

# THE WOLVERINE GUARD

Annual Training 2009, XCTC  
Wounded Warrior lives new life  
Michigan National Guard goes Green



A publication of the Michigan Army and Air National Guard  
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Maj. Gen. Thomas G. Cutler observes a participant of XCTC training during Annual Training 2009. The participant is wearing a mualage kit on his face to symbolize the real battlefield injuries that people can receive in explosions. Michigan National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse



Medically retired 46th military police officer, Staff Sgt. Michelle Rudzitis visits Camp Grayling, Mich., Michigan Army National Guard annual training. With Michelle are Maj. Gen. Thomas Cutler and his wife Chris. For more on Rudzitis and her journey after being injured during her deployment see page 18. Michigan National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Denice Rankin



Maj. Gen. Thomas G. Cutler congratulates Capt. Tiffaney Laurin after she is awarded the MacArthur Award for exceptional leadership during Annual Training 2009. Michigan National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Gabriel Morse

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

As the summer season comes to an end I 'm sure you and your family are thinking, just like my wife and I are, about how fast the summer has come and gone. As members of the Guard, our summers are always busy as we work hard to balance civilian jobs, Guard participation and family activities. Throughout the summer I've had the opportunity to see the great work you're all doing and I have been so impressed by your willingness to serve and to find this delicate balance in your lives.

July and August were months that highlighted so many things that are going on in our Michigan National Guard and drew focus on the people who accomplish the mission. I was extremely impressed as I observed this year's annual training at Camp Grayling. Once again, the bar was raised on providing high speed, exceptionally realistic combat readiness training. The Exportable Combat Training Capability was the best training system we've ever used. This "high tech" training system was incredible, but more impressive was the soldiers who participated in the training. I was in awe of your dedication and professionalism and your willingness to serve.

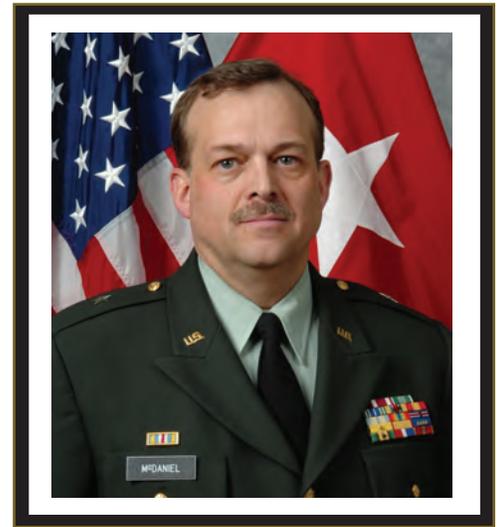
At the same time as we were participating in AT 09, a joint team of our Michigan Army and Air Guard members were hosting this year's National Family Conference and Workshop in Dearborn. We hosted approximately 1,200 family volunteers from all 54 states, territories, and the District of Columbia. Attendees included the entire National Guard Bureau leadership team, starting with General Craig McKinley. Our team did an awesome job of planning and executing this conference and the feedback we've received has validated that. I couldn't be prouder of one of them.

Our Air Guard has also been doing a terrific job of converting to each of their new missions. Change is always difficult, but there is no doubt we've got the right people stepping up to the challenges we face. We were very proud to recently host, General Roger Brady, the Commander of the United States Air Forces in Europe. He took an entire day to tour our Grayling Range and our new Air Operations Group at Battle Creek. He was extremely impressed with the great work being done at each location, which didn't surprise me a bit. He just confirmed what we already knew about each of our units!

As I attended Selfridge's Air Show this past weekend, I was again very proud to see how well everyone represented our National Guard. We had the opportunity to show off our Air Guard, as well as our Army Guard, and you all did it superbly. I thank you for all the hard work you put into doing this.

As I write this, I am preparing to leave on a trip to visit our Soldiers and Airmen in Afghanistan. While I'm there I will certainly let them know that I represent all of you and will thank them, on your behalf, for their service and the sacrifices they are making to serve our great country. I'm proud to serve with each one of you!

*Thomas G. Cutler*



*Brig. Gen. McDaniel has accepted a position in Washington D.C. as the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Homeland Defense Strategy and Force Planning. He delivered these remarks during his farewell ceremony July 15. (Remarks have been edited for space.)*

It has been an honor to work with you all. No success is an individual success; every success is a team success. I want to thank Gen. Cutler and the general officers with whom I have served; the NCOs who are the professional backbone of our corporate self; and the young captains and majors who are our future.

I remember my first trial with the Attorney General’s office. I was defending two Soldiers against claims of medical malpractice. I was driving to the Wayne County Circuit Courthouse in one of the state’s old Reliant K cars, with no A/C and an AM radio. I was prepped for trial, but my equipment was not – I ran out of gas where I-96 merges into the Lodge. I had miles of traffic backed up when a fellow friend recognized me and got me to court on time.

The point to this story is it does not matter if you are the star, the top of the pyramid, or the point of the spear. Without those working with you, you will accomplish nothing. And the trial? The courts created an intra-military immunity doctrine and recognized that members of the state military, like federal Soldiers, cannot sue one another. Sounds like a dry result, but one with far reaching consequences.

Speaking of stars, there was a great All-Star game last month. Can you name the MVP of that game or of the NHL championship, Winston Cup, Heisman trophy or the last American Idol or Academy Awards winner? I will give you a few minutes to cogitate on those.

These are the times of fast food and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, larger mansions, but more broken homes. We have endured and even flourished through two ground wars, a conceptual war on terror, and a struggle to define the role of the U.S. in the world today.

How do we get back on track? I can only tell you what I have learned: five simple rules that apply equally to organizations and individuals.

- 1) Demand accountability of our leaders and our soldiers. All individuals are vital members of the team.
- 2) Integration is never an afterthought. Jointness is not enough. True collaboration is hard. Assure we have a common goal that everyone is committed to. Inter-agency collaborations are like marriages: hard work.
- 3) Public Service. One of the great lies is, “I chose public service.” Public service is a calling. It chooses you. If you believe you can choose it, then you are selfish. Duty is but a corollary to public service. In 1931 The Infantry Journal wrote, “The conscience of the young officer will be his best guide to tell him whether he is following his duty according to his best light. If he is not persistent to do what he ought to, then he has fallen short of what the government has a right to expect. The careful, slow-plodding officer who can always be relied upon is of far more value than the brilliant and erratic one whose ability is not always dependable.”
- 4) Homeland security has focused on interoperable communications, a system to allow diverse agencies to talk on demand and in real time. But interoperable communications require rules. So I looked for guidance and found the Air Force’s Rules of Engagement for Blogging: All communications require timely response, proper tone, transparency and sourcing—meaning never pass off someone else’s thoughts or accomplishments as your own.

5) Finally and most importantly, remember, to say, ‘I love you’ to your family and loved ones and mean it. Hold hands and cherish the moment as if it is the last, because it may be.

Now, back to the quiz. How did you do? The point is none of us remember yesterday’s headlines. The applause fades, awards tarnish and uniforms are thrust to the back of the closet.

Here’s another quiz. List five teachers who helped you through school. Name three friends who supported you through a difficult time. Name five people who have taught you something worthwhile. Think of one true friend who always has your back.

It is our deeds not our words; it is our actions not our public persona; it is our accomplishments in support of our friends and our community by which we will be remembered.



From the desk of  
The State Senior Enlisted Advisor



CSM  
TALK

Being a member of the Michigan Army National Guard has been a source of inspiration and great pride for me. I am honored to have been a part of an organization that has done so much to make this country and countries around the world a better place to live. After nearly 40 years of service this part of my life has become a fellowship which lasts long after the uniforms are packed away for good. Even after I leave this great organization I will only escape the job and day-to-day participation.

I thank each and every one of you, along with those I have served with who have either retired or have passed on, for allowing me to be a part of the greatest fraternity the world has ever known. All of you are the very reason that I have been afforded these many opportunities. You have mentored me. You have changed me as a person and have made a lasting impact on my life. I have learned some tremendous life lessons from all of you which have helped me grow as a Soldier and as a Leader. You have been essential to my success and along this 40-year journey I have made some very precious, life long friends.

The privilege of serving as a Non-Commissioned Officer in the Michigan Army National Guard, the experiences I've gained as a Leader of Soldiers, and to serve the last five years of my career as your 8th State Command Sergeant Major and Senior Enlisted Leader is an honor that words can not do justice and is the source of many fond memories that will stay with me forever.

Difficult, although honorable and lasting memories for me, will be the costly price our Michigan National Guard Soldiers have paid in the War on Terrorism. Twenty of our Michigan comrades paid the ultimate sacrifice on my watch and they will be in my thoughts and prayers forever.

I also want to take this opportunity to thank my family. Just like each of your families, they are the reason we serve. They have sacrificed dearly and have adjusted their lives over the past 40 years to allow me to serve in uniform. Like you, I have missed countless family events and have been noticeably absent at times when the Army needed me somewhere else. Without their support, acceptance, and participation, the past 40 years would not have been possible for me. Although they don't wear the same uniform I do, they are as much a part of the Michigan National Guard as I have been.

2009 is the Year of the Non-Commissioned Officer. For more than 372 years, the Army National Guard's Non-Commissioned Officer Corps has distinguished itself as the world's finest trained and most accomplished group of citizen Soldiers in the world. It is important to reflect on the significant, history making contributions you have made. You have been pivotal figures of our Army since the beginning, envied by our allies and feared by our enemies. Each of you has displayed tremendous acts of courage and dedication to do whatever it takes to complete your missions successfully. You have all heard the phrases "NCOs are the backbone of the Army," "NCOs Lead the Way," "It doesn't go without the NCO," and many more. These phrases are sometimes used by speech writers who really don't understand and have never lived by the NCO Creed. The quality of the NCO Corps is in your hands and should never be taken for granted. The Soldiers we influence today will become Leaders of tomorrow's NCO Corps.

I need to speak one last time to the hearts of our enlisted Soldiers – to ask you for your assistance, your mentorship, and your continued desire to succeed. We need to continue to grow outstanding NCO Leaders, continue to live up to these phrases and insure we will always be the backbone of the Army and will always lead the way. Don't think for a second that you don't have what it takes to someday be the next State Command Sergeant Major. Never forget the NCO Creed especially the last sentence – "I will not forget, nor will I allow my comrades to forget that we are professionals, Non-Commissioned Officers, Leaders!"

Thank you for your support. God Bless each and every one of you and your families for your service and sacrifices to this great State and Nation. Your dedication to serve is the very reason why our families, children, and grandchildren won't have to. God speed on any future deployments wherever they may take you. I will hold close my memories of our service together forever.

# Bullets

## Guitars for Vets

Guitars for Vets is a non-profit organization designed to enhance the lives of ailing and injured veterans by providing them with guitars and music instruction. Their hope is that self expression through the gift of music will help restore the feelings of joy and purpose that can be lost after suffering trauma. Visit [www.guitarsforvets.org](http://www.guitarsforvets.org) for more information.

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## Attention Wounded Warriors:

Two programs specifically designed for wounded warriors are "Eagle Summit Ranch" in Texas and "The Wounded Warrior Project" in Florida. Both programs are no cost to eligible wounded veterans and include airfare and accommodations.

Eagle Summit Ranch is founded by Dave Roeber, a U.S. Navy Vietnam veteran who was severely wounded eight months into his tour of duty. Because of his war-time experience, injury and recovery, he is uniquely qualified to speak to the needs of military personnel. For more information call 817-238-2000 or visit: <http://daveroeber.org/esr/index.php>.

The Wounded Warrior Project's mission is to honor and empower wounded warriors. For more info visit: [www.woundedwarriorproject.org](http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org) or email: [info@woundedwarriorproject.org](mailto:info@woundedwarriorproject.org), telephone: 904-296-7350.

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## Post-9/11 GI Bill and other videos

To view videos about the new Post-9/11 GI Bill, Yellow Ribbon Schools (schools that participate in reduced tuition for veterans) and Project Odyssey (A ranch designed for rehabilitating wounded veterans) visit: <http://www1.va.gov/opa/feature/amervet/index.asp>

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## STARBASE introduces new website

[www.starbaseone.org](http://www.starbaseone.org)

5th and 6th grade students learn science and math concepts while interacting with military personnel and staff at Selfridge ANGB in southeast Michigan.

## Servicemember's Civil Relief Act

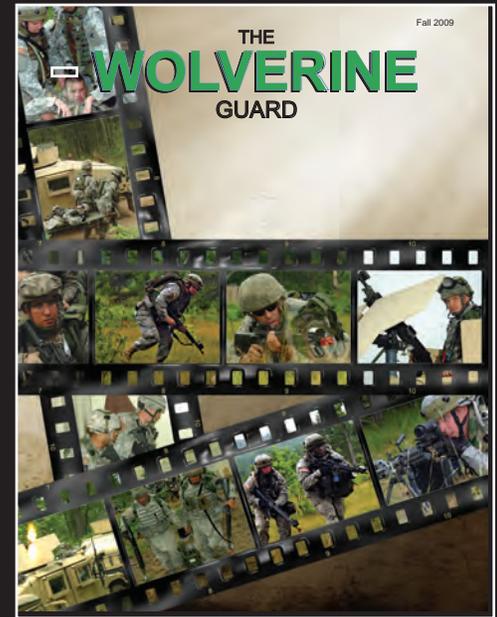
The Housing and Economic Recovery Act of 2008 amended several important provisions of the Servicemember's Civil Relief Act pertaining to mortgages. The period of protection from a sale or foreclosure and the period in which a Soldier may be granted a stay of proceedings or adjustment of the obligation by a court are extended from the "period of service plus 90 days after" to "the period of service plus 9 months after." This change will expire Dec. 31, 2010 and revert to the old language. Of similar importance is that the reduction of interest on the mortgage to the 6% cap has been extended from "the period of service" to the "period of service plus one year." Note that the interest rate reduction period of extension only applies to mortgage type obligations and not to credit cards, car loans, or other forms of consumer debt. If you have further questions on these important amendments, call Capt. Kevin Weise in the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate at 517-481-8100.

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## New Features for the TRICARE Retiree Dental Program

The new contract for TRDP is from Oct. 1, 2008 through Sept. 30, 2013. Enhanced features include: \$1,500 lifetime orthodontic maximum, coverage for certain implant services after a 12-month waiting period at 50% of the program allowed amount, certain emergency services covered for enhanced program enrollees visiting overseas locations, addition of worldwide coverage for those who live overseas and enroll in the new enhanced overseas program. For more detailed information contact your local TRDP representative, Lynn Jamroz at 630-587-6397.

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Michigan Army National Guard units conducting annual training at Camp Grayling, Mich., this year are using a new training package that allows them to receive the same training found at the Active Army's training centers at a fraction of the cost. The training package is called XCTC, which stands for exportable combat training capability. The "exportable" is significant because the package, consisting of real time battle field monitoring, laser simulated weapons engagement equipment, mock villages, and role players, can be sent from state to state, allowing units preparing to deploy to Iraq or Afghanistan to complete the training they need before being mobilized. (Cover illustration by 1st Lt. Mandy Sullivan)

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# HOLLYWOOD

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. James Downen

# makes WAR

BOOM! A big dust cloud of “movie dirt” from a simulated improvised explosive device (IED) engulfs Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers searching a replicated Iraqi village made up of container buildings. This scenario is contrived like a movie set, but isn’t taking place in Hollywood; instead, this is all happening at Camp Grayling, Mich., during Annual Training 2009.

Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers are using high technology methods to monitor, evaluate and conduct exercises via the enhanced eXportable Combat Training Capability (XCTC). One of the key components to XCTC is the simulated environment the Soldiers train in. Allied Container Systems, Inc. (ACS) provides an environment package that includes costumed role players, battlefield effects and buildings replicating what the Soldiers will see in Iraq or Afghanistan.

The buildings, shipping containers modified to look like huts, houses and mosques, allow Soldiers to conduct realistic searches for weapons and to detect hidden IEDs before they are detonated. Without these buildings, the training would become theoretic and notional.

Role players add another dimension of realism to XCTC training. The role players are recruited from Arabic and Afghan communities. They speak Arabic, Dari, or Pashto, unless the scenario identifies one of them as having English speaking abilities. This linguistic hurdle forces the Soldiers to use an interpreter just like they would in Iraq or Afghanistan. Additionally, many of the role players advise Soldiers about customs and culture, which helps Soldiers avoid offending the people in the country they deploy to.

The role players are costumed in native attire or in military or police uniforms appropriate to the country and scenario they are replicating. When engagements or bombings occur, Hollywood-grade wound moulage appears on role players while simulated body parts and corpses are littered across the battlefield. These effects give Soldiers a realistic view of battlefield chaos and the opportunity to assess casualties and treat wounded civilians.

ACS Inc. also places simulated IEDs, suicide bombers, mortars and vehicle borne improvised explosive devices (VBIEDs) on the

battlefield for the Soldiers to encounter and deal with.

Tactical Training Technologies (T3) has been sub-contracted by ACS Inc. to provide the explosions made by the various explosive devices encountered on the battlefield. T3 pyrotechnics technicians use electrically fired nitrogen gas cylinders to blast clouds of “movie dirt,” a brown, powdery substance, to simulate explosions. The clouds are huge and do a wonderful job of adding a “fog of war” that is impossible to see through.

The efforts of the ACS Inc. staff, role players and T3 pyrotechnics technicians have not gone unnoticed by the Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers who are training for Iraq and Afghanistan deployments. Michigan Army National Guard Pfc. Johnathan Raish said, “The training is better than anything we have done so far; most of our training before AT has been simulated or notional. The special effects make the training seem real. Having simulated IEDs to look for gives me an idea what we’re supposed to be looking for when we get deployed.”





Strati Hovartos and Andrew Cobb, special effects technicians with Tactical Training Technologies, prepare a simulated improvised explosive device nitrogen gas projector at Camp Grayling, Mich., during Annual Training on July 26, 2009. Michigan National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. James Downen



Displayed are costumes worn by civilian role players at Camp Grayling, Mich., during XCTC. All costumes were supplied by SRI, the company that created the XCTC concept. Michigan National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. James Downen





# 119TH FIELD ARTILLERY TAKES THE LANES

STORY AND PHOTOS BY STAFF SGT. JAMES DOWNEN

Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers at Camp Grayling, Mich., load into HMMWVs and roll out with gunners swiveling, searching for improvised explosive devices (IEDs) or insurgents bent on mayhem. The HMMWVs slow to a crawl when the gunner in the lead vehicle, Spc. Kurt Buell of the Lansing, Mich., Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 1st Battalion, 119th Field Artillery, spots an IED near the road. The IED is called in to higher and the Soldiers are told to proceed.

The convoy rounds a bend to discover a red SUV blocking the road. Two men in Arab dress use hand gestures to show they need assistance. After inspecting the vehicle, the Soldiers use a combination of hand signals and Arabic phrases to have the vehicle moved out of the way.

These scenarios demonstrate the potential for violence and bloodshed in a war zone while the training reinforces the positive results that can be obtained when Soldiers remain calm and treat civilians in a respectful manner.

This summer, 1,500 Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers will convoy down these same lanes during their two-week Annual Training (AT). Soldiers face IEDs, civilians on the battlefield and insurgent attacks.

Lanes training is scenario based, with role players and simulated battle drills at each station along a designated route. Each scenario tests both individual Soldier warrior

tasks and unit battle drills. The lanes are controlled by combat veteran observer-controllers (OCs) who also evaluate the performance of units going through the lane.

In the months prior to AT, the Soldiers from the Lansing based 119th Field Artillery practiced individual tasks, often pretending the enemy was present.

“We’re going to put the theoretical and notional training we did prior to AT into use on this lane,” said 2nd Lt. Gary Osbeck, a platoon leader with the 119th. “This is going to be a much needed learning exercise for the unit.”

The convoy resumes, “Boom, bang-bang-bang, rat-tat-tat.” Ambush! Three insurgents open fire, provoking a full auto response from the M-240 machine gunners. The convoy fights its way out of the ambush and rolls into an assembly area to regroup and care for its casualties.

Occupying the assembly area was the correct action; however, the convoy vehicles didn’t space themselves properly and the OCs hammer this point home by detonating an artillery simulator near the cramped assembly area. The OCs called “ENDEX” and the Soldiers gather for an after action review (AAR).

The lane scenario brings back memories of Afghanistan for Staff Sgt. Maloth Duong.

“The M-240 machine gunners must lay down a heavy base of suppressive fire on the enemy,”



Duong emphasizes. He adds that firing furiously and fighting back aggressively enabled his unit to survive ambushes in the Afghan mountains.

“This training is better than anything we have done so far,” said Pfc. Johnathan Raish. “The special effects make the training seem real. Having simulated IEDs to look for gives me an idea what we’re supposed to be looking for when we get deployed.”

The next scenario finds the Soldiers confronted by another SUV in distress, this time the vehicle is pinned by a fallen tree.

The convoy conducts a security halt and sends two Soldiers to search the vehicle. Boom! A simulated IED is detonated and the Soldiers are engulfed in a cloud of brown smoke. Gunfire erupts from the forests along both sides of the road and a firefight is on.

The Soldiers dismount their HMMWVs to take the fight to the enemy. They send an aid and litter team to recover two downed comrades, but the insurgents have a nasty ace up their sleeve. The aid and litter team happen upon a hidden IED, turning the rescuers into victims.

But the insurgents play into the hands of the good guys by charging straight at two up armored HMMWVs. The M-240 gunners fire upon the overconfident insurgents, ending the battle.

The Soldiers of the 119th say they have learned many valuable combat lessons on the convoy lane. Squad Leader, Staff Sgt. Jonathon Livingston concluded, “The lane was reality based training for us. The mistakes we made and discussed in the AAR are helping us to

perfect our job before we deploy.”

HQB, 1st Battalion, 119th Field Artillery is expected to deploy to Iraq late summer of 2010.



Above- Soldiers of the 119th Field Artillery evacuate a wounded comrade during a convoy training lane at Camp Grayling during Annual Training.



Right- Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers of the Lansing Headquarters and Headquarters Battery 1st Battalion, 119th Field Artillery are ambushed by insurgents during a convoy training lane at Camp Grayling, Mich. during Annual Training.



# Child's Play

Fusion of technology, movie FX and experience resolve age old dispute for Soldiers

Story by Staff Sgt. Gabe Morse and Senior Airman Matthew Mohundro Photos by Staff Sgt. Gabe Morse



A Soldier from the 1776th Military Police Company vigilantly guards his sector from simulated terrorists during training. His actions are tracked by a Global Positioning System.



Soldiers from the 1776th Military Police Company motion role players forward to be searched before passing through a Traffic Control Point during training at Camp Grayling, Mich.



The exercise requires the platoon to set up a position across a road to control entry and access to a specific point by civilian pedestrian and vehicular traffic. Traffic control points also stop or help capture insurgents.

“I shot you first!” The emphatic statement comes from a glowering face peering through weeds and around an old stump. “Whatever! You didn’t even see me until I shot you first,” another voice growls back from behind a small tree-covered hill nearby.

This type of disagreement has occurred millions of times since the first child ever played Soldier. It is an argument won and lost in all our childhoods. Some of the faces and the details of the arguments have faded with time, but the resentment we felt at being cheated that one moment of triumph still haunts our memories.

However, these are not the voices of children playing; they are Soldiers training for combat. And these war games could be the difference between life and death.

At Camp Grayling, Mich., disputes over who shot who are no more. Michigan Army National Guard Soldiers there are using a pre-combat training program called eXportable Combat Training Capability or XCTC.

XCTC tracks and records Soldier and vehicle movement through its mix of Global Positioning System technology incorporated with the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES).

It provides a fully mobile, contemporary training environment that does not require National Guard commands to move their units cross-country, or wait for a chance at one of only two comparable training centers within the U.S. In the past, all active Army, National Guard and Reserve units shared these two facilities for training combat ready troops. Since the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, these Maneuver Training Centers have not been able to keep up with demand. The National Guard Bureau’s XCTC program provides an answer to that backlog, and comes to the requesting state, allowing them to use their own training facilities, which saves commands time, money, and manpower.

At each training scenario, you find Soldiers in full battle gear, civilian videographers, special effects personnel, civilian and military role-players, and military observer controllers with combat experience who manage the lanes. It is a specially designed package catering to the specific training requests of National Guard commanders to find and fix errors before units head into combat. Michigan is the first state to provide this to its combat support units. Previous XCTC rotations trained only combat arms units.

Michigan National Guard Soldiers wearing laser reactive MILES gear and a GPS device called the Enhanced Dismount Instrumentation Package (EDI) inserted into their body armor, shoot at each other with lasers mounted on their weapons. Each combination of EDI, MILES and laser has a pin number associated with it that constantly updates in real time to the Tactical Analysis Facility where it can be viewed on television or computer screens. When a Soldier fires the



weapon mounted laser, the information is transmitted by radio waves to a computer that marks both the shooter and his target. All Soldiers and role players are vested with the EDI and MILES gear, which allows for a complete record of all participant's positions and actions, and shots fired.

"This equipment provides the closest thing you can get to firing a round," said Larry Swan, a former Soldier and current Raytheon Corporation employee subcontracted to repair MILES equipment. "When I was coming up (through the military) they used BB guns. This system allows the maximum effective range of the weapon itself. You can't get much better than that."

While Soldiers, role players, and trainers interact, videographers with hand-held digital cameras film the entire scenario from different angles. The videographer's data is uploaded daily and combined with the 3-D GPS data showing movements of all players in the scenario.

Role players dressed in Middle Eastern style clothing add to the realism and intensity of the training by acting out various roles in the midst of Hollywood designed Military Operations Urban Terrain (MOUT) sites. Mixed among the role players are Iraqi-Americans hired specifically for their cultural and linguistic expertise.

"This is not my first time serving with (American) Soldiers," states a man calling himself Muhamed Issa. "In 2004, I was an interpreter serving in Sadr City, Iraq. I understand the importance of this job. This is true training for the Army. A Soldier that has been trained (like this) will solve a lot of problems. It saves blood on both sides."

Neil Smith, a battlefield effects specialist with West Effects from Valencia, Calif. hired to make the training more realistic, agrees with Issa. "If we can help our Soldiers understand the culture, people and terrain they'll be working with, it will save lives all the way around. "

Smith, who has more than 30 years experience creating special effects in Hollywood, proudly displays the tools of his trade during a momentary break in the training. "We're striving to achieve the same effect (as with a movie) that's realistic and will enhance the training experience."

An experience that includes approximately 700 new Middle Eastern style structures, special effects operators disguised as suicide bombers, and dust filled IEDs. Combined with the role players, it created a very realistic situation according to some Soldiers. "I was in theater in 2006-2007," said Spc. Dwayne Paris, a driver for Charlie Team, 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon, 1776th MP Company. "At some points (during this training) you get little flashbacks of things you've done before and experiences you've had. It's really good training."

Cradling his laser mounted M-4 carbine, Paris described the whole XCTC experience. "If I'd had this equipment the first time I deployed, I think some scenarios would've gone a lot better than they did," he said.

And "better" is what the Michigan National Guard is aiming for. Traditional military After Action Reviews (AAR) provide a synopsis of events from everyone's perspective. They have no final resolution and remain conjecture. XCTC AARs allow each commander or Soldier to review the combined data and gain a detailed and overall perspective. It provides the ability to look back at a specific moment, and learn how to improve it for the future.

According to 2nd Lt. Kevin Hallman, platoon leader for 3rd Platoon, 1776th MP Company from Taylor, Mich., "It (XCTC) will give each individual person the idea of their tendencies and what they need to change to become a better Soldier. Normally it's tough to know if someone gets hit, because everyone's running around as if they are invincible."

"I can see a difference from the first

time we hit them," said West Effects specialist John Hoag, shortly after setting off a simulated Improvised Explosive Device against the MPs. "As time goes by they react the way they are supposed to. It's much better to get trained here where you're not going to get hurt, because when it really happens you don't have time to be learning those lessons."

No one is saying XCTC will create super Soldiers, so Captain America can rest easy. Nor does it replace a Soldier's ability, common sense, or intuition. But training is a necessity in the preparation for war, and the realism of XCTC will train Soldiers to instinctively duck faster and shoot straighter.

War has never been child's play; but as more Soldiers continue to fight for their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan, the National Guard is providing the tools they need to survive. And the original disagreement of who shot who now has an accurate ending not dictated by the loudest opinion.



Three Soldiers stack up and peer around the front of their HMMVW during an Enter and Clear scenario at Camp Grayling, Mich.





# Deployments Weapons Systems Chameleons

## 182nd Adapts to Change

Story by Spc. John Herrick  
Photos by Brandon Oursler

**A**s the sun's rays reflect the morning dew draped along the thin sandy grasses of Camp Grayling, Soldiers of the 182nd Field Artillery Regiment, (Detroit, Lansing and Bay City) wake up in their sleeping bags, away from the warmth and comforts of home, to greet a chilly Michigan morning.

There is an old saying in Michigan: If you don't like our weather, wait five minutes.

The Soldiers of the 182nd personify their home state, because like the ever transforming weather, they too are frequently making changes.

In the past five years and two deployments, Soldiers of the "Deuce" have shifted from their customary field artillery fire missions to supporting maneuver forces, training Iraqi police, and providing convoy security throughout Iraq.

"We understand that the battles we fight today may not always be artillery supported ones, so we must be aware of the fact that we may need to implement new training at any time," said 1st Sgt. Kevin Day, acting command sergeant major for the 182nd.

In October 2004, approximately 152 Soldiers from the 182nd did just that. They worked with Iraqi police conducting more than 2,300 joint missions, provided security along supply routes in Iraq, escorted high value detainees and supported maneuver force missions.

"Supporting the Iraqi police and conducting convoy security missions was definitely different than firing rockets, but I feel our unit was well trained and we adapted quickly to the mission," said Sgt. Aaron Staley, a fire directions control sergeant with Headquarters Battery.

Again in November 2006, approximately 150 Soldiers from the Detroit-based Battery A, 182nd Field Artillery deployed to Iraq for another non field artillery mission. They conducted more than 400 combat logistic patrols and patrolled more than 402,000 miles of the most hostile supply routes in Iraq. They also trained five security force companies for the 82nd Sustainment Brigade on proper tactics, techniques, and procedures for combat escort missions, and assisted military police with security.

Soldiers of the 182nd were recognized by the 82nd as the most effective combat logistic patrol company





in the entire brigade earning them 26 Bronze Star Medals, two Purple Hearts and 49 Combat Action Badges.

So, familiar with change, few Soldiers were surprised when Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Leonard Rusher announced they could expect another transformation and another deployment.

As the 182nd prepares for a late summer 2010 deployment, they also turn-in their primary weapons system, the M270 Multiple Launch Rocket System tracked vehicle or MLRS, for a more modern version of MLRS, the XM 142 High Mobility Artillery Rocket System or HIMARS.

“HIMARS will give us the ability to shoot and move faster than the MLRS, which will allow us to put rounds down range faster making us more effective on the battlefield,” said Rusher. HIMARS fires six rounds of supported MLRS munitions, or one Army Tactical Missile from tubes, which are mounted to a 6x6 all-wheel drive 5-ton truck platform. The MLRS utilizes two six-round tubes.

“Because of the effective capability of one six-round tube to accomplish the mission we no longer need the two six-round tubes we were using on the MLRS,” said Day.

Like its predecessor, HIMARS utilizes a three-man crew, consisting of a driver, gunner and crew chief, and will have the ability to engage and defeat trucks, tube/rocket artillery and air defense.

The HIMARS weapons system can be dropped from an aircraft allowing Soldiers the ability to execute missions within 15 minutes after landing versus the MLRS, which does not have that capability.

“Allowing Soldiers to move to a different firing point quicker after missions makes it harder for the enemy to zero in on our location,” said Day.

HIMARS uses a similar existing command and support system as the M270 MLRS with a few modifications such as a computer with more memory and a Global Positioning Satellite device to locate Soldier positions anywhere on the battlefield.

For some, saying goodbye to the M270 feels like the end of an era. It was 18 years ago when the M270 showed its might for millions during Operation Desert Storm where it got its nickname “Steel Rain.” However, Pfc. Andiago Cobb seems to understand that the type of warfare the U.S. military is fighting against on today’s battlefield requires speed, ingenuity and an ongoing ability to adapt to changing scenarios.

“I’m excited to use HIMARS and am curious to see it in action,” said Cobb.

“The Soldiers of the 182nd have chameleon-like skill when it comes to change,” said Maj. Scott Meyers, executive officer for the 182nd. “Their skill and professionalism is far above standard. They stand ready to deploy and engage any mission or obstacle that stands in their way.”





# SOUNDS like HOME

Story by Angela Simpson

Photos courtesy of Spc. Eric Beavervogel

For nearly 50 years the citizen-soldiers of the Michigan National Guard, 126th Army Band have provided ambiance and character to special occasions. From festive gubernatorial inauguration celebrations to the somber funeral and burial service of President Gerald R. Ford, the Grand Rapids based band never fails to impress.

Commanded since 2003 by Chief Warrant Officer Jon Montgomery, the band performs more than 50 concerts each year entertaining more than 122,000 audience members. The band performs in cities throughout Michigan, around the state, country and has even performed outside the U.S. including shows in London, Trinidad and Tobago, Australia and Latvia.

In addition to its musical mission, the band trains and maintains high proficiency in all aspects of being a United States Soldier. Band members are weapons qualified and strategy trained by the same physical and mental standards required of artillery, infantry and all other classes of Soldiers.

"I am extremely proud of the work these Soldiers do," said Commander Montgomery. "Many band members have full time jobs, families, and other Soldier responsibilities in addition to rehearsal and performance work. They are an outstanding, dedicated group of people and it has been my pleasure to serve and perform with them," Montgomery added.

Montgomery himself is no stranger to hard work. He holds a degree in Music Education from Aquinas College and was a saxophonist when he joined the Army in 1989. He served with the 108th Army Band in Phoenix, Ariz. and performed professionally with The Temptations, The Four Tops, Aretha Franklin, Lou Rawls, Oak Ridge Boys, The Grand Rapids Symphony, Bill Watrous, The Silver Bullet Band, Lou Christie, Johnny Mathis, Bob Hope, The Drifters and many others.

For more information about the band including a complete history, photo gallery, audio clip and performance schedule visit [www.126armyband.com](http://www.126armyband.com).



# The Legend of O'Club Hollow

## Fact or Fiction?

Story by Maj. Dawn Dancer Research my Master Sgt. Miner Roth

It was late afternoon on a dark, dreary October day. Merry Meredith was closing up the Camp Grayling Officer's Club for another season. The wooden floors creaked beneath her footsteps as she moved from one room to another preparing the historic building for its winter solace.

Merry worked alone but she was familiar with the annual routine and already had all the outside windows shut and locked. With the late autumn chill setting in, the welcoming screened front doors, normally propped open to encourage guests, were also shut tight. So too were the large wooden exterior doors. Merry had the entire perimeter sealed like a tomb.

Inside, Merry spent much of her time putting away all the items the O'Club's many visitors had moved here and there. She stacked chairs, returned books to their shelves, and removed a stray plastic cup pinched between a seat cushion and the wicker chair frame that held it in place. Knowing the O'Club's clientele, she didn't

think twice about how it got there or why. But when her office door suddenly slammed shut, she paused.

She looked backwards, her eyes moving up and down the antique stained walls that held the smiling pictures of current and previous Michigan Army National Guard general officers. As her head turned, she paused, her gaze at the shut office door, puzzled. It had been open just a moment before when she answered the phone. 'Had someone come inside without her notice?' she wondered.

Earlier that summer, 27-year-old Capt. Corissa Barton had stood near the same wicker chair that held the stray cup. She was a temporary tenant of the old building, staying in one of the bachelor quarters upstairs during her annual training period. Late one evening she had found her way to the bookshelves in an effort to relieve her insomnia. As she searched the dusty books, she felt the presence of the portrait hanging above the bookshelves. From



Photo illustration by 1st Lt. Mandy Sullivan



the corner of her eye, she peered at the portrait of the man she knew as Rasmus Hanson.

Rasmus Hanson is well known around Grayling for donating the original plot of Camp Grayling's land, used today for training the men and women of the Michigan National Guard. Barton tilted her head to get a better look at the man. He wasn't smiling but he didn't look mean either. Mischievous, she thought. The tarnished plaque beneath his face stated the O'Club had been established in 1917. As she returned her attention to the bookshelves, she wondered if the books were that old too. As she shifted her weight the old wooden floor creaked. She thought nothing of it until it creaked again, this time without the help of her body's movement.

"Strange," she thought. She pressed down on her knee to make the floor creak again, as if to remind her the creaking was natural. As the floor voiced its opinion, the wicker chair added its "two-cent's worth" and moved ever so slightly. Barton looked up again at the portrait. "Rasmus!" she thought. She grabbed a Bible jammed between the paperbacks within the bookcase. She didn't figure she would necessarily read it but she thought its presence in her room couldn't hurt.

As Merry blinked at the closed door she thought about the stories she had heard over the years about the supposed haunted structure. They could all be easily explained as coincidence she reasoned, adding a faint smile and eye roll to her gestures as if to emphasize her disbelief in ghosts.

Merry recalled another guest, Vicky, who complained someone was trying to get upstairs but instead fell down the steps and ran into the nearby pool table. "It was like they were pushed," said Vicky. "Show me one night when the bar is open that someone doesn't do that?!" Merry exclaimed. "Fine," said Vicky, "but the bar was closed and I am your only tenant."

"Everything is closed-up now," Merry thought. "There's no possible way that office door closed by itself." "Pam, are you here?" It was Pam Deline's day off but Merry thought maybe she came by to help. No answer. "Rasmus?"

Pam Deline has also worked at the O'Club for years and is very familiar with the haunted tales. She says when she's working at the O'Club she often sees someone or something moving out of the corner of her eye but when she turns to look, nothing is there.

Another employee, Aaron, was closing up late one evening. He walked from the bar area across the

creaky wood floors to the front doors. He peered out into the parking lot to ensure everyone was gone. Empty. He pulled closed the large wooden French doors and twisted the lock. "Ring!" Startled, Aaron twirled around to face the office door where the old push-button doorbell was installed. No one was there. Aaron figured maybe he shouldn't be either and quickly departed.

Merry decided she needed to get back to work. She returned the last book to the empty slot in the bookcase. It was a Bible. "Oh it's nice to see someone reading this...or perhaps they used it for a coaster?"

Barton pushed the wicker chair out of her path and carried the Bible to her room. She laid it on the desk next to her bed and crawled under the cool sheet. She had no sooner drifted asleep when the alarm rang. "Already?!" She found her shower shoes and flip-flopped across the hall. She passed the seating area and saw the Bible lying open the couch. "How? . . ." She walked back to her room to survey the desk. Half eaten bags of Doritos, an empty bottle of water, a crumpled pocket-sized safety guide required to be carried while at A.T., a toothbrush—"Ooh, I'll need that"—and a pile of dollar coins left over from the Laundromat. But no Bible. She heard her neighbor's door unlock. "Damn-it Stein\* -- I'm showering first today!"

Merry bent over to fluff the seat cushion. "The Portrait" loomed from the corner of her eye. She stood up and walked towards the picture.

"Rasmus, what do you think? Is it time for me to go home for the evening? I really should finish up here." Merry listened for a sign, a creak, a ring or a slight breeze. Nothing. "Come on Mr. Hanson, work with me!" She turned away from the portrait and walked to her office. She grabbed the door knob and started to twist it open. It was then when the light bulb in the phone booth behind her decided to burn out.

"That can't be coincidence," she smiled. She snatched her purse from the desk drawer and was gone.

\*"Stein" refers to Capt. Allison Stein, the state's Overseas Deployment Training manager and also a tenant of the O'Club during Annual Training. According to Stein, the O'Club is not haunted; however, others argue there may be a credibility issue with her expert opinion. This group reports that the O'Club floors don't creak when Stein walks across them.



# The Invisible COST of WAR

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Denice Rankin

A major news agency recently reported that the United States has spent \$864 billion on the war in Iraq and Afghanistan since Sept. 11, 2001. The cost of war is usually calculated in dollars. But the cost can also be measured in lives lost. And it is measured by those who have been injured. Some of these injuries are invisible and the “cost” remains to be seen.

In the past eight years, the Michigan National Guard has deployed more than 11,000 Soldiers and Airmen to fight in Iraq and Afghanistan. In those eight years, hundreds of Michigan Guardsmen have returned home wounded. Most of the men and women have returned to duty, however; 220 have been medically discharged. Five Soldiers have lost limbs. Another untold number of service members, some serving, some discharged, have “invisible wounds.”

In January 2007, three military police officers from the Kingsford-based 46th Military Police Company and their interpreter, nicknamed Kevin, left their forward operating base (FOB)



Above: Michelle Rudzitis, a former Michigan National Guard military police officer stands with Pfc. Louis Gomez, a member of the Detroit based Company A, 1st Battalion, 125th Infantry Regiment. Below: Members of the 119th Field Artillery gather with Michelle during her visit to Camp Grayling.

as part of a small unit convoy for a routine run to Victory Base Complex (VBC) in Baghdad to get additional up-armor on their vehicles. The assignment wasn't too bad because it meant they would get to go to the big PX where they didn't have to wear protective gear, could buy gifts for loved ones back home, and eat at Taco Bell.

Before leaving the wire, they touched knuckles ceremoniously and headed out on a beautiful sunny day. They arrived at VBC, dropped off the vehicles and were given about an hour to shop. At 6:30 p.m., they left the complex to return to their forward operating base.

About 10 minutes from their FOB, the MPs turned onto Route Pluto, an area well known for explosively formed projectiles (EFP). As they entered the area, truck commander Sgt. Michelle Rudzitis, driver Spc. Brandon Stout, gunner Spc. Derek Gagne, and Kevin braced themselves.

"I would always sit cockeyed in the vehicle—arms up, legs everywhere. We thought if we got hit it would get part of us, not all of us. We would get into position and hold our breath," said Michelle.

The convoy rolled past the treacherous area.

"I sat up to re-situate myself. Brandon said 'I love you man' and Derek said it too. It was like they knew," recalled Michelle. "I looked out the window and the explosion happened."

Moments passed—reality set in. Michelle tried to get accountability of her people but could not get a breath out because her lung had collapsed. She could hear Derek moaning so she knew he was alive. She was afraid to open her eyes.

"I was in and out of consciousness," Michelle recalls. "I was hurting and thinking about my family. Derek had gotten out of the turret to try to get me but he

didn't have a foot. I guess he didn't know. He ended up collapsing."

Michelle did not know yet that Spc. Stout and Kevin were killed instantly.

Unit members, Sgt. Kaleb Strahl and Spc. Justin Fruchey, came from another vehicle and quickly took the bolts off the door to get them out. Other Soldiers came to help put them on stretchers and load them into Bradley Fighting Vehicles nearby.

"I remember them tying tourniquets on both my legs. I thought my legs were melting off because it felt like fire—but it was just all the blood rolling down. I had my eyes closed because my eyelashes had fused shut from the heat, and I don't think I felt pain anymore. I just wanted to go to sleep," said Michelle.

The vehicles rushed back to the FOB, but the offensive was not over.

"The next thing I remember we

“*...and it was like they knew, and I looked out the window and the explosion happened.*”

were at the gate and the FOB was under attack. I remember the guys screaming, 'Open the bleep bleep gate, we have casualties!'"

By the time Michelle reached the field hospital she said she "had technically bled-out and was dead." Miraculously, they were able to "bring her back" and place her in a drug-induced coma.

"I woke up the next afternoon in the CSH [combat support hospital]. There was a nurse standing there and the first thing I asked her was 'Which one?' I knew one or both of my legs were gone."

The soccer ball-sized hole in the Humvee cost Michelle her left leg. There was also extensive damage to her lower body and right leg.

"My biggest hurdle right now is merely dealing with my deformities and the fact that I lost a limb. What has happened made me realize how ignorant the public is. It truly hurts when people

stare. Some stare so long that they run into things. In a nutshell though my biggest hurdle is trying to deal with all the change and figuring out what my purpose is," said Michelle.

According to Dr. Lisa Gorman, the manager for the Michigan National Guard Road to Reintegration program, visible injuries can represent a significant change in a person's way of life. Those who sustain disabling and disfiguring injuries may also experience invisible wounds like post-traumatic stress, traumatic brain injury, or depression.

"Michelle's story replicates the experience of other wounded warriors. Injury often changes everything for the veteran including interactions with friends, extended family, spouses and even children," said Gorman. "The loved ones of our wounded service members also may need additional support and resources as they adapt to the changing family needs."

Gorman also stated that social support is a critical component to the veterans' ability to recover and is vital for their loved ones too.

"Maintaining close relationships with comrades promotes healing of emotional injuries," said Gorman.

This summer, Michelle visited Camp Grayling to watch Michigan Army Guard Soldiers train. With two canes, a prosthetic leg and a lot of determination, Michelle maneuvered the dirt roads in the woods. At one area, Michelle watched Alpha Battery, 1st Battalion, 119th Field Artillery enter and clear a building. When the exercise was over, Michelle spoke to the group of 30 plus artillerymen. She told them how important it was to "have each other's backs." She also shared some of her struggles and told them how much she missed the military.

In the span of 10 to 15 minutes, the camaraderie that Soldiers depend on in battle formed between Michelle and the men. This bond is important for Soldiers. Perhaps it is part of the reason they serve, even in light of the cost war brings.



# CALL in the FORCE

Soldiers from the 144th Military Police Company, Owosso, Mich., fight off dissidents in civil disturbance training at Camp Grayling, Mich., during Annual Training 2009. Dissidents tried to fight their way through the line of Soldiers often ending up sprayed by an orange O.C. spray substitute used especially for the training. The 144th carries the

Quick Reaction Force (QRF) mission for the state. Every drill weekend is spent training to be prepared for local or national disasters. QRF tasks include hand to hand combatives, civil disturbance training, being tased, and sprayed with O.C. Michigan National Guard photos by Staff Sgt. Helen Miller





Design by Senior Airman Matthew Mohundro



# Michigan National Guard goes Green

## Army-Burning Trash for Energy

Story by Maj. Darrin Bremmer  
Photos by Spc. Paul Martinez

Military units in remote locations in Iraq and Afghanistan rely on transportation units to resupply them with fuel to keep their generators running. Supply routes to these remote locations are often under threat of insurgent operations that are focused on destroying and disrupting the resupply operations. One way to minimize this threat is by reducing or eliminating the need of fuel consumption.

Going green is one way to reduce fuel consumption. In an effort for these remote locations to do this the Army is field testing a new prototype power generation unit that converts waste product, which is readily available, into synthetic gas to fuel a diesel generator. The power generation unit is named Mobile Encampment Waste to Electrical Power System (MEWEPS), created jointly by NextEnergy of Detroit, Mich., and Community Power Corporation of Littleton, Colo.

The MEWEPS unit was recently field tested during the Michigan Army National Guard's annual training period, July 18 – Aug. 7, at Camp Grayling, Mich. The waste product used was recycled cardboard, plastic and organic material that is readily available since paper products are widely used in combat environments due to water conservation and limited personnel to clean dishes, cups and silverware that would take away from combat operations and base security.

The key component of the MEWEPS system is the Gasifier unit. The Gasifier takes the pelletized recycled waste product and burns it in a controlled process to produce a synthetic gas which provides the fuel to run the diesel generator. There are several companies with patented approaches to the design and process of the Gasifier and applications are in production all



Brig. Gen. Michael McDaniel tosses a bag of trash into the gasifier to start the demonstration of the MEWEPS.

over the world, but this is the first military application. “The Army National Guard supports both domestic and foreign crisis’s by providing water, food, power and security. By providing water and food we produce a waste product that can now be used to produce electricity instead of filling landfills.” said Brig. Gen. Michael C. McDaniel, State of Michigan Department of Military and Veteran Affairs.

To be successful in a combat environment where sand storms and extreme temperature ranges exist, special design changes needed to be made for this application. An earlier prototype was installed in Iraq back in 2003 at one of the Forward Operating Bases, but failed. This third generation prototype has addressed the problems of the past and is currently on schedule for the next phase of testing.



# Air Force-Using AFSO 21 6S Principles to get Organized

Story by Maj. James Shay

Photos by Master Sgt. Dale Atkins

Tech. Sgt. Patrick Weatherbee used the AFSO 21 6S Principles of Sort, Straighten, Shine, Safety, Standardize, and Sustain, to centralize, improve, and expand recycling options in the 110th Fighter Wing Hazmat Pharmacy.

Weatherbee significantly improved efficiency of recycling operations by creating a highly efficient, safe, customer friendly, recycling process. He neatly arranged recycling bins in the hazmat pharmacy with sample materials glued to the outside of each bin that quickly and clearly show customers what goes where.

The principles have greatly improved recycling safety by removing significant clutter from the area and separating incompatible materials. This new streamlined system will significantly improve the speed of return of recycling funds to base MWR programs by making it faster and easier to accumulate materials and outsource them from one location.

Lt. Col. James Kiel, 110th FW LRS Commander complimented of the efforts of Weatherbee. "Pat went all out on this effort and the results show it. The Wing now has a very efficient recycling center," said Kiel.

Lt. Col. Jeffrey Webster, 110th director of mission support said, "This is a great example of very straightforward, valuable and leveragable application of basic AFSO 21 principles that can be used to improve any Air Force operation. My hat is off to Tech. Sgt. Weatherbee."

Hazmat Pharmacy is now arranged for easy drop-off recycling of printer cartridges, used un-classified CDs and DVDs, old pagers, and used cellular telephones. Fourty different types of batteries are acceptable including expired/un-useable laptop batteries, cell phone batteries, cordless power tool batteries, as well as all types and sizes of alkaline and non-alkaline batteries. Where: Building 6906, 45 Spitfire Street. When: Tues-F, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Drill Weekends: Sat/Sun 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.



Before, during and after photos of the 110th Fighter Wing Hazmat Pharmacy show the progress of the AFSO 21 implementation of the 6S Principles.



Design by Senior Airman Matthew Mohundro



# READY for TAKEOFF

Unmanned Aerial Surveillance  
platoon takes to the skies

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. James Downen

Crew Chief: "I am ready for take off."

Aircraft Operator: "Clear for full throttle."

Crew Chief: "Clear" Air Craft is put into auto launch.

Crew Chief: "I hear full throttle."

Aircraft Operator: "Countdown, 5-4-3-2-1. Launch, launch, launch."

The take off sequence is completed; a Shadow 200 Unmanned Aerial Surveillance aircraft belonging to the 37th Brigade Combat Team Special Troops Battalion Unmanned Aerial Surveillance (UAS) platoon is catapulted into the Camp Grayling, Mich. skies by the hydraulic launcher unit. The UAS platoon is undergoing a 10 week UAS operator certification process that is divided by a five week ground training phase and a five week flying phase.

The UAS platoon has a unique command structure. The unit is lead by two warrant officers, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Scott Simms, commander, and Warrant Officer 1 James Huck, the operations technician. Huck was a member of the first Advanced Individual Training course for UAS operators at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., which started Oct. 7, 2002.

Huck has much experience

operating the Shadow 200 to include operating it in support of combat operations in Iraq. Huck explains that the platoon has three military occupational specialties in its organization: nine 15-W UAS operators, three 35-T military intelligence system maintenance specialists and a 52-D power-generation equipment repairer.

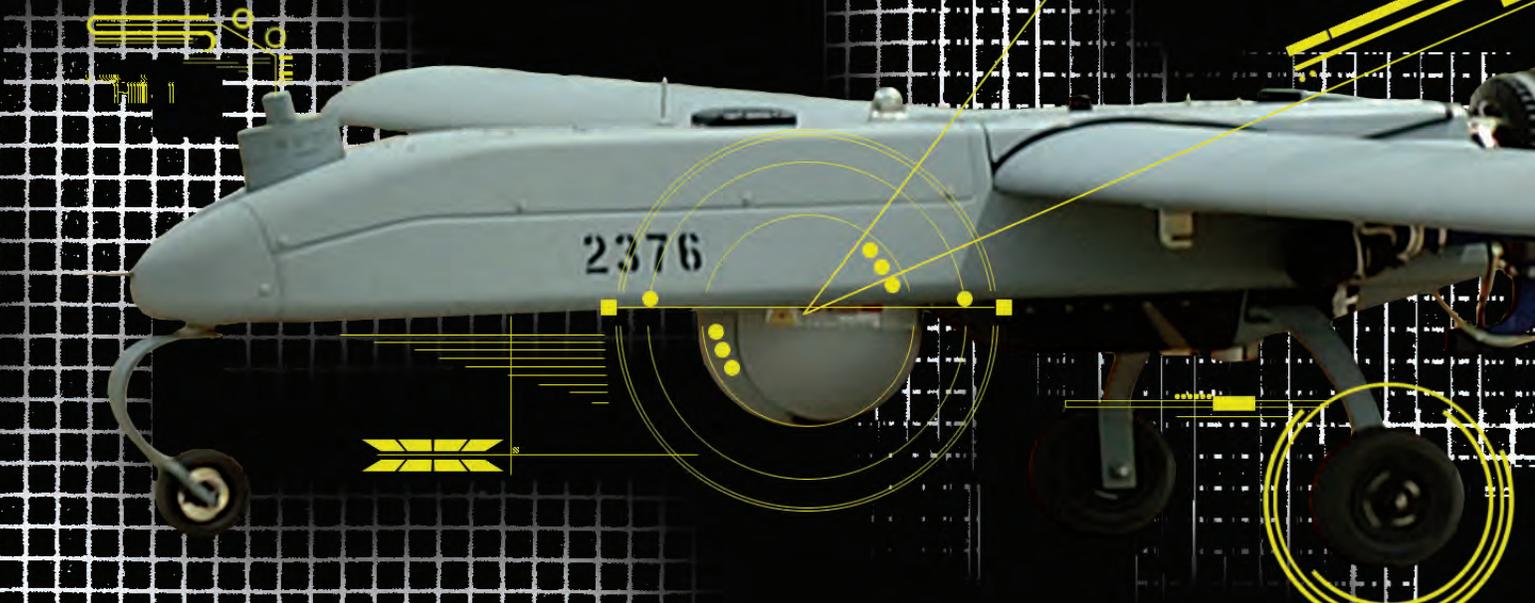
Huck describes the mission of the UAS platoon. "We use our aircraft's video and still photographic capabilities to provide the unit we are supporting with real time intelligence data. We can support any maneuver unit in the field, be it a transportation unit conducting convoys or an infantry unit conducting combat operations. The Shadow 200 has Forward Looking Infra Red viewing capabilities and "sees" heat patterns in the day or night time."

The Shadow 200 is crewed by an air vehicle operator (AVO) who is the "pilot" and the mission payload operator (MPO) who operates the still and video Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) cameras. The two crewmembers fly the Shadow 200 from a HMMVW mounted shelter; at the airfield the Shadow operates from.

The Shadow 200 operates best

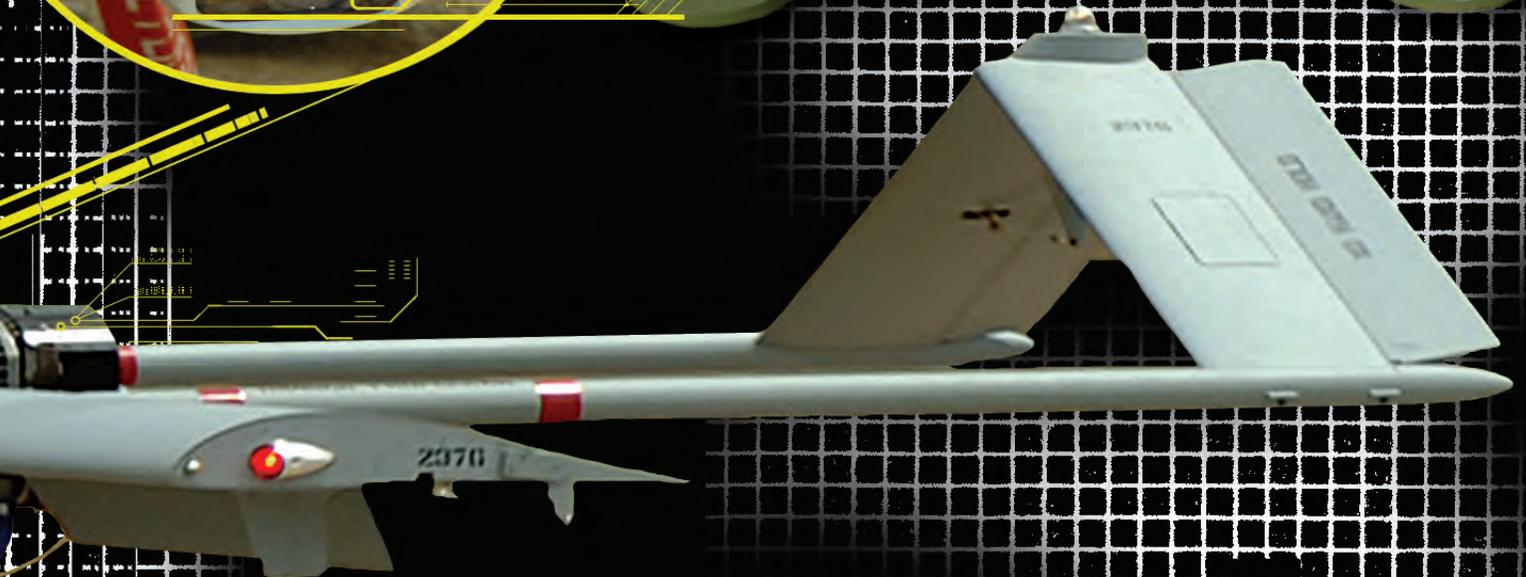
at an altitude of 3,000 feet above ground level. When the aircraft is at the proper angle to conduct surveillance, any personnel in the target area won't be able to hear it. The MPO can feed footage and photos in real time to the unit being supported. The real time capability allows the supported unit to see all kinds of activities such as enemy personnel on an objective or mortars being fired instantly. This gives the unit commander the ability to react immediately or change the operation plan to deal with new threats before the unit is engaged. Shadow 200 surveillance can also be used to prevent fratricide because friendly units' locations can be pinpointed as they conduct their missions.

The Shadow 200 can fly for up to four hours per mission, but most missions usually last about two hours. When the Shadow 200 is a kilometer from the airfield, the Tactical Automated Landing System takes control from the AVO to land



it. The Shadow 200 is landed and stopped by arresting gear similar to the cable and net found on an aircraft carrier.

The UAS platoon was started in January 2006 and is fully mission capable as of Aug. 1, 2009 after Annual Training concluded. The platoon is the 10th Army National Guard unit to receive the Shadow 200 aircraft.



# Battlefield Odyssey Run

## Results in Proud Finish

Story by Maj. James Shay

Twenty-three individuals on two teams, representing the 110th Fighter Wing, competed in the inaugural 200-mile, American Odyssey Relay Run early this summer. The race started in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, and passed through numerous national historical and scenic landmarks in Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and Washington, D.C. Relay participants ran through Gettysburg and Antietam National Battlefields, down the C&O canal, across the Mason-Dixon Line, along a portion of the Appalachian Trail, and through Harpers Ferry, West Virginia. The race ended on the mall in Washington D.C, near the Jefferson Memorial, with each 110th Fighter Wing team member crossing the finish line together. The two-day relay race consisted of more than 100 teams from 42 states and several foreign countries. Battle Creek was among the first teams to sign up, more than a year before the race was run. Each team member ran three relay legs during the course of the relay, with each leg varying in length from three to eight miles.

**H i s t o r i c a l**  
Interest: Antietam was the site of the bloodiest single-day battle of the Civil War. Harpers Ferry, West Virginia was the site of John Brown's historic raid on the federal arsenal located there, a pivotal event during the run up to the Civil War. 110th Fighter Wing Commander, Col. Rodger Seidel, participated in the race and took time to share his passion for Civil War history along the way. "I am fascinated by this place and by the tremendous sacrifices made here by our forefathers," stated Seidel. "It is humbling, but necessary, to bear witness to the courage and daring of those who preserved our country during one of its darkest hours."

Planning, the key to success and safety: Lt. Col. James W. Kiel, 110th Fighter Wing LRS Commander and race organizer, was happy with the race and the outcome.

"Overall I was very pleased with how both teams performed," he said. "Each team finished roughly on the schedule we predicted in our pre-race calculations. Working together to get 11 to 12 members of each team through each of their three relay legs, over 200 miles of remote and rugged terrain in 34 hours, proved to be an excellent exercise of our logistical, safety, situational awareness, and teamwork skills. You have to work together as a team every step of the way to get every runner safely through to the end of the race and we did," stated Kiel.

Kiel began planning for the relay more than a year before it started and was updating the plan up to the start of the race.

"Similar to any military endeavor, you must plan to succeed, create a plan flexible enough to adapt to constantly changing circumstances, execute the plan, and adjust on the fly as conditions change," stated Kiel. "Like any successful mission, we learned a lot, and there are things we will do differently in the future. However, I am extremely proud of every member of both of the race teams. Each individual gave their all and can be proud of

their part in this accomplishment."

Seidel was proud to be a competitor and observer of the relay race. "I am also proud of each member of our teams," stated Seidel. "To be safe and successful, this needed to be a very well planned event, and it was. Running through the remote hills and back country of three states, at all hours is not without risk, yet the entire relay was executed safely by the 110th. In the end this was an outstanding example of teamwork and sportsmanship. It was very evident to all of the other teams we encountered that the spirit of the 110th Fighter Wing and the Michigan Air National Guard was shining through."



110th Fighter Wing "Road Hawgs" at The Starting Line (Left to Right) Senior Master Sgt. Rolando Garza, Maj. James Shay, Senior Master Sgt. Chuck Combs, Senior Master Sgt. Chris Nozicka, Tech. Sgt. Ryan Schewe, Tech. Sgt. Patrick Weatherbee (in front), Tech. Sgt. Norma Carley, Lt. Col. James Kiel, Ms. Natalie Quisenberry, Tech. Sgt. Tim Hardin, Senior Airman Dave Havice, Col. Rodger Seidel. Photo courtesy of the American Odyssey Relay Photo not available for team "Road Runners."

# 1st Sgt. Receives Bronze Star for Deployment

Story and photos by Sgt. Ronald Flowers

First Sergeant Eric C. Post of Shelby Township, Mich., has been awarded the Bronze Star for meritorious service while deployed from 2007-2008 as a team medic specializing in combat medicine. During the deployment Post and his team of medics became combat advisors. It was here that Post became an advisor to the brigade surgeon.

During his deployment Post also operated as a trainer. The focus of this training was the Afghan National Civil Order Police, utilizing a Combat Medic course that Post developed. He was responsible for his team of trainers that were sent out to various parts of Afghanistan to train the Afghan National Army during which time they successfully trained more than 15 Afghan National Army Personnel. A large focus for the training was intravenous insertion. Post stated that "I wanted to make sure if anything happened to me, my team would be able to help me. I depended on them as much as they depended on me."

Post became the only Army Advisor on a Marine Advisor Team and became an integral part of that team. He was later told

that "He would have made a fine Marine."

Post is assigned to the 1171st Medical Company, based in Ypsilanti and has been a member of the Michigan National Guard for 19 years. Post attended basic training in 1990, at Fort Benning, Ga.

During his military career, Post has received numerous awards including the Army Good Conduct Medal, Army Meritorious Service Medal, and the Army Achievement Medal.

Post is employed by the City of Sterling Heights Fire Department as a fireman and paramedic. He holds a degree in Fire Science from Lansing Community College and a paramedic certification from Davenport University.

Post has three children, Ashlee, Eric Jr. and Amber. Post is the son of Robert and Dian Post, of Grand Rapids, Mich., and Mr. Post (a retired Army First Sergeant) says that "His mom and I are very proud of him and all that he has accomplished. He has reached the top of his rank...but not his abilities. There is more in store."



## Michigan Soldier Represents at Air Assault School

Story and photo illustration by 2nd Lt. Michael May



"Air Assault...Air Assault...Air Assault...Air Assault"

Air Assault Soldiers shudder when they remember the mantra yelled every time their left feet hit the ground during Air Assault school. Many try, and many fail during the short but grueling course, but Army Sgt. Josh Sheldon, an artillery repair specialist from the 1071st Maintenance Company at Camp Grayling, took it all in stride.

Sheldon never flinched as he pushed himself to the physical and mental limit while attending the course offered by the National Guard's Warrior Training Center located at Fort Benning, Ga. Requirements for the course include: an obstacle course, a two-mile run in ACUs, a six-mile ruck march, written and practical exams on Air Assault aircraft, operations and landing zone preparation, sling loading and rappelling. Sheldon's highlight was when he finished in third place in the infantry standard 12-mile ruck march, the course's culminating event. He did it in two hours, 15 minutes, beating out many hardened active duty infantrymen.

Sheldon said that he felt lucky to have family there to help him along the way. Josh's uncle, Sgt. First Class Tim Sheldon, Headquarters Detachment, Joint Forces Headquarters, was able to attend the course with him. They encouraged and pushed each other daily to succeed.

Although nearly 330 students began the quest, only 156 students earned the coveted wings on graduation day. Congratulations to Josh and Tim Sheldon and to the other Michigan Soldiers who graduated with them, 2nd Lt. Richard Sands, 1-119th Field Artillery, and 2nd Lt. Michael May, 177th Military Police Brigade. For more information on how you can be Air Assault too, please contact your battalion retention non commissioned officer or officer recruiter. Air Assault!

# Michigan Army and Air National Guard Promotions

May 15, 2009 through August 15, 2009

## Army Guard

<b>Colonel</b>	Rye, David	Bramlett, Kyle	Stafford, Mark	Grimes, Troy	Robinson, Brent	Brooks, Steven
Losinski, Mark	Squier, David	Bridges, Danielle	Tripp, Andrew	Grimm, Jacob	Rodriguez, Daniel	Brown, Derek
<b>Lt. Col.</b>	Wall, Brian	Brown, Sabrina	Wakeham, Thomas	Grzybowski, Tiffany	Romero, Mario	Brownlee, Alexander
Awadi, Jason	Weidmayer, Darlene	Brown, Wendy	Whittenburg, William	Hansen, Jenna	Sargent, Jesse	Bucholtz, Kevin
Connelly, Ryan	Wierman, Troy	Burch, Candace	Wilenius, David	Hardin, Ebony	Schafer, Nicholas	Burkitt, Amanda
Larrabee, Christopher	<b>Sgt. 1st Class</b>	Caron, Seth	Witt, Matthew	Harwood, Matthew	Scheuneman, Sarah	Burns, Michelle
Washington, Oliver	Dillon, Bradford	Carrick, Terry	Wizorek, Allen	Hicks, Lee	Schippers, Jessica	Bush, Trever
<b>Maj.</b>	Fabus, Meranda	Cookson, Sara	<b>Spc.</b>	Kanary, John	Sherlund, Aaron	Cady, Robert
Gray, Daniel	Foster, Damon	Croff, Chad	Achatz, John	Kemler, Jack	Skaggs, Justin	Callaway, Christopher
Harry, Michael	Freed, Steven	Cullen, Andrew	Agema, Timothy	Kler, Donald	Smith, Jeffrey	Clifton, Timothy
Johnson, Allyn	Haase, Shawn	Dale, Daniel	Anger, Rebekah	Knapp, Rachael	Stepanski, Ryan	Clafton, Timothy
Prestegaard, Dean	Harris, Kirk	Dankovic, Laura	Augustine, Chance	Kohtala, Seth	Straub, Aaron	Cobb, Andiago
<b>Capt.</b>	Kind, Gene	Dickersonhouilles, Gryphon	Bain, Andrew	Krenzke, John	Sullivan, Ronald	Cole, Frankie
Austhof, Jeffrey	Mattonen, Carl	Dolan, Stephen	Beaudoin, Michael	Krzyzanowski, Angela	Swope, Nicholas	Coleman, William
Blocker, James	Nelson, David	Enbodyclayton, Toni	Bloomfield, Kaitlyn	Lafave, Brantly	Taylor, Sarah	Corey, Ashley
Couillard, Jeffrey	Wallace, Keenon	Ferriss, Jeramie	Blumberg, Nathan	Lomax, Steve	Thompson, Nathyn	Correa, Brandon
Jorstad, Chad	<b>Staff Sgt.</b>	Fuller, April	Bodendorfer, Nathan	Ludwiczak, Ashley	Trepanier, Richard	Cowell, Derek
Warner, Matthew	Abbott, Jason	Fults, James	Bolyea, Johnny	Mack, Timothy	Tucker, Krystal	Crampton, Daniel
<b>2nd Lt.</b>	Asakevich, Gregory	Geldersma, Jerry	Brent, Vernon	Markham, Andrew	Tuckey, Charles	Crockett, Michael
Bishop, Myron	Boyd, Michael	Goodwin, Christopher	Buchanan, Michael	Marshall, Jonathan	Vanmaldeghem, Steven	Cruz, Troy
Briggs, Jeremy	Burton, Michael	Grace, Brandon	Bultema, Luke	Mccauley, Matthew	Vasquez, Corrina	Deace, Brandon
Harkins, Thomas	Carpenter, Joshua	Hall, Charles	Byl, Martha	Mccormick, Jack	Walker, Cody	Dietzel, Jacob
Heady, Charles	Corder, Cameron	Isaac, Sean	Cassell, Mark	Mcdonald, Mark	Wallace, Scott	Dunham, Justin
Kendrick, Jamiel	Corona, Corrina	Jenkins, Jason	Chevalier, Ronald	Mcgill, Dylan	Watson, Richard	Dye, Matthew
Martin, Devanne	Elston, James	Johnson, Grace	Clark, Robert	Mcmullen, Donald	Wessels, Megan	Edgell, Jeffrey
Roland, John	Garza, Travis	Johnson, Justin	Cody, Tyler	Mead, Kamron	Wilhoite, Keith	Ellsworth, Jerald
<b>Warrant Officer 5</b>	Hodroj, Ibrahim	Kimball, Ryan	Crego, Michael	Meddaugh, Kevin	Wilson, James	Emersen, Shane
Dembowske, Todd	Hulbert, Travis	Krozal, Kenneth	Currie, Joseph	Melendez, Jesus	Zamora, Jacob	England, John
<b>Warrant Officer 3</b>	James, Chauncey	Lamug, Cromwell	Cushman, Nathan	Menara, Louis	Zelenskiy, Sergey	Fisher, Nicolas
Dexter, Donald	Jaqua, Matthew	Lee, Jason	Dake, Kristen	Mitchell, Dustin	Zelinski, Simon	Fouty, Timothy
Good, Christopher	Jones, Kevin	Letchner, Matthew	Day, Kenneth	Moore, Joshua	<b>Pfc.</b>	Fredrickson, Kristal
Lingeman, Lora	Jorae, Kevin	Lilla, Lance	Dubay, Ivy	Moore, Rachel	Abbott, Shane	Fuller, Cody
<b>Warrant Officer 2</b>	Klopp, Eric	Macksoud, Joseph	Eastman, Guy	Morris, Nicholas	Agar, Amber	Gannon, Robert
Accavitti, John	Lemmer, David	Martinovski, Darko	Eberly, Jeremiah	Nalette, Richard	Alhassan, Amir	Gay, Nicholas
Moore, Ricci	Lewis, Kenneth	Michmerhuizen, Phillip	Eitrem, Jeremy	Neuwirth, Jarrett	Allen, Delanie	Gidcomb, Aaron
<b>Warrant Officer 1</b>	Marvin, Michael	Montalvo, Lucas	Fairbanks, Kayla	Ochenski, Kenneth	Allison, Casey	Gilman, Jordan
Easlick, Anthony	Ochoa, Richard	Newland, Kent	Fawley, Gregory	Pardee, Phillip	Allison, Stephanie	Gilmore, Eric
Mcneel, Ross	Plum, Michael	Prentler, Joseph	Feldpausch, Daniel	Patterson, Christian	Archambeau, David	Gozdzieski, Alicia
Patterson, Michael	Pueblo, Ashley	Proulx, Michael	Fidler, Trey	Pena, Donovan	Arndt, Jordan	Hall, Brandon
Perkins, Nick	Riselay, Mark	Rehkopf, Arthur	Finkbeiner, Jordan	Perry, Carmen	Bal, Allan	Hawley, Kevin
Ratliff, James	Siebert, Bernard	Richardson, Aaron	Fisher, Richard	Peterson, Nickolous	Banks, Dominique	Helferich, Alexander
Rodgers, Nicholas	Slezinger, Vincent	Roop, William	Foote, Terry	Phillips, Christopher	Barkley, Nikolas	Hewitt, Justin
<b>Sgt. Maj.</b>	Stanley, Timothy	Ruiz, Marx	Fornier, Caleb	Porcaro, Angela	Benally, Starlite	Hitsman, Kodie
Wesaw, Jason	Sweat, Amy	Sabo, Daniel	Fries, Jordan	Pulling, John	Berryhill, Kevin	Hogan, James
<b>Master Sgt.</b>	<b>Sgt.</b>	Schulte, Jessica	Fuentes, David	Reynolds, Bryan	Blackwell, Theodore	Hooks, Matthew
Bain, William	Adolph, Michelle	Sluka, Shane	Garcia, Brandon	Rice, Katherine	Bliss, Justin	Horvath, Nicholas
Cregar, Jon	Aiello, Frank	Spencer, Jacob	Gardner, Aaron	Richards, Thomas	Bonner, Raymond	Hughley, Erin
Nichols, Michael	Alvarado, Willie		Grandowicz, Thomas	Rizor, Bethany	Bourner, Jeremy	Ingles, Alicia
Reese, Vitula	Bell, Stephanie			Roberts, Phillip	Breniser, Jennifer	Ingraham, Prescott

# Michigan Army and Air National Guard Promotions

May 15, 2009 through August 15, 2009

Jahnke, Jared	Palmer, Christine	Willette, Brett	Leach, Nathon	Yates, Kevin	Coleman, Dennis M.	Tech. Sgt.
Jerz, Joshua	Papenfuse, Gillen	Wyman, Justin	Longthorne, Steven	Yuncker, Justin	Deming, Cassandra	Alexander, Matthew
Jezeck, Jesse	Parker, Eric	PV2	Lukasak, Michael	<b>Air Guard</b>	Donohue, Hillary E.	Anderson, Christopher
Johnston, Corey	Parker, Terry	Bader, Lauren	Mallon, Michael	Col.	James, Jesse L.	Baker, Israel M.
Jones, Devin	Phillips, Ricky	Bantle, Matthew	Manor, Jarrett	Henry, Douglas J.	Johnson, Brentnell	Bastien, Richard T.
Jones, Justin	Plumb, James	Barnes, Davonta	Massie, Nicholas	Isabelle, Leonard W.	Klein, Stephen D.	Berger, Sven G.
Jones, Robert	Prawatsrichai, Robert	Benjamin, Allison	Mccabe, Christopher	Sanclemente, David	Labruzzzy, Melissa L.	Bixel, Jason J.
Kass, Kyle	Queen, Christopher	Blockton, Eric	Mccord, Dirk	Teff, Bryan J.	Meeks, Denise	Blumline, Brian G.
Kaupp, Ian	Ramon, Hector	Blount, London	Mercado, Felix	Lt. Col.	Slater, Trevor J.	Cleaver, Robin W.
Keimer, Frank	Randall, Amanda	Bokmiller, Brandon	Meurer, Lane	Becker, John R.	Thomson, James R.	Crocker, Joseph M.
Kerberskey, Amber	Randall, Roderick	Bond, Grady	Mitchell, Sarrah	Campbell, Sean W.	Vogel, Hillary E.	Cuttle, Scott D.
Kerby, Robert	Reinert, Dustin	Boyd, Brenda	Montgomery, Quintesha	Holtz, Shawn E.	Wilson, Scott P.	Eby, Joshua A.
Kimbel, Adriane	Reis, Travis	Brooks, Jacob	Moore, Travis	Leon, Constantine A.	<b>Master Sgt.</b>	Eley, Derek M.
Kurtenbach, Joseph	Richardson, Devaughn	Brown, Daniel	Morgan, Bryan	Seely, David V.	Alves, James M.	Fedon, Deborah A.
Lapratt, Barbara	Roberts, Sarina	Brown, Randy	Nelson, Cody	Voelker, Michael K.	Bahleda, Nick	Fischer, Gary L.
Le, Kythao	Robertsodell, Ashley	Buchanan, Timothy	Nelson, Vincent	Maj.	Baldry, William D.	Forche, Kenneth W.
Limanen, Samuel	Ronan, Sean	Burchell, Joseph	Newcomer, Matthew	Burris, Wendy R.	Bates, Eric B.	Frazer, Akenty A.
Lindh, Jon	Rose, Drew	Byl, Philip	Oswald, Nathan	Castro, Arturo F.	Brown, Troy M.	Gilliam, Bradley S.
Lloyd, Tad	Salazar, Christopher	Casey, Heather	Palevic, Kaplan	Howell, James D.	Cressell, Charles M.	Ginzel, William L.
Lorio, Joshua	Schroen, Allison	Clark, Taylor	Palmateer, Eric	Ring, Kurtis P.	Dittenber, Adam G.	Gomillion, Justin L.
Lorrison, John	Seratti, Michael	Cobb, Kevin	Palmore, Raphael	<b>Capt.</b>	Everman, Marion W.	Hendricks, Steven C.
Lyons, Miles	Smith, Andre	Collins, Cody	Pickard, Darrin	Laske, James W.	Fetterman, Donald	Houchins, Jerome J.
Macgregor, Corey	Sneathen, Jon	Constantineau, Edward	Polsgrove, Christina	Miller, Michelle L.	Genter, Martin R.	Huff, Matthew T.
Malek, Spencer	Space, Evan	Cressey, Calvin	Richards, Bobby	Modock, Shaun P.	Hanet, Robert P.	Jasman, Michael E.
Maranian, Johnathan	Spohn, Joshua	Crozier, Jamie	Rodriguez, Manuel	Monarch, Matthew J.	Harr, John T.	Jemison, Michael W.
Martin, Shaun	Stclair, Brett	Demick, Michael	Sharon, Heaven	Platz, Christopher J.	Hayes, Harold E.	Jonkman, Benjamin J.
Mays, Charles	Stephens, Mark	Diethrich, Kurtis	Simons, Adam	Wilson, Paul W.	Jackman, Rena K.	Kilgore, Michael W.
Mcelrath, Jamar	Stone, Angelica	Duffy, Kenneth	Sleppy, Daniel	<b>1st Lt.</b>	Kinnucan, Matthew	Kummerl, Christopher
Mckim, Joseph	Stonecipher, Michael	Engelman, Alex	Smith, Khaliah	Chapman, Matthew	Knepp, Hope E.	Lee, Kinya A.
Mesaros, Kristopher	Tackett, Bryant	Erkard, Gerald	Snooks, Charles	Devries, Brett A.	Korotko, Joseph A.	Lewis, Dana M.
Michael, Brian	Tackett, Patrick	Esterline, Matthew	Strandberg, Jerry	Overton, Russell R.	Krzewski, John T.	Little, Alan D.
Miesler, Wesley	Tefft, Tyler	Evans, Aaron	Sullivan, Ryan	Turner, Monique S.	Manor, Heather L.	Luci, Scott E.
Miller, Justine	Tillmon, Joshua	Franckowiak, Spring	Tabares, Oscar	Warn, Craig S.	Mcgrail, Brian C.	Massa, Nicholas G.
Miranda, Jose	Trivett, Alfred	Goedike, Cody	Thompson, Shannon	<b>2nd Lt.</b>	Mckendry, Royce R.	Mccroskery, Matthew
Moore, Andrew	True, Brian	Grigg, Cody	Underwood, Kelvin	Brown, Kristie L.	Mitchell, Robert J.	Pensenstadler, Mark
Moore, Michael	Turek, David	Hale, Carol	Ussery, Erica	Jenney, William K.	Morgan, Ralph S.	Reichel, John D.
Morales, Miguel	Twiss, Michael	Harper, Kyle	Vance, Devin	Nichelson, Broc L.	Morphew, Hope E.	Reiss, Gregory S.
Morris, Deionney	Vajko, Stephen	Haywood, Joshua	Vandereyk, Christopher	Rexer, William F.	Murphy, John L.	Rhea, George F.
Mulder, Jacob	Vannoy, Tyler	Hemstreet, Ryan	Vincent, Michael	Sniderman, Arren M.	Nicholls, Mark J.	Ryder, Roger J.
Mullins, Kendall	Voakes, Christopher	Hendrick, Justin	Wagner, Alexander	<b>Chief Master Sgt.</b>	Oakley, Stephanie	Schaeffer, Kimberley
Naramor, Joshua	Warnock, Christopher	Holton, Christopher	Weaver, Robert	Eddy, David V.	Penn, Brian C.	Sciarrino, John V.
Nguyen, Johnbao	Warlock, Christopher	Hornbeck, Orlando	Webb, Jamie	Neill, David L.	Peri, Kirk J.	Shirkey, Kevin J.
Norton, Kyle	Warren, Braden	Janisse, Michael	Williams, Jonathan	Person, Kristina R.	Porter, Dawn M.	Sibula, Mark D.
Norton, William	Watt, Esperanza	Judge, Kyle	Wittenmyer, Gary	Schwartz, David R.	Russell, Seth S.	Spreeman, Erik G.
Olger, Cameryn	Weber, Justin	Jurich, Anthony	Wolf, Timothy	Shankleton, Robert	Schneider, Danniell	Tackett, Jeffery A.
Orr, Joshua		Koblinski, Kyle		<b>Senior Master Sgt.</b>	Scott, David K.	<b>Staff Sgt.</b>
				Barros, Michael C.	Tremblay, Brian S.	Abdallah, Mariam
				Charron, Brian J.	Trombetta, Jennifer	Amos, Stanton L.
					Wesley, Jeffrey A.	Azzopardi, Adam
					White, Michael D.	

# Air National Guard Promotions continued

Bigler, Shaun M.  
Bishop, Michael  
Black, Lyle B.  
Brillon, Michael J.  
Bruinsma, Andrew  
Burgess, Eric J.  
Chase, Matthew  
Denney, Shawn  
Deno, David L.  
Diciuccio, Charles  
Edwards, Teresa  
Ganzie, Kenneth  
Glynn, Brian T.  
Gordon, Kenneth  
Gruss, Jon C.

Gutzka, David E.  
Hanna, Dennis J.  
Hartmann, Michael  
Helsel, Amber D.  
Hodgman, Michael  
Holtz, Jonathan  
Hyde, Victor P.  
Judd, James N.  
Kindt, Justin D.  
Lecluyse, Holly  
Maher, Jacob M.  
Maki, Ted A.  
Manuel, Teresa  
Matheison, Tracy  
Mayer, John S.

Miller, Sarah A.  
Miller, Thomas E.  
Milligan, John W.  
Nanko, Brian J.  
Navalta, Katie M.  
Odum, Tina C.  
Pittel, Mark A.  
Polk, Daniel L.  
Postma, Heath D.  
Rayder, Justin F.  
Rife, Christopher  
Rudolph, Andrew  
Runey, Curtis S.  
Sedlow, Ryan M.

Sheets, Kenneth  
Shinn, Brad T.  
Smith, Jeremy S.  
Solis, Aaron J.  
Strom, Aaron D.  
Taylor, Destiny R.  
Taylor, Ruel L.  
Townslley, Destiny  
Turner, Jason L.  
Vanmeekeren, Todd  
Vaughan, Barry T.  
Velasco, Robert A.  
Vermeersch, Adam  
Wilcox, Tina C.  
Williams, John C.

Wortley, Jeffrey  
York, Todd S.

## Senior Airman

Baker, Benjamin  
Bastow, Alexander  
Bayones, William  
Boroughf, Jonathan  
Brewer, Matthew  
Burdett, Brian E.  
Den Boer, Matthew  
Fisher, Garrett M.  
Fitzpatrick, Sean

Frohlich, Robert  
Gardner, Cory J.  
Groll, Phillip K.  
Hyde, Burke M.  
Jock, Ryan C.  
Kirchoff, Kenneth  
Layton, Andrew  
Leppek, Derek  
Manning, Cecil  
Mclean, Roderick  
Mix, Kevin A.  
Preston, Michael

Pretzel, Michael  
Putinsky, Nicholas  
Scramlin, Melissa  
Smith, Justin A.  
Taylor, Peter A.  
Turner, Brandon  
Wade, Kevin T.  
Wolf, Andrew J.

## Airman 1st Class

Jackson, Alfonzsa  
**Airman**  
Childress, Katelyn

## Only a Soldiers Son...



"My youngest son, Tyler, had his end of the year school singing thing that they do and they opened with the National Anthem. You'll be able to pick him out in the picture. When he did that, through the entire song, at first my jaw dropped and I'd be lying if I said that my eyes were completely dry. When I asked him why afterwards he

didn't have much to say except that he just wanted to. For a 7-year-old boy who is struggling hard with the fact that his dad is going back to Iraq in a couple months (when I return from this tour I will have spent a bit over a third of his life in Iraq), to show that kind of respect for Soldiers through mimicry is astounding. Even the tremendous amount of disappointment he's experienced in the time I've had to be away from home hasn't destroyed his pride and respect for his dad and his country. Only a Soldier's son.....," said Sgt. Trey Sumner of his son seen saluting in the picture above. Photo courtesy of Sgt. Trey Sumner



## TAPS

Sgt. James Erickson, (ret), 62, April 5, 2009

Staff Sgt. Norman Tucker, 61, May 14, 2009

Sgt. 1st Class Robert Frazier, (ret), 78, May 16, 2009

Sgt. Frederic Flodin, 56, May 16, 2009

Chief Warrant Officer 4 George Villeneuve Jr., (ret), 81, May 27, 2009

Staff Sgt. Robert Beckman, (ret), 56, May 29, 2009

Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Laseur, (ret), 76, May 29, 2009

Staff Sgt. Jerry Kraycs, (ret), 68, June 7, 2009

Staff Sgt. Thomas Kogler, 43, June 20, 2009

Spc. 5 Andrew McIntosh, (ret), 96, June 23, 2009

Staff Sgt. Marc White, 49, June 29, 2009

Platoon Sgt. Edward Ingersoll, 70, June 29, 2009

Capt. David Cartwright Jr., 39, June 30, 2009

Chief Master Sgt. Gary Shreves, (ret), 62, July 13, 2009

Chief Master Sgt. Ernest Mabarak, (ret), 79, July 23, 2009

Platoon Sgt. William Bailey, (ret), 74, July 26, 2009

# Duncan does Good

Story by Diane Epps

You can hear the soft clicking echo of his steps in the hallway, a backpack slung tightly to him sways back and forth with the movements. He looks side to side as he calmly walks through the hall, searching for a particular door. He has a regal look about him, tall and slender with dark eyes and white hair dotted with patches of black.

When they reach the correct doorway he stands patiently waiting for the invitation to come in. An elderly veteran skootches himself up a bit on the bed, a smile breaks across his face “Come on Duncan” he waits for the soft leap up to his bed. Receiving a welcoming lick on the cheek the veteran pats Duncan with a shaking hand, his pleasure at the visit obvious.

The three-year old carefully moves around the elderly man and lying down adjusts himself close to him. This will make the veteran’s day, this visit from one of the most feared dog breeds in the country. He lies down with a sigh, his movements stilled so the veteran can touch him with ease.

Duncan is a service dog. Trained to work with children or adults in a service capacity, he listens to children read or just makes an older veteran happy by snuggling up on a bed. It isn’t unusual for service dogs to visit schools or a hospital except Duncan is a unique service dog. Duncan is a purebred Staffordshire terrier, more commonly known as a Pit Bull.

He yawns lazily as his owner chats with the veteran. Completely at home with all kinds of people it is hard to imagine this animal has a dubious reputation for violent attacks. Duncan was rescued from the Calhoun County Animal Shelter by his owners John and Danielle Di Pierro of Battle Creek. Once Duncan became a member of their family the Di Pierro’s wanted to find a way to share Duncan with other people. The service dog program seemed like a logical path.

Trained using German he responds to commands easily and he successfully completed the service dog program with honors. The Di Pierro’s then looked for ways to use Duncan to help dispel the reputation of the breed as being vicious attack dogs. Danielle

is an elementary teacher and made arrangements for Duncan to participate in the reading program at the school she works in.

The project was so successful that the Di Pierro’s asked family for suggestions of other locations they might share Duncan’s friendly temperament. The Di Pierro’s have family that work for the National Guard and the Veteran’s homes were suggested. After some skeptical coordination with the Veteran’s Home in Battle Creek, Duncan made his first visit to the center. The reaction of the veterans was so positive that the couple made arrangements to visit the home regularly.

There are plenty of studies to support the positive impact of animals on ill people. Veterans being connected to community members looking for a way to show support for our military personnel makes the impact that much better. The Di Pierro’s admit that they have benefitted as much as the veterans they visit, they feel as though they are giving something back to the vets for the service they have given to the country. Everyone wins in this relationship.

Now Duncan and the Di Pierro’s are regular faces in the halls. Staff and patients alike welcome his visits and many still comment on the gentle nature of this allegedly vicious dog breed. The Di Pierro’s have since added another Pit Bull to their home and hope to start him in the service dog project soon. In the meantime, Duncan and his backpack sway calmly through the halls of the Veteran Center, wagging his tail and providing a welcoming lick to the friends he has made.



Photo courtesy of the Di Pierro family

Duncan sits with school children during reading time. Duncan is a Staffordshire Terrier trained as a service dog to listen to the children read in their schools or to make special visits to veterans.



Department of Military and Veterans Affairs  
Michigan Army and Air National Guard  
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Lansing, Michigan 48906

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