

GEORGIA GUARDSMAN

★ ★ SERVING THE NATIONAL GUARD AND STATE DEFENSE FORCE OF GEORGIA ★ ★

June 2011



NATO Sec. Gen. Visits, praises Georgia National Guard

**Operation Vigilant Guard
puts HRF, first responders to the test**

**Georgia honors those who gave all
Memorial Day 2011**



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GEORGIA NATIONAL GUARDIAN

★★ SERVING THE NATIONAL GUARD AND STATE DEFENSE FORCE OF GEORGIA ★★

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Chief Warrant Officer 3 Jamie Higgins sends a South Carolina pitch on its way toward center field and a single at the top of the third inning.

GEORGIA DEFEATS SOUTH CAROLINA DURING ANNUAL SOFTBALL CLASSIC

Story and photo by Sgt. Richard Holdridge
124th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment
Georgia Army National Guard

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., May 20, 2011 – The Georgia National Guard’s Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) Wild Boars came out on top today as they rooted out a 16 to 13 victory over the South Carolina Guard’s Palmetto Pride in the fourth annual Softball Classic. Played annually in recognition of Armed Forces Day, this year’s seven-inning showdown was played on Gammon Field at Fort McPherson.

With the Pride holding onto a 12-5 lead in the bottom of the third inning, it looked like the win would go to the traveling team out of Columbia, S.C. The Boars, led by the solid pitching of retired Sgt. Maj. Ronald George and the timely hitting of Sgt. John Marple, both with Georgia’s Recruiting and Retention Division, chipped away at that lead.

Marple had two homeruns and six runs batted in. He hit his second three-run homer in the bottom of the sixth inning, with South Carolina holding on to a delicate 13-12 lead. Georgia would later tack on another insurance run, with George making his way onto the mound in the top of the seventh to shut the door for the Boars’ final victory.

“It feels great, especially against another state,” said

Georgia JFHQ 1st Sgt. Robert Callahan, the Boars’ coach. “It was looking pretty rough for us there for awhile. I had to make changes in the field, but those changes paid off for us in the end.”

Callahan says his team only had four practices, which made it tough on his players when game time came, but their determination not to let South Carolina walk away with the win outweighed their lack of practice time.

According to Callahan, the Boars plan to play against South Carolina again, possibly in Columbia.

Like their coach, Callahan’s players agreed that the effort and teamwork put into making a comeback in the game reflected well on the Boars’ desire to leave the field with a win.

“It was an amazing feeling to come back from seven runs down and then go up three runs,” 116th Army Band Staff Sgt. Shelton Williams said. “In the end, though, I just had a lot of fun, and it didn’t matter who won or lost.”

Major Jonathan Roscoe, JFHQ commander, says that the Wild Boars may play other states, and that they hope to continue playing at Gammon Field despite the fact that Fort Macpherson will close down in July.

“It’s been an outstanding facility and staff,” Roscoe said. “Gammon is home for us, and we’d like to continue playing here even after the post closes. At least that’s our hope because it’s a great old 1930’s style stadium – something you just don’t see any more.”

KENNESAW’S 277TH MAINTENANCE COMPANY RETURNS FROM AFGHAN DEPLOYMENT

Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Roy Henry
Public Affairs Office
Georgia Department of Defense

GEORGIA GUARD GARRISON TRAINING CENTER, Hinesville, Ga., April 30, 2011 — Kennesaw’s 277th Maintenance Company is back on Georgia soil after having been deployed for a year in Afghanistan. The unit made its homecoming official during an early evening ceremony at Fort Stewart’s Cottrell Parade field amidst a fanfare of music and the cheers and tears of more than 100 families, friends and fellow Soldiers.

“On behalf of Maj. Gen. Terry Nesbitt, our Adjutant General, and Maj. Gen. Maria L. Britt, our Army Guard Commander, it’s a great honor to have you home safe and with you families once again,” said Col. Michael Scholes, Sr., who commands the 277th’s parent headquarters, the 78th Homeland Response Force.

“Your state and your nation are very proud of the way you conducted yourselves,” Scholes told the more than 140 Soldiers standing before him. “I commend you for your actions and for the tenacity with which you lived out your commitment to accomplishing the mission.”

While supporting Operation Enduring Freedom, most of the 277th’s personnel were attached to the 17th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion out of Fort Elendorf in Richardson, Alaska, and stayed at Bagram Air Base in Kabul. Others, who were sent “outside the wire,” went to forward operating bases where they worked alongside the Army’s 360th Transportation Company and under the 101st Airborne Division, according to Capt. Anna Smith, the unit’s commander. The 277th also picked up the additional task of providing mentorship to Afghan Army maintenance units throughout those areas, she adds.

“Our job, which I believe we did very well, was to

provide our Afghan counterparts with best practices on things like running a maintenance shop, supply inventory, putting together and then operating proper maintenance standing operating procedures, documenting work and, basically, the running of a maintenance company,” Smith explained. “We went over everything with them, and I have no doubt we left them with – if you will – the ‘right tools’ with which to get the job done, even without anyone other than their own officers and noncommissioned officers looking over their shoulder.”

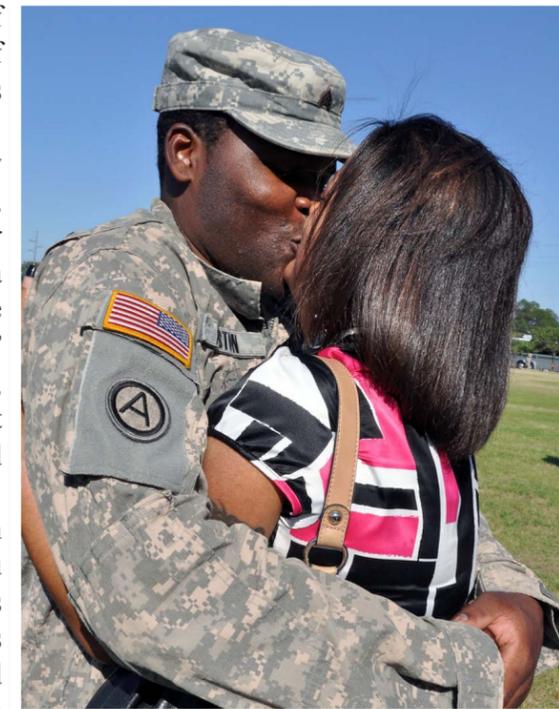
Probably the unit’s greatest challenge, she and 1st Sgt. Eric Roberson (her senior enlisted leader) agree, was the separation of the unit when various elements of the company ended up not operating together as they have always worked and trained.

“Making things mesh – learning the other unit’s ins and outs – took some time, but only a short time,” said Roberson, who hails from Dublin and is the full-time product control supervisor with the Guard’s Augusta Field Maintenance Shop.

“Our folks never let that old adage of, ‘this is how we do it,’ get in the way of getting the job done – no matter what the task or who they worked with,” Roberson added. “They got in there, took on the task, got it done, and moved on to the next thing. I don’t know that I could be any prouder than we are right now of the way this fine group of Soldiers handled themselves throughout the deployment.”

What some might consider a miracle is the fact that, during the time it was in country, the company only sustained two wounded – one of which was a Soldier who suffered minor injuries from an IED during a convoy detail, the other injured a finger while working on a vehicle.

Smith said with a smile, “We’ve brought them all home. We went to war, we did our jobs, and we all came home.”



NCO NOTEPAD



Pictured left to right are 1st Sgt. (Ret.) Randy Hardin, Sgt. 1st Class Claude Bohannon, Sgt. Maj. (Ret.) Jack McGill, Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Rainwater, Staff Sgt. (Ret.) Alvin Massingill and Capt. Joshua Lasley.

ALLCONNECT DONATES \$5,000 IN SUPPORT OF FALLEN SOLDIERS

ATLANTA, May 14, 2011 – Captain Joshua Lasley, account manager at Allconnect and HHT Commander for the 1-108th Cavalry of the Georgia Army National Guard, presented a \$5,000 donation to the Fallen Soldiers Memorial Committee today in support of the Fallen Soldiers Memorial that will be located at the 1-108th Cavalry Armory in Calhoun, Ga. The memorial is being built to honor the Soldiers who gave their lives for their country while serving in the 1-108th Cavalry.

Lasley, a Marietta resident who served with the 1-108th Cavalry in Afghanistan and Troop E, 1-108th Cavalry in Iraq while on military leave from Allconnect, says he is grateful for the generosity of everyone who has donated.

The group has raised \$35,000 toward their goal of \$50,000 and will break ground in June. The 13 names engraved on the bronze memorial represent the 1-108th's fallen heroes from the unit's deployment in support of both Operation Iraqi Freedom (2005-06) and Operation Enduring Freedom (2009-10).

"We are grateful for Josh's service to the military over the years, and Allconnect is proud to support this memorial to the fallen who gave the last full measure of devotion to their country," said Mark Miller, Allconnect CEO.

More information about the Fallen Soldiers Memorial, including the opportunity to donate a personalized brick, is available at www.108thmemorial.com. Members of the Memorial Committee include 1st Sgt. (Ret.) Randy Hardin,

Sgt. 1st Class Claude Bohannon, Sgt. Maj. Jack McGill (Ret.), Command Sgt. Maj. Scott Rainwater, Staff Sgt. (Ret.) Alvin Massingill and Sgt. 1st Class (Ret.) Greg Simmons.

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The 108th Memorial Committee recently contracted Star Granite of Elberton, Ga. for the solid granite wall which is in production at this time. Construction of phase one of the project in front of the Calhoun Armory is scheduled to begin the third week of May by Fox & Brindle.

While the 108th Memorial is in the phase one stage, donations are still needed to complete this project to honor the fallen heroes from the unit. More information can be found at www.108thmemorial.com or by calling one of the committee members from the contact page on the website. Donations can also be handled with the Community Foundation of North West Georgia at (706) 275-9117.



By Command Sgt. Maj. James Nelson, Jr.
State Command Sergeant Major
Georgia Department of Defense

One of the biggest issues Soldiers have on their minds when they deploy is making sure their families are taken care of while they are gone. Through help from our communities, Soldiers' minds are put to ease, allowing them to focus on their mission and their fellow Soldiers. It is these same communities and neighbors we often forget to thank for all the hard work they do in supporting our troops and their families in the war fight.

There are many groups and public organizations that assist our Soldiers by helping their families during a deployment. In almost every community, you will find family readiness groups (FRGs), VFWs, the Red Cross, and local church groups to name a few.

A family readiness group, the main purpose of which is to take care of the needs of the families of Soldiers while they are deployed in the service of their country, are comprised mostly of volunteers who put in 15-20 hours a week on top of their normal jobs and family responsibilities to organize fund-raisers and prepare care packages. Additionally, some volunteers meet with family members of deployed Soldiers and assist them in coping with the separation.

During my deployments to Bosnia and Iraq, I received many care packages sent by FRGs and letters from kids and churches.

One image that sticks out in my mind is when "welcome

home" signs lined the ten-mile stretch of road from Albany, Ga., to Sylvester, Ga., as we made our official return home from deployment. Can you imagine the effort that went into such a display of appreciation? All the same, it meant the world to us who were returning to see that level of support from our community.

In addition to organizations, our neighbors lend a helping hand as well. While I was deployed, my neighbor cut my grass for my family. He did this throughout the whole deployment.

This small neighborly gesture had a huge impact on my wife and me. It was one less thing my wife had to worry about, and I was very grateful to him – not just because he helped my wife with a household burden in my absence, but also because his charity helped me to serve my country.

I am sure others have similar stories about their neighbors helping out and lending a hand. Maybe it was your boss, or fellow co-workers.

In another endeavor to help out, American Legion Posts coordinate and organize food pantries which provide nonperishable foods and other necessities to the Soldiers' families. Most are supported by community donations.

And let us not forget the homecoming parades and celebratory events! It's heartening to see folks try to make all the hardship endured by the servicemen and their families worthwhile.

There are many more organizations and groups that contribute to helping our families, but space does not permit me to go on in further detail. But we know who you are.

There are not enough words to adequately describe how great the citizens of Georgia and our community organizations have been and how much their efforts are appreciated by all who wear our nation's uniform. I will simply end by saying "Thank you" for supporting our Guardsmen and our families. Your efforts and selfless love does not go unnoticed or forgotten.



NATO SECRETARY GENERAL VISITS, PRAISES GEORGIA NATIONAL GUARD



Major Gen. Nesbitt (seated left), listens while Rasmussen (right) talks to more than 60 Soldiers, Airmen and Georgia Department of Defense civilians at the Georgia Air Guard Headquarters about the Georgia Guard's work with NATO.

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Roy Henry
Public Affairs Office
Georgia Department of Defense

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., May 9, 2011 – The Georgia National Guard played host to NATO Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen, who took time to honor Georgia Army and Air Guardsmen for their service with NATO forces in the Global War on Terror, as well as for their work with the nation of Georgia since 1995 through the State Partnership Program.

In addition to Atlanta, the secretary general is also visiting Austin, Texas; Chicago, Ill.; and the nation's capitol, to address NATO's critically important role in what it calls the "transatlantic relationship" between the United States and other NATO partners.

During an afternoon session at Georgia Air Guard Headquarters, just across the runway on Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Rasmussen talked with more than 60 Soldiers, Airmen and Georgia Department of Defense civilians about the Georgia Guard's work with NATO in the War on Terror through the Joint Surveillance Target Attack System (JSTARS), the Army Guard's operation of Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix in Afghanistan from 2009 to 2010, and the joint Army and Air work being done with the country of Georgia through the State Partnership Program to help that nation become a NATO partner.

"Most of the Soldiers and Airmen in the room have participated in NATO operations in Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan and – most recently – in support of the alliance in the skies over Libya," said

Maj. Gen. William T. Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General, to the audience before the Secretary General delivered his remarks.

116th aircrews flying the E-8C JSTARS aircraft have, for example, flown more than 66,000 combat flight hours over Iraq and Afghanistan, providing command and control, and ISR – a multispectral intelligence sensor array – capability that is unique within NATO, Nesbitt noted. The wing has also participated in NATO's Odyssey Dawn and Unified Protector operations. Crews operating the 165th's C-130 Hercules cargo planes have also provided airlift support to NATO operations.

In Afghanistan, Georgia Army Guardsmen staffed Combined Task Force Phoenix. Comprised of more than 11,000 troops from more than 20

nations, the task force was commanded by Georgia's Brig. Gen. Larry Dudney from spring 2009 to spring 2010. Dudney, Nesbitt added, also directed the Afghan National Security Forces Development Assistance Bureau.

The Georgia Guard's partnership with the country of Georgia, Nesbitt added, has helped the NATO hopeful build an effective and "interoperable force," capable of contributing to alliance operations. Indeed, the country of Georgia is already third largest provider of coalition forces to current NATO operations, Nesbitt said.

"We're proud of our partner [the country of Georgia] and the progress it's made, and we look forward to helping them achieve their goal of membership within the alliance," he said.

Rasmussen said he found it a rare privilege to meet with Soldiers and Airmen who continue to make such a large contribution to NATO operations.

"I know that the motto of the National Guard is 'always ready, always there,' and this has been absolutely true – now and in the past, here in the United States and throughout the world," Rasmussen

said. "Whenever, wherever you've been asked to go, you've gone to make sure peace prevailed and nations like Afghanistan never again are the breeding ground for some of the world's deadliest terrorists. Most recently, you've helped with the defense of innocent civilians in Libya against the senseless attacks of the present regime."

Rasmussen said he knows the past few years have been busy ones for the Georgia Guard – and the National Guard as a whole – and that operational tempo has remained high throughout that time. He added that he also knows of the toll war takes on Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen – some of whom have made the ultimate sacrifice in the fight against oppression and tyranny – and on their families.

"When you consider that you are all volunteers, and that many of you have done more than one tour abroad while your regular jobs and your regular lives were put on hold, your service is that much more remarkable," Rasmussen said. "It takes a very special person to make that kind of commitment to serve, not only alongside NATO, but here within your own communities."

NATO is busier now, Rasmussen

said, than at any other time in its history. He added that the world is in an increasingly predictable place, with many threats to its security and well-being. Terrorism, cyber attacks, piracy, failed states and nuclear proliferation know no borders and affect every nation. But he affirmed, "There is no future for extremism."

"The only way to identify and defeat such threats is by working together," he said. "We do this by reaching out to our allies – like the United States – because no one nation, no one organization can do it alone. Solidarity between the NATO partners has, and will remain, vital to our continued success. Citizen-Soldiers and Airmen like you contribute greatly to our resolve."

"I can only say 'thank you' for your professionalism, and for your dedication to the cause of freedom," Rasmussen added. "Thanks, too, to your loved ones and your employers for their support of your service."

He then took questions before moving out onto the Dobbins flight line to tour aircraft and speak with the crewmembers from Savannah's 165th Airlift Wing, Marietta's 78th Aviation Troop Command, and Warner Robins' 116th Air Control Wing.



OPERATION VIGILANT GUARD PUTS HRF, FIRST RESPONDERS TO THE TEST

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Roy Henry
Public Affairs Office
Georgia Department of Defense



Major Gen. Maria Britt, Commanding General of the Georgia Army National Guard, speaks with Homeland Response Force security Soldiers about Operation Vigilant Guard and their role, overall, in the HRF.

MERIDIAN, Miss., May 17, 2011 – As units of the Mississippi National Guard battle flooding alongside civilian first responders and residents in the state’s western section, more than 100 Georgia Army and Air Guardsmen arrived at the Meridian-Lauderdale County Public Safety Training Center to participate in Operation Vigilant Guard as part of a multi-state exercise designed to stress and test the capacity of the Guard and civil authorities to work together in real-life disasters.

Operation Vigilant Guard 2011 is an annual multi-state exercise designed to test interagency cooperation at the local level. It provides an opportunity for state National Guard headquarters, state joint task forces – like the 781st of Marietta’s 78th Homeland Response Force (HRF) – and their various elements to improve command and control, and operational relationships with other CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package (CERFP) units as well as local, state and federal emergency responders.

However, the 78th HRF also deployed the rest of its capabilities for this exercise, to include (in addition to JTF 781) the 214th Security Forces, the 4th Civil Support Team, the 78th HRF Brigade Command and Control Tactical Command Post, and the Tactical Operations Center.

This operation was the first collective training event in which the 78th HRF has participated as a unit in preparation for its external evaluation, which will take place November 2011.

To adequately evaluate the command, control, coordination, communication and information (C4I) exchange capability of the HRF, the Florida CERFP participated in the training to simulate the rotation of forces necessary for an enduring domestic response mission. This stretched the C4I capability of the 78th HRF and highlighted the gaps and weaknesses in the contingency operations plan and respective unit SOPs, allowing remedies to be developed to correct deficiencies.

“The exercise was a tremendous success,” said Maj. Gen.

Maria Britt, Commanding General of the Georgia Army National Guard, who observed the training and spent time talking with Soldiers during the exercise to share her vision on the Guard’s role in Homeland Defense.

Britt explained, “The HRF’s role is critical to bringing calm to chaos. The specialized teams of engineers performing human extractions from collapsed buildings, health professionals conducting triage and providing health care, and chemical specialists monitoring and decontaminating victims and workers, couldn’t happen without the force protection of the security teams. They protect from external probes while also maintaining order inside the perimeter.”

She added, “Tactical decisions could have strategic implications, especially in today’s 24/7 media cycle. The security force, in most cases, would be our first line of defense and the public’s first impression of the Guard’s response.”

Joint Task Force 781 has been on the forefront of developing the CERFP techniques and tasks for the past several years, and that includes fatality recovery. Fatality Search and Recovery Teams (FSRTs) add a critical capability to the CERFP mission that is trained to handle fatalities, not only when Mother Nature strikes, but also in a chemical, nuclear and radiological environment when man decides to strike out against those who do not share his philosophies or ideologies.

“What’s going on here this week is made even more relevant by the events going on now here in our state,” said Mayor Sheri Barry. “My goal – our state’s goal – is to let our citizens know that they can count on us to react promptly, swiftly and with the right resources to reach out and provide the right aid at the right time, and the Guard is very much a part of that effort.”

The knowledge and expertise that the Guard brings with it when it answers the call for assistance can never be discounted, Barry says. To do so, she contends, would be doing the residents

of her city and the surrounding area a great disservice.

During the exercise, Kennesaw’s Joint Task Force 781 and CERFP, along with its Florida counterpart, provided aid to the “victims” of a hotel and community college severely damaged during an earthquake and those injured and killed during a train derailment.

“Our Soldiers and Airmen are ready, willing and able to give far more than just their best effort to the mission, whether it’s a training exercise such as this or the real thing,” said Maj. Michael Collins, JTF 781’s commander. “It’s here, though, that we refine the processes we use to do the job, and make ourselves that much better at doing it right.”

While Vigilant Guard is a test of the JTF’s own abilities, it is also a precursor to the external evaluation coming in mid-November, which will determine whether or not Georgia’s 78th Homeland Response Force is ready to take on its role as FEMA Region IV’s “911 force” during natural or manmade disasters.

Because JTF 781 is part of the HRF, Col. Michael Scholes, the 78th HRF’s commander, and his staff are here watching to see how Collins’ unit and other elements of the HRF met the challenges laid out for



them by observer controllers from West Virginia’s Joint Interagency Training and Education Center. The JITEC helped put together the scenarios in which the 781st, its Florida counterpart, the security force element from Elberton’s 1-214th Field Artillery, and Marietta’s 4th Civil Support team are involved.

As the region’s “first responder,” the 78th’s responsibility is to act as command and control for multiple CRBNE elements assigned to provide search and extraction, decontamination, medical and mortuary assets to the civilian incident scene commanders with whom they work.

“This is the first time we’ve been able to bring together the multiple capabilities of the HRF to essentially do a ‘crawl, walk, run’ of the tasks we’ll be using to perform our mission, and on which we’ll validate our ability to do the mission during the EX-EVAL,” said Scholes. “At the end of the day, this all helps me, helps us, identify gaps in the policies and procedures by which the HRF and its elements operate. It also helps us put together a common operating picture we can use to do our job and to better communicate and share information with our civilian partners.”

As Mississippi continues its battle to hold back the floods ravaging the western sections of the state, it decided to pull all but a small element of its Guard and emergency response force out of the Vigilant Guard exercise. Scholes says that, in his opinion, the state’s decision to continue to support the exercise and allow Georgia and the others to conduct their training is a “world-class gesture.”

“As we train for what they’re doing

right now, we in the Georgia Guard want our fellow Soldiers and Airmen here in Mississippi, the civilian force working along side them, and the citizens affected by this catastrophe, to know that our hopes and prayers are with them,” he said. “They should know that the lessons learned from their fight to save the lives, lively hoods, and homes of their fellow human beings will help us accomplish the mission when it’s our turn to respond.”

This Vigilant Guard exercise is tied to National Level Exercise 2011 (NLE11), a White House-directed, congressionally-mandated exercise that includes the participation of all appropriate federal departments and agency senior officials, their deputies and staff, and key operational elements.

The NLE incorporated several military exercises with the National Guard from eight central U.S. States: Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Illinois, Indiana, Mississippi, Missouri and Tennessee; and four FEMA regions. The city of Meridian’s Public Safety Training Center hosted the exercise, opening up the premiere training facility for Georgia and Florida to participate in NLE11, despite the magnitude of the historic flooding Mississippi is experiencing on the West side of the state.

Britt concluded the trip by personally thanking the City of Meridian EMA and the Mississippi Guard for “still hosting this key event to improve regional response capability while simultaneously working disaster floods in their own state.”



GEORGIA GUARDSMEN MENTOR LATVIAN ARMY IN OPERATION SUMMER SHIELD

*Story by 1st Lt. William Carraway
HHC, 2-121 Infantry Battalion
Georgia Army National Guard*

ADAZI, Latvia, June 4, 2011 – Twenty-five Soldiers of the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT), Georgia Army National Guard, led by the 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry, and supplemented with additional skilled Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry, and 1st Squadron, 108th Reconnaissance Surveillance Target Acquisition (RSTA), just spent two weeks in Latvia supporting Operation Summer Shield VIII – an annual joint U.S.-Latvian training exercise.

The Georgia mentors trained 166 Latvian soldiers in the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP), Tactical Operation Center (TOC) operations, fusion cell/targeting procedures, intelligence preparation of the battlefield, mortar and machine gun theory, sniper implementation, long range reconnaissance, and call for fire.

While embedded with their mentoring sections, the Georgia Guardsmen provided two days of classroom and field instruction followed by three days of mission receipt and planning. The final phase of Operation Summer Shield was a five-day mission to test the capabilities of the long range reconnaissance and sniper teams along with the battle tracking skills of the Latvian headquarters section.

Captain Brian Cardinali, commander of HHC Company, 2- 121, said, “In the scenario, long range reconnaissance patrol teams were inserted by helicopter as far as 50 kilometers from their surveillance objectives. Augmented by sniper teams, the reconnaissance elements maneuvered to their objectives, reported intelligence to the TOC, conducted actions on the objectives, and successfully exfiltrated without being compromised.”

A Latvian Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol augmented by Soldiers of the 1st and 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry, Georgia Army National Guard, conduct a stream crossing during culminating exercises as part of joint U.S./Latvian training for Operation Summer Shield. (Photo by Capt. Carl Anderson, HHC, 2-121st Infantry, Georgia Army National Guard).

ONE MISSION TO AFRICA, LESSONS FOR A LIFETIME

By Col. Peter VanAmburgh
Chief of Staff
Georgia Army National Guard

The thought of African military engagements rarely invokes images of preparation for disaster relief or humanitarian operations. The effect that this type of operational training can have on participants, including local populations, is not widely recognized. Exercise Natural Fire 10, the largest humanitarian and disaster relief exercise conducted on African soil to date, is contributing to stronger and more robust disaster response capabilities and a better understanding of the local impact.

Natural Fire 10 involved moving National Guard and Reserve forces from the continental United States and Germany, along with representative forces from Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania, to several sites in Uganda.

The three-week mission aimed to build partner capacity and interoperability, but went much farther than its stated goals. It left all participants with key lessons for multinational operations and a deep appreciation for one another and the Ugandan people.

Exercise Natural Fire is an annual theater cooperation event orchestrated between the United States and the East African countries of Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda, Tanzania and Uganda. It evolved from a bilateral exchange into a multinational exercise designed to prepare participants for regional response to humanitarian and disaster crises.

There is a common lesson often learned in complex multinational operations: relationships will sustain the mission when bureaucratic structures and systems fail. Previous experience and knowledge of the psycho-social aspects of group

development among the Task Force leadership ensured relationship building was a priority from the start. Careful arrangement of personnel, the physical design and flow of the headquarters facility into tabletop cells to encourage crosstalk, coupled with official and unofficial social engagements were all employed to assist with relationship and team building.

The value of establishing multinational teams cannot be overstated. After overcoming initial language and group formation issues, each team quickly matured and worked successfully in the cooperative, competitive environment. This enhanced the unity of purpose across the force and mitigated the potential for country-level elements to become isolated in the mission.

Understanding the local people, issues, politics and mediums of communications is critically important to all multinational operations, particularly when conducting humanitarian and disaster assistance.

Natural Fire 10 was a superb test of the ability of the participating forces to understand the local customs and laws, and to act accordingly. This was no small feat given the language, religious, cultural, political and other differences among the six countries and residents of the Kitgum region.

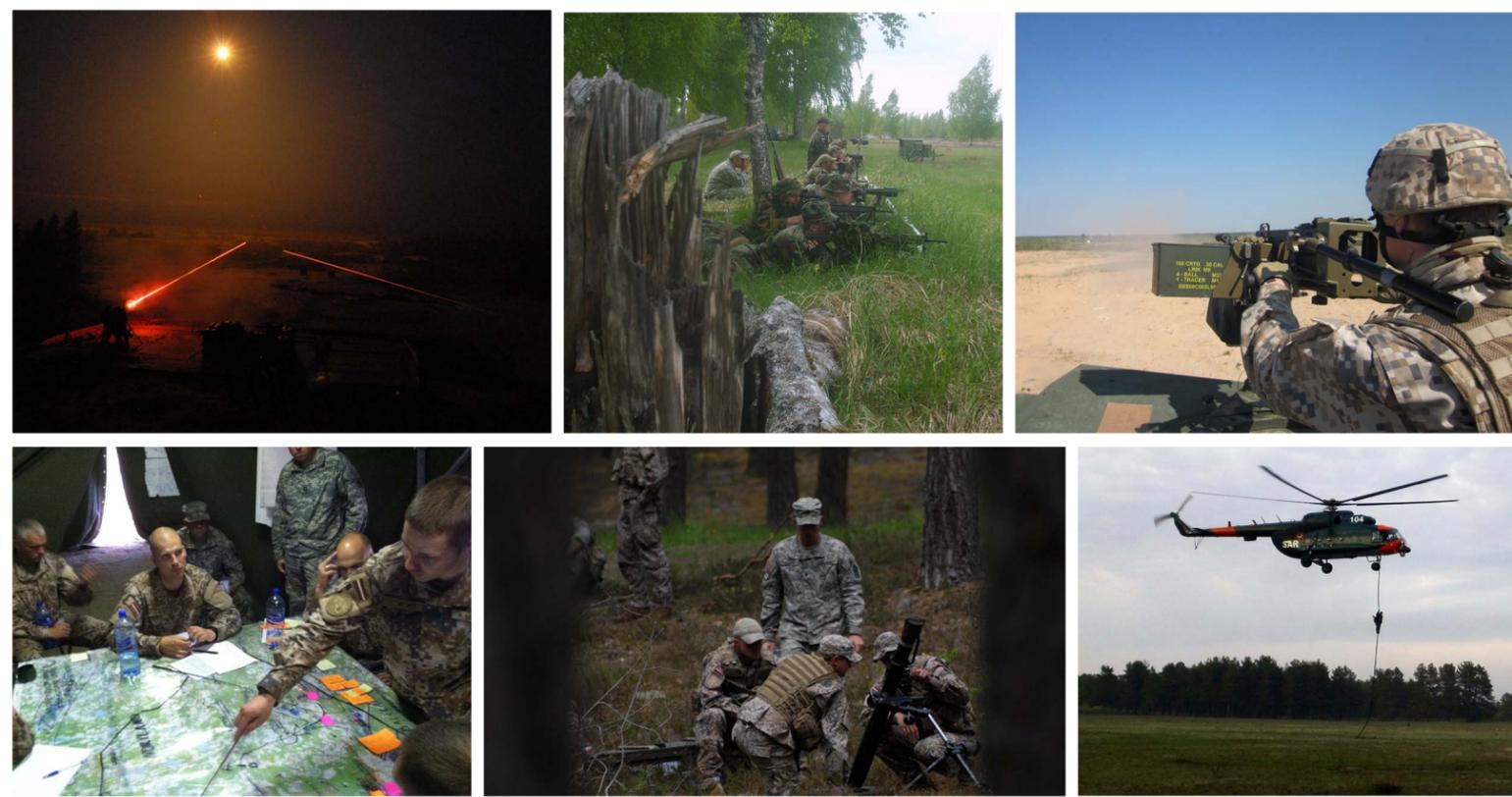
Communications proved decisive to educating, shaping perceptions, setting expectations and engendering the Task Force Kitgum's internal and external support.

The final results of Task Force Kitgum during Natural Fire 10 included 11,698 persons treated through the medical and dental capacity building events, three facilities (two schools and one health center) renovated, 636

soldiers from five countries trained in a variety of disaster response measures, seven radio broadcasts conducted, and a successful logistics and forward staging operation established. This all occurred with an integrated multinational tactical operations center synchronizing, resourcing and tracking the 1,009 joint and East African personnel accomplishing the mission.

The Ugandans in the Kitgum region have endured incredible hardships over the last 15 years, including famine, civil war and unbelievable brutality at the hands of insurgents. Many of the locals who came to the Task Force encampment walked for several days for a few moments of interaction with the group of U.S. and East African partners.

The lessons learned among the participants were many, including the value of employing integration as an organizing principle; the importance of relationship building and its ability to sustain the mission; the criticality of public communications to engender support among the local population; and the knowledge that performing humanitarian and disaster relief is difficult, but there is nothing more rewarding than building the capacity to help people in need.



the 13th century castle of Turaida, visited the Soviet occupation museum, and joined their Latvian counterparts for an open fire cookout in the statue park of Sigulda. Additionally, some Soldiers were able to participate in the Riga Marathon, which took place along the cobblestone streets of downtown Riga.

“I enjoyed working and training with the Latvian Army – so much so, in fact, that I joked about joining them,” Said Staff Sgt. Ryan Hern, a reconnaissance mentor with the 1-121st Infantry.

During closing ceremonies, the U.S. and Latvian Soldiers exchanged gifts. Lieutenant Col. Alan Alexander, commander of 2-121st Infantry, and Command Sgt. Maj. Samuel McCord, presented key Latvian Leaders with tomahawks – symbols of the Warrior Battalion – also known as the “Macon Volunteers.” The Georgia Soldiers were in turn presented certificates of appreciation and coins from the Land Force Infantry Brigade, 1st Latvian Battalion, commanded by Major Velts Āboliņš.

Alexander expressed the unanimous sentiments of the Georgia Soldiers: “We stand ready to assist (the Latvian Army) with any future training requests, and we would be honored to be called to train again alongside these fine Soldiers.”

For photo captions and high-resolution focus, check out the corresponding Georgia National Guard Flickr set online.

In coordination with these field maneuvers, the Latvian composite battalion staff used collected reconnaissance reports along with scenario-driven intelligence to put the staff through the MDMP process with a full battalion operations order production for future operations. The event culminated with multiple live-fire exercises involving mortars, snipers, and machine gun fire.

In previous years, the Michigan National Guard has been the U.S. proponent for the exercise. However, due to recent deployments, the Michigan Guard was not able to support this element of its State Partnership Program and, instead, looked to the state of Georgia for assistance. The Soldiers of 2nd Battalion were quick to live up to their battalion motto: “It shall be done.”

“To my knowledge, this is the first time that Guard units from one state have stepped in to assist another state in completing its overseas mission requirements,” said Lt. Col. Eric Pless, Bilateral Affairs Officer for U.S. European Command, Latvia.

“Not only were Georgia’s actions unprecedented, the level of training they’ve provided to the Latvian Army has been as well,” said Maj. Vents Lapsenbergs, Commander of the 2nd Latvian Battalion. “Our officers [battalion and brigade staff] received a far higher level of training in the past two weeks than in their entire service academy experience.”

As the training concluded, the Latvian Army – being good hosts – treated their new Georgian friends to the splendor of Riga, Latvia’s capital city. The Soldiers toured

39 REASONS TO NEVER FORGET THE TRUE MEANING OF MEMORIAL DAY

By Lt. Col. Randall Simmons
48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team
Georgia Army National Guard

Monday, Americans across the world will pause throughout the day to observe Memorial Day. This is a day for honoring, remembering and celebrating America's departed Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen. Truly, this is a time to look back with gratefulness and bring briefly to living memory the fallen heroes of our country whose service and sacrifice have kept America safe and free.

Distinct from Veterans Day in November, during which we celebrate our living veterans — those who have, and still do, place themselves in harm's way to ensure we are able to enjoy the freedoms we cherish — we reserve Memorial Day as an annual pause to commemorate our honored fallen.

As Abraham Lincoln observed at Gettysburg: "From these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion ... that this nation under God shall have a new birth of freedom, and that government of the people, by the people, for the people ... should not perish from this earth."

More than a million American service members have died in the wars and conflicts of our nation since the first colonial Soldiers took up arms in 1775 to fight for independence. Each person who died during those conflicts was a loved one, cherished by family and friends. Each was a loss to their community and to the nation.

Today we pay special tribute to more than 5,000 service members who made the ultimate sacrifice while supporting the global war on terrorism. Of those fallen, 39 were members of the Georgia National Guard. These were men we knew, respected and cared for.

I recently attended the "Some Gave All" 5K road race in Lula. This race was organized in memory of Maj. Kevin M. Jenrette, a Georgia Guardsman who was killed in action on June 4, 2009, in Afghanistan. The outpouring of support and love from family, community and friends at the event stands as a stark reminder that our fallen live on in the freedoms enjoyed by those they leave behind.

As we reflect on Memorial Day, I encourage you to ask yourself a couple of fundamental questions: What is it that inspires and enables ordinary citizens to rise to the challenge

of battle — to be willing to make the ultimate sacrifice in service to their country?

In my opinion, the answer is simple: values.

The proud legacy of our Army, and of our country, is grounded in core values: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage.

During our recent deployment to Afghanistan, the 48th Infantry Brigade lost eight brave Soldiers on the field of battle. I had the honor of knowing several of them and commanding four of them. These eight heroes embodied those values. These brave citizen-Soldiers — and all of America's fallen — made the conscious choice to serve their state and nation, knowing full well the possible costs associated with their service.

The lives of our 39 fallen Georgia Guardsmen — and the thousands of other men and women who have died to bring stability to the Middle East — were not sacrificed in vain. Though the wars are not yet over, the people of Afghanistan and Iraq have been freed from the oppression of tyrant regimes, bringing more stability to the region and improved security to our own homeland.

Our fallen knew that freedom must be protected, and that, in the absence of fervent defense, freedom is perishable. Because of our Soldiers' service and sacrifice, our great nation has proudly secured liberty for a substantial share of the world's population, and defended it for much of the rest.

I would ask that, over the next few days, as you reflect on our fallen heroes, you take a moment to think, too, of Gold Star Families — those who have lost loved ones in the defense of our country. Memorial Day has an inexplicably profound impact on those with empty seats at the dinner table. This is one aspect of the holiday that means more to me now than in years past.

People often say "freedom isn't free," and they are correct. But, sometimes, it takes personal experience to understand exactly just how high the cost of freedom really is. A more accurate description would simply be: "priceless."

This weekend, we remember and pay respect to those who made the ultimate sacrifice to secure our freedoms. These heroes believed in a cause greater than themselves, a cause that constitutes their permanent legacy — freedom.

We will never forget their sacrifice.

GEORGIA HONORS THOSE WHO GAVE ALL



Story and photo by Sgt. 1st Class Roy Henry
Public Affairs Office
Georgia Department of Defense

ATLANTA, Ga., May 26, 2011 — Members and leaders of the Georgia National Guard were among the more than 100 present today at a ceremony held in the state capitol's north rotunda to pay tribute to all those who have given their lives in the service to the country — especially to those Georgians who made the ultimate sacrifice, past and present.

Among the audience for this, the state's annual remembrance of active duty, Guard and Reserve service members killed in action, were the families of the 22 Georgians who died between May 27, 2010 and today while supporting operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Those 22 honored dead are:

- Army Sgt. Johnathan Peney — June 1, 2010
- Army Sgt. David Holmes — June 26, 2010
- Army Private 1st Class Jacob Dennis — July 3, 2010
- Army Staff Sgt. Sheldon Tate — July 13, 2010
- Army Sgt. 1st Class Edgar Roberts — Aug. 17, 2010
- Army Spc. Chad Coleman — Aug. 27, 2010
- Army Spc. Shannon Chihuahua — Nov. 12, 2010
- Army Pvt. 1st Class Austin Staggs — Nov. 29, 2010
- Army Sgt. Brandon S. Hocking — March 21, 2011
- Army Pvt. Jeremy P. Faulkner — March 29, 2011
- Army Maj. Wesley J. Hinkley — April 4, 2011
- Army Spc. Gary L. Nelson — April 5, 2011
- Army Staff Sgt. Cynthia R. Taylor — April 16, 2011
- Marine Lance Cpl. William Richards — June 26, 2010
- Marine Lance Cpl. Christopher Rodgers — Sept. 1, 2010
- Marine 1st Lt. Scott Flemming — Sept. 17, 2010
- Marine Cpl. Stephen Sockalosky — Oct. 6, 2010
- Marine Lance Cpl. Raymon Johnson — Oct. 13, 2010
- Marine Lance Cpl. Joseph R. Giese — Jan. 7, 2011
- Navy Sr. Chief Petty Officer David McLendon — Sept. 21, 2010
- Air Force Sr. Airman Michael Buras — Sept. 21, 2010

Stepping to the podium, Gov. Nathan Deal said that he and all those present were there to honor the families of these 22 who died in the service of their country.

"We commemorate them — these Soldiers, Sailors Airmen and Marines — for their sense of honor and service, for their courage, for their love of this nation and its most cherished principles," Deal said. "They, as have those who've gone before them, have given their lives in the defense of freedom, and we owe them our deepest respect and gratitude."

"A ceremony such as this is the time in which all citizens should recommit themselves to those high ideas," Deal said. "Their sacrifice is a reminder that freedom is won — and kept — at a great cost."

Quoting from President Abraham Lincoln's Gettysburg Address of Nov. 19, 1863, at one point in his keynote remarks, Lt. Col. Kevin Jarrard — commandant of Gainesville's Riverside Military Academy and Marine Forces North liaison to the Federal Emergency Management Agency — said, "It is for us, the living — rather — to be dedicated to the great task before us...that from these honored dead, we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion. That we here, highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain..."

He asked those present to live their lives in such a way that Georgia's 22 heroes (whose names would later be read aloud by Maj. Blair Davis — chaplain to Marietta's 78th Homeland Response Force, and Army Guard assistant to the State Chaplain) will not have died in vain.

"That their memories," Jarrard said, "propel us to lay down our lives in sacrificial service to our families, to our communities and to our nation."

After the ceremony, Maj. Gen. Maria Britt, Georgia Army Guard Commander, made her way through the crowd to shake hands with the veterans who had come and to talk with the families of those whose names were read. Britt said events such as this are always necessary and relevant. It is through such venues, she added, that the sacrifices made by those who have died, and the loved ones they leave behind, are remembered and taken to heart.

"They may be gone, but the pain and the memories of who they were and why they committed themselves to the preservation of the ideology upon which this state and nation were founded remains," Britt explained. "That should always be remembered. It is who we are as a democracy and a nation to remember them all and what they have given up for us... and for the world."

GEORGIA PAO SUCCESSFULLY TESTS NEW DVIDS SATELLITE SYSTEM

Story by Sgt. 1st Class Roy Henry
Public Affairs Office
Georgia Department of Defense

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., May 17, 2011 – In an ever-changing world where technology upgrades happen by the minute, the Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office became the first organization in the United States to successfully test the new Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System (DVIDS) man-portable satellite system.

“We’re very honored to have had the opportunity to prove the system’s capabilities in a field environment,” said Master Sgt. John Kinnaman, the DoD PAO’s operations sergeant.

The new “man-pack,” as it is called, is a small satellite system designed to be carried on the back of a Soldier, Airman or Marine, and set up anywhere in the world in a matter of minutes. Once operational, the system can send live video from around the world back to the main DVIDS hub in Norcross, Ga. Upon arrival at the hub, the video can be picked up by television stations across the state or nation and used for broadcast.

“The system is the next generation of portable communication systems that the military is using,” said Maj. Scott Betts, DVIDS’s director of operations. Adding that the system is in place, and in use at this moment, in Iraq and Afghanistan by all the military branches.

Kinnaman said the DoD PAO has been looking at, and testing, systems with which to enhance its capabilities, and its

opportunities, for “telling the Georgia Guard story” in real time.

“This particular version of the DVIDS system – by far – has been the most cost effective, and the most portable of those we’ve used,” he added.

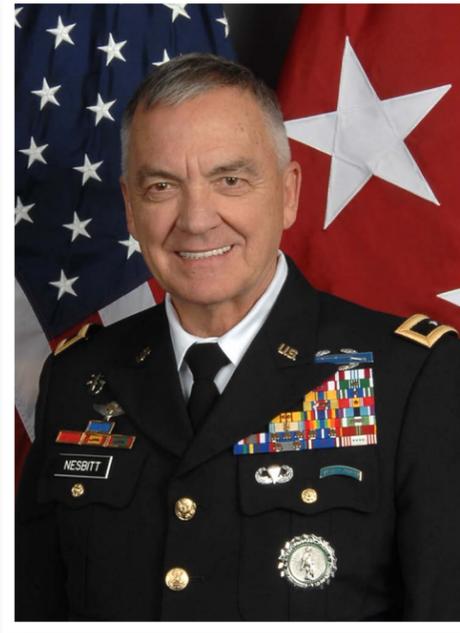
In addition to sending live video feed from the field, the system can also stream webcasts from anywhere in the world. During a five-day period, the man-portable system was set up and operated in two different locations, and run through a series of tests to include a live Webcast and a live video feed connection test to a major national news outlet.

“We were able to get the satellite system operational, and have a signal lock, in under 30 minutes, and that was with just two people,” said Pfc. Ashely Fontent, a DoD PAO broadcast journalist. “Once the system – composed of a dish, the system’s main body, a video stream box and laptop computer – is up and running, you can immediately begin streaming live video back to Norcross.”

DVIDS technicians were “quite excited” to have the Georgia Public Affairs office offer to help us test the system, says Kinnaman.

“Everyone at DVIDS was extremely helpful and on board with this,” Kinnaman said. “I was very impressed with how much support we had through e-mail and telephone conversations – even while we were out in the field – to make this test successful, not only for DVIDS, but also for the Georgia Guard in getting our story out to the public from any remote point in the country and around the world.”

15 YEARS OF WORKING WITH THE NATION OF GEORGIA



By Maj. Gen. William T. Nesbitt
Adjutant General
Georgia National Guard

changed political-military situation following the collapse of communism and the disintegration of the Soviet Union. The SPP was established to engage the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, and is now a key security cooperation tool – facilitating interaction in all aspects of civil-military cooperation in that area.

The Georgia National Guard has maintained a strong State Partnership program with the Country of Georgia since 1995 – a program which has helped position the state of Georgia as the home of the second-largest diaspora of Georgians outside the country of Georgia. Many National Guardsmen are also active in the Atlanta-Tbilisi Sister City Committee, which contributes to building relationships between our state and their nation.

Through the SPP, the State of Georgia benefits by being able to play a role in overall U.S. security assistance and foreign policy initiatives. The state’s employers also benefit from the extensive experience their Guardsmen employees procure while working with the country of Georgia on a variety of missions.

Since 1995, the nation of Georgia has put itself on the path of acceptance into NATO – thanks, in no small part, to the State Partnership Program.

Suffice it to say, the National Guard’s relationship with the nation of Georgia has had a local and political impact that reaches beyond the battlefield. But the contributions of the Georgian Armed Forces to the War on Terror are not to be understated.

In 2010, the Georgia National Guard helped train over 2,000 Georgian Soldiers. It is worth noting that embedded Georgia National Guard

Soldiers have fought side-by-side with Georgian Soldiers in Iraq. In fact, the country of Georgia is the third largest contributor of coalition forces currently in Iraq.

The Georgian Armed Forces are currently providing one battalion to the coalition forces in Afghanistan with an additional battalion in training. The State of Georgia also supports the U.S. Marine Corps as they train additional Georgian battalions for combat in Afghanistan.

In fact, I recently had the privilege of visiting those Georgia Guardsmen currently helping to train the Georgian Armed Forces.

During my visit, I had the opportunity to tour the new National Defense Academy in Gori, Georgia. The academy was established in November 2010 by Presidential mandate, and it will accept the first class of students fall 2011.

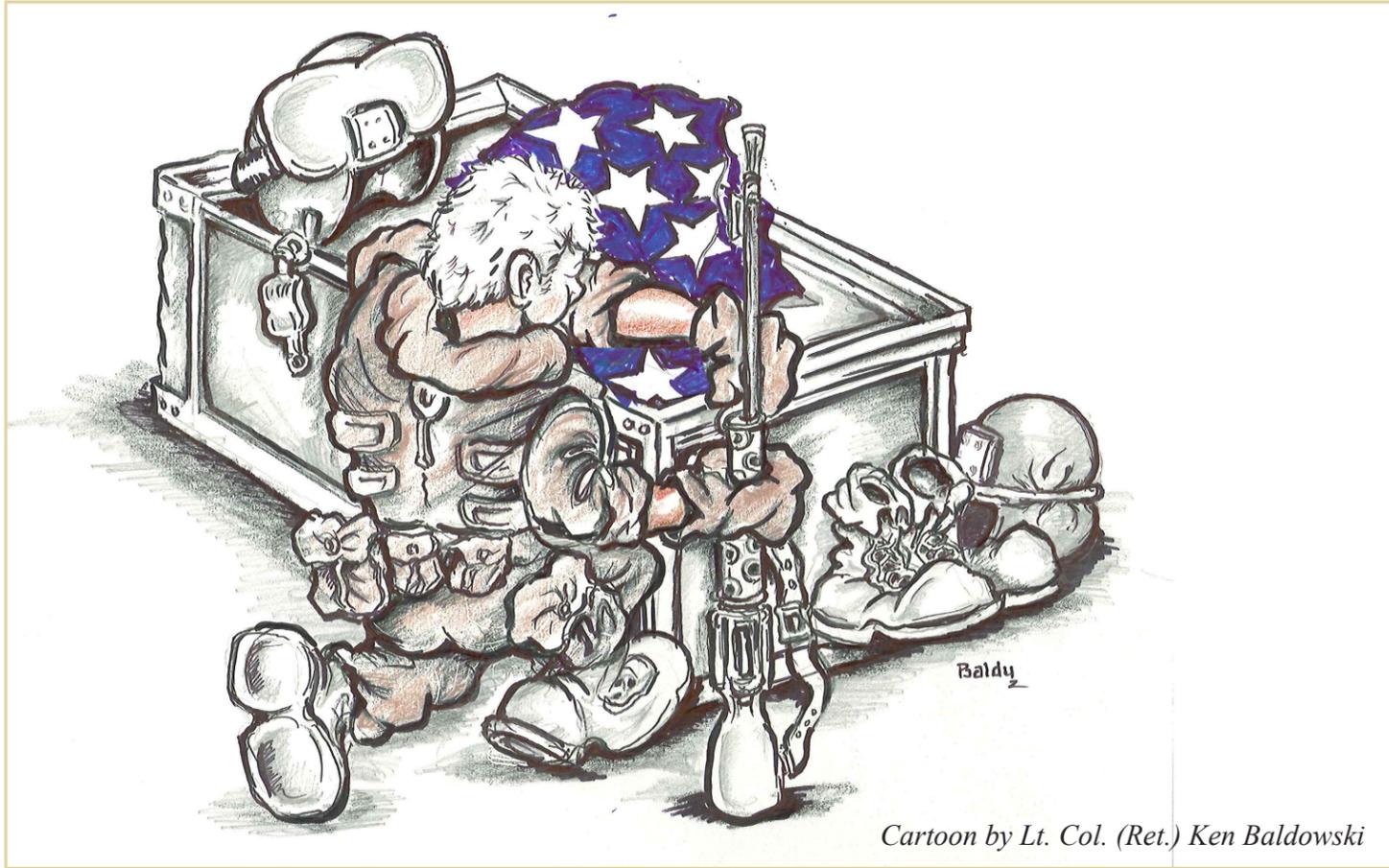
The Georgia National Guard has assisted with this effort through the SPP by arranging several meeting between Georgian and U.S. academic institutions – including North Georgia College and State University – to help develop curricula and syllabi. Staff members from NGCSU and I plan to attend the grand opening of the Georgian Academy this September.

The future of the partnership will be based on continuing the already robust 15-year-old relationship, with the intent of building defense, interagency, and crisis management capacity within the partner country. What’s clear, however, is that this partnership is just that – a mutually beneficial relationship, of which all Georgians (from either the Peach State or the Eastern European country) can be proud.



Private 1st Class Ashley Fontenot, a broadcast journalist with the Ga. DoD Public Affairs Office, shoots live video back to the DVIDS hub in Norcross, Ga., using a new man-portable satellite system while covering training exercises in Mississippi.

REMEMBERING FALLEN COMRADES IN ARMS



Cartoon by Lt. Col. (Ret.) Ken Baldowski

It has lately, and thankfully, become more common for folks on Memorial Day to recall that the holiday is not just about grilling and swimming – but about the men and women who have served our Nation. And even more importantly, not just about men and women who have served – but those who have died while in service to our Nation.

While this connection to the purpose of Memorial Day is pretty easy for those of us in uniform to make, it is, sadly, even easier to make for those of us who personally know someone killed in combat.

Since our country's birth, over 1.3 million Americans have died in service to our country. The number looms large, an incredible sacrifice by those come before us.

Yet another, smaller number feels larger: Since September 2001, a total of 39 Georgia Guardsmen have died in combat.

A still smaller number is, for me, largest of all: Three. Three of the Scouts under my command in Iraq were killed in combat. So this Memorial Day, as with so many – too

many! – of my fellow Guardsmen, I felt again and all too well the pain of their loss and my pride in their exemplary service. And my deep and eternal appreciation for keeping my children safe.

We Americans are pretty particular about how we treat our national flag, much more so I think than most other nations. Flags on Memorial Day are flown in a very particular fashion: Half-staff until noon, then full-staff the remainder of the day.

Perhaps this should be the pattern and type of our behavior on Memorial Day, as well: Mourn our fallen, then celebrate our fallen. Remember; and honor. Perhaps there's room, then, for a morning of reflection followed by an afternoon to celebrate the freedoms our fallen have ensured.

--By Maj. John H. Alderman IV
Public Affairs Office
Georgia Department of Defense

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT BOOKSHELF: REVIEWS OF BOOKS THAT TEACH US ABOUT OUR CRAFT

By Maj. John H. Alderman IV
Public Affairs Office
Georgia Department of Defense

Mobile Armor. Light, fast, maneuverable suits with jump jets, guns, rockets, bombs, hand flamers, radar, IR goggles, heads up display, commo suites, and a prototype Blue Force Tracker. That's the hook for this book.

But there's so much more going on.

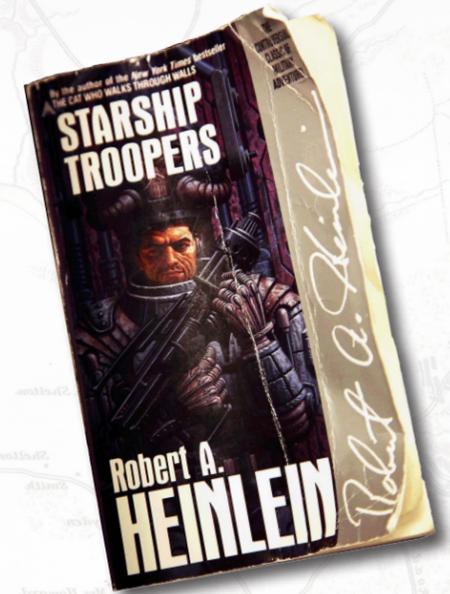
New members of the military have a tough time. They must find their own place in an organization infinitely bigger than they are, even while learning skills, customs, regulations, culture, and people, all at once. Most are newly adult, too, further complicating things.

Finding one's place in the organization is essentially what this book is about. I think that's why it remains popular and is so often recommended to junior leaders.

The great science fiction makes it a fun read. The "Mobile Infantry" – future versions of Marines, Rangers, skirmishers, or Cavalry, depending on your taste – jump onto alien planets, maraud, dispatch bad guys with bombs and mini-nukes, get extracted, and head off to the next system. Good. Times.

**"THERE ARE NO DANGEROUS WEAPONS;
ONLY DANGEROUS MEN."**

We follow the protagonist through alternating memories of combat, Mobile Infantry enlistment, leadership training, and even high school. Through these experiences, Heinlein introduces and plays with all sorts of ideas. Why do we fight? Who fights? What's the division of labor in a small



unit? How do we train officers? What's the model for NCO/officer working relationships? What demeanor should a junior officer project?

So *Starship Troopers* isn't just a romp through space – or a memoir of basic training. It's more a series of philosophical discussions between characters that provide thoughts like this one to new officers:

"I gave you a talk on how rough it's going to be. I want you to worry about it, doing it in advance, planning what steps you might take against any combination of bad news that can come your way, keenly aware that your life belongs to your men and is not yours to throw away in a suicidal reach for glory...and that your life isn't yours to save, either, if the situation requires that you expend it."

Anyone ever express that sentiment to you quite so clearly?

Some of these philosophical points are what make some people refer to this book as "controversial." For example: In a free society, who gets to vote? In the book's future, only Veterans – and not even current service members – get to vote. Other folks are free, but they don't determine the course of government. His point, however, is one that ties selflessness and service to governance and society.

In fact, this is a good example of why leaders can re-read the book over time, finding new ideas in it that reward further reflection (as with *Gulliver's Travels*, for example). *Starship Troopers* is a great work, not just because it is fun – but because it is instructive and provocative.

Final note: If you have had the misfortune of seeing the Verhoeven movie from the 90s which shamelessly uses the name of this novel, I recommend you banish it from your mind. In many cases it actually inverts Heinlein's philosophies and erases the leadership lessons offered. The less said about it, and the sooner it is forgotten, the better.

AROUND THE GEORGIA GUARD



TAG VISITS GUARDSMEN IN GEORGIAN NATION

KRTSANISI NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER, Tbilisi, Georgia, May, 2011 – Georgia's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. William T. Nesbitt, visits Georgia National Guardsmen supporting the USMC training of the Georgian Armed Forces. The Guardsmen have been deployed for 12-14 months and are due to be replaced by a larger force structure this August.

AG TEAM CONTINUES TRAINING AT INDIANA SITE

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., May, 2011 – Georgia's 201st Agricultural Development Team No. 1, continues to move forward in its training as it gets ready to deploy to Southeast Afghanistan for a year. Here, Ga. ADT team member Maj. John Church (center), holds onto a chicken, while a fellow team member talks with a man playing the role of an Afghan farmer about the basic care and raising of the farm fowl at the Indiana Army National Guard's Camp Atterbury. The ADT will help local Afghan farmers and farming communities better their lives through basic agricultural practices.



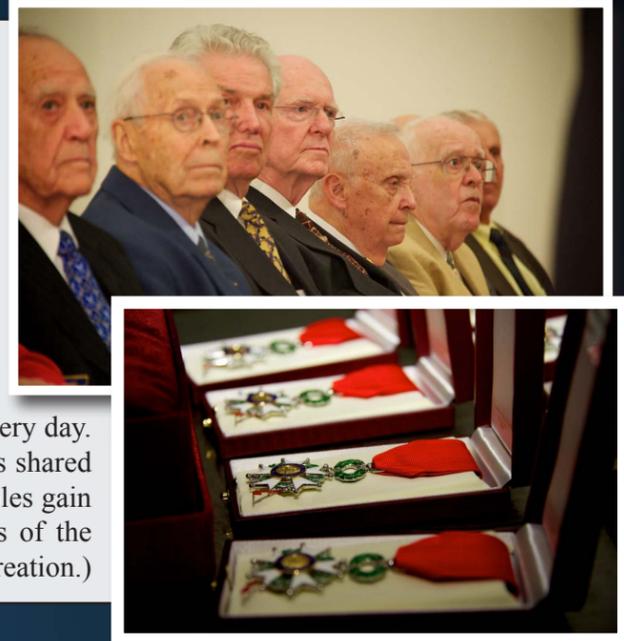
GOOD MORNING AMERICA

ALBANY, Ga., May 8, 2011 – It was a special day for Ms. Mary Tyson when a knock came to her front door and noted gourmet Chef Emeril Lagasse, 13 members of Georgia's 2-121st Infantry, and over 75 local well-wishers surprised her with "Breakfast in Bed." All part of an annual "Good Morning America" feature for Mothers Day, Chef Emeril Lagasse has prepared gourmet breakfasts in bed for deserving mothers for more than a decade. As the time came for the breakfast to begin, four Georgia Guardsmen carried Ms. Tyson's four-post bed out of the house and placed it in her front yard where Chef Emeril Lagasse had breakfast waiting. The Guardsmen, many who returned last summer from Afghanistan, readily participated in making Mothers Day for one special hometown mother an event not to be forgotten.



FRENCH AMBASSADOR HONORS WWII U.S. VETERANS

ATLANTA, May 27, 2011 – At the High Museum of Art, Ambassador François Delattre inducted nine World War II veterans who participated in the liberation of France into the Order of the Legion of Honor, which was founded by Napoleon Bonaparte and recognizes distinguished service to the French Republic. Brigadier Gen. Larry Dudley, Director of the Joint Staff and Joint Task Force Georgia Commander for the Georgia National Guard, delivered remarks, saying, "Tonight is a powerful reminder of the yearning for freedom, and the desire for liberty that ignited both our countries, and burned in our hearts for centuries unto to this very day. France and the United States remain dedicated to liberty; and this shared goal binds and will continue to bind us as we aim to help all peoples gain the freedom our nations enjoy." Pictured here are the recipients of the night's honors. (Photo courtesy of Laurent Cavalie - Mindworks Creation.)



IRAQI MEDEVAC TRAINING

CAMP TAJI, Iraq, May, 2011 – Two U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk utility helicopters flew in formation with two Iraqi Air Force helicopters in May on a joint medical evacuation training mission, serving to build rapport and partnerships between the two militaries. The mission allowed the pilots and crews from the two militaries to better understand each other's way of doing business, explained Capt. Jennifer Sims, a pilot on one of the Black Hawks, and the Headquarters Company commander for the 1st General

Support Aviation Battalion, 171st Aviation Regiment, Georgia Army National Guard. Pictured here, Iraqi Air Force crewmembers train Medevac procedures while 1-171st GSAB Guardsmen demonstrate Medevac equipment on the "M" model UH-60 medevac helicopter. (Photos by SPC Michael Uribe, 1-171 GSAB, HHC Co.)

USAID'S MERITORIOUS HONOR AWARD

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., May, 2011 – Major Jason S. Baker, Bilateral Affairs Officer, along with members of the Georgia Civ-Mil Disaster Preparedness Assistance Team from United States Agency International Development (USAID), are presented with USAID's Meritorious Honor Award for innovative civil-military cooperation to strengthen local capacity for disaster preparedness and response in the nation of Georgia from Ambassador John Bass. Baker and Joakim Parker agreed to collaborate on a disaster preparedness project, drawing on their organizations' respective strengths: USAID in technical assistance and training, and the Office of Defense Cooperation with rapid material and logistics support through United States European Command. From left to right; Aviva Kutnick (USAID Program Manager), Maj. Jason S. Baker (Bilateral Affairs Officer), Ambassador John Bass (U.S. Ambassador to Georgia), and Joakim Parker (USAID Deputy Chief of Mission to Georgia).





Georgia Guardsmen in Latvia for Operation Summer

GEORGIA  **GUARDSMAN**

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