

# GEORGIA NATIONAL GUARD GUARDSMAN



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

August 2011



## Back to Business

1-118th's Best Gun Competition

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Ready to serve!

SDF helps Guard train

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ADT in Afghanistan

Georgia's first ADT deployment



# GEORGIA NATIONAL GUARD GUARDSMAN

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



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**Commander-in-Chief:**  
Gov. Nathan Deal

**Adjutant General of Georgia:**  
Maj. Gen. William T. Nesbitt

**State Public Affairs Officer:**  
Maj. John H. Alderman IV

**Managing Editor, Layout & Design:**  
Mr. Seth G. Stuck

**Operations NCO:**  
1st Sgt. John Kinnaman

**Contributing Ga. DoD Organizations:**  
124th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs, Army National Guard Unit Public Affairs Representatives, Air National Guard Wing Public Affairs Representatives, Georgia State Defense Force Public Affairs.

**Editorial Inquiry and Submissions:**  
Seth.G.Stuck@us.army.mil or (678) 569-3663

*The Georgia Guardsman is published monthly under the provisions of AR 360-81 and AF 6-1 by the Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office. The views and opinions expressed in the Georgia Guardsman are not necessarily those of the Departments of the Army, Air Force or the Adjutant General of Georgia. The Georgia Guardsman is distributed free-of-charge to members of the Georgia Army and Air National Guard, State Defense Force and other interested persons upon request.*

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# GUARD ENGINEERS CONDUCT ANNUAL TRAINING IN SOUTHEAST GERMANY

Soldiers of the 878th pour and spread concrete for one of several helicopter landing pad projects in Southeast Germany.

*Story and photos by Sgt. Alexander Gantt  
Headquarters Company, 878th Engineer Battalion  
Georgia Army National Guard*

**CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., July 27, 2011** – Instead of conducting their annual training this year at Fort Gordon or Fort Stewart near Savannah, Soldiers from elements of Augusta’s 878th Engineer Battalion traveled to the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC) in Hohenfels, Germany, where they spent the latter part of June putting their various engineer and warrior skills to the test.

The 878th, which consists of seven different companies from four different Georgia towns, separated itself into two rotations to carry out a variety of construction and combat-related training missions. Being at the JMRC also provided the Citizen-Soldiers a unique opportunity to work with soldiers from the Polish, Romanian, Slovenian, and French armies.

Among those on the first rotation were combat

engineers from Swainsboro’s 810th Engineer Company, with maintenance, medical, supply and other support from Augusta’s Company A (the battalion’s forward support company), and the 878th’s headquarters element.

Specialist Randy Broner, who is with the 810th, says he had previously experienced working with foreign militaries during his 2009 deployment to Afghanistan.

“It’s good to see, work and train with soldiers from other countries,” Broner said. “They’re alert and ready for any situation during training, and I learned a lot from them. A chance like this don’t come along every day, but when it does, my fellow Guardsmen and I like to make the most of the opportunity.”

Among the warrior skills being tested were: reaction to improvised explosive devices, reaction to contact from enemy fire, medical evacuation, cordon and search operations, and mounted and dismounted movement.

Private 1st Class Tamara Newton, a radio communications maintainer with the battalion’s Headquarters Company, says that while it seemed there was a lot of training and little time to accomplish it all, she found everything the unit did quite informative.

“There were two things I especially enjoyed, though,” Newton said. “One was the opportunity to work with soldiers from other countries during convoy training, where we learned how each would react to the scenarios we faced. The other was the fact that I actually got to do my job as a communications specialist, installing radios, setting frequencies and calling up to the Tactical Operations Center, and so on.”

The 878th’s second rotation involved Soldiers from Toccoa’s 876th Engineer Company, Hinesville’s 874th Engineer Team and 175th Engineer Platoon, and the 877th rear detachment from Augusta. During their rotation, the second group built four roads, a couple of helicopter landing pads, and a tent city for use by the JMRC.

The 877th’s main body is presently deployed for a year to Afghanistan.

“Surveying is very critical to the mission,” said Staff Sgt. Roenzer Brunson from the battalion’s headquarters element, who supervised surveying operations while taking direction from the project manager. “Every other element depends on the surveyor to dictate where things need to go during a construction project. That means the measurements we provide must be right the first time and every time.”



Guardsmen with the 810th Engineer Company conduct MEDEVAC training with French soldiers during the 878th Engineer Battalion’s annual training in Hohenfels, Germany.

On the whole, concluded Capt. Courtney Hawkins, the 878th’s executive officer, the battalion “met the commander’s intent with regard to the training, meeting mission timelines, and allowing non-commissioned officers throughout the battalion and its elements to ‘pick up the ball and run things.’”

“One of our goals, and one of Lt. Col. Dane Snowden’s [the battalion commander] goals, during this annual training was to empower our NCOs –especially the younger ones – to take charge of the construction projects or mission taskings and further develop their leadership skills,” Hawkins said. “As Soldiers, as engineers, and especially as NCOs, they all did the 878th and the Georgia Army Guard proud.”



Sergeant 1st Class Clifford Gardner (center) discusses tactical movement plans for a group of French soldiers with a fellow Guardsman.

# AIRMAN USES SKILLS TO KEEP THE LIGHTS ON

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

**DOBBINS AIR RESERVE BASE, Marietta, Ga., July 8, 2011** – In the Army Guard, the job of maintaining the equipment that keeps the electricity flowing – especially in the field – belongs to the military occupational specialty 52 Delta (power generation equipment repairman). In the Air Guard, Guardsmen like Tech Sgt. Brent Ikard, who holds the Air Force Specialty Code (AFSC) 2 Alpha 672 (power production craftsman), are the ones keeping the lights on.

“I’ve been doing this for a little more than 20 years over the course of my time with the Georgia Air Guard and active duty Air Force,” said Ikard, who is part of the 283rd Combat Communications Squadron power production shop. “It’s a job I’ve loved doing from the time I put on the uniform, and I’ll be doing it for a long, long time to come.”

The world of the power production craftsman begins with 17 weeks of school at Sheppard Air Force Base at Wichita Falls, Kan., learning to install, remove, operate, maintain, and repair electrical power generating and control systems, aircraft arresting systems, and their associated equipment.

There is a laundry list of specialty qualifications for gaining the AFSC, such as knowledge of the principles of electronics and electricity (to include generation, conversion, transformation,



Master Sergeants Brent Ikard and Joseph Pasture begin the process of conducting scheduled maintenance on one of several 30-kilowatt generators.

distribution, and use), and an understanding of the types, capacity, and purpose of high and low voltage circuits, circuit breakers, switches, fuses, regulators, relays, instruments, and meters associated with electric generation and distribution.

“Much of that knowledge, I had when I joined the Air Force at age 24 because I was working as a diesel truck mechanic,” Ikard said. “The prospective enlistee looking to change job fields may not know everything, but a working knowledge of at least some of it, including how to use basic tools, is a great advantage.”

Once through the basic school, a new power production Airman moves on to more advanced schools and the job of supervising others in his profession.

Ikard points out that what he does and what an Army 52 Delta does are very similar except for the levels of maintenance in which he and his Army counterpart must operate.

“In the Army, a 52 Delta at the unit level can only do a certain amount of maintenance on his equipment,” he said. “In the Air Guard, the power production specialist does it all, right up to the point of sending the equipment off for depot-level maintenance. This means that, if it can’t be fixed by my Army counterpart on the spot, the equipment is ‘sent to the rear’ for repair or replacement. Here, we do it all except for what has to be done at the depot level.”

In the overall scheme of things, everything in the military – from lights, to computers and printers, to field radios, to air-conditioning units, to satellite systems – runs on electricity. This means power generation equipment and the people who maintain them are always going to be a critical asset, Ikard says.

“I always say, ‘nobody notices when the power’s on, but when it goes out, you become the most popular person in the place,’” Ikard said with a laugh. “I get great satisfaction out of what I do as a power production craftsman, and as an Airman. I hope that others out there with similar interests take this military career path into consideration because it’s a good one.”



Georgia Air Guard Master Sgt. Brent Ikard checks the oil on a 30-kilowatt generator before starting it.

# NCO NOTEPAD



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

**W**e recently had the pleasure of hosting the second Georgia Department of Defense Senior Enlisted Leaders and Spouses Workshop. I must say, I was very pleased with the full participation of all senior NCOs of Georgia’s Army Guard, Air Guard and State Defense Force.

The event was attended by Maj. Gen. William T. Nesbitt, Georgia’s Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Maria Britt, Commanding General of the Georgia Army National Guard, a host of other senior staff members from each Ga. DoD component, and several members of the joint staff. Each leader provided the senior NCOs with briefs that ranged from command philosophies to the “state” of the various components. There was even a period of questions and answers which made for some interesting discussions amongst senior leaders.

We were also honored to welcome Chief Master Sgt. Denise Jelinski-Hall, the Senior Enlisted Leader for the National Guard Bureau, as our professional development speaker for the event. She brought greetings from Gen. Craig R. McKinley, National Guard Bureau Chief.

Jelinski-Hall discussed a variety of subject matters, but one that seemed to resonate most with the attendees was her main theme: resiliency and the NCO role. This spurred a discussion about resiliency, as she explained the importance of each of its four pillars: physical, mental, emotional and

spiritual. She also repeated the importance of the wingman philosophy, providing sobering numbers for the year’s suicide rates. She went on to note that relationships and finances, not deployments, are the most reported causes for attempted and completed suicides.

Chief Jelinski-Hall added, “Even one suicide is too many. It’s important that we watch over each and every person.”

Major Gen. Nesbitt, Maj. Gen. Britt, and Chief Jelinski-Hall also shared a breakfast and open discussion with the enlisted leaders’ spouses. The spouses were also given briefs on resiliency, family programs and survival outreach services. One of the event highlights was the total inclusion of the spouses and families during the workshop. I especially enjoyed hearing their thoughts and concerns.

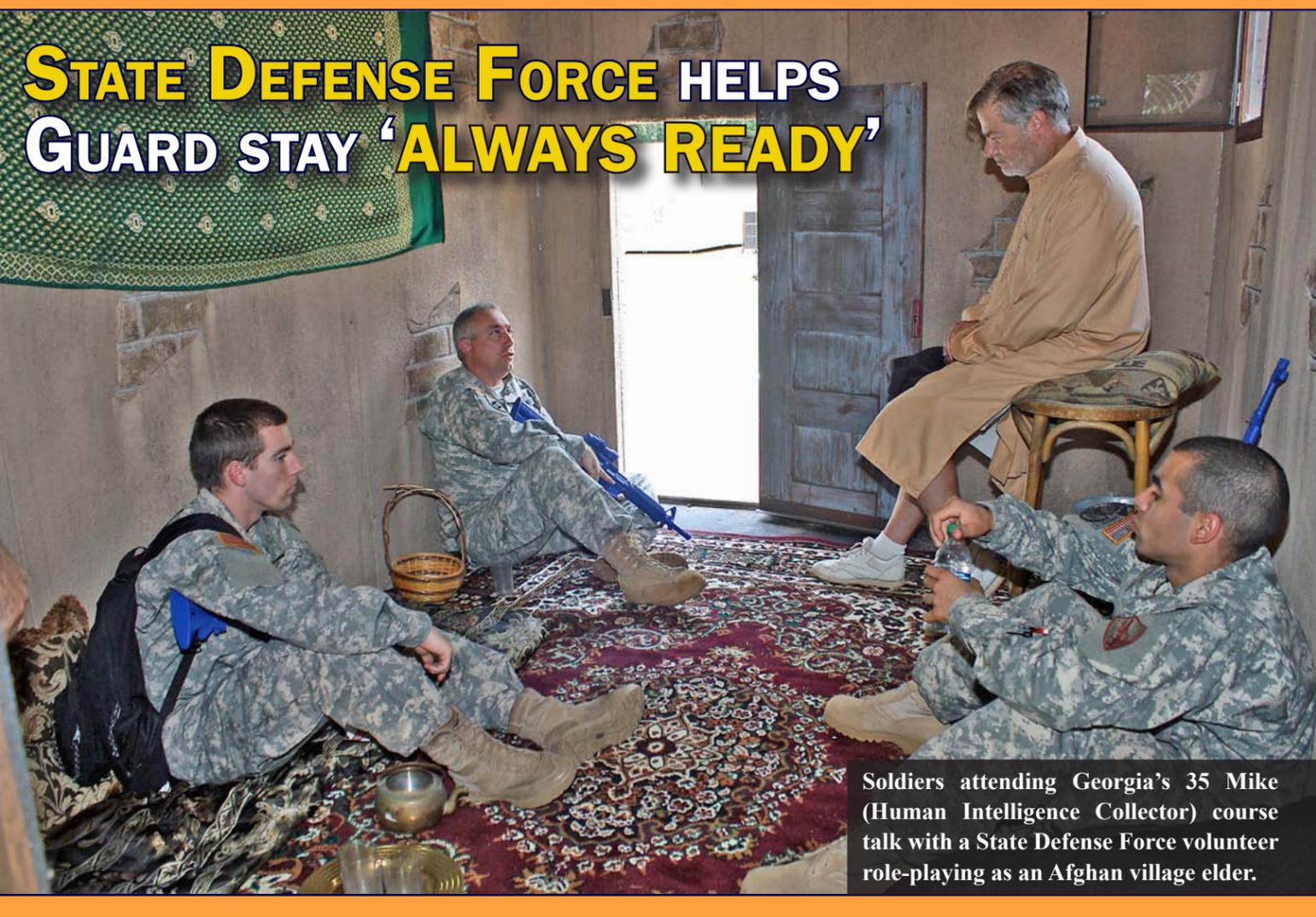
One spouse noted, “Even though I have been feeling ‘burned out’ on the Guard, this conference replenished my love for the Guard. It also taught me that, as a ‘Senior Spouse,’ I have a responsibility to be an example and help ‘Junior Spouses’ by leading by example and being more involved.” She also stated, “Even after many workshops in the past, I still learned important information I did not know.”

Ultimately, the workshop was a great success. And I would just like to express my appreciation to all those who helped organize the event and for the leadership support that helped make the event possible.



Command Master Sgt. Denise Jelinski-Hall, Senior Enlisted Leader for the National Guard Bureau, addresses the Georgia Department of Defense Senior Enlisted Leaders and Spouses Workshop.

# STATE DEFENSE FORCE HELPS GUARD STAY 'ALWAYS READY'



Soldiers attending Georgia's 35 Mike (Human Intelligence Collector) course talk with a State Defense Force volunteer role-playing as an Afghan village elder.

**“LIKE THE GUARDSMEN WE SUPPORT, WE COME FROM ALL WALKS OF LIFE, AND MANY OF US HAVE BEEN ASSOCIATED WITH THE MILITARY BEFORE IN SOME FORM OR FASHION.”**

“I believe I speak for every member of the PTAE cadre when I say the GSDF volunteers add much to the realism of the training we endeavor to provide the Soldiers who come through here,” Steinbrecher said. “They continually show that they come here with one goal in mind: helping Soldiers focus on the skills they need to survive combat. They are true patriots, and we thank them for all they do.”

Colonel Thomas Carden commands Ellenwood's 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade. He says that, as his troops are getting ready for deployment, they have benefited greatly from the GSDF volunteer's participation in their training.

“Everything these SDF volunteers do demonstrates that they're committed to our success,” Carden said. “The training, I believe, would be greatly degraded without them. They do an excellent job, and the fact that they do it on their own dime, well, that makes it all the more remarkable and appreciated.”

Here at the Clay National Guard Center, another group of GSDF volunteers help Soldiers attending the 122nd Regional Training Institute's 35 Mike (Human Intelligence Collector) course to learn their new job skill. Those GSDF role players work right alongside Guardsmen from the 221st Military Intelligence Battalion at the Military Intelligence Academy's simulated Afghan village. Like Steinbrecher and Carden, Sgt. 1st Class David Creamer, the academy's branch chief, praises the GSDF for the “valuable help they provide.”

“The GSDF role players never turn down an opportunity to be here, and are always asking how they can do more,” Creamer said. “We strive to make the training as real as possible here. With the GSDF's help, those new 35 Mikes understand their jobs better because they've dealt with real people.”



*Story and photos by Spc. Adam Dean  
124th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment  
Georgia Army National Guard*

**CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., July 27, 2011** – While many civilians feel strongly about doing what they can, whenever they can, to help Soldiers deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan, few ever actually turn those patriotic sentiments into action with a greater degree of personal sacrifice and selfless service than the all-volunteer Georgia State Defense Force (GSDF).

“Like the Guardsmen we support, we come from all walks of life, and many of us have been associated with the military before in some form or fashion,” said SDF Capt. Chris Bowen of the GSDF's 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade. “Unlike our Guard counterparts, though, we aren't paid for what we do. We do it because Guardsmen and Guard families give of themselves every day, to our state and to our nation, and we want to assist them in any

way we possibly can.”

One way in which the State Defense Force helps the Guard is with the training of Soldiers preparing for deployment. A handful of GSDF volunteers, for example, are role players at the Georgia Garrison Training Center's Pre-Mobilization Training and Assistance Element (PTAE) station in Hinesville, Ga.

Dressed in traditional Iraqi and Afghan garb, the volunteers role-play as opposing forces while Soldiers patrol a makeshift village complete with livestock and a thriving market. The two sides, armed with paintball guns, often engage in realistic combat complete with artillery simulators and smoke grenades, creating an ultra-realistic training experience.

Lieutenant Col. Wallace Steinbrecher, the PTAE executive officer, has high praise for the help the State Defense Force role players provide his 26 trainers as they instruct deploying units in the 15 warrior tasks and four battle drills they need before moving on to their mobilization sites.

# SIMULATED AFGHAN VILLAGE PROVIDES SOLDIERS WITH REALISTIC TRAINING

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

**CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., July 28, 2011** – Out in the intense heat of the mid-day sun, a group of Army human intelligence collectors move into a small Afghan village to gather information about insurgent activity in the area and to begin building a good rapport with the villagers and their leaders.

This scenario is played out every day across Afghanistan by American and NATO forces; only this time, it is not 120-degrees or above (it is only 92-degrees, with a heat index of at least 98) and the village is not in Afghanistan. Instead, the mock village is right here in what used to be the base tennis court.

“This certainly is not the kind of ground a Soldier will find in country,” said Sgt. 1st Class David Creamer, branch manager for the 122nd Regional Training Institute’s Military Intelligence Academy, about the fenced-in, lined asphalt pad upon which the academy’s new training village sits. “But it does provide a place where Guardsmen and Reservists attending the academy’s 35 Mike (Human Intelligence Collector) course can better prepare for their new job.”

At some point, he adds, the village’s location will move to a more rural location here on post, once a suitable site is found.

“The tennis court is somewhat removed from view because of the surrounding trees,” Creamer said. “What we’re looking for now is a plot where the soil and surroundings better add to the realism provided to Soldiers by the village.”

Creamer says the \$1.5 million, state-of-the art village

came to the Georgia Army Guard from Fort Huachuca, Ariz. Its 14 structures were built by a movie prop company in California. The interiors can be used as an Afghan home, a shop, or school, and each even have places in their walls and floors for hiding weapons and other “contraband.”

“I mean, we’re not only looking for information,” said Staff Sgt. Thomas, an Army Reservist from the Chicago area who was involved in the most recent 35 Mike class. “We may even have to do a cordon and search. The hidden caches, I think, add an extra touch of stress to whatever scenario is being conducted.”

Creamer says that, while the village is used by the 35 Mike course, it is also available to any unit – Guard, Reserve or active duty – for training Soldiers in cultural awareness or for learning tactical movement in an urban environment.



Human intelligence collector trainees talk with a “village elder” (role-played by a GSDF volunteer) inside the elder’s “home.”

“Right now, only the Guard and Reserve members attending the course use the village. But we’re hoping active duty folks will look at us and decide to come here,” said Creamer, adding that the academy hopes to see that happen in the next year or two.

Having the village, which is just one of three such sites in the nation, makes RTI’s Military Intelligence Academy one of the

most elite training locations in the nation, Creamer says.

Georgia Army Guard Sgt. Shanda, who teaches the academy’s Military Occupational Skill 35 Fox (Military Intelligence Analyst) course, often acts as a role player for the 35 Mike course.

“Often, Soldiers will approach me and say how much they like the training, and how much better it is than just sitting in a ‘brick and mortar’ classroom,” Shanda said. “The pride in this facility, and the benefits it provides the Soldiers who use it, is understandable. We [the Georgia Army Guard, RTI and the academy] recognize the value of something like the mock village, so we’re constantly striving to make the training better.”

# FORT GORDON YCA PILOTS ‘A BACKPACK JOURNALIST’ PROGRAM

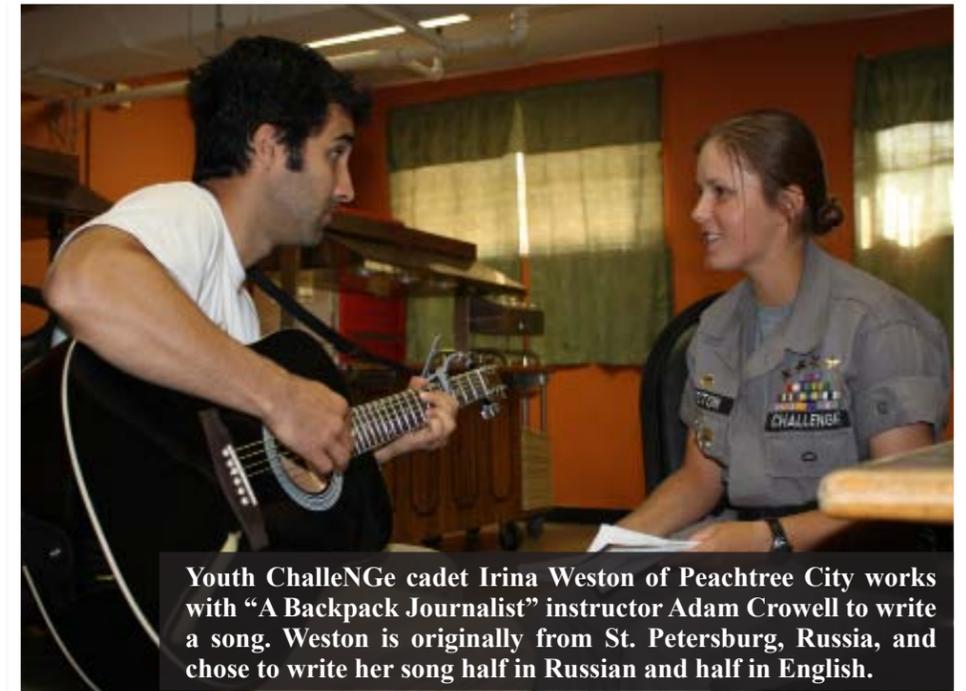
Story and photo by Pfc. Ashley Fontenot  
Public Affairs Office  
Georgia Department of Defense

**FORT GORDON, Augusta, Ga., July 10, 2011** – Writing was the activity of the weekend, and cadets at Fort Gordon’s Youth ChalleNGe Academy could be seen grinning ear-to-ear as they scribbled away at their notepads during a visit from A Backpack Journalist.

A Backpack Journalist is a program dedicated to helping military youth “find their voice.” The program normally does this by sending more than 50 writing professionals, volunteers, and interns all over the country to teach children of military families techniques for expressing themselves through various forms of writing. This weekend’s program at Fort Gordon was unique because it was the first time that A Backpack Journalist has come to teach at a Youth ChalleNGe campus.

“This was a pilot test of the program at Youth ChalleNGe. In the past, we’ve focused on the children of deployed military service-members as a way of helping them find resiliency within themselves,” said Linda Dennis, A Backpack Journalist program manager. “The cadets of Youth ChalleNGe have already shown resiliency by allowing themselves to take a second chance at a successful future. They’re already so focused on learning – what better students could we ask for?”

When cadets weren’t scribbling thoughts down on paper, many of the teens were busy collaborating with other cadets on creative writing projects like songs and poetry, but thanks to A Backpack Journalist, none of them appeared bored by an activity that many kids find to be tedious.



Youth ChalleNGe cadet Irina Weston of Peachtree City works with “A Backpack Journalist” instructor Adam Crowell to write a song. Weston is originally from St. Petersburg, Russia, and chose to write her song half in Russian and half in English.

“Writing isn’t something I ever thought I could enjoy or be good at until this weekend,” said Quincey Winder, a cadet from Fayetteville.

The Fort Gordon cadets spent approximately two hours in each of four writing subjects: writing for a G.E.D., songwriting, photojournalism, and free-verse poetry. While all four courses focused on enhancing their skills and confidence, the G.E.D. writing course was said to have been perhaps the most important for these young cadets.

“We all have a common goal here at Youth ChalleNGe – to get an education and a G.E.D.,” said cadet Triana Daughtry of Augusta. “These classes have taught me the importance of organizing my thoughts before I write anything. The instructors explained things in a way that just made writing seem easier.”

“We take a different approach to G.E.D. writing,” said Dennis. “And I’m proud to say that one of our instructors

has a 99% pass rate among his students who take the G.E.D. writing test.”

At the end of the two-day workshop, A Backpack Journalist had one more surprise for Fort Gordon’s Youth ChalleNGe Academy. The program will send Cadet Quincey Winder to Washington D.C. later this year with 19 other military youth to gain experience as a public affairs writer covering the Association of the United States Army’s conference.

Dennis said Winder was chosen out of many potential YCA cadets based on his writing ability and his stellar attitude during the workshop. Many of his instructors even said that his writing was “quite powerful.”

“I called my mother and she is so excited – she kept telling me how this is a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and I definitely have to agree with her,” said Winder. “Now that I’ve been recognized as a good writer, I think maybe I should look into a literary career or college degree.”



## GUARD ARTILLERY CREWS GET ‘BACK TO BUSINESS’ WITH BEST GUN COMPETITION

Firing their 105mm howitzers is not the only thing the Soldiers of the 118th Field Artillery had to train. Here, they practice another core component of their artillery skills: resupply.

*Story and photos by the Public Affairs Office  
Georgia Department of Defense*

**SAVANNAH, July 27, 2011** – Over the past six years of intermittent deployments, cannoneers of the 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery, 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, have not had an opportunity to send “lethal responding fires raining down on an enemy.” So, gun crews from Battery A – home-stationed here – alongside Headquarters Battery and Springfield’s Battery B used their annual training to “get back to business” and their “red leg roots” by sending some rounds downrange.

“Our folks haven’t fired a round since 2004,” said Capt. Kevin Nicklay, the battalion’s operations officer. “But we’ve been able to train on our core competencies [refuel, resupply, rearm, and crew skills], go back to the basics, and become qualified again to provide timely and precise fire in support of the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team and its commander. It’s been a long time coming, but our

crews have proven they are capable of working in unison with the brigade to give it the firepower it will need on the battlefield.”

Because the unit has not yet received its new 105mm howitzers, earlier in the year, six M119A2s were obtained from the Louisiana Army National Guard in the interim to facilitate training. The training, which included gun crew safety, was a live fire exercise held at several artillery firing points at Fort Stewart in Hinesville, Ga. The guns used for the training have since been returned to Louisiana, and the 118th is slated to receive its full complement of 16 towed howitzers early next month.

Before its deployment to Iraq in 2005-2006, the 118th’s gun crews were firing the M109A Paladin self-propelled 155mm howitzer. With the transition of the 48th Brigade from a heavy to a light infantry combat team after that deployment, the 118th changed also, from using the Paladin to the towed 105s for “sending a rain of heavy steel down on any enemy that might challenge the brigade in combat,” said Nicklay.



A 105mm towed howitzer crew from Savannah’s 1st Battalion, 118th Field Artillery, sets up its gun in anticipation of “pulling the lanyard” for the first time in six years during annual training at Fort Stewart in Hinesville, Ga.

# SECURITY AIRMEN RETURN FROM AFGHANISTAN

Story and photo by Sr. Airman James Reese  
165th Airlift Wing  
Georgia Air National Guard

**SAVANNAH, July 18, 2011** – Air Guardsmen with Savannah’s 165th Security Forces Squadron (SFS), 165th Airlift Wing, returned Monday, July 18, from three months of duty at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan, to warm welcomes from their families, friends and fellow Airmen.

Pictured here, members of the security team – a 25-Airman contingent commanded by 1st Lt. Roy Fountain – pose for a group photo along with one of the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles they used during their tour-of-duty to conduct their mission.

During its time at Bagram, the 165th SFS conducted a variety of defense and security missions while under the direction of the base’s Joint Defense Operations Center (JDOC). Team members also conducted data analysis projects, assisted with redesigning a foreign national hospital entry control point, and facilitated the movement of the JDOC to a newer building.

“Many among the team also volunteered for missions outside the wire,” said Tech Sgt. Peter Bowden, one of the team members. “Doing so gave my fellow Airmen and I the opportunity to experience what mounted and dismounted combat patrols are like.”

“The Savannah team came to Bagram and immediately made a great impact on the mission here,” said Lt. Col. Thomas Hannon, a Rhode Island Air National Guardsman assigned as Bagram’s security operations officer. “We wanted to make a positive impact on our active duty counterparts, and I believe the men and women of the 165th SFS helped us do that in every way possible. I would proudly serve with them again, any day, any where.”



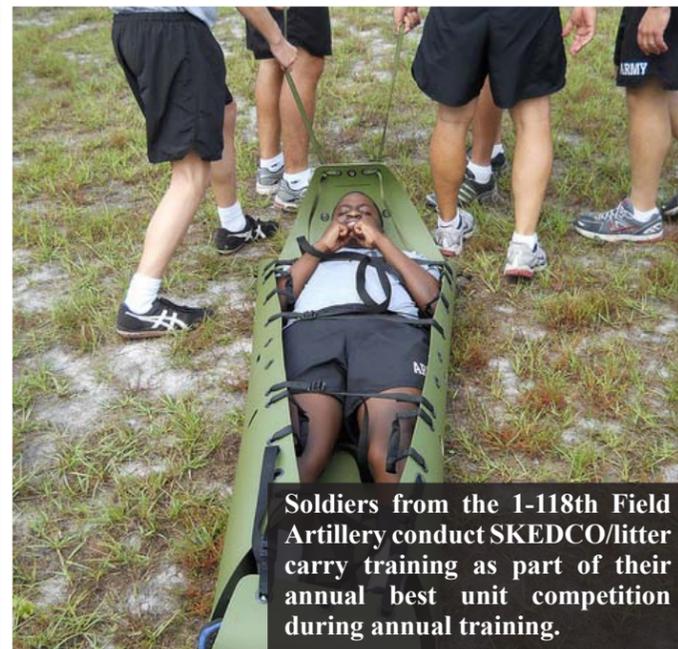
The battalion fielded new howitzers in November of 2008, but they were subsequently reallocated when the unit’s 2009-2010 mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom shifted toward mentoring the Afghan National Security Force rather than providing artillery fire.

“While it wasn’t our traditional wartime mission,” said Lt. Col. John Gentry, who assumed command of the 118th in September 2010, “it’s the one we received, and we carried that mission out with great success.”

With its collective hands finally on the M119A2s obtained from the Louisiana Guard for training, the battalion fired more than 350 rounds of artillery “safely and with excellent effects on target,” said Capt. James Clay, the 118th’s full-time training officer and the Battery B commander. Clay also points out that battery gun crews worked on perfecting the “digital firing concept of getting rounds out.”

the competition’s inaugural return, a Battery A gun crew under the direction of Staff Sgt. Fred Hudson took first place from among the six crews participating. Taking second place in the competition was a crew directed by Staff Sgt. Michael Hatfield from Battery B.

“The 118th has a long-standing tradition of serving our nation as artillerymen, and the Georgia Army Guard leadership has made it known that they are committed to re-establishing the battalion as a premier artillery unit,” Gentry said with obvious pride in his voice. “Providing fire support is a complex business, and it takes coordination to quickly and efficiently respond to a brigade commander’s call for fire. It’s our job to respond to that call, and now that we’re back in that business, the Soldiers of the 118th will give their all meet that challenge, again.”



**Soldiers from the 1-118th Field Artillery conduct SKEDCO/litter carry training as part of their annual best unit competition during annual training.**



**Major Gen. Maria Britt, Commanding General, Georgia Army National Guard, looks through the sight of a M119A2.**

Clay explained of the digital firing concept, “Information about the target comes to the crew through a digital display unit from the forward observer. The gun crew then uses that information to acquire and then fire on the target. It’s what we call a ‘sensor to shooter process.’ It’s a process that takes a bit of rehearsal, but it’s much quicker than it used to be, which means the target is destroyed faster because our shooters are good at what they do.”

Even Maj. Gen. Maria L. Britt, the Georgia Army Guard commander, who observed the training, tried her hand at “putting steel on target,” during the live fire exercise.

This annual training also saw a return to the unit’s “Best Gun Competition,” which – like its guns – went away when the unit’s mission changed for the Afghanistan deployment. On this,

## AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED FIGHT AGAINST TERRORISM

Story by Sgt. Maj. Curtis R. Gann  
J34 and Provost Marshal Office  
Georgia National Guard

**CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., August 5, 2011** – The Department of the Army has designated August as Anti-terrorism Awareness month. In support of this initiative, the Georgia National Guard is taking this opportunity to increase the overall force protection awareness of its Soldiers, Airmen, civilian employees, contractors, and family members.

This year we, and the nation, commemorate the 10th anniversary of the terrorist attacks that occurred on Sept. 11, 2001. As we do, the threat of another such attack remains. Terrorism is an enduring and persistent threat to our nation, our state, and our Guard forces. We must focus our efforts on instilling a service-wide sense of heightened awareness and vigilance to protect the Guard and its resources from acts of terrorism.

Last year, we introduced Georgia’s iWatch program. The

iWatch mission is to get the word out to every member of the Georgia Guard about how they can help prevent terrorism and protect our community.

Through iWatch, we facilitate the reporting and tracking of all suspicious incidents. The J34 Force Protection staff has distributed materials and briefed about the iWatch program at various meetings and conferences as a way of spreading the word about the initiative and its importance in the fight against terrorism.

We must continue to brief our Guard community about the threat of terrorism, about the preventive measures that can be taken to combat that threat, and about tools like iWatch that we can use to mitigate and prevent future attacks. Every member of the Georgia Guard community plays an integral part in this fight. Every member of the Guard team is a sensor. If every one of us recognizes and reports suspicious activities, we succeed as a team.

Report suspicious activity or behavior by e-mail at [NGGaiWatch@ng.army.mil](mailto:NGGaiWatch@ng.army.mil) or call 1-866-307-2729.

# GEORGIA GUARDSMAN COMPETES IN NINJA WARRIOR COMPETITION

Story by 1st Lt. William Carraway  
State Safety Office  
Georgia Army National Guard

**CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., July 7, 2011** – Every year since 2007, Georgia Army Guard 1st Lt. Ryan Stratis, a signal officer and safety specialist with the Guard State Safety Office here in Marietta, has competed in a contest few know about or understand: television’s “American Ninja Warrior” (ANW) competition.

“It’s something you have to really want to do,” the Kennesaw resident said, “not just something you do on a whim. It takes preparation and a strong competitive spirit to come out a winner.”

ANW is the American trial for the Japanese “Sasuke” competition. Sasuke has been held in Japan several times a year since 1997 at Mount Midoriyama in Japan. In reality, Midoriyama is not even a mountain, but a studio owned by the Tokyo Broadcasting System (TBS), located in Yokohama Prefecture.

More than 2,600 contestants ranging from Olympic athletes to shoe salesmen have attempted to negotiate Midoriyama and the four stages of the Ninja Warrior course. However, only three contestants – none of them American – have ever beaten the course.

“ANW is like the television show ‘Wipeout,’ but much more serious,” explained Stratis. “It’s a timed obstacle course that tests the limits of your cardio and upper body strength, and I mean really tests their limits.”

After training for three years and paying his own way to Japan, Stratis has yet to realize the “sweet taste of victory.” He competed last year, but left Venice Beach, Calif., and the 2010 American Ninja Warrior Competition in defeat after a misstep on a trampoline.

Still, he has never given up the dream of one day walking in the footsteps of Sasuke heroes like Nagano, one of the three Japanese athletes to defeat Sasuke.

Stratis has since redoubled his efforts for the 2011 tryouts, and his workout regimen has consisted of a mixture of traditional cardio and body weight exercises with obstacle-specific training.

“I’ve geared everything specifically toward maintaining momentum on the course while also maintaining my mental focus,” Stratis said. “The mental aspect of this can knock you out of the competition just as easily as the physical.”



He explained that at any one point in the course, contestants could find themselves clinging by their fingertips to the “cliffhanger” obstacle, jumping 14 feet up the “warped wall,” or dealing with the gruesome salmon ladder that uses a bar along a vertical track. To complete that event, Stratis explained, contestants must use their body weight to lift the bar in 10-inch increments up a notched wall.

“None of it is easy,” he said. “Many a competitor, including myself, has found that out the hard way.”

In May of this year, Stratis traveled back to Venice Beach, and out of the 300 contestants who attempted the open tryout, only he and 14 others would advance to the next elimination round where the field of competitors was reduced to 10.

After years of intense physical and mental training, Stratis stunned the competition with a flawless run securing for the first time a chance to move on to his ultimate goal: standing at Mount Midoriyama and securing his place in event history.

“I intend to be the first American to make it all the way,” Stratis said. “Being a Soldier has helped me prepare for this competition, and I am determined to show everyone how that has paid off and that I’m giving everything I’ve got – as an athlete and as a Guardsman – to be on top.”

To Follow Stratis as he pursues his dream of Sasuke glory, tune to G4 TV on your local cable or satellite provider, starting July 31.

# GUARD LOOKS TO NEW PROGRAM TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENT

One of the Georgia Army Guard’s ongoing missions is to continuously improve its practices for protecting the environment. One of several programs offering the guidance for meeting that goal is the Environmental Management System (eMS).

Since November 2010, the Georgia Army Guard has moved forward with the full implementation of eMS to comply with Executive Order 13148, “Greening the Government through Leadership in Environmental Management.”

The goal behind developing and implementing eMS is to incorporate sustainability into the organization’s business practices at all levels.

An eMS allows an organization like the Guard to systematically manage its environmental impacts through constant improvement. To do this, formal and informal controls are used for organizing and managing environmental programs, namely, the International Standard of Organization (ISO) 14001 and the Plan-Do-Check-Act (PDCA) cycle.

An ISO 14001 eMS is “conformance-based” rather than compliance-based, built on total quality management concepts of focusing not only on what happens, but why it happens, helping to identify opportunities for prevention. ISO 14001 also uses the PDCA model to make improvements in four phases.

During the “planning” phase, the problem is identified and analyzed while the organization establishes baselines, identifies priorities, sets improvement goals, and targets for operations that might harm the environment. The organization then develops measures to reduce this harm.

In the second phase of “doing,” the organization develops and implements solutions to achieve goals for minimizing environmental harm across all levels and functions of its operations.

In the “checking” phase, the organization monitors,

measures, corrects and documents results of effectiveness for minimizing potential harm to the environment and the consequences of its impact on the organization’s mission.

During the final phase of “acting,” the organization standardizes the solution and capitalizes on new opportunities by evaluating and applying the lessons learned and then makes modifications as needed to promote continual improvement.

With that critical cycle in mind, the Georgia Army Guard eMS has a set of fundamental goals:

- Support the Army Guard’s environmental policy and environmental vision.
- Maintain environmental compliance with local, state, federal, and Army regulations.
- Minimize and reduce the impact of Georgia Army Guard facilities and training operations on the environment through documented processes and procedures.
- Track environmental performance and conformance to policies through records, internal audits and assessments, and management reviews.
- Enable, enhance and sustain overall mission and operations through pollution prevention and continual improvement.

Overall, the success of an eMS rests in the hands of every member – from the Soldier, to the civilian employee, to the military contractor – of the Georgia Army Guard.

Your support is critical to making this system work toward the common goal of sustaining the environmental and mission readiness. Together, we can sustain the mission and the environment.



*Want to find out more about the Environmental Management System?*

Contact Rolandria Boyce, the Georgia Army Guard eMS coordinator: [rolandria.boyce@us.army.mil](mailto:rolandria.boyce@us.army.mil)



# TRAGEDY REMINDS US TO REDOUBLE SUICIDE PREVENTION EFFORTS

Story by Maj. Gen. Maria L. Britt  
 Commanding General  
 Georgia Army National Guard

**CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., July 1, 2011** – On 9 July 2009, Spc. Joey Roberts of the 935th Aviation, Intermediate Maintenance Detachment, was laid to rest. Specialist Roberts took his own life. Every loss is tragic, but a suicide is especially tragic. While nothing we can do will bring this Soldier back, we owe it to him and his family to learn from this tragedy.

Specialist Roberts was a white male, 23 years old, who had never deployed. This describes a significant number of suicide cases across the Army National Guard. There are indications he had made previous suicide threats; but the unit did not know about this (and really had no way of knowing that).

best programs and resources cannot address information that is not provided to our units. Looking at this situation based on what I know today, I do not see “missed signals” or apathy. Looking forward, I believe we need to take the following steps:

**NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE™**  
**1-800-273-TALK**  
**1-800-273-8255**  
[www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org](http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org)

I encourage your feedback and cross-talk on this important topic. There is no one-size-fits-all answer or “school solution” in this area.

**Communicate and educate.** Talk to your Soldiers and FRGs about this case and our Resiliency Programs. Families and friends of our Soldiers see them far more often than their first line leaders.

**Encourage Soldiers to ask for help when/if it is needed without fear of being labeled.** They need to know that asking for help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

**Redouble your efforts to encourage engaged “battle buddies.”** Our Warrior Ethos reminds us that we must never leave a fallen comrade.

## KEEPING SAFETY IN MIND DURING SUMMER FUN IN THE WATER

Story and photo by 1st Lt. William Carraway  
 Safety Office  
 Georgia Department of Defense

**CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER SAFETY OFFICE, Marietta, Ga., June 30, 2011** – The Army Combat Readiness Center refers to the time between Memorial Day and Labor Day as the “101 Days of summer.” It is during these sun-scorched summer days that the active Army and the National Guard witness a sharp increase in accidents. This, of course, results in human, man-hours, and material loss.

The majority of these accidents happen during off-duty hours. During these 101 days of summer, Georgians flock to local and national lakes and waterways to enjoy everything from boating, to fishing, to swimming with friends and family. So far this year, Georgia waters have witnessed nearly 50 boating accidents that resulted in 16 injuries and 7 fatalities. Twenty-two cases of drowning have also been reported.

Take the time to review the following safety tips before you and the family head out to enjoy, a weekend or a week of water recreation here in the Peach State.



**Fishing:**

The Chattahoochee River beneath Buford Dam is one of the most popular fishing spots in the state, with sportsmen fishing the area beneath the dam for giant catfish and trout. The dam that creates those popular fishing holes also poses a flood risk for anglers. When the Army Corps of Engineers releases water from the dam, the river can easily rise as high as 12 feet. Before visiting the dam, it would be wise to call (770) 945-1466 for the water release schedule. Remember also, that the water is released from the bottom of the dam, and that the water temperature is no more than 50 degrees, even during the warmest months.

**Boating:**

As popular as recreational boating is these days, accidents have become a common occurrence. That being the case, it is

good to keep a few things in mind:

The minimum age to operate a vessel or personal watercraft in Georgia without adult supervision is age 16.

Personal watercraft operators must be licensed.

There must be a personal flotation device available for every boat occupant. Children under age 8 must wear a flotation device.

Everyone must wear a flotation device while riding a personal watercraft.

From sunset to sunrise, boats must operate with their navigation lights on.

Water-skiing is permitted only from one hour after sunrise to one hour before sunset.

Boats towing skiers must be equipped with a rear-view mirror or have an observer onboard. Observers must be at least 12 years old.

**Boating traffic:**

There are days on the water when there is little-to-no traffic. Then there are days when there are a large number of boats and personal watercraft. A few safety tips to remember:

When approaching another boat head-on, both boats must yield to the right.

Any boat overtaking another may pass on either side, but the boat being passed has the right-of-way.

When two boats meet at angles (like motor vehicles meeting at an intersection), the boat on the right has the right-of-way.

Boats and personal watercraft must maintain a 100-foot buffer from diving flags that indicate divers are in the water.

Operate at an idle speed around gasoline docks and loading docks.

Operators are responsible for any damage caused by the wake of their boat or personal watercraft.

**Swimming:**

As fun and cooling as a good swim can be, safety hazards at the pool, on the lake, or at your favorite beach are still present. That means there are basic rules to follow, such as:

Never swim alone.

Do not dive or jump into unfamiliar water. Shallow water may hold submerged trees or rocks that could cause injury, paralysis, or even death.

Do not stay in the water too long, especially when the water is cold. Remember, everything in moderation.

One last note – Drinking alcohol and participating in any of the above events is not a smart move. The Georgia Guard Safety office wants everyone to enjoy the 101 days of summer safely. Remember these facts and be safe.

# REFLECTIONS FROM THE AFGHAN FRONT

Story and photo by Lt. Col. David Simons  
Director of Public Affairs  
165th Airlift Wing,  
Georgia Air National Guard

On Dec. 31, 2010, I landed in Kabul, Afghanistan, to start a six-month tour as the Director of Public Affairs for the NATO Training Mission in Afghanistan.

It was a valuable learning experience that taught me much and one that I hope not to repeat too soon.

There were good days, but the bad days were much more plentiful. The hours were long, the living conditions frightful, and every drive was fraught with danger.

And, sadly, I had it better than most who serve in Afghanistan. That said, the mission is critical for victory.

The following are some of the lessons I learned:

The mission of NTM-A is to train the Afghan army, police and air force and prepare them to secure and stabilize their attempt as a democracy. For America and the NATO allies to leave victorious, a successful transition is a must. Success can only be claimed if the next generation of Afghans can lead, and lead on their own.

Fortunately, they are moving at a fairly quick pace as the first seven locales have already moved to the role of Afghan-led security. However, the downside is that they may not move quick enough to achieve the gains necessary for country-wide security before the money runs out. For now, Afghanistan doesn't have the financial resources to sustain their new army, police and air force.

General David Petraeus, International Security Assistance Force Commander, may be one of the brightest people I have met and heard speak. Most mornings, I sat in a video teleconference of his daily briefing and the breadth of his commentary and questions makes you realize you aren't the smartest person in the room.

There is a reason that he is a four-star general and was commander of all the forces in Operation Enduring Freedom during my tour. He has since become the director of the Central Intelligence Agency. I was also highly impressed with Georgia native, Lt. Gen. Bill Caldwell, commander of NTM-A. There are reasons that these men are leading our country's finest and our allies' finest. They are just plain brighter and more experienced than the rest of us.

The United States really does have the best Soldiers, equipment, pay, motivation and commitment to duty. As a former Special Forces Soldier, I have worked alongside and trained foreign troops. But in a high-level international command, the parity becomes less prevalent but is still very much there, and the difference between Afghan forces and ISAF forces is night and day.

We Americans can be very proud of the men and women we

send to fight for us. They truly are the unsung heroes of our lives.

Family and friends make the time bearable but painful. With their packages, cards, phone calls and prayers, they make our time in a war zone much more bearable. But as most of us know, leaving loved-ones, friends and family is always painful. But I am the first to realize, you can't have a good homecoming until you leave.

The axiom, "there are no atheists in foxholes," is very true. Every drive is potentially your last drive as the weapon of choice for the insurgents is the improvised explosive device.

Those big road-size bombs can render your vehicle destroyed and the passengers dead. And while you take all the precautions possible short of just not doing the mission, the possibility of injury and death surround you at every moment. It makes most Soldiers that much more spiritual in their beliefs, prayers much more common, and chaplains that much more popular.

It's hard to trust a friend when they keep shooting you. One of the major problems we faced at NTM-A was the very few Afghan army and police trainees that had a bad day or a bad life and chose to shoot the trainers.

Over the past five years, there have been more than 50 coalition forces killed via impersonation or combat stressors. The loss of one trainer's life in these situations, where trust has to be the catalyst for the training, can dissolve the cohesiveness and unity of effort.

When nine Americans were massacred at Kabul International Airport by an Afghan Reserve Air Force officer, it was easily the worst day of my life. With every major media outlet wanting the gruesome details, it was extremely painful to know how the innocent American trainers died.

What was worse was the aftermath of the murders. Their compatriots grieved and tried to piece the shattered trust with those they had to train back together.

Overall, I learned much about myself, my God, my friends and my family. I was proud to serve and I was rewarded for my efforts. In the end, the most important thing is I returned home with honor. It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, and I wouldn't wish it on anyone.



## 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

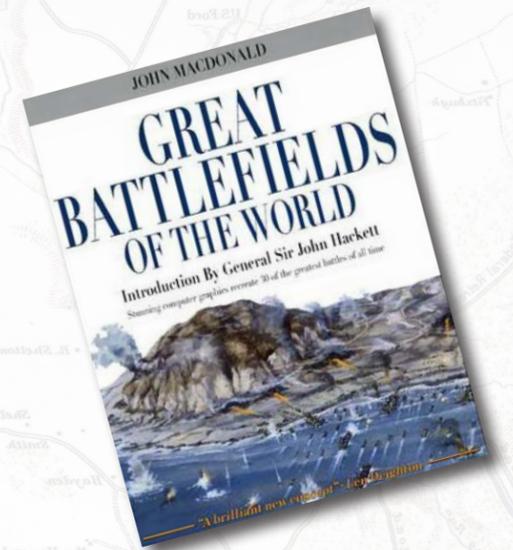
I remember, several years ago, watching one of my lieutenants maneuver his squads in an attack on the MOUT complex at Camp Blanding. They were in close contact with the OPFOR, moving through the point of penetration into the streets beyond.

Tom was just behind his lead squad. But he wasn't looking at the enemy. Rather, he was sitting down on his haunches, leaning against a wall, head tilted back, looking up at the ceiling. He listened to reports come in, listened to the sounds of the fight, and calmly gave his men orders. Tom was visualizing the battlefield – a vital skill for leaders at all levels, and a skill that John Macdonald's *Great Battlefields of the World* can help you develop.

**"MANY OF MORGAN'S SHARPSHOOTERS WERE SITED HIGH UP IN THE TREES, FROM WHICH VANTAGE POINTS THEY USED THEIR POWERFUL PENNSYLVANIA RIFLES TO DEADLY EFFECT."**

Macdonald covers 30 battles from Cannae (between Romans and Hannibal, 216 B.C.) to Dien Bien Phu (between the French and the Viet Minh, 1953-4). The sense of breadth is a little misleading, however, as Macdonald skips 1200 years of military history between his first and second battles, and fully two-thirds of the battles covered involve the British.

That's not necessarily a problem, however, as British military history between Hastings and The Hook really is the story of Western military history in the same period.



The book's compact, engaging coverage of that history is its greatest strength.

Each of the 30 battles is given a brief historical context, detailed description of how the battle unfolded, depictions of tactics and weapons used, a rudimentary 3D model of the terrain, and an illustrative painting.

These many "entry points" to the battles' stories make *Great Battlefields* easy to skim. In fact, one could go through the entire book just reading the sidebars on weapons and get a pretty good brief history of Western armies' weapons development.

The real draw of the book, however, is the one or two paintings provided for each battle. Macdonald chooses a decisive point in the battle and provides a ballon's-eye-view of the action. These lively paintings of the pageantry, sweeping movement, fallen horses, muzzle flashes, and gallantry of the battlefields really brings the action to life – and aids the student of history with visualizing the maneuver and decisions that shaped history.

True, the computer graphics are a bit dated; and, having visited a couple of these battlefields, I can confirm that details of the terrain elevations are sometimes wanting. But, the overall benefit of gaining a new perspective on the battles proves useful both in understanding the battles better, and in learning how better to visualize battlefields based on reports and descriptions.

*Great Battlefields* is a perfect companion to *100 Decisive Battles* – not least because many of the books' battles share common weapons, tactics, uniforms, and even commanders.

This book also is exceptionally user-friendly, an excellent introduction to Western warfare for junior leaders. If you're looking to get started – or want a book in your library to make it easy to share lessons from – this is a great first choice.

# AROUND THE GEORGIA GUARD



## GEORGIA TAG VISITS CITIZEN-SOLDIER AVIATORS IN IRAQ

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., July 29, 2011 - Major Gen. William T. Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General, followed by his senior enlisted advisor Command Sgt. Maj. James Nelson (left) and another Army Guard officer, makes his way across Taji's flight ramp during a visit to Georgia Guardsmen of the 171st Aviation currently deployed to Iraq.

## GEORGIA ADT IN AFGHANISTAN

KABUL, Afghanistan, July 7, 2011 - Specialist Justin Cash, a security force Soldier from Acworth, Ga., with the Georgia Agribusiness Development Team, pauses to communicate with an Afghan boy during a patrol. This is the first deployment of an ADT from the Georgia Guard.



## MEDEVAC TRAINING IN IRAQ

IRAQ, June 23, 2011 - Crew members from the Marietta-based Company C, 1-111th General Support Aviation Battalion, conducted 9-line training with fellow service members. The training aimed at helping Soldiers understand and become more proficient at responding to critically injured troops and removing them from the battlefield.

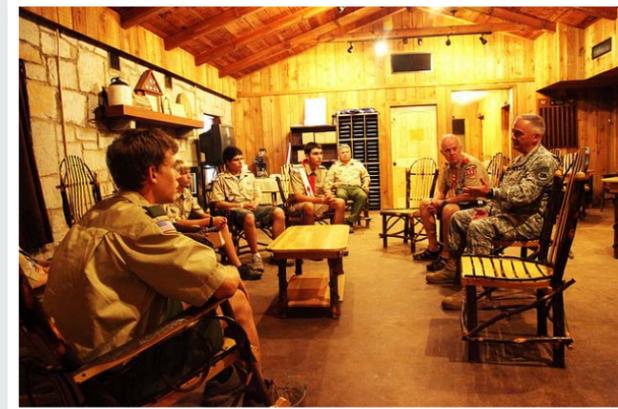


## HELPING AFGHAN WOMEN

KABUL, Afghanistan, July 2, 2011 - First Lt. Claire Cvetkovski, officer-in-charge of the Georgia Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) Women's Initiative Training Team (WITT) meets with the Logar director of women's affairs (DOWA). Cvetkovski along with the other with members of GA ADT 1 WITT discussed upcoming projects planned for the month of July. Additionally, GA ADT 1 supplied the DOWA and her staff with Internet equipment and service for two computers to enhance her professional development and capabilities.

## GEORGIA'S ADJUTANT GENERAL SPEAKS WITH BOY SCOUTS

CLAYTON, Georgia, July 20, 2011 - Major Gen. William T. Nesbitt, the Adjutant General of Georgia, takes a little time to get to know Boy Scouts at Camp Rainey Mountain here today as part of a visit to provide a "Patriotic Fireside" for the hundreds of Boy Scouts encamped for the week. The Scouts, representatives of over 600 boys at the camp that evening, asked the general about his experience in the military and for advice on being better leaders.



## MPS SAY GOODBYE TO THEIR FAMILIES

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Marietta, Ga., August 1, 2011 - Captain Ana Schaus, a logistics officer with the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 170th Military Police Battalion, holds her young son during a deployment sendoff ceremony honoring the unit's 34 members who will leave for a yearlong mission to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The detachment will be responsible for assisting Guantanamo's Joint Detention Group with personnel actions, intelligence, supply, logistics, and day-to-day operations.





**Georgia's Adjutant General  
visits Citizen-Soldiers in Iraq**

**GEORGIA**  **GUARDSMAN**

Public Affairs Office  
Georgia Department of Defense  
1000 Halsey Ave. Bldg. 2  
Marietta, Ga. 30060