336-7187/(877) 540-7276 (toll-free) or maureen.doyle@oh.ngb.army.mil

BUCKEYE GUARD STAFF

Director, Public Relations
Dr. Mont Weygand

Editor
Stefanie Ullrich

Associate Editor
WGA, Press Services

Visual Information/Photographic Support
Staff Sgt. Ronald A. Mitchell, Ohio Adjutant General’s Department

Contributors
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Volume 28, No. 2
The Buckeye Guar...
Our Ohio National Guard has never before had such a professional force as it does today.

Five priorities must guide each leader, Soldier and Airman

leader among the 54 states and territories. We do not face a recruiting challenge today, we face an opportunity. The Ohio Army National Guard has exceeded its recruiting goals in recent months, and many more young men and women want to serve. The Ohio Army National Guard has exceeded its recruiting goals in a practice assignment of 100 percent strength; every vacancy must be filled. We have the best incentives of any service and provide the greatest opportunities, including the opportunity to serve your state and nation. Yet it is still amusing to speak with young men and women that they do not know about our great organization, the scholarship program and benefits.

There are still many vacancies in the Air and Army National Guard. To maintain unit readiness, our formations must exceed 100 percent strength, every vacancy must be filled. To accomplish that, every Soldier and Airman must be a recruiter. I challenge you to reach out to young men and women in your communities and encourage them to join our ranks. It is a powerful tool to recruit a force of 15,000.

Our Ohio National Guard has never before had such a professional force as it does today. Retaining our junior enlisted Soldiers and Airmen and noncommissioned officers—the backbone of the force—will solidify our future. Every leader must be engaged to retain this quality force. We have a tremendous number of Soldiers and Airmen who have been mobilized and served at home and abroad, gaining valuable experience. Capitalizing on their experience will benefit our enlisted Soldiers and Airmen as they come through the ranks. During annual training at Camp Grayling, Mich., Soldiers, from the 1485th and 1487th Transportation Companies not only shared their experiences in Iraq, but provided training on convoy operations. We need to make the maximum effort to retain these guardsmen and their families. By retaining the family you will retain the Soldier or Airman. The family readiness groups have tremendous assets during the deployments, and I charge each commander to maintain a strong family readiness group. I wish them all well as they settle in again at home.

Carol Stephens-Carty
Buckeye Guard tells ‘other side of the military’

After (looking) through it, I must commend the Buckeye Guard for putting the Buckeye Guard (Winter 2004/2005). One of the unique things about the Buckeye Guard is that it deals with the human aspects of the military, and as a result its press is that it dwells entirely on the bad aspects of the assignments related to the War on Terrorism and peacekeeping efforts. It is refreshing to have the opportunity to be informed of the “other side of the military” that shows some of the many humane and useful projects with which our troops are involved. We as leaders know that your publication is not more widely distributed to inform the general public of these typical projects.

Sgt. (Ret.) Claude M. Mercer

Ohio National Guard

EDITOR’S NOTE: Ohio units supporting KFOR would not have been listed on that page as it was dedicated to unity mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. KFOR is a NATO-led international force responsible for enabling and maintaining security in Kosovo since June 1999. NATO Security Council Resolution 1244.

These rotations are separate from Enduring Freedom deployments (see related articles on pages 8-10 of this issue about the Ohio Guard’s support to Kosovo Force 6A).

But regardless of the name of the operation or duty status, whether deployed stateside or overseas, the contributions of every Soldier and Airman are valuable and appreciated by many.

Contributions of 512th engineers not mentioned

I was somewhat disappointed to read the article on page 17 of the most recent Buckeye Guard (Buckeye Soldiers lead bridge building mission in Bosnia – 2005 issue).

The article discussed in great detail the worthy contribution of the 216th Engineer Battalion, also of the Ohio National Guard Army, the true leaders of bridge building in Iraq, and the role of the 512th Engineers from his unit, had their deployments extended to Camp Eagle in Bosnia (Stabilization Force-SFOR 15).

The magazine completely left out my husband’s Company in the “Roll Call” listing on page 19, as well as other companies (HRC, and Company B) in the unit that were deployed on this mission as part of Operation Enduring Freedom. The article only mentioned 24, about Kosovo in depth, but it was a desire to recognize all of the units that were in Kosovo in 2004.

I am only writing this because my husband’s Company was left out of the Camp Bonsall mobilization daybook for the deployment as well. It is hurtful to the Soldiers deployed, and their families who support them, not to be recognized for their efforts and sacrifices. Please improve your reporting in future issues, to recognize all Ohio Guard soldiers serving across the world.

Carole Gilligan

Could you please update your “Roll Call” article on page 19 (Winter 2004/2005 Buckeye Guard)? The 123rd Air Control Squadron had members (conducts a rotation in Iraq too). They left from Blue Ash last September (2004), and returned in 2005.

512TH ENGINEER BATTALION

Command focus

Our Army Guard makes good impression overseas

I am an American citizen living in Ireland. Since Operation Iraqi Freedom began, I have been in the news, but never in the news until passing through Shannon (Ireland) International Airport on their way to Iraq. The “duty free” area appeared as normal and there was no notice—going back to our Minuteman heritage.

Since 1990, we have contributed to the education, medical readiness and family safety of the citizens of Ohio. No other service, active or reserve—but also Air Force, Navy and Marine—can make this claim.

I met with many individuals from the Ohio National Guard who served in Iraq. Kuwait, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan and Afghanistan. I have seen them leave home for Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 148th Infantry Regiment. I have walked with them in Iraq, Kuwait, Kosovo, throughout Europe and here at home. We have truly answered our mantra of “when called, we go.”

We have accomplished so much, we have to see so much more to achieve success. When we do success will require every member of the organization to be engaged, there will be special demands on the leadership. Every leader must maintain focus. I often reflect on what it takes to be a leader.

Leaders must be out in front, expect positive results, know their “staff,” declare their expectations, maintain absolute integrity, show the way, serve and put duty before self. Most important is that leaders take care of Soldiers and Airmen.

I have five priorities that will guide each leader, Soldier and Airman through these challenging times: Readiness, Strength Maintenance, Infrastructure, Diversity and Transition/Emerging Missions.

READINESS. Our ability to accomplish the federal and state missions is how we measure success. Our federal mission is to provide ready to fight and win the nation’s wars. Our state mission is to protect the life and property and preserve the peace, order and public safety throughout the State of Ohio. Our reserve or component has a wide spectrum of missions, and we have a responsibility to ensure that our units are prepared. Unit readiness begins with individual Soldiers and Airman readiness, which encompasses individual skill qualification (military job training), weapons proficiency, physical fitness, appropriate completion of professional military education, medical readiness and family readiness. All of this must be monitored and certified continuously.

RESERVE PROGRAMS. The Ohio National Guard and Reserve programs are ready to be at a moment’s notice—going back to our Minuteman heritage.

To date, we have met that priority. We have gone all over the world and served here at home, and the readiness of our units has never been questioned. The Joint Force Headquarters-Ohio just successfully completed the first-ever National Guard Bureau (NGB) five-day homeland defense tabletop exercise. Ohio’s citizens expect our units to be ready and we must never break that trust with them. To maintain this high level of readiness requires every leader to monitor the readiness levels of his or her organization. This is a team effort.

STRENGTH MAINTENANCE. This encompasses recruiting, retaining, and fielding personnel losses. It is the key to readiness, and the Ohio National Guard remains a strength in the Army and Air National Guard.

Sgt. (Ret.) Claude M. Mercer

Ohio National Guard

Ohio National Guard

Buckeye Guard tells ‘other side of the military’

(SP)G 145TH INFANTRY REGIMENT

The 145th Infantry Regiment was the first military unit to use the medium of radio and mass media in a war zone. The Ohio National Guard was proud to have members of the 693rd Light Artillery in the 145th Infantry Regiment for Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Buckeye Guard

S P R I N G / S U M M E R  2 0 0 6

Buckeye Guard

Ohio National Guard

OHIO NATIONAL GUARD

Historical Highlights

Ohio National Guard

Ohio National Guard

Buckeye Guard

OHIO NATIONAL GUARD

Feedback from the field

Camp 45

45TH ENGINEER BATTALION

A Soldier from the 123rd Air Control Squadron recently returned from a rotation in Iraq too.

Erich G. Macke

123RD AIR CONTROL SQUADRON

2004/2005 Buckeye Guard

65TH ENGINEER BATTALION

The 65th Engineer Battalion is the only Ohio National Guard unit that has had the privilege of serving with the 37th Infantry Division.

Buckeye Guard

37TH INFANTRY DIVISION

INCORPORATED

Ohio National Guard

Buckeye Guard

SPRING/SUMMER 2005 BUCKEYE GUARD
**Death, insurance benefits see increase during 2005**

Contribution for the survivors of servicemembers who die in combat zones, and insurance coverage have both increased significantly this year.

An increase in death gratuity benefits for combat zone deaths that occurred earlier this year, and Servicemembers’ Group Life Insurance maximum coverage was raised to $100,000 Sept. 1, Defense Department officials said.

The increase in death benefits is dated retroactively to Oct. 7, 2001, meaning survivors of servicemembers who died in combat since then have or will receive the increase.

When the increase in SGLI coverage became effective Sept. 7, it was also dated retroactively to Oct. 7, 2001. Survivors of servicemembers who died in a combat zone, combat operations or combat-related situations will receive a $150,000 benefit on top of the previous maximum of $250,000.

The SGLI monthly premium remains $3.25 per $1,000 of coverage, so the monthly premium for full coverage is $26 as of September. These changes took effect with coverage under Family SGLI, which will continue under previously existing elections.

A person who wishes to retain the $400,000 of coverage with the same beneficiary designations as before does not need to take any action. Even people who had previously declined SGLI coverage or elected less than the maximum coverage, will automatically be covered for $400,000. If they wish to again decline or reduce the coverage, they must complete a new SGLI form.

Diversify: The best way to know how to rate the quality that are different from your own, including ethnicity, class, gender, physical qualities, race, religious status or educational background. A recent news article noted that former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld has received many compliments on the diversity that makes up this organization.

Current plans call for fielding the new Army Combat Uniform to all total Army by December. As of August 2007, Army officials said. Some Soldiers have begun receiving the new ACUs, with priority going to those deploying in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as Soldiers going through Initial Entry Training (IET). Plans call for all Army Guardmembers not covered under IET or deployment fielding plans to begin receiving the new ACUs starting around October 2006.

The Army conducted a limited wear test of the new uniform to make it a better fit in the field and to determine if the new colors (and pattern provided the camouflage protection they need in the field,” said Senior Master Sgt. Dena Athanos, Air Force uniform board superintendent.

Airmen can expect the new uniform to be fielded sometime after October 2006. The proposed uniform will be phased in over four or five years.

**Helmets to Hardhats**

Military and veterans find qualifying for jobs available for former, current guardmembers, reservists, transit-

**Helmets to Hardhats** is a nationwide search program, which helps military entities. An article on the exercise will be published in our October issue.

The exercise conducted in mid-August to validate the new Joint Force Headquarters-Ohio Operating Procedures, and to test communication and information flow throughout the chain of command, and with other civilian and military entities. An article on the exercise will run in the next Buckeye Guard. More photos can be viewed at www.ohionationalguard.com/pao/gallery/vigilant.htm.

**Command focus—continued from page 2**

Air Force officials have finalized the latest version of the branch’s proposed utility uniform, which was subjected to limited wear testing this summer. RIGHT: BG Matthew L. Kambic, Ohio assistant adjutant for Army, is shown wearing the new Army Combat Uniform.

**Another step in JFHQ evolution**

The three words that best describe the Ohio Army National Guard are: new, future, and transformation. The Ohio Army National Guard is transforming into modular forces, known as Future Total Force. This new concept relies heavily on “reachback” capabilities that enable Airmen to use new technology to conduct missions anywhere on the globe, such as flying unmanned aerial vehicles—from their home stations, thereby increasing operational effectiveness and reducing reliance on involuntary mobilizations.

The Ohio Air National Guard leadership is working closely with NGB to identify future requirements.

The Ohio Army National Guard will transform to modular forces, known as Future Total Force, which will include new formations of the active and reserve components. New formations will focus on the needs of the next wars, in which our war fighting forces will be more flexible and will require greater mobility, as well as the need for flexibility by our Soldiers and Airmen. While transforming, we must maintain readiness and strength, and recapitalize our infrastructure to meet the needs of these new organizations.

Above all of these priorities, however, must be an unwavering commitment to taking care of our people. My charge is “no Soldier/Airman will be left behind.”

Given the large numbers of Ohio National Guard Soldiers and Airmen that have returned or will be returning from deployments, I want to explain two such efforts. As a military organization, we have traditionally solved challenges from within. This way of old thinking does not serve the interests of our Soldiers and Airmen.

We have, therefore, worked closely with the Ohio Departments of Mental Health, Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services, and Jobs and Family Services to create an Ohio Cares Program to address the needs of our returning Soldiers and Airmen and their families. Each unit is briefed on this program before and after mobilization. We also established a career assistance program for Soldiers, Airmen and family members who seek career assistance can be viewed at www.ohionationalguard.com, under the Adjutant General’s Department link.

In closing, I want to thank all of the Soldiers, Airmen, family members and employers for everything you have done, and will do, for our great organization. We are in the fourth year of the Global War on Terrorism, and your commitment and resolve have been the sole reason we have accomplished every mission. With each of the priorities I have outlined comes a set of challenges which we can overcome with our continued hard work and dedication. We must never forget the sacrifices that have been made on our behalf and continue to support our organization, the Ohio Army National Guard, and I know it will be a proud chapter.

**Jobs available for former, current guardmembers**

Helmets to Hardhats, the nation’s first federally funded program that helps guardmembers, reservists, transitioning military and veterans find employment through this program, has partnered with the National Guard to provide this free civilian job search program, which helps put their training to use as they transition to jobs in the building and construction trades.

Construction trades offer diverse positions that appeal to servicemembers who enjoy working with their hands and applying their minds as well as their strength on the job.

Servicemembers interested in a civilian career with high pay and great benefits can register with Helmets to Hardhats for free at www.helmets2ohards.com.

**Soldiers, Airmen getting newly designed uniforms**

The Army and Air Force are joining other U.S. military forces in changing an aspect of their members’ looks. They have decided to change the uniforms to fit today’s combat missions.

Current plans call for fielding the new Army Combat Uniform to all total Army by December. As of August 2007, Army officials said. Some Soldiers have begun receiving the new ACUs, with priority going to those deploying in support of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, as well as Soldiers going through Initial Entry Training (IET).

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The Ohio Air National Guard leadership is working closely with NGB to identify future requirements.

The Ohio Army National Guard will transform to modular forces, known as Future Total Force, which will include new formations of the active and reserve components. New formations will focus on the needs of the next wars, in which we can offer, including a 100-percent tuition assistance program for Soldiers, Airmen and family members who seek career assistance can be viewed at www.ohionationalguard.com, under the Adjutant General’s Department link.

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**Command profile**

**CO** COL James S. Green

37th Brigade Combat Team

**Age:** 47

**Full-Time Position:** attorney

**Hometown:** none (father was active duty Air Force)

**Family:** wife, Katherine; children, James, Scot, Jaime, Lauren and Zachary

**Most recent achievement:** served as chief of staff for KOFR 6A (Kosovo) deployment

**The last good movie I saw:** The Caddyshack

**The book I’m reading:** Camelot into Victory

**My most prized possession:** license to practice law

**Heroes:** my parents, Ronald and Agnes

**Nobody knows I’m afraid to fail:** I’m better than anyone else at handling stress

**I’d give anything to meet:** Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia

**The three words that best describe me:** selfless, loyal, balding

**If I could leave today’s guardmembers with one piece of advice it would be:** Be humble, live the Army values and never forget the infantry Soldier that takes and holds the objective.

**About the author:** TSgt David Jablonski / U.S. Air Force

**Below the article:** Helmets to Hardhats / U.S. Air Force

**Top Gear Jake Jutkiewicz (U.S. Air Force)**
Wanting more than challenges of life, motherhood, Airman satisfies competitive need by hitting gridiron

As long as Staff Sgt. Esmeralda Soto Taylor can remember, she wanted to play football. She just assumed she would. “Until someone broke the news to me that girls don’t play football,” Taylor said.

Unhindered by gender barriers, this natural athlete who loved to play football, softball and volleyball, ran track and studied karate, jumped at the chance to prove her naysayers wrong by trying out in June 2002 for the National Women’s Football Association.

Taylor, who is a communications system support specialist for the 121st Air Refueling Wing, Columbus, and who served in the active Army, compared the tryout to the first day of Army basic training. “I wound up getting heat exhaustion,” she said, “but, they saw I really wanted to do this, so they had me come back for a second tryout.” Her desire paid off. She earned jersey No. 77 and the chance to play offensive and defensive tackle for the Columbus Comets, one of about 40 teams in the league.

The NWFA, which formed in August 2000, is the world’s largest league for women’s full-contact tackle football. The league includes the National Football League, except the pigskin is smaller. Team sizes range from just like the Di- vas knock helmets on Saturdays from April through June at high school fields in cities in 23 states. Taylor’s home turf is Whitetail-Yearling High School on the east side of Columbus.

Last year, though, her team played the Cleveland Fusion in Browns Stadium on the NFL draft day. “We were the draft day event, and we walked away with a win,” Taylor said. In 2003, Taylor and her team- mates caused some publicity on The Tonight Show with Jay Leno.

That season the Comets fell just short of beating the NWFA’s powerhouse team, the Detroit Demolition, earning recognition as the only team to come close to beat- ing the three-time league champions. Tay- lor sustained a concussion in that playoff loss, but such injuries are not uncommon. Bumps, bruises, and sore muscles do not trouble her as much as the possibility of broken fingers and ribs or torn anterior cru- ciate ligaments (ACLs). But, no pain, no gain. She said she trains two to three hours, four nights a week with workouts that include weight training, running, shuttles, horses, cone drills, jumping and a lot of cardio work. “Play after play, we are going full speed at one of two locations, either on a basket- ball court or a turf gym. The hitting is jaw- jarring and the bruises are not something you would want to see while wearing an evening gown,” she said.

So, just what drives this wife and mother of three children to play full-contact football? “I have always seemed to prefer male-dominant jobs and hobbies,” Taylor explained. “I am a naturally aggressive female, with a soft side. I can rock my children to sleep with a gentle song, and turn around and take someone’s knee- caps out.”

Beyond Taylor’s eagerness for rougher sports, it also is about achieving goals, she continued. “Being a woman doesn’t mean limitations. It means we just have to be better at multitasking to do and accomplish what we want in life. It is just how I am wired, but I still enjoy looking like a lady and wearing lipstick.”

In contrast to the hefty salaries of NFL players, their NWFA counterparts are not paid to play. Instead, they are compensated for travel costs and re- ceive gym memberships, personal train- ers and other perks.

To pay the bills, Taylor works full- time at the Defense Finance Ac- counting Service in Columbus as a computer specialist. She also is a full-time mother, raising Thomas, 12; Edona, 3, and Ahion, 1, with her hus- band Brian, a union electrician and fellow 121st member. The unit allows both of them to make up unit train- ing assemblies when game days fall on drill weekends. However, her Na- tional Guard commitment trumped all two years ago when a deployment took her from her family and the 2003 season.

Professional football player Air Guardmember Computer specialist Mother of three Is there a red “S” on her chest, perhaps? “The juggling is pretty draining at times on all of us, but we are committed as a family and my children are also involved as ‘water kids,’” she said. Her in-laws also help, but “my husband is my most important supporter. He takes care of the kids during my practices (and games). He makes sure I eat and hydrate prop- erly.”

Both members of the 121st Air Refueling Wing, Taylor (right) and her husband, Brian, enjoy a moment together before a Comets game at Cleveland Browns Stadium versus the In-state rival Cleveland Fusion.

The Comets games are broadcasted live on CitizensRadio.com and covered on Armed Forces Network. TV coverage is in the works, too. As word of mouth and media coverage have increased, so has the league’s fan base. Whole families fill the stands and cheer them on, she said. “Our fans are just like the men’s for the most part, as far as their level of energy and sup- port,” she said. Fans also attend away games and even have tailgate parties. “Both genders and all age groups seem to really enjoy it,” Taylor said. “There are more women, maybe, because there isn’t such a push for ‘male visual pleasures,’ such as cheerleaders. There is more focus on the game itself.”

Win or lose, Taylor said her dreams have come true. “My biggest thrill is knowing that I have accomplished something that everyone said would never happen and knowing my children will know they can do anything, regardless of gender,” she said.

Both members of the 121st Air Refueling Wing, Taylor (right) and her husband, Brian, enjoy a moment together before a Comets game at Cleveland Browns Stadium versus the In-state rival Cleveland Fusion.
Ohio’s 37th Brigade Combat Team plays vital role in U.N. peacekeeping mission

KFOR 6A:

Ohio’s 37th Brigade Combat Team plays vital role in U.N. peacekeeping mission

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Josh Mann

Joint Force Headquarters-Ohio

Half a world away, a nation is in conflict. Helping to maintain stability in the volatile region of Kosovo were Soldiers from the 37th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) of the Ohio National Guard.

Staff Sgt. Robert Wright, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-148th Infantry, was one of those Soldiers. For six months, he helped to keep the peace in Kosovo. “Some of our main mission was presence patrols, to help maintain a safe and secure environment for these individuals,” he said. “We looked for any signs of trouble, any types of things that indicate ethnic tensions.”

Those ethnic tensions are what brought Wright and the other 950 Ohio National Guardsmen soldiers to the province last fall, when the 37th assumed the Kosovo Force (KFOR) mission, a NATO-led international force that in 1999 was established to maintain security in Kosovo, an area of southern Serbia and Montenegro that has a mixed population, of which the majority is ethnic Albanian.

In the late 1990s, Kosovo faced a grave humanitarian crisis when ethnic tensions between the Serbs and Kosovar Albanians peaked, claiming many lives. Military and paramilitary forces from the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY) and the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) clashed, forcing more than 1 million people fled Kosovo to seek refuge and humanitarian assistance. After 77 days of NATO air strikes, the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution in 1999 establishing the Kosovo Force (KFOR).

Now, almost six years later, KFOR continues to patrol the region to maintain a safe and secure environment with troops from 36 NATO and non-NATO nations. KFOR contingents are grouped into four multinational brigades, each having a specific area of responsibility, but falling under a single chain of command under the authority of the KFOR commander.

Ohio’s 37th BCT, Guard and Reserve Soldiers from other states as well as troops from Armenia, Greece, Lithuania, Poland and the Ukraine. The “Dragon Brigade” units comprising the KFOR 6A rotation included: 1-148th Infantry Battalion, 2-107th Cavalry Squadron, 1-137th Aviation Battalion and the 237th Forward Support Battalion.

Soldiers deployed in early June and conducted initial mobilization training at Camp Atterbury, Ind. From there they traveled to Germany for additional training and certification before arriving in Kosovo in August. Following a short familiarization period, the official deployment of authority occurred on September 1, 2004.

From the sky to the ground, through villages and cities, churches and mosques, the Soldiers brought a sense of stability to the region. In one sector, Soldiers of the 1-148th conducted about 8,000 patrols, including for the first time in history, joint patrols with Serbian military forces. Task Force Shield Soldiers also conducted joint smuggling interdiction, and seized 76 illegal weapons caches.

Some of the units included: 1-148th Infantry Battalion and 2nd Battalion, 137th Air Defense Combat Team (ADCT) to Kosovo.

Kosovo trip helps employers learn about their Citizen-Soldiers

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Josh Mann

Joint Force Headquarters-Ohio

Rob Alt is the postmaster of the City of Fremont, Ohio. Alt recently returned from Kosovo to make some long trips to ensure packages get to their destination.

In December 2004, just days before Christmas, Alt made a very special delivery—taking Christmas presents to one of his postal carriers, Master Sgt. Patrick Colston, who deployed with the 37th Brigade Combat Team (BCT) to Kosovo.

“I came to see him and deliver presents from his wife and child,” Alt said. “This is my chance to go over and honor him.”

Soldiers of the 37th BCT recognized the support they received from their employers during an Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve Boss Lift to Camps Bondsteel and Monteith, Kosovo. For three days, the troops hosted Ohio Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Way, who brought along 20 employers, as well as two state senators, ESGR officials, members of the Ohio Army National Guard leadership and Ohio news media representatives.

The ESGR mission is to gain and maintain employer support for the National Guard and Reserve. Boss Lifts add this mission by giving employers the opportunity to observe military training firsthand.

“We understand that employers, too, make sacrifices when Guard and Reservists are deployed,” said retired Col. Anthony Angello, executive director for the Ohio ESGR Committee. “These Boss Lifts are instrumental in showing employers how honorably their employees are serving their country. In addition, it shows the employers the valuable skills our Citizen-Soldiers gain from their military experience that they can bring back to their civilian jobs.”

The guests were given tours of both camps, went on foot patrols with Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 148th Infantry (Mechanized), learned about the challenges of unexploded ordnance in Kosovo and got a bird’s-eye view of the region during a Black Hawk helicopter ride from A Company, 1-137th Aviation Battalion.

Those on the trip gained more understanding and appreciation for the Soldiers and the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

Prior to the trip, Alt held a “Patrick Colston Day” at the Fremont post office. He attached yellow ribbons to all the mail trucks in honor of Colston. Alt also took a video camera along Colston’s route and recorded video messages from his customers and family. Alt delivered the tape with the gifts. “People love him on his route,” Alt said. Colston admits, after months of being away from home, it was nice to see a familiar face, even if it was his boss. “It’s hard being away and not being able to exchange...but it gives me a little taste of home, something I hadn’t had for a few months,” he said.

Fremont postmaster Rob Alt (right) observes a Hawk helicopter ride from A Company, 1-137th Aviation Battalion. The guests were given tours of both camps, went on foot patrols with Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 148th Infantry (Mechanized), learned about the challenges of unexploded ordnance in Kosovo and got a bird’s-eye view of the region during a Black Hawk helicopter ride from A Company, 1-137th Aviation Battalion. Those on the trip gained more understanding and appreciation for the Soldiers and the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. Prior to the trip, Alt held a “Patrick Colston Day” at the Fremont post office. He attached yellow ribbons to all the mail trucks in honor of Colston. Alt also took a video camera along Colston’s route and recorded video messages from his customers and family. Alt delivered the tape with the gifts. “People love him on his route,” Alt said. Colston admits, after months of being away from home, it was nice to see a familiar face, even if it was his boss. “It’s hard being away and not being able to exchange...but it gives me a little taste of home, something I hadn’t had for a few months,” he said.

Col. Anthony Angello, executive director for the Ohio ESGR Committee. “These Boss Lifts are instrumental in showing employers how honorably their employees are serving their country. In addition, it shows the employers the valuable skills our Citizen-Soldiers gain from their military experience that they can bring back to their civilian jobs.”

The guests were given tours of both camps, went on foot patrols with Soldiers of the 1st Battalion, 148th Infantry (Mechanized), learned about the challenges of unexploded ordnance in Kosovo and got a bird’s-eye view of the region during a Black Hawk helicopter ride from A Company, 1-137th Aviation Battalion. Those on the trip gained more understanding and appreciation for the Soldiers and the peacekeeping mission in Kosovo. Prior to the trip, Alt held a “Patrick Colston Day” at the Fremont post office. He attached yellow ribbons to all the mail trucks in honor of Colston. Alt also took a video camera along Colston’s route and recorded video messages from his customers and family. Alt delivered the tape with the gifts. “People love him on his route,” Alt said. Colston admits, after months of being away from home, it was nice to see a familiar face, even if it was his boss. “It’s hard being away and not being able to exchange...but it gives me a little taste of home, something I hadn’t had for a few months,” he said.
Ohio Army National Guard units of KFOR 6A
Sep. 1, 2004 to March 1, 2005

• TASK FORCE FALCON—HHC, 37th Brigade Combat Team (Columbus)

• TASK FORCE SHIELD—1-148th Infantry Battalion HHC (Jama) A Company (Karia); E Company (Urbania)

• TASK FORCE LANCER—2-107th Cavalry Squadron HHT (Kaffering) A Troop (Cincin
nati); B Troop (Lebanon); C Troop (Greeneville; Sandusky)

• TASK FORCE PHOENIX—1-137th Aviation Bat
talion; HHC (Columbus); D Company (Colum
bus)

• TASK FORCE PROTECTOR—C of Soldiers from 437th MP Battalion (various locations)

• TASK FORCE MED FALCON—C Company (Columbus); 237th Forward Support Battalion (Columbus)

Ohio Army National Guard recruiting bucks national trend, posts record months

In March 2005 the Ohio Army National Guard landed more recruits than in the previous 29 months, showing an increase of more than 35 percent greater than the average for those previous months. A total of 183 recruits signed up in March.

Then in June, OHARNG recruiters topped themselves, landing more recruits—192—than in the previous 33 months, beating a mark for the month of June established in 2000. It was the greatest number of new enlistees in any month since 297 Ohio Army National Guardsmen joined in October of 2002.

Nationwide, the active Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard have fallen short of their recruiting goals. While the Ohio Army Guard has continued to outperform the national average, it had become clear that more resources and energy would need to be dedicated to the recruiting effort if Ohio were to continue to meet or exceed enlistment goals.

One way to increase enlistments is to recruit more women. The Ohio Army National Guard has doubled its recruiting efforts among females in recent months.

Ohio Army National Guard Recruiting Command is one of the Army’s most elite recruiting commands in the nation.

Giving a nod to fellow cavalrymen of past eras, SP Cpt. Thomas Rope (right) administers the oath of enlistment to SPC Dasch Underwood as he extends his service in the Ohio Army National Guard.

Ohio Army National Guard

CPT Thomas Rope (right) administers the oath of enlistment to SPC Dasch Underwood as he extends his service in the Ohio Army National Guard.

TF Lancer patrols Vitina, appraises livestock

Story and photo by Spc. Ian Blake.
364th Mobile Public Affairs Det., USAR

This busy street is typical of a market day in the city of Vitina. Between merchants haggling over how much a cow is worth and children making their way to school, there was the regular sight of cavalry Soldiers walking the streets. Every one of them was prepared for anything that could possibly happen. Regardless of the police presence, Kosovo in October 2004, Task Force Lancer was treating this like any other patrol.

Prior to the presidential elections, the Soldiers of Task Force Lancer had begun to increase their presence at political func
tions across Multinational Bri
gade East as part of their daily duties, like any other patrol.

One of the Soldiers of Task Force Lancer who was providing this kind of security was Spc. Derek Dicker. In the days of pre-mechanized cavalry, this is what the cavalrymen of past eras, like unruly mobs forming, said Spc. Aaron Oberlander, Troop A, 2-107th Cavalry.

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The new initiatives’ impact was evident in Ohio in what has been a down period for recruiting nationwide.

Not too late to start

Winter Accelerated OCS

Phase 0 has begun and officer candi
dates have until Nov. 30 to enter the program. Soldiers participate in this phase while in a monthly drill status through Jan. 8 at Rickenbacker Airport near Columbus.

Individuals who complete this course and fulfill all other requirements (civilian education, security clearance) may receive a commission in March as a second lieutenant in the Ohio Army National Guard.

For more information, contact Maj. Joe Gabriel, officer strength manager, at (614) 336-7077 or Maj. Shelly Boyd, 1-145th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, at (614) 336-6448.
The Bells' children include (clockwise, from bottom left) Katie, Aaron, Bethany, Maggie, Tim, Mia, Jamie and Kiana.

The Bells have been through crisis intervention training, which taught them how to calm themselves as well as the children and how to de-escalate an angry situation, sometimes going as far as using distance and time. The Bells conduct intervention sessions with birth parents and therapists, using family therapy to try to reunify parents and children.

“They have a lot of experience and are very insightful to the special needs of these children,” Collins said. “They’ve developed creative intervention techniques and different ways to integrate kids into a positive environment. Actions speak louder than words, and the Bells desire to help.”

Geri said she believes their biological children have truly benefited as well as the foster children. “The kids are more compassionate. If they see someone acting out, they wonder why instead of judging. ‘Why do you—and how do you?’”

The Bells have watched some of their children graduate; they have helped reunite families and taken children back when the reunion was not as successful as hoped. It has not always been easy, and “fun” would definitely not be used to describe some of the long nights spent handling crisis in one way or another. But every child they help and every young adult who manages to break the cycle of abuse, makes it all worthwhile.

“Seeing these babies as much or more than I did my own,” Geri said. “My parenting skills are better now, and I can say ‘that’s normal’ or ‘that will pass.’ Not only do I know kids grow out of certain behaviors, but I’ve learned to redirect their energy.”

During the past 12 years, there have been at least 25 foster children in the Bell home. In fact, when 10-year-old Jamie (the fifth and youngest biological Bell) was born, there were foster kids in residence. She has never known a life any different—she has

The Bells' children include (clockwise, from bottom left) Katie, Aaron, Bethany, Maggie, Tim, Mia, Jamie and Kiana.
Ohio ANG medical personnel treat residents at South Dakota Indian reservation, gain invaluable experience

121st Medical Mission serves dual purpose

Story by TSgt Andrew Todd, 121st Medical Group

Through the Innovative Readiness Training program, members of the ANG’s 121st Medical Group (MDS) gained invaluable experience while treating residents of the Rosebud Indian Reservation in South Dakota last summer.

The Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program is designed to accomplish two important goals. Launched in 1999, the IRT brings together the Ohio National Guard’s medical personnel and medically underserved populations which improves health conditions while enhancing the medical expertise of wing personnel. This particular IRT was conducted at the Rosebud Comprehensive Health Care Facility, a 20-year-old hospital with 35 beds and surgical suites.

Before leaving the 121st Air Refueling Wing headquarters in Columbus for the Rosebud reservation, the medical team researched the Sincagu Oyate (Burnt Thigh) Lakota of the Sioux Nation and discovered the population had a high rate of diabetes among adults and children. The medical team decided to make a difference. They collected basketballs, baseballs, softballs and bats to promote youth physical fitness and diabetes prevention. In addition, glucometers from a local hospital were collected for distribution to the diabetic patients.

The optometry team performed examinations and ordered glasses for more than 150 patients. A separate group sorted and inventoried 70 boxes of clothes, medicine and toys that were donated for families in need.

The MDS not only enhanced their medical skills while at Rosebud, but also helped the proud people of the Sincagu Oyate Lakota of the Sioux Nation. The Sincagu Oyate holds a high regard for military personnel. In order for them to be considered a warrior they must join the military. At social gatherings, songs of honor are sung for members of the military.

The Lakota even went the highest percentage of Native Americans serving in the military, both male and female. The first Native American killed in action in Iraq was from the Rosebud Sioux Tribe.
B U C K E Y E   G U A R D

W hen a riot situation develops, military police officers are called to assist with crowd control. For these situations, MPs carry cans of Oleoresin Capsicum (OC) Pepper Spray. A stream of the highly potent chemical to the face can incapacitate the offender. But in any scenario, the tables could turn quickly on an MP attempting to quell a volatile situation, and the police officer could be the one to confront a volatile situation, and the police officer could be the one to confront an attacker.

Each trained MP in the 323rd Military Police Company must be ready and able to respond to incidents such as a riot, terrorist attack or other disaster,” said Lt. Col. Kenneth Lambright, 437th Military Police Battalion commander. “Should the need arise, these MPs are now confident they can respond within a very short period of time and will work as a highly effective team.

The purpose of the contamination and fight drills was to give the Soldiers a better understanding of the spray’s effects to teach them how to react in the event that they accidentally become contaminated. Realistic training such as this allows Soldiers to perform their mission successfully.

“As the state’s quick reaction force, the 323rd Military Police Company must be ready and able to respond to incidents such as a riot, terrorist attack or other disaster,” said Lt. Col. Kenneth Lambright, 437th Military Police Battalion commander. “Should the need arise, these MPs are now confident they can respond within a very short period of time and will work as a highly effective team.

Training brings tearful experience to 323rd Military Police Company
Story by 1st Lt. Timothy Castell

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T hirty-seven members of the 437th Military Police Battalion participated in Overseas Deployment Training (ODT) at the Caserma Ederle military complex located in Vicenza, Italy, dur-
Ohio National Guard units trained, prepared

WMD-CST team prepared to rapidly deploy on short notice

The Ohio National Guard’s 52nd Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team is fully trained and ready to assist civil authorities in the event of an act of terror or other disaster.

According to the results of a recent evaluation by the First U.S. Army, the team responded rapidly to a suspected or actual terrorist attack, detect and analyze suspicious substances, and advise the local authorities on managing and minimizing the effects of the attack. First U.S. Army evaluated the team on 15 critical tasks and the team was fully prepared to deploy in support of first responders in the event of an act of terror or other disaster.

“‘Code Silver’ exercise showcases value of Mansfield Air National Guard unit’s potential to aid its community during disaster scenario”

Airmen from the Ohio Air National Guard’s 179th Airlift Wing in Mansfield enhanced their ability to respond to a terrorist incident during a training exercise that included civilian first responders from Richland County.

About 100 Ohio National Guard and civilian first responders participated in “Code Silver,” an Air Force exercise aimed at improving the Air National Guard’s ability to respond to acts of terrorism and other emergencies. The exercise brought together the Ohio Air National Guard and civilian first responders from Mansfield and Richland County.

The exercise involved “two very different but very realistic scenarios,” Wing Commander Col. Mark Stephens explained. One scenario featured an improvised explosive device that contained a chemical agent and the other involved an outbreak of pneumonia.

With the help of facilitators, members of the group learned of each other’s capabilities and how to mesh military and civilian resources in the event of a disaster. Stephens said, “They expose you to an event, you have a reaction, you see the consequences.”

“as we worked through each scenario, we learned how we can work together as a community to mitigate the effects.”

The 179th Airlift Wing continuously trains to handle all types of disasters such as weather emergencies and hijacked planes, as well as nuclear, chemical and biological attacks. This exercise added another dimension to their preparedness training and bolstered the wing’s ability to respond to any future threats, Stephens said.

“This is the first time we have done this to such an extent with the community outside our gates,” he said. “When you put everyone together you develop a fast appreciation for what we can do to be as ready as possible and what we need to do to be even more ready.”

Maj. Gen. Harry “A.J.” Feucht, assistant adjutant general for Air, attended the exercise. “This exercise is another example of the many precautionary measures both seen and unseen the Ohio Air National Guard is taking to protect Ohio,” he said. “It also is an example of our ability to work together with state and local agencies as well as our communities to ensure the Ohio Air National Guard undertakes proper, well-coordinated measures to protect and defend against threats to our homeland.”

—Lt. Col. Chip Tansill, 52nd WMD-CST commander

“Code Silver” exercise showcases value of Mansfield Air National Guard unit’s potential to aid its community during disaster scenario

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“This validation assures our governor, adjutant general and senior leadership that our team is fully prepared to deploy in support of first responders,” said Lt. Col. Chip Tansill, the team’s commander. “It also builds the confidence of our team and our leadership, and if called, we can perform our job to the highest standards.”

The evaluation scenario replicated a possible terror incident the team might face in Ohio. The test scenario involved a boat suspected of containing a hazardous material, perhaps chemical, biological or radiological in nature. The team reconnoitered the boat and then, employing their detection, protective and analytical equipment, determined what suspicious substances were on board. In addition, the team helped the incident commander respond to the attack. “We have to brief the incident commander on what we think is going on and help put together the pieces of the puzzle,” Tansill said.

Ohio’s Civil Support Team is one of 55 authorized by Congress. It consists of 22 highly-trained, full-time members of the Ohio National Guard who are federally resource, trained and evaluated, but fall under the command and control of the governor. After Sept. 11, the team was called upon during the anthrax threats to inspect mail trucks.

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More than 7,000 Ohio Army National Guard members have been mobilized since Sept. 11, 2001, in support of the Global War on Terrorism. In an expression of gratitude for their service and sacrifices, the Ohio Army National Guard is recognizing Soldiers and their families with the largest appreciation efforts in history, the “Freedom Salute Campaign.”

The Freedom Salute Campaign provides many tools to recognize Soldiers, their families and employers.

Story by Spc. Michelle Morgan
Joint Force Headquarters—Ohio

The mission of the Freedom Salute Campaign is to publicly recognize Army National Guard Soldiers activated for more than 30 days in support of Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom and those who supported them. In December of 2003, the Army National Guard launched the Freedom Salute Campaign, one of the largest, most successful recognition endeavors in the Army National Guard’s history. To date, the program has recognized more than 100,000 National Guard Soldiers nationwide, their families and others who have supported them as they answered the call to duty—both at home and abroad. Ohio Army National Guard units have been conducting these ceremonies, and continue to do so upon their return from deployments.

“Our Soldiers have served with honor and distinction in the Global War on Terrorism and this ceremony honors their service and the sacrifices they have made,” said Brig. Gen. Matthew L. Kambic, Ohio’s assistant adjutant general for Army. “We cannot forget that we are a team made up of our Soldiers, their families, employers and the communities in which we live and serve. This ceremony is an opportunity to publicly thank our families, communities and employers for the wonderful expressions of support they have given to our troops defending this great nation.”

Ottovigilant General Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wayt has attended many of these ceremonies to ensure that Soldiers, family members, friends, employers, centers of influence and other very important persons know how much the Ohio National Guard appreciates their contributions to the defense of freedom.

“Deploying Ohio National Guard units is about Soldiers, but it is also about families, employers and communities,” Wayt said. “The Freedom Salute Campaign is our opportunity to acknowledge this incredible team effort and to ensure that these often silent partners receive the recognition they deserve. In doing so, we lay the foundation for future mission successes rooted in strong family and community support.”

According to information from National Guard Bureau, the campaign is first and foremost a recruiting and retention program. Soldiers returning from Operation Iraqi Freedom receive a recognition for their service and sacrifice was one of the most important contributing factors in whether or not they would continue to serve in the Army National Guard.

“The (ceremonies are) a good recognition for the Soldiers,” said Sgt. Michelle Morris during a ceremony in Highland Hills for the 372nd Maintenance Company, which deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom in 2003. “I believe in the reason we are fighting the War on Terrorism. I appreciate the support from my family and the rest of my community.”

During a Freedom Salute Campaign ceremony, each Soldier is presented an American Flag in a wooden case in recognition of service and sacrifice in the cause of freedom; a sequentially numbered coin featuring the Army National Guard Minuteman on one side and the Defender of Freedom design on the other, both sides of this coin are also mounted on the flag display case; a certificate of appreciation from the director of the Army National Guard with the “I am the Guard” poem; and Defender of Freedom lapel pin, worn exclusively by Citizen-Soldiers as symbols of distinction.

After this presentation, the Soldiers return to their families to receive a Defender of Freedom lapel pin from a family member such as a spouse or parent. The Soldier, in turn, pins the National Guard Team honor insignia on the family member to acknowledge their support of the Citizen-Soldier and the overall efforts of the Army National Guard.

Then, Soldiers present Future Soldier Kids to their children (one per family). The footlocker includes the Daring Eagle board game, Mission Command game, Army National Guard trading cards case and a comic book. The Soldiers can nominate one Center of Influence (COI)—an individual or organization that offered the most support for that individual Citizen-Soldier during the deployment—to receive a certificate and a commemorative lapel pin.

When Soldiers finish their presentations, two additional levels of display items are presented to the unit’s choice of a person or organization most deserving of the Distinguished and Outstanding COI awards. The Outstanding COI, an individual or organization that helped the Soldiers the most during the mobilization, receives a framed mosaic American Flag print. The Distinguished COI, an individual or organization that was most helpful to the unit’s Soldiers and their families during mobilization, receives a 17-inch National Guard Minute-man statue. In earlier phases of this campaign, the distinguished COI received a swopping bronze eagle statue.

“This effort is a way to establish the spirit that welcomes and recognizes the tremendous service of our troops,” said Cincin-nati City Councilman David Crowley, during a Freedom Salute Campaign ceremony on March 28, 2004, honoring A Troop, 2nd-107th Cavalry Squadron. “It’s not over. Our military men and women continue to serve and should be recognized.”

EDITOR’S NOTE: Cpl. Susan R. James, and Sgt. Harvee N. Ghanbari, WHQ—Ohio, also contributed to this article.

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As part of a Freedom Salute Campaign recognition ceremony, a 17-inch National Guard Minuteman statue (left) is provided to a unit’s Center of Influence (COI)—an individual or organization that was most helpful to the unit’s Soldiers and their families during mobilization.
Ohio Air National Guard engineers support Army missions in Iraq

By Maj David Simons 366th Air Expeditionary Wing, USAF

Their motto is simple: “Go anywhere, build anything, at anytime.” Recently, members of the 200th Rapid Engineer Deployable Heavy Operations Repair Squadron Engineers (RED HORSE) put this motto to the test during a six-month tour in the Middle East in support of the Global War on Terrorism.

The 200th RED HORSE, located in Port Clinton, mobilized in January and joined forces with the Pennsylvania Air National Guard’s 201st RED HORSE to form an expeditionary force engineer squadron. This team of Air Guard engineers worked in direct support of the active Army’s 3rd Infantry Division’s 36th Engineering Group. Together, the Army and Air Guard units helped build, stabilize and secure Iraq.

The 200th/201st RED HORSE Squadron was the first ever assigned directly to the Army’s aviation brigade. In addition, the engineers were assigned to augment and manage the local host country operation’s aviation support teams.

The Airmen, sometimes while under attack from enemy forces, managed to renovate a convoy support center and constructed a heavy-lift helicopter pad for the Army’s aviation brigade. In addition, RED HORSE was tasked with completing a full electrical assessment of more than 600 facilities and 300 generators.

Never a group to quit, they worked tirelessly on local projects for Iraqis such as building reconstruction and enhancing the overall infrastructure of the Baghdad International Airport. When the RED HORSE teams finished, the Baghdad airport was to have fully operational runways with solid infrastructure.

Three RED HORSE Airmen get Purple Hearts

Three members of the Ohio Air National Guard’s 200th RED HORSE Squadron received America’s oldest military decoration, the Purple Heart, during a welcome home ceremony for the unit Aug. 18 at Port Clinton High School.

Senior Airmen Joshua Rohrbacher, and Staff Sgts. Charles Hiser and Duane Collins were honored with the Purple Heart as part of a ceremony marking the return of the unit from missions in Iraq and Southwest Asia. Maj. Gen. Harry “A.J.” Feucht, Ohio assistant adjutant for Air, presented the Airmen with the awards.

The Purple Heart is awarded to U.S. servicemembers who are wounded or killed by an enemy force. The three honored 200th members sustained relatively minor injuries.

More than 200 in the squadron were deployed in January to conduct heavy construction projects in support of the Army. For one project, the Airmen built a heavy lift pad for helicopters at a camp in Iraq.

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**Buckeye briefs**

**A guest question a guest of the 180th Fighter Wing about an F-16 jet engine during the unit’s 50th anniversary celebration at the Toledo base.**

**Toledo Air National Guard unit celebrates golden anniversary**

“So many things happened in 1955. Disneyland opened. Polio shots were given for the first time. President Eisenhower put together the first televised press conference. The Warsaw Pact was formed. The Brooklyn Dodgers won their only World Series. New products included Fido doghouse, no more-tears baby shampoo, and the Ford Thunderbird. A postage stamp costs 3 cents, a loaf of bread 18 cents and a gallon of gas 23 cents. And the 112th Fighter Bomber Squadron moved from Akron to Toledo,” said Thomas E. Schott as he addressed the more than 200 people in attendance April 8 at the 180th Fighter Wing’s 50th Anniversary Celebration. Scharb spoke about the unit’s history and significance to the community. “In these last 50 years, we’ve flown five different aircraft including the state-of-the-art F-16...” he said. “We’ve taken on increased responsibility for the defense of our great nation and have become part of the fabric of this country.”

**318TH FIGHTER WING PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

**Camp Perry AAFES extends hours to benefit troops**

The Camp Perry (AAFES) exchange is now open year-round, including winter months, with extended hours of operation: Sunday, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.; Monday closed; Tuesday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.; and Saturday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Units with special schedule requirements may request extended hours outside the normal schedule.

For more information, contact Rita Lippus, exchange manager, at (419) 635-0101 or lippusr@AAFES.com.

**African-American handful rolls up sleeves for community at annual event**

The American flag now flies as an equal opportunity office.

**African-American handful rolls up sleeves for community at annual event**

The American flag now flies as an equal opportunity office.

**Buckeye briefs**

**Engineer battalion earns prestigious combat honor**

The 236th Engineer Battalion (Combat Heavy) received the Meritorious Unit Citation (MUC) in June “for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service for at least six continuous months during the performance of military operations against an armed enemy.”

With headquarters in Hamilton and units located in Felicity, Chiloicothe, Taltonton, Portsmouth, Ironton, Youngstown and Walbridge, the 236th is the largest Ohio Army National Guard unit to deploy to Iraq.

The 236th was mobilized in January 2004 and supported the 1st Infantry Divi- sion in Iraq from March 2004 until their redeployment in February 2005. During that timeframe, the 236th conducted 450 combat patrols and completed more than 350 missions at 40 different locations in southern central Iraq and An Najaf.

The unit played a critical role in improving freedom of movement of Iraqi operating bases and fixed check points in the 1st Infantry Division’s area of operations by constructing more than 50,000 meters of protective barms and placing 2,000 concrete barriers to protect soldiers from enemy fire. In communication for Iraq’s national election last Jan. 30, the 236th emplaced concrete barriers at hundreds of voting sites to allow Iraqis to vote in a secure environment.

During their deployment, three Soldiers— Pvt. L. Charles Wilkins of Columbus, Spc. Ryan Martin of Mount Vernon, and Pvt. 1st Class Sam Bowen of Cleve- land—were killed in action; 20 Soldiers earned Purple Hearts for wounds received in combat. AGON-PUBLIC AFFAIRS

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extending a touch of home to the military. The private organization, the USO relies on the generosity of individuals, organizations and corporations to support its activities. The USO represents the American people by extending a touch of home to the military.

SGG John Bernardi (far right), of C Battery, 1-134th Field Artillery Battalion, Piqua, was recognized as U.S. Air Force in Europe (USAFE) Outstanding Army Soldier of the Year, 2004, while deployed last year with nearly 500 other members of the battalion.

Soldier excels during European force protection mission

When faced with the anxiety and uncertainty that can accompany an overseas deployment, some Soldiers might be content just doing the bare minimum. But for one Ohio Guardmember, it presented an opportunity to excel.

Staff Sgt. John Bernardi, of C Battery, 1-134th Field Artillery Battalion, Piqua, deployed last year with nearly 500 other members of the 1-134th Field Artillery Battalion to provide force protection and security operations at 12 military installations throughout Europe. During the deployment Bernardi earned the recognition from the U.S. Air Force in Europe (USAFE) as Outstanding Army Soldier of the Year. He was chosen as the top among all Army security forces serving or base security missions throughout Europe.

Bernardi supervised 15 Soldiers, which he assigned to various security posts such as controlled entry and exit points, flight line security and aircraft security from March through November 2004.

Ohio Guard now has own

General Lee among ranks

Col. Jack E. Lee pinned on the single-star rank of brigadier general April 20 during a ceremony at Beightler Armory in Columbus. Recently retired from nearly 30 years as a federal technician, Lee retains his position as commander of the 1st Vet Troop Command, the Ohio Army National Guard’s largest major subordinate command. With headquarters at Rickenbacker Airport in Columbus, Lee oversees about 4,000 Soldiers who drill in locations throughout Ohio.

In addition to serving the Ohio Guard now has its own General Lee among ranks.
New state legislation aids Ohio Guardmembers

The Ohio General Assembly passed several pieces of legislation this year that will benefit members of the Ohio National Guard.

House Bill 2, sponsored by state Rep. John Uyvagi (D-Toledo), extends tax filing deadlines for members who are deployed. If the tenure of your deployment includes the traditional April 15 filing date, you are not required to file your state income tax returns until 60 days after you return home from active duty. While on active duty, you will not be charged penalties or interest for taxes owed during this time.

On Feb. 15, Gov. Bob Taft signed House Bill 426, sponsored by state Rep. Peter Uyvagi (D-Toledo). The bill contains a comprehensive package of changes to the Ohio Revised Code that provides a wide array of new benefits and protections for Ohio’s servicemen and women who are called to active duty.

The bill will assist Ohio’s military personnel and their families who face potential added expenses and disruptions caused by being called to active duty in the nation’s ongoing Global War on Terrorism. Uyvagi said the sacrifices our military men and women make while serving on active duty should not be compounded by their families having to make additional sacrifices at home. This comprehensive package will provide new and enhanced benefits to our military personnel, so that they and their families will get the support and protections they need and deserve.

The provisions of the Patriot Plan include:

Termination of Vehicle Leases: Permits military personnel to terminate a car lease without penalty if he or she is called to active duty.

Interest Rate Cap on Installment Loans: Caps rates of interest on installment loans at 6 percent while the individual is on active duty.

Health Insurance Benefits: Directs the Insurance Department to protect the rights of military personnel to continue, suspend or convert health insurance benefits during periods of active duty.

Life Insurance Policies: Requires banks and other financial institutions to provide term life insurance coverage during active military service.

The bill authorizes the Ohio Department of Insurance to create regulations that provide protections for military personnel to terminate car leases and to continue their health insurance policies during active duty.

The bill authorizes the Ohio Department of Insurance to establish regulations that provide protections for military personnel to terminate car leases and to continue their health insurance policies during active duty.

Prevent families from losing their homes and cars by terminating vehicle leases and providing enhanced health insurance benefits during active duty.

The Ohio General Assembly passed an opportunity for students to file civil claims if the institution does not comply.

Scholarship: Permits children of overseas deployed parents to remain in the same school, without disruption, for the period of deployment.

Evictions: Prohibits evictions of a financial-dependent family member residing with a servicemember during period of active-duty military service. The servicemember must be listed on the lease.

Termination of Cellular Contracts: Provides that a servicemember deployed overseas may terminate a cellular telephone contract without penalty.

Utility Disconnection: Prevents termination of utility services at the residence of a financially dependent family member residing with a servicemember during a period of active-duty military service. The servicemember must be listed on the lease or provide proof of residency.

Maj. Gen. Gregory L. Wyatt, Ohio’s adjutant general, commended the efforts of the Ohio General Assembly and the governor for strengthening servicemembers’ rights. “I am pleased that Ohio’s legislators recognize the need to help our military men and women and their families at a time when they are sacrificing so much,” he said.

Both laws took effect this past spring.

Guardmembers who have questions about their rights under the law may call the Judge Advocate General’s Office at (614) 336-7256.

Johann Klein / AOG-LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

Guard Snapshot

health insurance program open to veteran reservists

Thousands of Reserve and Guard servicemembers can now qualify to purchase more healthcare coverage for themselves and their families under a new Tricare program that began in April.

Tricare, the military’s health care provider, is now accepting enrollment for its new Troop Reserve Select health plan. Congress authorized the new healthcare benefit for Reserve Component members under the fiscal 2005 National Defense Authorization Act as a way of providing healthcare coverage to Reserve Component members.

To be eligible for TRS, servicemembers must have been called to active duty by the president in support of a contingency operation since Sept. 11, 2001, and they must have served continuously on active duty for 90 days or more. The cost for the plan is $75 for TRS member-only coverage and $233 for TRS member and family member coverage.


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For more information about the Tricare Reserve Select health plan, visit the Military Health System website at http://mhs.dnd.mil/ or call Tricare enrollment at 1-800-TRICARE (1-800-874-2273).

Johann Klein / AOG-LEGISLATIVE LIAISON

In this photo, Maj. Gen. Kimberly M. Bratton, Jr., adjutant general of the Ohio National Guard, speaks at the annual Central Ohio Armed Forces Day luncheon May 20, 2004, at the 122nd Air Refueling Wing. Joe Fix (center) of the Columbus Clippers was honored as the area’s “Service Person of the Year.”


LEFT: In November 2004, members of Cub Scout Pack 452 and Boy Scout Troop 452, both of Wintoniana, in conjunction with southeastern Ohio veterans groups, erected a display of white crosses at Union Township Veterans Memorial Park to honor each U.S. servicemember who had died fighting the Global War on Terrorism, including six Soldiers from the Ohio Army National Guard.