

THE
WOLVERINE
GUARD

Fall 2007



WELCOME
HOME Daddo
WE Love^U SO much
I AM SO Glad YOU
ARE HOME Love
Jacob



Photo by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse
Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler (right) poses with Fred Meijer, chairman emeritus and founder of Meijer stores, during the presidential wreath laying of former U.S. President, Gerald R. Ford on July 14, 2007 in Grand Rapids, Mich.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller
Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler (left) speaks to family and friends of Staff Sgt. Michael Sutter during an improvised explosive device training lane dedication in Sutter's name at Camp Grayling, Mich. on July 29, 2007. Sutter, a former Michigan Army National Guard Soldier was killed in 2003 while defusing an IED in Iraq.



Photo courtesy of Col. Michael Paletta
Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler and Command Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Slee visit members of the Selfridge-based 127th Medical Squadron stationed in Iraq. They stand in front of the Michigan flag at the "wall of states" at Sather air base, from left to right: Staff Sgt. Jody Nitz, Col. Michael Paletta, Cutler, Technical Sgt. Royce McKendry and Slee.

★ ★ *From the desk of*
The Adjutant General ★ ★
TAG
TALK

We were all excited during the month of August to welcome home three of our Army National Guard units who had spent the past year serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom. All three units, (107th Quartermaster Battalion, Company E 125th Infantry and 1461st Transportation Company) did an outstanding job in theater and we were exceptionally proud of their service. We were very glad to have them out of harms way and back to the safety of their own communities and families.

As we conducted homecoming events for each of these units, we were reminded of the incredible support system that is in place for each of our Soldiers and for each of the units. We were also very honored that each family, who has lost a loved one from one of these units, was there to show their support for other unit members. That takes enormous courage and I am certain their loved one would have been very proud of them.

Each time we welcome home a deployed Airman or Soldier, we remind them that the job is not done until they have successfully transitioned back into their personal lives. We are very much aware that our Soldiers and Airmen face many new challenges when they return from a long deployment, especially when it involves the kind of challenges they face in a combat zone.

My leadership team and I are fully committed to providing our Soldiers, Airmen and their families, the support they need to make a successful transition. Whether it is Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Traumatic Brain Injury, or family/work transition issues, we have the capability and the resources to help. Our Soldier Re-Integration Program is an aggressive attempt to ensure that we meet the needs of each person who has served our country so honorably.

However, the most important and difficult step in making a successful transition is convincing our Soldiers and Airmen that it's okay to ask for help. I would ask each of you to be your "brother's keeper" and help them to be brave enough to seek help when they need it. I would be most appreciative of your help in this area. As Col. James Anderson is fond of saying, "It's now time to turn HOOAH into HELP!"

I also want to use this article to make sure that each of you are aware of the new eligibility for the TRICARE Reserve Select health plan. We have fought for this coverage for a very long time and this is a great opportunity for those of you not covered under another plan. I would encourage you to investigate this coverage and see if it fits your particular needs. Go to www.dmdc.osd.mil/appj/trs/index.jsp for more information or contact your unit administrator. Current members must reenroll prior to Sept. 30, 2007.

In closing, let me thank you again for your service. The job is not done, and it has not gotten any easier, but each of you continues to serve in a manner that makes me incredibly proud. You are a dedicated and courageous group of Soldiers and Airmen. May God bless each one of you!

Maj. Gen. Thomas G. Cutler

It is appropriate to recognize, at this time of year, the advances made in homeland security in the six years since Sept. 11, 2001. As homeland security has developed in the United States and in Michigan, three areas of importance have emerged: critical infrastructure protection and resiliency, information sharing, and exercises. Given our historic domestic mission, the Michigan National Guard is fully involved in all three missions.

Exercises test plans and test partnerships to prepare us to respond efficiently when needed. In the past two years we have exercised with our state, local and federal partners.

During 2006, we conducted Exercise Ardent Sentry, a multi-state and international homeland security exercise designed to test the ability of federal, state, and local agencies response to incidents of national significance under the National Response Plan.

During 2007, we conducted Exercise Operation Safeguard which was designed to assess the adequacy of local medical facilities and local response agencies ability to respond to the effects of a terrorism incident. Successful completion of these two full scale exercises brought a realization by all responder agencies of the capabilities the National Guard brings to critical infrastructure protection.

Our ability to quickly aggregate units and capabilities to create a joint task force built around the Quick Reaction Force, the 51st Civil Support Team, the Reconnaissance and Interdiction Detachment Team, our diverse equipment sets, and the expansive authority given to the adjutant general, guarantee that

the Michigan National Guard will continually be depended on for critical infrastructure protection.

As a result, the adjutant general has directed joint contingency planning efforts of the joint planning group focus on key critical infrastructure in Michigan. An energized joint planning group will incorporate lessons learned from exercises and build better contingency plans for future execution.

Homeland security information sharing is equally important to exercising, planning and conducting domestic operations. The newly formed Michigan Intelligence Operation Center, located at the Michigan State Police Headquarters, is intended to be an intelligence fusion center between the State Police, the National Guard, the Department of Homeland Security, the Federal Bureau of Investigations and other public safety agencies.

Currently, homeland security has five personnel stationed at the MIOC. Developing information on the vulnerabilities of, and the threats to, our state's critical infrastructure is a key focus of DHS and MIOC employees. National Guard staff in the MIOC is leading the state's efforts to fully assess the risks to the state from terrorist attacks.

Let us never forget the terror attacks of six years ago or that the Michigan National Guard will always be called upon to secure our great state and homeland.



Col. Michael McDaniel



Col. Michael McDaniel, Michigan Army National Guard, is the Assistant Adjutant General for Homeland Security.

“Let us never forget the terror attacks of six years ago or that the Michigan National Guard will always be called upon to secure the homeland.”



Joint Task Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Nelson Cannon visits the Monroe County Emergency Operation Center during Operation Safeguard.

Bullets



Photo by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse
Cover: Jacob Smith awaits the return of his father, Sgt. Dennis Smith, at Ferris State University on Aug. 17, 2007. Smith was deployed to Iraq with Company E, 1st Battalion, 125th Infantry, Big Rapids.

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Assistant Adjutant General, Army

Col. James R. Anderson

Assistant Adjutant General, Air

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Brig. Gen. Carol Ann Fausone

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TSGLI

Traumatic Servicemembers' Group Life Insurance helps severely injured service members and their families with a one-time payment of \$25,000-\$100,000, depending on the severity of the injury. Soldiers are covered 24/7/365 whether they are active duty, Reserve or National Guard.

In addition, there is a retroactive program that covers Soldiers injured in a combat zone supporting Operation Enduring/Iraqi Freedom from Nov. 30, 2005 back to Oct. 7, 2001.

For more information on TSGLI, visit the Web site at www.tsgli.army.mil or call 1-800-237-1336.



Never forgotten

A support group for families of fallen service members has been established. This support group welcomes family members of all branched of service.

The group will meet on a monthly basis to support, grieve and learn from each others experiences. Chaplains will be available to assist in facilitating the group and to help work through the grief cycle.

For more information contact Shannon Rynca at (810) 938-8293.



HOOAH 4 Health

HOOAH4HEALTH.com is a Web site specifically designed to address the force health protection and readiness requirements of the Army, particularly its reserve components.

The program centers around four elements: body, mind, spirit and environment. These four elements provide the basis for the H4H challenge, a web-based, interactive correspondence course that offers correspondence course incentives and continuing education credits.

For more information log on to www.hooah4health.com.



Decade of Health 2007 campaign

The Decade of Health is a ten-year strategic deployability and readiness marketing campaign supporting personal responsibility for health and wellness.

The Army National Guard is launching an intense, focused media strategy targeted at Soldiers and their families that promotes readiness and enhances strength management.

Join the ARNG Decade of Health and the American Heart/American Stroke Association in battle against high blood pressure during the 2007 Blood Pressure Awareness - "Get Cuffed" campaign.

Visit www.decadeofhealth.com for more information on how to get involved and get your blood pressure checked now.



Death gratuity change

Effective May 25, 2007, Soldiers may designate only one beneficiary to receive up to 50 percent of the \$100,000 death gratuity entitlement. This designation may be someone not listed under Title 10, Section 1477(a).

Soldiers may elect to designate in 10 percent increments, up to the maximum of 50 percent. The unpaid portion of the DG will be paid to the Soldier's living survivors in the order of precedence. If no beneficiary is designated, the full DG will be paid in accordance with Title 10.

Effective immediately, personnel records centers will offer Soldiers the opportunity to designate a DG beneficiary in accordance with the new law. Department of Defense Form 93s executed prior to May 25 are still valid. However, beneficiaries erroneously designated on a DD Form 93 executed before May 25 will not be paid under the new law until Soldier completes a new DD Form 93.



USAPDCE offers up to date pubs

Deployed and predeployed publications support is provided by the United States Army Publication Distribution Center Europe. USAPDCE and the Army in Europe Publishing System provide tools and support necessary to accomplish several tasks such as publication management training, research center, determine subscription requirements and research status of requisitions.

More information is available at <https://aepubs.army.mil>.


From the desk of
The State Senior Enlisted Advisor
TALK

The National Guard has proven over the past six years that it is a relevant force in our nation's defense. The active Army and Air Force realize we are tactically and technically proficient Soldiers and Airmen. They also know our units not only accomplished their missions in the war on terror, but perform at a level equal to or above that of our active duty partners. This is good news for the Guard.

The bad news is that when I talk to active component leaders at mobilization sites and leaders returning home from the fight, they tell me the poor physical readiness of many of our Soldiers is hurting our force and putting them in harms way with their poor physical condition.

As Michigan National Guard members we are required to be physically ready to do our duties, possibly in a combat zone or a natural disaster. There are events in our lives that may temporally impair our physical readiness, but overall we must be ready to deploy and complete our missions.

Is your physical fitness at the level necessary to carry 40 pounds of personal protection equipment; helmet, body armor, weapon and ammunition in 110 degree plus heat? Can you do this now or would it take you four weeks or more to get back in shape? Is physical readiness an important part of your membership in the National Guard, or is it just something you know you should do, but do not?

When I discuss physical readiness with Soldiers they have many reasons for their poor health or inability to pass the Army Physical Fitness Test. Those that smoke know it is bad for their health and that the money they would save would help them financially, but it is hard to quit.

To quote Mark Twain; "quitting smoking is easy; I've done it a thousand times!" Most people do not manage to quit smoking at their first attempt, but quitting a thousand times until you succeed is better than not kicking the habit.

Traditional Soldiers say they do not have time like Active Guard/Reserve Soldiers to work out; that AGR Soldiers are paid to conduct physical training for three hours a week. I know how hard it is to balance a civilian job, a family life and a career in the National Guard. However, traditional Soldiers, are being paid to remain physically fit between monthly drill weekends. We receive the additional pay because we are expected to accomplish another two days of training each month on our own. If you figure as a minimum that we need to work for eight hours per additional day of pay, then all traditional Soldiers receive pay for an average of more than three hours per week to conduct physical training. If we don't use this time to maintain our physical fitness, we will lose the pay.

Every couple of years someone in Congress attempts to lower our pay to two days of pay for two days of training per month. And every couple of years the National Guard Bureau and our professional organizations tell Congress that we deserve the "extra" pay because of the duties we perform in between drill periods.

Soldiers like to say they often accomplish more in a drill weekend than they did during a whole week on active duty. They are proud of their devotion to duty. Help us change the "culture" of the National Guard by using our devotion to duty to improve physical readiness, do your PT during the week, eat right, if you smoke, quit and continue to look out for each other.



Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Foster

"Every couple of years someone in Congress attempts to lower our pay to two days of pay for two days of training per month. And every couple of years the National Guard Bureau and our professional organizations tell Congress that we deserve the "extra" pay because of the duties we perform in between drill periods."

*Command Sgt. Maj.
Thomas Foster*

Thomas W. Foster

Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas W. Foster

TAG lays presidential wreath in honor of President Ford

Photos by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse



The Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler, represents President George W. Bush as he places the presidential wreath at former President Gerald R. Ford's tomb at the Gerald R. Ford Museum during Ford's first wreath laying ceremony July 14, 2007. Assisting Cutler is Sgt. Chris Hanners, state training noncommissioned officer for Michigan's Military Funeral Honors team. Hanners serves as the funeral honors sentinel and assists with the presidential and Ford family wreath placement.

Value in Afghan field visits

Story and photos by Sgt. 1st Class James Downen

While some days the Regional Police Advisory Command—Central staff at Camp Dubs, Afghanistan, are “chairborne rangers,” they also conduct ground attack convoys and travel by helicopters to visit provinces and districts in their area of operation to assess the logistics, planning, and medical needs of the Afghan National Police.

RPAC-C staff recently went to Laghman and Nuristan Provincial ANP headquarters to complete a winterization assessment. The tour began Aug. 6, 2007 and lasted until Aug. 16, 2007. The purpose of the assessment was to determine the winter supply needs of ANP in those provinces.

U.S. Air Force Capt. Holli Dunn, RPAC-C logistics officer said, “ANP not having winter supplies is a security issue. They will desert their police stations if they don't have winter clothing and the enemies of Afghanistan will take over the areas they leave.”

While in Laghman, the staff worked with the provincial Police Mentor Team based at Mehtar Lam Provincial Reconstruction Team site commanded by U.S. Army Maj. Patrick Wolf. This police team assisted staff convoys to Mehtar Lam, Alisheng, and Quarghai ANP stations and provided security while the staff commenced winterization assessments.

Michigan Army National Guard Maj. Jeffrey Griffith, RPAC-C operations officer and mentor to ANP 201st Corps Region accompanied the winterization assessment to interact with ANP provincial staffs. According to Griffith, RPAC-C is working to get ANP staff to share information with subordinate units.

“The ANP have a top heavy culture and the upper echelons sometimes keep information instead of passing it down to subordinate units. We're trying to show ANP leadership that information is best used by their subordinates to stop the enemies of Afghanistan in a proactive, rather than reactive, manner,” he said.

The staff completed the Laghman leg of the journey and determined the major issue facing ANP in that region was distribution of fuel from the province to district level. Dunn recommended that fuel tanks be provided to the district ANP stations to alleviate the distribution problem.

The staff departed Aug. 11 to Nuristan ANP headquarters, the “emerald gem” of Afghanistan.

MIARNG Capt. Robert Botsford, Medical Service Corps, explained the medical mission RPAC-C performs, “We’re here to insure PMTs have the medical support needed to perform their duties,” he said. “We also have the mission of training, supplying and educating ANP medical elements. We’re training our ANP medical counterparts and working to have medical personnel posted at the village, district, and provincial levels to support ANP.”

On Aug. 12, the staff carried out a dismounted patrol around ANP headquarters. They visited mountain observation posts and ANP living quarters. The patrol was a scenic challenge that gave the staff an “eyes on” view of the hardships faced by ANP in Nuristan, the obvious being a lack of proper winter housing.

The staff met with the Nuristan province ANP and discussed logistical issues facing police in the region.



Afghan National Police Brig. Gen. Karim Omaryar discusses events that occurred in Laghman province with Police Mentor Team Commander, Maj. Patrick Wolf (right) and Michigan Army National Guard Maj. Jeffrey Griffith of the 201st Corps Regional Police Advisory Command at Mehtar Lam ANP station, Afghanistan on Aug. 8, 2007.

Much of the discussion was held over Afghan meals of goat, naan bread and rice. A huge obstacle during discussions, according to Dunn, was getting the Afghans to understand the difference between wants and actual needs. Critical issues for Nuristan were ultimately lack of winter equipment, quarters and fuel storage.

At the completion of the mission, RPAC-C staff members had several solutions to challenges faced by ANP.

“Getting the ANP to maintain supply logs and inventories will allow them to address their logistics needs,” said Dunn.

Griffith said, “If we plant a seed of cooperation among the police and military forces of Afghanistan and get them to share information with each other, they will be able to defeat Afghanistan enemies quicker.”

Botsford offered another solution, “U.S. and coalition partners need to assess the Afghan local level and non-governmental medical resources so that the Afghan government knows what is available and can put them to use in emergencies.”

According to Dunn, the value of RPAC-C staff visiting ANP in the field was the ability to have an “eyes on” view of what was actually happening. “Due to the language difficulties, sometimes problems get ‘lost in translation’ when we receive written reports, so when we visit, inspect facilities, check records, and speak with ANP officers this eliminates this problem,” she said.



Michigan Army National Guard Master Sgt. Eric Post, a combat medic assigned to Task Force Phoenix Regional Police Advisor Team Central meets Afghan children at Quarghai Afghan National Police station, Afghanistan on Aug. 11, 2007.

Blackhawk bambi buckets like tear drops to forest fire

Photo by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller



A Michigan Army National Guard UH-60 Blackhawk carries approximately 760 gallons of water in a bambi bucket over the Lake Superior State Forest fire in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. Compared to the 18,256 acre fire, the endeavor looks like a drop in the bucket. MIARNG provided four UH-60 Blackhawks and one CH-47 Chinook to battle the fire from Aug. 5 to Aug. 25, 2007. The total number of gallons of water dropped from the bambi bucket was 1,912,120 gallons.

Fort Custer to host Freedom hunt for disabled hunters

By Maj. Dawn Dancer

The Department of Military and Veterans Affairs and the Fort Custer Training Center in coordination with the Department of Natural Resources will host the first Freedom Hunt for disabled individuals Oct. 19 – 21, 2007 at Fort Custer, Augusta, Mich. This special deer hunt is held in conjunction with the statewide early firearm deer hunt for disabled individuals.

A catered banquet featuring door prizes and guest speakers will kick-off the event Friday at 6 p.m. and hunting will begin Saturday morning. Hunters are welcome to stay at Fort Custer overnight, Friday and Saturday.

All meals, lodging and deer processing are free of charge due to generous sponsors such as The National Wild Turkey Federation, Whitetails Unlimited and the Fort Custer Deer Hunt Group Leaders.

This year's hunt is limited to 15 hunters, chosen by a point system. Those with military service related

disabilities will be given preference; however, military service is not required for eligibility. Next year's number is expected to be higher.

A 950-acre site has been selected to maximize hunting opportunities and will be equipped with wheelchair accessible blinds and heaters. Volunteers will be on hand to assist hunters with special needs.

Applicants must present a DNR certificate stating they are eligible to hunt from a standing vehicle. Hunters will also need a 2007 Michigan deer hunting license when they arrive at Fort Custer. Antlerless permits may be purchased over the counter from official DNR licensed vendors. Shotgun, black powder guns, bows or crossbows may be used.

To apply for one of the 15 openings applications must be postmarked or faxed (269) 731-6572 by Oct. 5. Applications are available at www.fortcusterhunt.org. For more information, call (269) 731-6570.

How to plan your military retirement

By Master Sgt. Dennis Hawn and Staff Sgt. Katrina Golab

When do you start?

The day a Soldier enlists in the military is a great time to start planning for retirement. Even if retirement seems far in the future, it is never too early to start planning.

From the date of enlistment until the day a Soldier submits their retirement request, there are important documents that must be kept (preferably in a fireproof container or safe deposit box). These documents are proof of military service or documents received upon attaining 20 years of creditable service. It is ultimately the responsibility of every Soldier to keep proof of their military service.

Below is a list of primary documents received during a Soldier's military career that must be kept as proof of military service or proof of benefits:

- DD Form 220 (Active Duty Report): Received by Soldiers who elect a split-training option after completing Basic Combat Training. Split trainees will receive a DD Form 214 upon completion of Advanced Individual Training.
- DD Form 214 (Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty): Received after completing BCT/AIT, MOS school, Active Duty, and mobilization.
- NGB Form 22 (Report of Separation and Record of Service): Received when discharged from the National Guard.
- Leave and Earnings Statements (LES): Retrieve from MyPay account. It is recommended to print an LES copy monthly because MyPay only keeps the last four LES's.
- NGB 23D (Notification of Eligibility for Retired Pay at Age 60 -- 20 Year Letter): Sent to Soldier's home of record approximately one month after 20 years of creditable service for retired pay is attained. (A "15 year letter" is sent to the soldier's home of record if found not fit for duty after at least 15 years, and less than 20 years, of creditable service.)
- DD Form 2656-5 (Reserve Component Survivor Benefit Plan (RCSBP) Election Certificate: Sent to Soldier's home of record along with the NGB 23D as part of retirement packet. Soldier must complete the DD Form 2656-5 within 90 days of receipt and return to Joint Force Headquarters to the attention of the Retirement Manager. No money is paid out by the Soldier or family until retirement money is received.
- NGB Form 23B (Army National Guard Retirement Points History Statement): It is critical for a Soldier to review an NGB Form 23B annually during their military career. Understanding the NGB Form 23B is vital to insuring that you have received full credit for your military service. A Soldier may know how many years they have served, but if the NGB Form 23 does not show that service, it is as if it never happened.

Army Correspondence Course Program (ACCP) roll-up sheets: Used to verify the number of ACCP courses completed by a soldier. Points earned are credited in a Soldier's retirement anniversary year and when added to IDT and memberships points cannot exceed a total of 90 points for an M-day Soldier; AGR Soldiers do not receive retirement credit. These points are completely separate from promotion points for ACCP.

What happens?

Approximately one month after attaining 20 years of creditable service for retired pay, a 20-year Letter, NGB Form 23D and DD Form 2656-5 is sent to Soldier's home of record as a packet. Verify the NGB Form 23D to insure full credit for service is received. If errors are found, Soldier should notify their unit for assistance. Complete the DD Form 2656-5 and return to the JFHQ within 90 days of receipt. It is critical to keep the 20 Year Letter and a copy of DD Form 2656-5 in a safe place that can be found when ready to retire.

If a Soldier has attained eligibility for retirement but is not ready to retire, the Soldier should continue to review their NGB Form 23B every year to verify they are receiving credit for their service.

Soldier Responsibilities...

A Soldier should determine the date they wish to retire. This date must be at least 90 days from the date request is submitted to the Soldier's unit commander. This allows enough time for a retirement request to make it through the chain of command so the retirement order is published before the Soldier's retirement date.

An appointment should be made with Soldier's Unit Readiness NCO and supply sergeant. The Readiness NCO has a Retirement Checklist that is used for requesting retirement along with a copy of the 20 Year Letter. Coordinate with the supply sergeant to turn-in any equipment. Also, if a Soldier has SGLI/FSGLI, the monthly premium(s) is still required to be paid until effective date of retirement.

Within 1-2 weeks of the retirement date, Soldier should contact their unit to obtain a copy of the retirement order. Next, Soldier should make an appointment with an I.D. Card facility nearest their home. A copy of the retirement order should accompany them to that appointment. **It is vital that a Soldier get a retired I.D. card within 30 days of retirement; otherwise they will be deleted from the DEERS/RAPIDS database resulting in a loss of benefits. The I.D. card cannot be issued until after the effective date of retirement.**

Continued on page 10

Retirement continued

Federal retirement pay begins at age 60 or later if a Soldier has received a waiver to stay in the Guard beyond age 60 to attain 20 years of federal service. When requesting retirement it is recommended that the Soldier request to be placed in the Retired Reserve. This enables a Soldier to receive cost of living adjustments until age 60 and insures that at or around age 58 the Human Resources Command, St. Louis, mo. will send an application for retirement. Completion of this paperwork is critical and must be mailed back to HRC immediately. Soldiers should note that anytime they change their address after retirement HRC must be notified to ensure Soldiers receive all pertinent documents and pay.

In addition to federal retirement, a Soldier may be eligible for state retirement. If the Soldier has attained at least 19 years, 6 months and 1 day of creditable Michigan Army or Air National Guard time they are eligible for state retirement. An application for MING state retirement benefits must be completed to receive state retirement. This benefit is payable starting at age 55 if retired. The application and a helpful *Handbook for Military Retirees*

can be found at www.michigan.gov/dmva. The handbook provides guidance on how to prepare for retirement and what to do after retired.

What you will receive...

A retired Soldier is entitled to many benefits. Many factors affect what the Soldier will receive for retirement pay and benefits. The *Handbook for Retirees* provides guidance on computing estimated retirement pay. Federal taxes are deducted from retirement pay, but retired MING Soldier's pay is exempt from state taxes. Also, if a Soldier elects Survivor Benefits their monthly premium will be based on coverage elected. Premiums for survivor benefits accrue starting the first month of retirement, but are not deducted until retirement pay is received at age 60. A debt for the survivor benefit premiums will accrue from the date of retirement until age 60.

The information provided is only a small portion of what is available to help Soldiers prepare for and enjoy a well deserved retirement. Every Soldiers' retirement status and benefits will differ depending on their specific situation (age, dependency status for survivor benefits and many other factors) at the time of retirement.

156th Signal Battalion bids final farewell to colors

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Knaub



Command Sgt. Maj. David Hartigan, 156th Signal Battalion, receives the unit colors from Sgt. Maj. Gary Wilcox, 156th Signal Battalion, in preparation to give the colors to Lt. Col. Todd O'Neill, 46th Military Police Command, as the unit is officially inactivated.



Command Sgt. Maj. David Hartigan rolls up the colors and battle streamers of the 156th Signal Battalion for the last time. The colors were cased during an inactivation ceremony at the Camp Grayling post chapel Aug. 9, 2007 during Annual Training 2007.

156th Signal Battalion was first constituted in the Michigan National Guard Feb. 13, 1959.

Free college education, compliments of the Michigan Guard

By Spc. LaKeshia Tryon

Note to readers: The programs discussed in this article provide only a brief overview of what is offered to most Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers. Soldiers are strongly encouraged to do further research based on individual circumstances to determine their entitlements. A list of helpful resources is provided in the sidebar, "Helpful education resources."

As Citizen Soldiers, Michigan Army National Guard members are heirs to the "best of both worlds" when it comes the financial perks associated with higher education. The MIARNG offers several programs to assist with the ever-changing rise of college tuition.

The first of these programs is the Federal Tuition Assistance program. FTA offers 100 percent of tuition and authorized fees (fees charged by the institution that are a requirement to all students for enrollment purposes or are directly related to the course for which FTA is provided). There is a \$250 cap per semester/credit hour and the total annual cap is not to exceed \$4,500 in a fiscal year (from Oct. 1 to Sept. 30). However, there is no limit on the number of classes a Soldier can be enrolled in at one time.

FTA is available to all MIARNG Soldiers in a drilling status who remain in an active drilling status through the end date of the course, to include AGR Soldiers and commissioned officers. Commissioned officers must agree to remain a member of the selected reserve for at least four years after completion of the education or training for which the tuition is paid.

Eligibility criteria require that Soldiers have less than nine Absent Without Leave/Unsatisfactory Participation within the last 12 months prior to submission of the FTA application. Soldiers must not be flagged for adverse action other than weight control or Army Physical Fitness Test failure. In addition, Soldiers must be enrolled in an institution that is accredited by the U.S. Department of Education and must maintain an overall grade point average of 2.0. Soldiers are authorized to use FTA benefits toward a certificate or licensure, associates degree, bachelors degree, or a masters or first professional (graduate) degree.

To continue eligibility, Soldiers must submit a documented degree/credential plan for record, outlining their educational goal. This must be submitted prior to the completion of nine semester/credit hours of coursework. All requests for FTA must be submitted prior to the course start date. At the completion of the course Soldiers must submit final grades to the State Education Office within 30 days.

Traditional drilling Soldiers may use FTA in addition to other funding sources with on certain limitations. For example, MIARNG Soldiers are also entitled to the State Education Reimbursement Program and this program can be used concurrently with FTA.

SERP is designed to offset tuition costs for members of the Guard and pays up to 50 percent of tuition, not to

Helpful education resources

Web sites

www.virtualarmory.com/education/
www.gibill.va.gov
www.dantes.doded.mil.gov
www.military.com/education-home/
www.nationalguardbenefits.com
www.mi.ngb.army.mil/education/grants.asp
www.michguard.com
www.michigan.gov/dmva
www.arnng.army.mil/education.aspx
www.1800goguard.com/education/index.php

Phone numbers

State FTA Manager517-483-5509/5428
State Education Office.....517-483-5639

Additional resources

ARNG Education Benefits Handbook
Unit Retention NCO
Unit Education NCO

exceed \$2000 per fiscal year. It is important for Soldiers to understand, however, that if FTA paid 100 percent of tuition, SERP cannot be used. The two programs combined can not exceed 100 percent of tuition costs.

Upon completion of the semester or term, Soldiers with an approved SERP application will submit a copy of their final grade report and tuition bill to the State Education Officer for reimbursement. Reimbursement will not be given for courses that are failed, incomplete, repeated or withdrawn. Soldiers have only 30 days upon completion of the semester to send their grade report to the State Education Office for payment.

At enlistment, most MIARNG Soldiers became eligible for the Montgomery GI Bill- Selected Reserve Chapter 1606. MGIB provides educational assistance in the form of a monthly check to qualified selected reserve soldiers. This money is paid directly to the Soldier after verifying enrollment to the Department of Veteran's Affairs each month.

An incentive that is in addition to the MGIB Basic, known as the GI Bill Kicker, is also available to some Soldiers. In order to receive the Kicker, an additional \$200 per month, Soldiers must be eligible for the MGIB Basic benefit and have at least a six year obligation at the time of enlistment. Unlike FTA and SERP, Soldiers must complete Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training before they can receive MGIB benefits.

Continued on page 12

Education continued

Soldiers, including AGR, mobilized under Title 10 or 32 for at least 90 days after Sept. 11, 2001 are eligible for the MGIB-SR Chapter 1607. The difference between the 1606 and 1607 is an increase in the monthly pay and those who fall under Chapter 1607 will have their Kicker retained if entitled.

The MIARNG also works with several Michigan universities and colleges to offer tuition grants to Soldiers. These grants, used in conjunction with other available tuition assistance programs and the MGIB, can enable Guard members to attend selected colleges and universities at no cost.

For those Soldiers who enlisted in the Guard with existing student loans, the Student Loan Repayment

Program authorizes payment on eligible student loans for qualified enlisted Soldiers. The program provides an annual payment of 15 percent or \$500, whichever is greater, on a total of all eligible student loans. The annual payment limit is \$3000 and the total payment limit is \$20,000 for all categories.

SLRP changes often and it is recommended that Soldiers review their contract prior to processing any SLRP requests. The policies that apply when a Soldier signs the SLRP addendum apply throughout their enlistment.

For more information on these and other educational benefit programs available to MIARNG Soldiers refer to the listings under “Helpful education resources.”



WMU Aviation Maintenance students receive ‘top flight’ tour

Story by Maj. Timothy Resst, Photos by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse

Eighteen students from Western Michigan University’s School of Aviation Maintenance visited the Army Aviation Support Facility in Grand Ledge, Mich. to conduct a tour the facility and to learn the opportunities available in Army Aviation.

Working in three small groups, students observed three primary aspects of the operations at AASF.

First, was maintenance. Students were given an orientation to the utility helicopter-60 Blackhawk. They learned the capabilities of the aircraft and were able to observe maintenance being performed by facility personnel.

Secondly, students gained knowledge of all the component repair sections, supply sections and other maintenance functions that help keep the aircraft flying.

Flight operations was the third aspect of the tour. Students discovered how the aircrew prepares for flight missions in phases from reception of the mission to the planning and execution of the mission.

By the end of the tour, several students expressed a positive interest in the National Guard. One visiting student, Sgt. George Firm, is already assigned to Company B 3/238th in Selfridge as a Chinook-47 flight engineer.



Chief Warrant Officer Randy Bebee (top) explains UH-60 helicopter systems to Western Michigan Aviation Maintenance students visiting the Army Aviation Support Facility in Grand Ledge, Mich.



Maj. Timothy Resst explains the operation of a UH-60 Blackhawk to Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Joe Guifoyle (far left) and Western Michigan University professors, Martin Grant and Jonathan Smith.

Let them eat cake: Camp Grayling O'Club raises over \$120k



Photos by Spc. Patricia Churchill

The Marie Antoinette “Let Them Eat Cake” Donor Luncheon was held Thursday, Aug. 9, 2007 at the Officer’s Club Camp Grayling, Mich. A large sheet cake was served during the luncheon with Marie Antoinette’s famous words, “Let them eat cake.” Fund raising began on Oct. 26, 2001 and by June 30, 2002 they had raised \$25,063. As of August 2007, they have raised \$120,965. The purpose of the Camp Grayling Officers’ Club Endowment Fund is to generate money to be used for the preservation of the historic Camp Grayling Officers’ Club facility and to support projects and programs that help develop the Michigan Army National Guard Officers’ Corps.

Heritage Outreach Program

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse

A gray-haired, bib-overall clad lady moves into the room, her old tin lunch pail swinging against her leg. Reaching a mammoth, Detroit-made engine, she sets down her lunch pail, rubs her hands together and introduces herself to a group of high school students. “Hi, I’m Rosie the Riveter.” With that, or similar greetings, Barbara “Rosie” Koval, and other Michigan Historical Museum re-enactors assisting the National Guard sponsored Heritage Outreach Program, begin to explain important roles Michiganders played in World War II.

While “Rosie” and friends recount their personal stories, downstairs in the Museum’s auditorium, HOP Manager, Sgt. 1st Class Joseph Belote and program specialist, Sgt. Michael Janik make the connection between the ‘living history’ of World War II era Michiganders and the lives of the young history students sitting in front of them with power point presentations, short lectures, and hands on historical displays.

“The HOP is important,” said Belote. “It’s designed to help students realize the importance Michiganders played creating and defending democracy and making history. Today, they witnessed ‘living reminders’ of why this country is still free.”

The program is an interactive educational resource offered free to high schools and colleges in Michigan. It was developed to generate interest about how the MING affected our nation’s history, and demonstrate how the seven Army values guided the nation from its inception until today.

One volunteer speaker, Fred Kletke, a former World War II National Guardsman, summed up HOP as he sat misty-eyed,



Barbara “Rosie” Koval stands next to a Detroit-made engine at the Michigan Historical Museum in Lansing, Mich., during the Heritage Outreach Program on May 10, 2007.

clutching his war service scrap book in his lap. “I think this (program) will help kids look at their grandparents in a different light and appreciate our current servicemen better. It brings us all closer,” he said.

Museum artist Richard Geer sat watching “Rosie,” Kletke, Janik and Belote interact with the students and added, “It’s encouraging to talk with the older veterans and the current Soldiers. What amazes me is the humility and character of these (older and current Michigan National Guard) soldiers. They are heroes.”

That message is exactly what Belote hopes gets across to everyone who participates in the program.

For more information, contact Belote at 616-249-2747 or joseph.belote@us.army.mil.

Guard of today is not the Guard of 20 years ago:

Camp Grayling Annual Training 21 years in review

Story by Spc. LaKeshia Tryon, Photos by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller

“Guard training at Camp Grayling is tougher, more realistic this year,” was the headline atop a September 1986 article of *The Wolverine Guard*. Reporter Denise Karasiewicz of the Booth News Service explained how 8,117 members of the Michigan Army National Guard in attendance that year were on more than a “camping trip;” they were simulating actual combat situations.

The Michigan National Guard Adjutant General at the time, Maj. Gen. Vernon J. Andrews, wrote in the Aug. 22, 1986 issue of *Michigan Minutemen*, that Readiness Exercise '86 or Redex '86, the given name for the 1986 Annual Training, “began as a very simple question, ‘Could the MIARNG mobilize from their home stations directly to the field at Camp Grayling and sustain themselves in the field for whatever time it took them to complete their Post-Mobilization Training prior to deploying overseas to their wartime assignments?’”

Deploying from Camp Grayling had never been done before, and in the 21 years since, it is yet to become a reality for the MIARNG as a whole. In the midst of the Global War on Terrorism, there are approximately 15 to 20 percent of MIARNG Soldiers deployed overseas in Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom at one time. With some exceptions of a few small groups and individuals, Michigan Soldiers have always mobilized to stations outside of Michigan before deploying overseas.

Looking back over the last 21 years, Soldiers say Guard training during AT '07 was the most realistic training they experienced at Camp Grayling thus far, and that the emphasis on training this year only further proved that MIARNG Soldiers have the capability to mobilize to Camp Grayling and complete all necessary training prior to deploying overseas.

“We have the expertise and training capabilities,” said Capt. Shawn Abbe, 507th training officer,



An aerial view of the South Forward Operating Base at Annual Training 2007, Camp Grayling, Mich.

“with two-thirds of our troops deployed already, it makes sense to deploy from here.”

In 1990, as a private first class with the 1439th Engineer Battalion, Abbe experienced his first Camp Grayling AT. He said training this year, compared to the other 14 he’s attended, was more theater specific. Speaking from experience after a 2004 deployment to Iraq, he said the training was, “very real world compared to what happens in theater.”

With dry temperatures ascending above 90 degrees during the first week of AT and the appropriate attire consisting of the Army Combat Uniform, Kevlar, individual body armor and weapon, training at the Forward Operating Base, or FOB, seemed to be decently acclimatized in comparison to Iraq according to Abbe.

According to Col. Burton Francisco, deputy chief of staff of operations director, the aim of AT '07 was to conduct theater specific training by completing tasks in a FOB that Soldiers are expected to run into in a theatre of war such as Iraq or Afghanistan.

Francisco said training in the past was more military occupation specialty specific, “Infantry did infantry; transportation did transportation.” Yet today, the biggest change in the way the MIARNG trains since GWOT is, “A-symmetric warfare—there is no strictly defined role in this war and every soldier needs to train on basic warrior skills,” he said. Career Soldiers such as



A 1431st Engineer Soldier practices dismounting during an attack, at Camp Grayling Annual Training 2007. Soldiers were trained how to react if ambushed.

Note: Due to heat category, Soldiers performed training in a modified uniform.



Members of the 210th Military Police Battalion drag simulated casualties during a room clearing exercise at Annual Training 2007.

Command Chief Warrant Officer Rhea Pruett agree that one of the most significant changes was the shift from focusing primarily on MOS training to training Soldiers individually.

In the mid-1980s, according to Pruett, the Guard made a huge shift toward being more training oriented and the emphasis on training changed for the better. "Training evolves based on our mission," she said. "Individual training is needed now."

Sgt. 1st Class Thomas Knaub of the 46th Military Police Command in Lansing, Mich. said this year was the best Guard training he has seen by the MIARNG in his 18 years of service.

"The tempo of training is bigger and better," Knaub said. "There is less down time. You get there, you train, and you train hard."

For Staff Sgt. Rodney Barnes, a food service worker with the 1776th MP Company in Taylor, Mich., AT has become more battled focused. After a startling simulated mortar attack during the primitive hours of

the second Monday, Barnes said the training, "keeps you on your P's and Q's. It keeps your skills sharp so you will be able to perform to maximum capacity when you get to the box."

Redex '86 may have been the toughest, most realistic training the MIARNG had seen 21 years ago, but as Pruett, with 33 years of military service to corroborate, stated, "The Guard of today is not the Guard of 10 or 20 years ago." She said emphasis on training is far more focused and professional and has changed for the better.

With more than 147,000 acres of land, Camp Grayling has extensive maneuver space, ranges that can fire several weapons systems, is capable of conducting collective training for battalion size elements and has the infrastructure in place to provide pre-mobilization training that many mobilizations stations in the country have.

In some cases Camp Grayling, according to Francisco, has better resources than some stations.

Whether or not Camp Grayling will ever become a mobilization station for the MIARNG is undetermined. However, 21 years later and another successful AT completed, the *simple* answer to Maj. Gen. Andrews' *simple* question remains "Yes."



Spc. Nicole Talbert and Spc. Adam Geselman, mechanics assigned to the 1073rd Maintenance Company, Greenville, Mich., install a water pump into a CUTV during Annual Training 2007.

State Air surgeon deployed to Iraq realizes training works

By Chief Master Sgt. John Loser

Col. Michael Paletta, state air surgeon for the Michigan Air National Guard, deployed to Southwest Asia for duty in the early months of 2007. While there, he saw first-hand that training “at home” works in combat.



Photo courtesy of Col. Michael Paletta

Col. Michael Paletta, Michigan Air National Guard state surgeon, treats an Iraqi child for a rash on his stomach. (Iraqi faces are blurred for security reasons.)

Paletta is a medical doctor and a traditional MIANG member. As a civilian, he is the corporate medical director for Hospice of Michigan. He deployed to Sather Air Base, Baghdad, Iraq as the chief of flight medicine for the 447th Air Expeditionary Group and also served as an emergency room physician at the Expeditionary Medical Support facility.

As Chief, his duties included supervising aeromedical technicians, providing aeromedical support for visiting aircrews and supervising the biomedical engineers and public health staff who performed water testing and food inspection for the base. He also served as the consultant to the base commander on air support needs.

Every four days, Paletta served a 24-hour long shift in the EMEDS emergency room. It was here that training really paid off. While his ER duties included sick-call and other routine medical work, the EMEDS was a focal point for combat related trauma medicine.

“The largest part of our work was in support of the Iraqi Special Forces based at Al Muthana air base.” Paletta said. These forces were some of the Soldiers conducting house-to-house anti-insurgent sweeps. They would get into fire fights with the insurgents and the wounded forces came into Sather Air Base EMEDS. It had been some time since Paletta had worked as a surgeon, so, “I relied heavily on the surgical team members for guidance. It was great; in the EMEDS we had a full set of skills and for the really heavy trauma stuff, we had the ER surgeons to handle those cases.”

Paletta is a pioneer supporter and teacher for the EMEDS systems in the Air Force. “The transition from EMEDS training to reality is outstanding,” he said. “It is something the Air Force should be proud of.”

During his tour of duty, Paletta cared military and Iraqi civilian patients. Some of these were children with ailments as simple as a bad rash. While providing the care, the EMEDS team showed their compassion for each patient they treated.

On one occasion, Paletta traveled to Al Balad air base, where members from Selfridge Air National Guard Base are assigned to the 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing. He learned the full scope of the aeromedical loop, “from injury, through triage and ER care at EMEDS, and on to evacuation out of theater.” All along the way, he discovered well trained, caring professionals treating the injured and sick.

According to Paletta, training is a key element to the medical successes, but, it is the individual Airman’s attitude to the training that counts most.



Photo courtesy of Col. Michael Paletta

Col. Paletta, center, and a trauma team treat a wounded Iraqi Special Forces soldier at the Expeditionary Medical Support facility at Sather air base, Iraq.

“Sometimes people look at ancillary training as ‘pencil work’, but when you get into situations with bombs and bullets you see the value of personal physical fitness, security awareness and self-aid/buddy care training at the unit level,” Paletta said.

It is important to take the training seriously. “You have to train as you fight. If you’re lazy in your unit training, you will be a risk to others in a combat environment. Conversely, if you train as you fight, you can acclimate quickly to the combat environment.”

When Paletta returned home, he brought back the knowledge that paying attention to ancillary training at home base can make Soldiers and Airmen better prepared with the skills they need when deployed to combat.

CURRENTLY DEPLOYED

HHD, 107th Combat Support Battalion
144th Military Police Company
Company A, 182nd Field Artillery
363rd Personnel Service Detachment
Joint Force Headquarters
HHD, 177th Military Police Brigade
ETT Joint Force Headquarters
127th Wing
HSC, 107th Engineer Battalion

Kuwait
Iraq
Iraq
Kuwait
Operation Jump Start, Kosovo
Iraq
Afghanistan
Kuwait, United Arab Emirates, OJS
Iraq



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class James Downen
Capt. Robert Botsford accompanies Army and Navy Civil Affairs officers on a walking tour of Nuristan. Botsford is assigned to Task Force Phoenix Regional Advisory Command Central in Afghanistan.

E-mail us at WolverineGuard@michigan.gov

127th Airlift Group named Distinguished Flying Unit

By 1st Lt. Penelope Carroll

For the fifth time in less than eight years the 127th Wing can tout more national level awards for its combat tested units. The 127th Airlift Group, of the Michigan Air National Guard at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, received the coveted “Distinguished Flying Unit” award on Aug. 27, 2007 from the National Guard Association of the United States. The award recognizes outstanding Air National Guard flying units.

“I have never been more proud of the men and women of the Airlift Group than at this time,” said 127th Airlift Group commander Col. Michael Thomas.

The 107th Weather Flight of the 127th Wing also has been named as a 2006 NGAUS Distinguished Mission Support Unit as well as the Air Force’s Outstanding Reserve Component Weather Flight.

The 127th Wing has a history of success and achieves recognition by such renowned awards. In 2001, the 171st Airlift Squadron received the “Spatz Trophy” for being the top ANG flying unit in the nation.

In 2002 and 2003, the 107th Fighter Squadron won “Distinguished Flying Unit” awards. Success continued to follow the Wing as the 107th Fighter Squadron Won the



Photo courtesy of 127th Wing Public Affairs Office Michigan Air National Guard members of the 127th Airlift Group accept the Distinguished Flying Unit award at the National Guard Association of the United States conference on Aug. 27, 2007.

“Outstanding Flying Unit” Award from Air Force Association for being the best in the nation in 2005.

“It’s the men and women of the Wing who continuously create all these success stories, and clearly a record of success the citizens of Michigan can be proud of,” said 127th Wing Commander Brig. Gen. Michael Peplinski.

Selfridge 90th, Air Force 60th anniversary Air Show, a high-flying success

By Staff Sgt. Dan Heaton

The 2007 Selfridge Air Show and Open House was a high-flying success with an estimated 110,000 plus visitors attending the July 21-22 show, hosted by the 127th Wing, Michigan Air National Guard.

Thousands more watched the show from boats in Lake St. Clair or at backyard parties in the area around the Harrison Township base.

More than a dozen flying demonstrations took to the skies during the show ranging from military F-15 fighter aircraft to civilian acrobatic stunt pilots.

“The show went off without a hitch,” said Lt. Col. Kurt Klasmeier, the director of the 2007 show.

“Once again, the men and women of Team Selfridge rose to the challenge and put on a show that allowed the community

to see the capabilities of not only today’s military, but to enjoy some of our proud heritage of military flight,” he said.

The biennial event celebrated the 90th anniversary of the first military flight at Selfridge Field and the 60th anniversary of the creation of the U.S. Air Force.

Among the popular static displays at the show was a nearly-complete full-size replica of a World War I-era Simple Plastic Airplane Design, better known as SPAD biplane that is being created by a local group of military retirees. The show marked the first time the SPAD was available for viewing by the public since the project was launched almost two years ago.

Once completed, including a paint scheme that will reflect unit insignia from when a squadron of SPADs was based at Selfridge, the aircraft will go on permanent display at the Selfridge Air Museum.



Visitors to the 2007 Selfridge Air Show watch as an acrobatic pilot performs during the show.

Photo by Master Sgt. Clancy Pence



Photo by John S. Swanson

More than 110,000 visitors and spectators enjoyed the 2007 Selfridge Air Show and Open House, July 21-22. The show is held every two years.

The show also showcased the unique joint nature of Selfridge with active and reserve components of the Air Force, Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard participating in the show. The U.S. Border Patrol located at Selfridge also featured a static display.

Area residents got a preview of aircraft types that will soon be sporting 127th insignia. Air Force Reserve KC-135 Stratotankers and A-10 Thunderbolts from the 110th Fighter Wing at Battle Creek participated in the flight demonstrations at the show. The 127th Wing is in the process of transitioning from flying C-130 Hercules and F-16 Fighting Falcons to flying KC-135s and A-10s.

VA's suicide hotline begins operation

To ensure veterans with emotional crises have round-the-clock access to trained professionals, the Department of Veterans Affairs has begun operation of a national suicide prevention hot line for veterans.

The toll-free hot line number is 1-800-273-TALK (8255). VA's hot line will be staffed by mental health professionals in Canandaigua, N.Y. They will take toll-free calls from across the country and work closely with local VA mental health providers to help callers.

To operate the national hot line, VA is partnering with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services.

The VA is the largest provider of mental health care in the nation. This year, the department will spend about \$3 billion for mental health. More than 9,000 mental health professionals, backed up by primary care physicians and other health professionals in every VA medical center and outpatient clinic, provide mental health care to about 1 million veterans each year.

In addition to the hotline, Michigan National Guard chaplains are expected to immediately begin implementing Suicide Awareness briefings to all units and are available to provide any additional assistance to Michigan service members.

For other information on the VA suicide hotline, visit <http://www.va.gov/opa>.

177th MP Brigade host 232nd Army birthday party

Story and photo by Capt. Evalynn Chapp

The 177th Military Police Brigade hosted a traditional Army birthday party June 15, 2007 for all members of the headquarters and the subordinate battalions present at McGregor Range, Otero County, N.M., for training in preparation to deploy to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The birthday party was to celebrate the U.S. Army's 232nd year of existence as a military force.

The evening celebration included a captivating speech by Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Michael, the traditional cutting of the cake with an Army sword and concluded with The Army Song.

"The most potent weapon in this war is you, the American Soldier. Coming from small towns and cities, with varying backgrounds, volunteering to answer the nations call you symbolize selfless service," said Michael.

"You are motivated to be victorious on the field of battle; we have fought this way since 1775 and always will."



Spc. Amani Ameer and Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Michael, 177th Military Police Brigade, prepare to cut the cake in celebration of the Army's 232nd birthday on June 15, 2007. It is tradition for the youngest member of the unit to join the command sergeant major in cutting of the cake.

Michigan Army and Air National Guard Promotions

From July 2, 2007 through Sept. 7, 2007

Army	Staff Sgt.	Harris, Amy	Witczak, Joshua	Marshschweitzer, Jacob	Carlson, Samantha	Oviedo, Benjamin
	Atkins, Daniel	Harris, Ronald	Witt, Llewiss	Martin, Alexis	Cavazos, Carlos	Paulson, Todd
Lt. Col.	Charania, Kalvin	Herring, Kyle	Zahara, Ashley	Martin, David	Chevalier, Ronald	Phillips, Joseph
Mcneil, Kelly	Davis, Roy	Hibma, Cody	Pfc.	Martinez, Jennifer	Cline, Kevin	Popour, Jerry
Maj.	Halm, Scott	Hildabridge, Ryein	Alberda, Christopher	Mcclellan, Quentin	Collett, Dakota	Porter, Travis
Ambler, Todd	Haviland, Thomas	Hoffman, Frederick	Bailey, Thomas	Mccune, Robby	Cudd, Zachary	Powell, Joseph
Frazer, Robert	Kasper, Christopher	Humphrey, Cecilia	Bain, Andrew	Mcelroy, Gibrain	Dejong, Brandy	Proffitt, James
Kniffin, Lawrence	Koonter, Troy	Johnson, Genna	Baldwin, Wesley	Meek, Joshua	Demattia, Joseph	Reinbolt, Frank
Mcdowell, Damean	Long, Timothy	Johnson, Larry	Barnes, Jermaine	Meixner, Ryan	Derby, Harry	Richards, Robert
Roberts, William	Miller, Daniel	Jolly, Christopher	Baruti, Akil	Nafe, Michael	Doyle, Jason	Robinson, Johnathan
Stemitz, Raymond	Morse, Gabriel	Joslin, Steven	Belcourt, Brandon	Nastaj, Dustin	Driesenga, Randy	Saladino, Nicholas
Walker, Robert	Ressler, David	Kovach, Jacob	Bell, Craig	Nicholson, Travis	Eerdmans, Timothy	Salters, Christopher
Capt.	Vaughan, Rick	Lada, Steven	Betterly, Joshua	Nikkel, Derrick	Ellis, Eric	Schahczinski, Brittany
Dehner, Michael	Wills, William	Lalone, Robert	Boyd, Craig	Odonnell, Daniel	Emmorey, Joseph	Schember, Shane
Gibson, Cordell	Sgt.	Lambert, Jonathan	Brown, Joshua	Olsson, Bethany	Fisher, Richard	Schroen, Jeffrey
Labara, Samuel	Caudill, Matthew	Lester, Melvin	Bryant, Byrd	Osborn, Robert	Flexon, Jonathan	Seeley, Anthony
Lapoint, Robert	Cheeks, Terry	Lewis, Elizabeth	Bullock, David	Palmer, Brian	Forner, Caleb	Simpson, James
Laurence, Frank	Conkle, Joseph	Martinez, Martin	Castellini, David	Powers, Ashley	Fox, Desiree	Smith, Merlin
Maciolek, Robert	Diller, Jay	Mckenzie, Jacklyn	Cawood, Kyle	Purdue, Tracie	Galbraith, Nicholas	Soules, Amanda
Pinter, Kathryn	Downey, Matthew	Merrifield, Todd	Challenger, Justin	Qualls, Brian	Gendron, Jeffrey	Stokes, Jamie
Yordy, Obie	Duguay, Sarah	Metcalf, Joshua	Cheney, Michael	Richter, Paul	Greer, Joshua	Sullivan, Ronald
2nd Lt.	Ebnit, Joseph	Mobarak, Michael	Cherry, Ryan	Riggs, Christopher	Harrington, Christopher	Thacker, Aaron
Beatty, Brett	Flowers, Ronald	Murphy, Charlotte	Clark, Anna	Ritter, Robert	Harvey, Alexandria	Tokarczyk, Renee
Degrammont, Joey	Gilman, Tyler	Mwankenja, Victor	Clark, Michael	Roeder, Eric	Heeren, Daniel	Vennekotter, Robert
Guy, Eric	Goke, John	Palmer, Brandi	Cobb, Eric	Roggenbuck, David	Higgins, Ryan	Wagner, Jeffrey
Mccollum, Brandon	Highman, Jonathan	Paris, Duane	Crittenden, Gordon	Ross, John	Hill, Gregory	Waldrup, Stanley
Shuster, Stephen	Keranen, Connie	Peterson, Yaphett	Davis, Elizabeth	Ruiz, Sandra	Hoffman, Steven	Wardwell, James
Snedden, Brian	King, Leroy	Polifroni, Zachary	Deyoung, Travis	Saunders, Stephen	Hooyer, Joshua	Warfield, Jeffrey
Zeld, Aaron	Kosal, Troy	Queen, Gary	Edmonds, Andrew	Schafer, Matthew	Hosteter, David	West, Devan
Warrant Officer 4	Luczak, Christopher	Reinsmith, Erik	Elliott, Brian	Schermerhorn, Cletus	Huges, Gertrude	Wheeler, Benjamin
Greenwood, Michael	May, Neysa	Richardson, Melissa	Ellis, Elissa	Shymske, Grant	Innes, Drew	Williams, Terrence
Warrant Officer 3	Mccormic, Mick	Riggie, Christopher	Eshelman, Kent	Sietsema, Casey	Jaworski, Wayne	Wormick, Stephen
Mcgee, James	Pagedrummer, Santita	Riley, Michael	Fierke, Nathan	Sloan, Benjamin	Johnson, Matthew	Young, Joseph
Mosciski, Andrew	Quimby, Christopher	Ross, Jack	Fitzner, Kenneth	Smith, Gerald	Jones, Andrew	
Warrant Officer	Rendon, Valentino	Rowan, Kenneth	Flores, Gregory	Smuts, Leslie	Kitzman, Anthony	
Fitzpatrick, Robert	Rogers, Chanda	Royal, Tyran	Fullerton, Joshua	Spry, Matthew	Kraemer, Timothy	
Lammi, Robert	Seery, David	Schneider, Michael	Garcia, Robert	Stack, Tracey	Kuffer, Matthew	
Lee, Patrick	Sexton, Michael	Schrot, Jacob	Gazzeny, Darryl	Stone, Patrick	Larson, Thomas	
Moore, Ricci	Stmartin, Kathryn	Sevarns, Michael	Geerlings, Jamie	Tatro, Joshua	Laurell, Robert	
North, Joey	Willaford, Timothy	Sexton, Jesse	Gerheiser, Tony	Taylor, William	Leach, Matthew	
Pena, Juan	Spc.	Shelton, Steven	Gore, Keith	Telgenhof, James	Leavell, Anthony	
Slater, Scott	Acosta, Angel	Shilakes, Rachel	Gough, John	Thonnissen, Michael	Lemley, Pamela	
Squier, Phillip	Aikens, Joshua	Skibbe, Nicholas	Grady, Robert	Walker, Derrious	Levitski, Bradley	
Command Sgt. Maj.	Andrade, Rheannon	Smith, Dale	Green, Brian	Walker, Michael	Lincoln, Alley	
Wagner, Darrell	Billings, Russell	Smith, Jason	Griffin, Eddie	Weiler, Chad	Lippert, Deanna	
Sgt. Maj.	Broom, Zephaniah	Spaulding, James	Hagle, Douglas	Weiss, Andrew	Lockridge, Desiree	
Regan, Timothy	Buckley, Kevin	Starkey, Samuel	Hanson, Walter	Wheeler, Brittany	Lugo, Aaron	
Master Sgt.	Cain, Jonathan	Stier, Stacy	Hockenberry, Randy	White, Eric	Mancinelli, Ryan	
Calloway, Steven	Castillo, Rudy	Thomas, David	Hua, Chanh	Williams, Jordan	Martin, Capri	
Foreback, Randy	Chatfield, Adam	Thompson, Joshua	Hussain, Joshua	Willings, Christopher	Mcaffrey, Levon	
Michaud, Penny	Compau, James	Thoryk, Blaine	Hutchinson, Mark	Windsor, Daniel	Mclane, Adam	
Raffik, Ronald	Copeman, Michael	Tolliver, Heath	Itrich, Jason	Zamora, Jacob	McLeod, Brian	
Sgt. 1st Class	Cox, Kenneth	Valkema, Dustin	Johnson, Tracie	Pvt. 2	Meece, Joshua	
Brink, Jason	Cummings, Andrew	Vallie, William	Kemp, Eric	Andersen, Ryan	Metz, Steven	
Hall, Bernard	Davis, Jesse	Vanderweide, Paul	Kujat, Derek	Asaka, Christopher	Moore, Jeffrey	
Heikkila, Michael	Dugan, Andrew	Vanzile, Karl	Laakso, Jeff	Benton, Julie	Moriarty, Albert	
Isom, Michael	Foreman, Kathleen	Ward, John	Lambka, Jordan	Bodette, Danielle	Morrow, James	
Knight, Christopher	Gaultney, Patricia	Wethy, Dale	Lameira, Brenton	Brabaw, Andrew	Morton, Adam	
Mack, Joel	Gerstenschlager, Justin	Williams, Adam	Leys, Chad	Bryant, Kervin	Mwangi, Martin	
Miller, Carl	Goslee, Charles	Williams, Christopher	Lockett, Mercedes	Caddy, Anthony	Nakken, Suttipong	
Pummill, William	Griffith, Michael	Williamson, Stephen	Logan, Timothy	Campbell, Seth	Nichols, Christopher	
Tucker, Randy	Haley, Gregory	Wilson, Mario	Lund, Jason	Canyock, Travis	Orozco, Wellington	

Air

Lt. Col.

Borden, William W.
Davis, Jeffrey D.
King, Christopher M.

Maj.

Nodland, Erick J.
Shay, James R.

2nd Lt.

Chapman, Matthew T.
Overton, Russell R.
Senior Master Sgt.

Hurst, Lisa

Martinez, John S.
Riley, Michael P.

Master Sgt.

Annan, Shane C.
Atwell, Terry L.
Briggs, Heather R.

Carr, William J.
Feldman, Felix S.

Gates, Jeffrey D.
Gordon, Scott H.

Howes, William F.
Mcgowan, Christopher

Walters, David C.

Technical Sgt.

Bewley, Jennifer A.

Promotions continued

Cassini, Daniel M.
Centa, Bonnie
Frank, Todd M.
Gabler, Scott A.
Goodhue, Brian P.
Haven, Bonnie S.
Hyatt, Deborah S.
Kaleta, Jeffrey M.
Langston, David L.
Mazure, Michael R.
Mccall, Richard K.
Milligan, Robert A.
Perez, Recardo
Remelius, Joshua S.
Reno, Edward D.
Savickas, Thomas W.
Shipway, Craig M.
Solis, Virginia M.
Stager, Paul L.
[Staff Sgt.](#)
Affholter, Eric H.
Barnowski, Virginia D.
Bitterle, Stephen J.
Burdick, Alicia A.
Crisman, Derek B.
Danis, Marcus X.
Kalee, Daniel J.
Luts, Lindsey D.
Mackenzie, Richard A.
McAllister, Eric J.
Okeefe, John M.
Puszczewicz, Kevin M.
Sass, Joel E.
Townsend, William E.
Van Nortwick, Daniel M.
Vannortwick, Daniel M.
Vlcko, Ryan P.
Ward, Brian K.
[Senior Airman](#)
Kurr, Katilyn L.
Lecluyse, Holly M.
Miller, Steven J.
Prytula, Dustin W.
White, Geoffrey G.
[Airman 1st Class](#)
Grinvalsky, Amy T.
Perrow, Michelle L.
Smith, Justin A.

Adrian armory kicks-off Adopt a Soldier program

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller

156th Network Signal Company, Adrian, Mich. kicked-off their Adopt a Soldier Program on Aug. 22, 2007, to support their troops and loved ones that are deployed or deploying.

The event began with a collection drive to collect items Soldiers want and need overseas. Carla Ayers, a disc jockey from Q95, a local radio station, hosted a live broadcast from a tent on the front lawn of the Adrian armory. The goal was to broadcast all night until the back of a Cargo HUMVEE was filled with supplies for the families to mail to the Soldiers.

Several members of the unit gave their time to support the program. Phase two of the Adopt-a-Soldier program will take place Sept. 22, 2007 from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the National Guard Armory, 230 W. Maumee St., Adrian, Mich. Participants will select a name of a Soldier that they will adopt and receive mailing materials from the unit, along with items to add to their



Staff Sgt. Larry Bedolla along with members of the 156th Network Signal Company and local disk jockey, Carla Ayers, wave to passing motorists at the Adopt-a-Soldier kick-off event held at the Adrian Armory on Aug 22, 2007.

care packages. It will then be up to the participant who adopts a Soldier, to mail their care packages.

Staff Sgt. Larry Bedolla, 156th supply sergeant, said, "Our service men and women are tired, dirty, hot and lonely and they need our letters and care packages so that they know that they are appreciated. And thank you to everyone who has participated so far and will participate on Sept 22."

Sutter's lane unveiled at Camp Grayling AT

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller

Camp Grayling unveiled a new combat improvised explosive device lane that will train Soldiers on the dangers of IEDs, which are a leading cause of Soldier deaths in Iraq.

On July 29, 2007, the Camp Grayling CIED training area, also known as Sutter's Lane, was dedicated in honor of Staff Sgt. Michael Sutter, a member of the 745th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company. Sutter lost his life while defusing an IED on Dec. 26, 2003 while serving in Iraq.

A 1st Army directive on IED awareness and training led to the construction of three IED lanes in



A member of the 745th Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company unveils a sign dedicating the new Combat Improvised Explosive Device training lane at Camp Grayling, Mich., as "Sutter's lane". Staff Sgt. Michael Sutter, a member of the 745th EOD, lost his life while defusing an IED in Iraq.

Michigan, one at Fort Custer and two at Camp Grayling.

Sutter's Lane, located at Camp Grayling's South Forward Operating Base, was constructed in less than 75 days by Sgt. 1st Class Scott Wilczynski, Master Sgt. Steve Waring, Spc. Joe Harp, Spc. Keith McCotter, Spc. Vergil Poitier, Sgt. 1st Class Dennis Labissoniere, 1st Sgt. Dave Schneider and Sgt. 1st Class Dave Howe, along with help from the 745th EOD and Camp Grayling staff.

The lane, used by Michigan, Ohio and elements of Indiana

National Guard, is said to be among the best IED training lanes in the country.

Operation Summer Shield IV- Latvia, a training success

By Master Sgt. Ron Raflik

Labrit. Sveiki. Ludzu. They look like typos, and when spoken, sound like something from a Cold War spy movie. But, talk to someone who has been to Latvia or has trained with our Latvian counterparts in Michigan and you will find that these are common cordial phrases of the Latvian language.

This year, Michigan National Guard and Latvian Land Forces Soldiers participated in Operation Summer Shield IV. The exercise took place in Latvia, June 3-16. The focus this year was on the Forward Support Company, an essential element of support to the soldier on the battlefield. Training included medical operations, convoy operations, night vision driving techniques, and call-for-fire scenarios.

“We will learn as much as we teach,” expressed Lt. Col. Pablo Estrada, during the opening ceremony of the exercise. Estrada acted as commander of U.S. Forces participating in OSS IV.

Training, which was structured in a crawl-walk-run format, began with classroom lectures, progressed to hands-on demonstration, and then to practical application in a real-world style field training exercise.

“In the beginning we were not sure how many American tactics, techniques, and procedures the Latvian Forces were already familiar with,” said 2nd Lt. Melody Taylor, officer in charge of the convoy operations lane. “Some classroom material ended up being a refresher. This put us into the hands-on phase quickly.”

“I’m amazed at how quickly they picked up the medical tactics and how exceptionally well the soldiers performed during the mass-casualty exercise,” said Capt. David Howell, medical operations officer for the exercise. “This is a brand new unit, and until now, have had no formal training in military medical procedures.” The new Latvian medical company of approximately 25 soldiers will deploy

to Afghanistan and work as an Area Support Medical Company.

“The training conducted during Summer Shield has gotten them well into the walk phase,” said Howell. “Until they deploy, they will train using American and NATO field and technical manuals.”

Training for deployment is not the only benefit of OSS. The exercise is only a small aspect of the State Partnership Program which Michigan and Latvia have mutually benefited from since 1993.

“The challenges are as great as the rewards,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Jody Arrington, the command sergeant major of U.S. Forces, OSS IV. “We reach beyond the language and cultural differences, and focus on what makes us the same as Soldiers.”

Although the primary focus of the exercise was the training, the partnership with Latvia yields additional benefits as well.

After the exercise, the Michigan Soldiers were treated to some cultural activities, including a walking tour of the 806 year-old capital city of Riga.

“It’s nothing short of amazing,” said one Michigan Soldier. “Everything you see, from the cobblestone streets and the detail in the architecture, to the warm and enthusiastic greetings from the people, speaks of a culture rich in pride and tradition!”

In regards to the future Michigan-Latvia partnership, Col. Juris Bezzubovs, commander of the Zemessardze, the Latvian equivalent of U.S. National Guard said, “As a goal of our cooperation, I’m looking forward to having some kind of joint mission. It doesn’t matter where, just a chance to work together.”

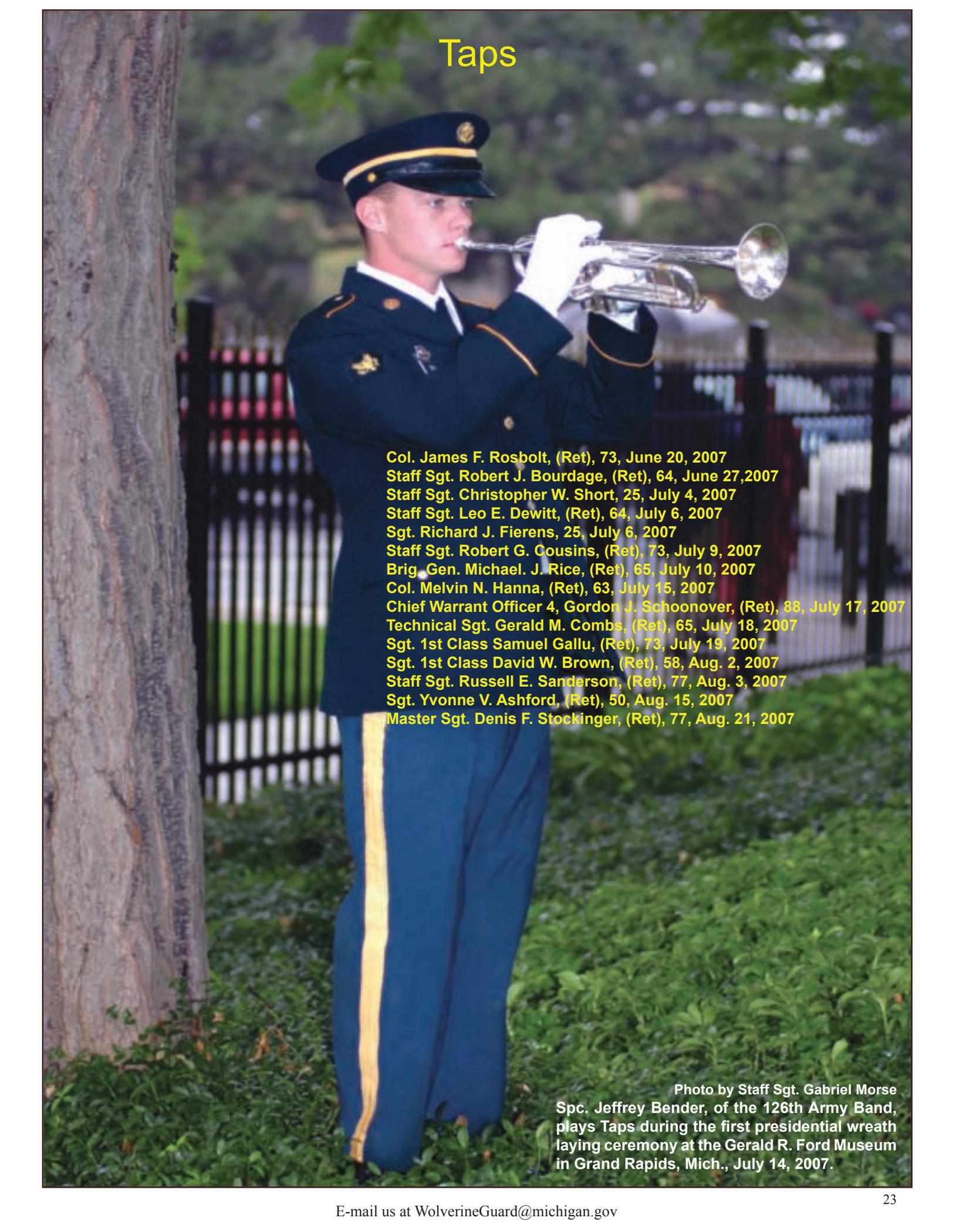
More than 34 states and territories participate in the Partnership for Peace program, and conduct similar training all over the world.



Photo by Madara Miglane, Latvia

Sgt. Deron Woodard of the Michigan Army National Guard State Medical Command observes and evaluates Latvian soldiers as they conduct casualty drills during Operation Summer Shield IV in Latvia. The exercise was conducted June 3-16, and focused on forward support company operations.

Taps



Col. James F. Rosbolt, (Ret), 73, June 20, 2007
Staff Sgt. Robert J. Bourdage, (Ret), 64, June 27, 2007
Staff Sgt. Christopher W. Short, 25, July 4, 2007
Staff Sgt. Leo E. Dewitt, (Ret), 64, July 6, 2007
Sgt. Richard J. Fierens, 25, July 6, 2007
Staff Sgt. Robert G. Cousins, (Ret), 73, July 9, 2007
Brig. Gen. Michael J. Rice, (Ret), 65, July 10, 2007
Col. Melvin N. Hanna, (Ret), 63, July 15, 2007
Chief Warrant Officer 4, Gordon J. Schoonover, (Ret), 88, July 17, 2007
Technical Sgt. Gerald M. Combs, (Ret), 65, July 18, 2007
Sgt. 1st Class Samuel Gallu, (Ret), 73, July 19, 2007
Sgt. 1st Class David W. Brown, (Ret), 58, Aug. 2, 2007
Staff Sgt. Russell E. Sanderson, (Ret), 77, Aug. 3, 2007
Sgt. Yvonne V. Ashford, (Ret), 50, Aug. 15, 2007
Master Sgt. Denis F. Stockinger, (Ret), 77, Aug. 21, 2007

Photo by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse
Spc. Jeffrey Bender, of the 126th Army Band,
plays Taps during the first presidential wreath
laying ceremony at the Gerald R. Ford Museum
in Grand Rapids, Mich., July 14, 2007.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Bennie Deitch

The 126th Army Marching Band from Wyoming, Mich. keeps the beat as the troops march off the parade field at Camp Grayling, Mich. during the Annual Training Memorial Review. The Memorial Review concludes the two-week training each year with a flyover of Army Blackhawk helicopters.

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Michigan Army and Air National Guard
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