

# The Georgia Guardsman

Vol. 1, No. 4

*Serving the National Guard and State Defense Force of Georgia*



Welcome home

Contents Vol. 1, No. 4

- 3 248th Med prepares for Iraq Deployment
- 4 Britt, others honor fallen during Memorial Day ceremony
- 6 Embedded Training Team 1 reunited with family following deployment
- 8 Bruce, 28 others honored by governor
- 10 Airmen visit JSTARS facility
- 11 History
- 12 SDF graduates four from ANCOC
- 13 Bracewell honored with aviation award
- 14 Integrity
- 15 3 Georgia Guardsmen run in '09 marathon; 2 make 'all guard' team
- 16 Counterdrug takes to the skies, schools in war on drugs
- 18 News and Announcements

Want to submit a story for your unit?

All submissions for *The Georgia Guardsman* can be sent to Amanda Kenny at amanda.kenny@ga.ngb.army.mil. Please submit your stories in a Word document. All photos should be in a JPEG format and NOT embedded in the document.

Online at [www.dod.state.ga.us](http://www.dod.state.ga.us)

The Georgia Guardsman

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**Adjutant General of Georgia**  
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# 248th Med Prepares for Iraq Deployment

Story by Ken Baldowski, photos by Spc. Mike Perry

**MARIETTA** – Soldiers of 248th Medical Company were part of a pre-deployment ceremony held Saturday, May 30, 2009, when more than 90 Guardsmen assembled with families at the unit's armory.

The medical company is set to deploy to Balad Airbase in Iraq where they'll assume the responsibility of operating the airbase medical center.

"Today I salute you for your service and personal sacrifice to our nation," said Maj. Gen. Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General, before a gathering of the more than 150 soldiers, families and guests.

Marietta mayor William B. Dunaway also acknowledged the Soldiers service, and the important mission that lay ahead for them. He also extended the appreciation of the citizens of Marietta and Cobb County.

The ceremony also saw the introduction of a new patch for the 648th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade of which the 248th is a subordinate unit. Soldiers removed their Joint Forces Headquarters patch and exchanged it with the newly designed patch of the 560th, one of the two new Georgia Army Guard brigades.

"Our new patch signifies the three essential missions



of those are the 648th," said brigade commander, Col. Keith Knowlton. "Engineering, chemical and military police." Members of the 248th are the first soldiers of the 648th to wear the newly designed patch from the Army's Institute of Heraldry. The remainder of the brigade is scheduled to receive the patch over the next few weeks.

Later in the afternoon, Brig. Gen. Maria Britt, Georgia Army Guard commander, presided over a Yellow Ribbon ceremony for families of the deploying Soldiers held at Southern Polytechnic State University.



Specialist Kimberly Dover (front), a combat medic with Marietta-based 248th Medical Company, awaits orders during the unit's sendoff ceremony. She is among the more than 90 members of the 248th Medical Company getting ready for the unit's yearlong deployment in Iraq.



*General Charles C. Cambell addresses the Memorial Day ceremony audience at the state capitol.*

## Britt, others honor fallen during Memorial Day ceremony

Story and photos by Spc. Mike Perry

ATLANTA — National Guard Master Sgt. David N. Weaver from Barnesville, was among 10 Georgia Soldiers – all but Weaver were active duty – honored by Gov. Sonny Perdue during a Memorial Day ceremony in the State capitol’s North Rotunda May 21, 2009.

The ceremony paid special tribute to Georgia service members killed in support of operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. In attendance were Weaver’s family and those of the other Georgia fallen.

Brigadier Gen. Maria Britt, Georgia Army Guard commander, told families, military and others assembled at the capitol for the annual Memorial Day ceremony. “Many of these Soldiers struggled proudly as they limped forward to receive their American flag.

“Others still grimaced with pain, but they managed to smile as they clutched their Stars and Stripes under one arm. What a vivid reminder that freedom isn’t free and that we should never, ever take that for granted,” Britt concluded.

Weaver, who was assigned to Macon’s 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, was killed in Afghanistan in May 2008 from wounds he sustained when the

Humvee he was riding in struck an improvised explosive device.

General Charles C. Cambell, commander, U.S. Army Forces Command at Fort McPherson, told the group that American Soldiers had fought through many conflicts over the last century and, “gave the gift of freedom ...and have asked for nothing in return. Not oil, not wealth, not dominion...not anything. Not anything except enough ground to bury our hallowed dead. Ground that is now sacred; Ground that is consecrated by the blood of our noble young.”

Captain Blair Davis, 78th Troop Command chaplain, delivered a short tribute to the fallen and read the names of the 10 honored. Besides Weaver, the honored Soldiers included Sgt. Steve A. McCoy, corporals Matthew B. Phillips and Jonathan R. Ayers; Master Sgt. Mitchell W. Young; Pfc. Theron V. Hobbs; 1st Lt. William K. Jernigan; Pvt. Colman J. Meadows, III; Command Sgt. Maj. Benjamin Moore, Jr; and Spc. Ryan C. King.



Gov. Sonny Perdue



*Brigadier Gen. Maria Britt speaks of the courage and sacrifices of Georgia's fallen heroes at the 2009 Governor's Memorial Day commemoration.*

## “It’s nice to be home”

### Embedded Training Team 1 reunited with family following deployment

Story and photos by Amanda Kenny and Spc. Mike Perry

**ELLENWOOD** - From the early morning hours at Hartsfield-Jackson Airport, Saturday, to a friend and family-filled room at Joint Forces Headquarters, Monday, May 18, 2009, the 16-member Embedded Training Team 1 (ETT1) finally crossed the finish line.

Following a yearlong Afghanistan deployment, during which the Guardsmen were assigned to the Afghanistan Regional Security Integration Command-North, members of the ETT were reunited with their families.

“It’s just nice to be home,” said Sgt. Maj. Mark Bender, the unit’s first sergeant. “As I told these guys before we left, this is a marathon not a sprint, and we are at the finish line.”

Brigadier Gen. Maria Britt, Georgia Army Guard commander, said. “You’ve made history, you didn’t just read about it, you participated in it.”

**“Oglethorpe hasn’t changed much, except for some fresh paint on the walls, and Atlanta still has some fantastic traffic.”**

Brigadier Gen. Maria Britt  
Georgia Army Guard commander



*A member of Embedded Training Team 1 talks with his son at Hartsfield-Jackson Airport after the unit returned from its yearlong deployment to Afghanistan.*

While deployed, the unit worked with the Police Advisory Command, the Balkh Central Police Mentor Team, ETT4 and ETT5, and the Afghan National Army it also occupied key mentor positions at forward operating bases at Kunduz and Meymaneh.

A marathon is exactly what the team went through,

arriving at the airport just after midnight, May 16, 2009, to a crowd of delighted and relieved family and friends. By Monday, the team wrapped up its demobilization with a Freedom Salute ceremony.

“Thank you for all you have done,” said Maj. Gen. Terry Nesbitt, Georgia’s Adjutant General. “This was a very dangerous and complicated mission, and you made a very big step in Afghanistan. Thank you for all your efforts.”

Nesbitt and Britt gave the Soldiers one common piece of advice. “Decompress.”

“Take some time to get used to your family and civilian life,” said Nesbitt. “Please get help when you need it. We want you back as the same great Soldiers and leaders that you were when you left.”

Britt also praised the Soldiers declaring, “We will have peace if we have to fight for it,” quoting the late President Dwight D. Eisenhower.

Soldiers completing their first deployment were presented with an encased American flag as well as a special coin. Soldiers completing their second or more deployments received a certificate and a special Defender of Freedom ring.

Of course the ceremony wasn’t complete without a few jokes.

“Welcome back home,” said Britt. “Oglethorpe hasn’t changed much, except for some fresh paint on the walls, and Atlanta still has some fantastic traffic.”

Besides Nesbitt and Britt, Maj. Gen. Larry H. Ross, National Guard Bureau Manpower and Personnel director, Col. Tom Blackstock, commander, 78th Troop Command, and command sergeants major Claude Ray and Neil Russell, 78th Troop Command and state command sergeants major, were on hand to congratulate and welcome the Soldiers home.



*Major Israel Ham, a member of the Embedded Training Team, is welcomed home and presented with an encased American flag by Brig. Gen. Maria Britt. The award thanks and recognizes him for his service in the Global War on Terror. Ham was presented the flag during the team’s Freedom Salute ceremony at the Joint Forces Headquarters.*

# Bruce, 28 others honored by governor

Sandra Bruce, state personnel officer for the Georgia Department of Defense, was among 32 state employees and state employee teams recognized for excellence in customer service by Gov. Sonny Perdue and the State of Georgia.

Bruce was honored for her efforts on behalf of state employees including numerous personnel innovations and work programs. She was cited for her work in assisting state employees as well as streamlining often complex personnel actions.

Also, 28 Georgia DoD employees were recognized for continuous faithful service to the state with the awarding of 5-10-15-20 and 25 year certificates. Two employees were recognized for more than 30 years of service. Together the employees accounted for more than 450 years of service to the state.

Five-year certificates were presented to Urvi Bharucha (FMD), Rolandria Boyce (CFMO), Anthony Burch (CFMO), Johnny Byers (CFMO), Etta Edwards (CFMO), Kenneth Kirby (SPO), Charles Thompson (CRMO) Jermicka Vauss (CFMO), Trent Compton (116ACW), Phyllis Cooper (116ACW), Jozef Matuszewski (116ACW), and Ronny Walker (CFMO).

Recognized for 10 years of service were John Eubanks (116ACW), Carolyn Cox (SPO), Patricia Graham (FMD), and Anthony Patrick (CFMO).

Fifteen year award recipients were Sonya Anderson (SPO), Claudette Griffith (DCS) and Eugene Watson (CFMO).

Twenty-year award recipients were Elizabeth Warwick (Public Affairs), Donna Allen (SPO), Marian Miles (CFMO), Asa Barnard (FMD), Lottie Miller (FMD), and Angela Williams (FMD).

Altamese Finch, awards and retirement coordinator was recognized for 25 years of service.

Representing more the 30 years of service to the agency were Beryl Diamond (Public Affairs) and John Baade (116ACW).

*See employee photos on next page.*



**Sandra Bruce receives the Governor's Excellence in Customer Service award from Maj. Gen. Terry Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General, during activities at the state capitol.**

# 450 years of service ...



Trent Compton



Phyllis Cooper



Elizabeth Warwick



John Baade



Jozef Matuszewski



Ronny Walker



Jim Driscoll



Beryl Diamond



Asa Barnard



Pat Graham



Donna Allen



Altamese Finch



Lottie Miller



Sonya Anderson



Carolyn Cox



Eugene Watson



Claudette Griffith



Etta Edwards



Anthony Patrick



Kenneth Kirby



Rolandria Boyce



Johnny Byers

## Airmen visit JSTARS facility

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Christopher Holmes

**LAKE CHARLES, La.** – Twenty-six members of the Georgia Air Guard's 12th Airborne Command and Control and 116th Aircraft Maintenance squadrons toured the maintenance depot at Northrop Grumman's Integrated Systems operations depot to see E-8C Joint STARS aircraft in various stages of maintenance and repair, April 29, 2009, in Lake Charles.

The tour was intended for the Airmen and depot employees to gain a better understanding of what the other does and how they help keep the mission going.

"At the end of the day, the team we have between Lake Charles and Robins is very vital," said Col. Domenick Eanniello, vice commander, 116th Air Control Wing. "I wanted the Airmen to see what happens at the factory and meet the people behind this aircraft."

David Tracy, site manager for the Lake Charles facility, said, "As opposed to a lot of military programs, we're on more of a commercial cycle for depot maintenance, and that cycle is 18 months."

When they come in, the jets are put through one of four checks, depending on the check cycle, explained Tracy.

"The checks are divided up into four different checks," he continued. "And then every six years, the aircraft is repainted."

Using service bulletins and airworthiness directives, the crew at the depot knows what to look for when the aircraft come in. The checks include everything from skins and body to the electronics and radar.

"Service bulletins and airworthiness directives, which come from the manufacturer, tell us what we need to do for each inspection, especially when it comes to safety" Tracy said. "These bulletins and

directives are what insure the aircraft are kept updated, and more importantly, has the best features."

The E-8C has even been the forerunner for new technology throughout its existence.

"We're the first platform to incorporate the EFC-100 fuel tank sealant as a full re-sealant," Tracy said.

The Joint STARS crew also learned how Northrop Grumman incorporates other technologies to help keep the jets flying and air worthy. One way they do this is a system from Dying Industries which tests all of the wires on the aircraft, which makes the process more efficient and can divert man power to other areas.

"The system was designed to test all of the individual wires at all of the positions," Tracy said. "We connect the cables to the wires and a computer sends signals down them and tells us if the wires are plugged in right and are sending out the correct amount of electricity."



First Lt. Jason Greer; 12th Airborne Command and Control Squadron; examines an E-8C engine at Northrop Grumman's maintenance depot in Lake Charles, La.

## 'Battle of the boat'

Part 2 of 3, continued from Issue 3

In part one, Georgia's Irish Jasper Greens and Kennesaw Rangers met while on a steamboat traveling to a camp along Rio-Grande during the Mexican War of 1840s. The Rangers threatened to run the damned Irish off the boat! And the war of words soon erupted into violence. In part two, violence grows and the men of the 4th Illinois become involved. The following narrative of an incident involving the Kennesaw Rangers and the Irish Jasper Greens, as well as members of the 4th Illinois Volunteers, led by Col. Edward D. Baker, is from Gordon Burns Smith's four-volume work, "*History of the Georgia Militia, 1783-1861*," Boyd Publishing, Milledgeville, Ga., 2000.

Some of the Greens were lying in blankets on the deck of the river steamer, while others lay asleep on the riverbank. The Kennesaw Rangers suddenly assailed the Greens on the shore. Hearing their comrades yell for help, the Greens on the boat sought to run to their aid, but Capt. McMahon checked them as Capt. Nelson endeavored to restrain the Rangers, some of whom were endeavoring to force their way on the boat to battle there with the Greens. McMahon ordered the Greens aboard the boat to march to the hurricane deck, where he drew them up in line. Captain Nelson of the Rangers drew his company up on shore, thus separating the two companies. This was the scene when Col. Baker came upon it. 27

A company from the Illinois regiment had been attending a funeral of one of its men, and was returning under the command of Col. Baker to their camp nearby. As they reached their camp, someone reported to Baker that there was trouble in the camp of the Georgia regiment. He demanded to know what the trouble was, and apparently Lt. Col. Redd pointed to the steamboat. As senior commander at Camp Belknap, Baker immediately marched his company to the boat and formed them up in line of battle. He stormed his way on board with his sword drawn and followed by his men started to the hurricane deck, where Capt. McMahon was addressing his men and cautioning them against disorder. It was late afternoon and, in fact, darkness was coming on. Believing the invaders to be Rangers, a struggle between the Greens and the Illinois soldiers ensued. 28

As Col. Baker and his men advanced on the deck he shouted at Capt. McMahon, "Surrender your sword!" It was becoming dark, and the irate commander of the Greens, who had been quieting his men, not recognizing Baker's rank, engaged him at once with his sword. Captain Nelson of the Rangers subsequently testified that McMahon responded, "Damn you, cross swords with me!" to McMahon. Col. Baker was simply an unknown officer leading men to assail the Greens. The colonel and the captain parried and thrust and continued battling, while the turmoil on the shore kept on. It was a duel to the death between Baker and McMahon without the customary preliminaries. With the clashing of their swords heard above the din, under the onslaught of Capt. McMahon, Col. Baker gradually gave way until some of the Illinois volunteers, seeing his plight, rushed in, answering the cry of one of them: "Charge, damn you, run your bayonets through him!"

The captain of the Greens now attacked the Illinois colonel furiously, seeking to disarm him or to inflict a disabling wound. One of the Illinois soldiers ran up behind McMahon, grabbed him by the waist and dragged him back, causing McMahon to slip and fall to the deck. By good fortune McMahon held off with his sword the bayonets aimed at him, but one of the Illinois soldiers firmly pinned McMahon to the deck with a bayonet through his mouth. *Continued in Issue 5*

Notes

27 "With Jackson In Mexico" in SMN, 3 May 1897. By 1897 there were only two survivors of the 1st Georgia Regiment. They were Henry R. Jackson, who had gone on to serve as a general in the Confederate Army, and poor Patrick ("Harry") Maroney, a private in the Jasper Greens. Over thirty years earlier Maroney had wandered off to Oregon, where he became a miner. During one of CDL Edward D. Baker's political campaigns in Oregon, he saw Maroney and instantly recognized him as having been one of the Jasper Greens on the boat that August night so many years earlier. Maroney eventually began to lose his mind, and spent some time in an institution, but was released. As his insanity increased, he became a hermit high up in the mountains. Realizing that Maroney could no longer care for himself, one of his acquaintances attempted to get a government pension for the poor old veteran, but the government responded by stating that Maroney had to prove his service. Of course, Maroney could no longer prove anything, so his friend wrote an inquiry to Savannah for assistance. The only other veteran then alive, Jackson could not recall Patrick Maroney. However, when Maroney's friend recounted his campfire stories about the "Battle of the Boat," Jackson was certain that he was telling the truth and certified his service to the government.

28 *Our Gallant Greens* in DG, 1 October 1846.

### Georgia Companies engaged in the Mexican War

Companies	Enlisted From	Enrolled
The Columbus Guards	Columbus	87
The Georgia Light Infantry	Columbus	91
The Crawford Guards	Columbus	83
The Richmond Blues	Augusta	93
The Irish Jasper Greens	Savannah	86
The Bibb-Macon Volunteers	Macon	92
The Sumter County Volunteers	Americus	89
The Fannin Avengers	Pike County	93
The Kennesaw Rangers	Cobb County	92
The Canton Volunteers	Cherokee County	90

Total Strength (officers and men)

898



Map of action in 1846-47



Col. Harry Jackson,  
1st Regiment Commander



Col. Edward Barker,  
4th Illinois commander

## SDF graduates four from ANCOC

Story and photos by 1st Lt. Arni Katz

Four members of the Georgia State Defense Force's Non-commissioned Officer Corps graduated from Advanced Noncommissioned Officer course, May 17, 2009.

Sergeant 1st Class Jeffery L. Ulmer, Headquarters, 1st Medical Company, received the "Honor Graduate Award" and 1st Sergeant L.M. Harrell, 1st Battalion, 1st Brigade, received the "Leadership Award." The honor graduate is the person that achieved the highest academic grade. The Leadership Award recipient is selected by the students. It goes to the person who has demonstrated leadership abilities and helped lead the class through the ANCOC course.

The ANCOC course instruction is designed for senior non-commissioned officers. It assumes that the students enrolled have had a variety of GSDF assignments and thus builds on this foundation. The subjects taught are broad and focus on the role of senior NCOs at all levels of command. The students are expected to contribute their input in the form and manner of case studies. This program is five weekends in length beginning usually at the start of every other calendar year, and was conducted by the NCO Academy cadre, at the Georgia Public Safety Training Center (GPSTC) in Forsyth.

This year's ANCOC graduating class members are: 1st Sgt L.M. Harrell, Sgt. 1st Class Keven Leasure, 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, Sgt 1st Class Lamorah L. Stephens, Headquarters, 1st Brigade, and Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery L. Ulmer, Headquarters, 1st Medical Company.

Instructors were; Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Parmenter, Sgt 1st Class Warren S. Langley, staff sergeants Jay M. Lancaster, Jimmy W. Gaines and Chris Brierley.



**From left to right: Students are (front) Sgt. 1st Class Keven Leasure, 1st Sgt. 1st Class Jeffery L. Ulmer, Sgt L.M. Harrell and Sgt 1st Class Lamorah L. Stephens. Instructors are (back) Staff Sgt. Jimmy W. Gaines, Staff Sgt. Jay M. Lancaster, Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Parmenter, Staff Sgt. Chris Brierley and Sgt 1st Class Warren S. Langley. (Contributed photo)**

## Bracewell honored with aviation award

Story and photos by Spc. Mike Perry



**Colonel Brent Bracewell, (right) commander, 78th Aviation Troop Command, receives the Order of St. Michael for contributions to Army Aviation from Lt. Col. Vernon Atkinson, commander, Army Aviation Support Facility 3, Hunter Army Airfield.**

**MARIETTA** — Colonel Brent Bracewell, commander, 78th Aviation Troop Command, received the prestigious Order of St. Michael for contributions to Army aviation during an award ceremony May 28, 2009, at Dobbins Air Reserve Base.

Bracewell told a gathering of fellow aviators and friends at monthly meeting of the Greater Atlanta Chapter of the Army Aviation Association of America's that "a week does not go by that I don't realize what a blessing it is to be an Army aviator."

The Order of Saint Michael, established 1990, honors individuals who have contributed significantly to the promotion of Army Aviation and who demonstrate the highest standards of integrity and moral character, professional competence and service to the Army Aviation. The legend of Saint Michael depicts him as a slayer of dragons and exemplifies the bravery and gallantry associated with the aviation soldier.

The colonel was recognized for his strong support of Army aviation in the State, as well as the establishment of an Unmanned Aerial Systems Detachment in the Georgia Guard. He was also cited as "leader in the fight to continue the C-27J joint cargo aircraft fielding plan, and well as advancing a groundbreaking program that takes Youth Challenge cadets and puts them through an aviation program sponsored by a national corporation.

"For so long," said Bracewell, "I wanted to be an Army aviator and I didn't ever think I would be one. Now to be recognized by the Army Aviation Association of America that supports Army aviation, I'm humbled. It's a little hard to believe."

A veteran of more than 20 years in the active duty and Guard, Bracewell serviced in Bosnia, Operation Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom and holds the Bronze Star, the Air Medal, Army Commendation Medal, as well as Kuwait Liberation Medal, and many other awards.

Bracewell was a 1986 distinguished military graduate of the University of Georgia Army ROTC program.

# Integrity

## *A Push on the Flywheel* *One of the Core Values*

Story by Chief Master Sgt. Leslie Allen

The never-ending journey from good to great is clear. How do we get from good to great!

Let's begin by talking with a mentor or a coach, don't have one, talk to your State Human Resource Advisor. My name is Leslie Allen (Lee Ann) and I can be reached at DSN 497-9072 or Leslie.Allen@ang.af.mil. I would be glad to mentor, coach or just talk about your future in the military.

**What does integrity mean? Why do you need integrity to go from good to great?**

Integrity demands that you are **STRAIGHT WITH YOURSELF**. Sometimes it's the toughest thing you'll ever have to do... but it's the foundation of a joyous life, self-expression, power... everything. You don't say 'yes' to please people, or because it's the right thing to say, or because it makes you "look good". The foundation of self-confidence is living in accordance with your values. As long as you know you're doing the right thing, the world can collapse around you and you'll maintain peace of mind, calm and confidence. Integrity is vital to high self-confidence. It is an essential value to have, and it is more than a value as it ensures that all your other values

are respected and lived in line with. You can't have a little bit of integrity; you can't put it aside when it's not convenient. From the moment you've selected your values, you will never compromise them. This is the measure of your quality as a human being. As long as deep down you know you'll never violate your values you can be in control and self-confident. Honesty involves not only telling the truth but living truthfully. When we fake an emotion or pretend to like something we dislike, we lower our self-respect. When we lie, we are giving ourselves the message that the truth is something to be ashamed of. If we pretend or live falsely in any way, we are rejecting our true selves and this creates a negative self-concept that we'll find reflected in the attitudes of others toward us.



Chief Master Sgt. Leslie Allen

## 3 Georgia Guardsmen run in '09 marathon; 2 make 'all guard' team

LINCOLN, Neb. - Members of the Georgia Army National Guard were among the 140 Guardsmen representing 47 states who competed, in the 32nd annual Marathon, May 2 and 3, 2009.

The event gives National Guard marathon runners a chance at making the "All Guard" Marathon Team. Each state sends a handful of their best long distance runners, including some who are newcomers to the sport, to participate.

The goal: to complete the Lincoln Marathon successfully and earn a spot on the "All-Guard" team.

Making up this year's Georgia marathon team were 1st Sgt. Devika Hull, senior enlisted Soldier for Headquarters Company, 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade; Lt. Col. Jeff Olive, who commands 1st Battalion, 214th Field

Artillery; and 1st Lt. Ryan Stratis, a safety specialist with 3rd Squadron, 108th CAV. "I'm the rookie of the group," Stratis said with a laugh.

The day before the marathon, a runner's expo was set up in a local hotel auditorium. Participants, who visited the National Guard Marathon booth, were given an excellent opportunity to find out about other Guard opportunities like the All Guard Marathon Team and the World Class Athlete Program that many people may not know about.

"The level of energy at the event the next morning was obvious, with the runners standing at the start line bright and early," Stratis recalled. Those who came to support us lined the streets cheering, not just for their favorite runner, but for everyone waiting to 'hit the street running.'

That support, of course, didn't end at the starting line. At stops along the 26.2 mile course, people handed refreshments and a constant stream of encouragement.

"Personally, I don't think I've had that many orange slices, let alone having that many folks tell me, 'Hang in there, you can do this...you're doing great,' in one day my entire

life," Stratis said. "And the camaraderie, the camaraderie that brought us together was evident even during the tail end of the run when everyone's muscles were failing, cramping, and doing everything except what we wanted them to do."

After a lot of pain and determination, he crossed the finish line with a time of 4 hours and 44 minutes. "Not bad for a rookie," he said with a smile.

Olive and 1SG Hull both finished in the top 40 to make the All Guard team, and then placed in their respective divisions. As a part of the All Guard team, they will participate



Photo: From the left Lt. Col. Jeffrey Olive, 1st Battalion, 214th Field Artillery; renowned marathon runner, author and Atlanta native Jeff Galloway; 1st Lt. Ryan Stratis, 3rd Squadron, 108th CAV; and 1st Sgt. Devika Hull, Headquarters Company, 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade. (Contributed photo)

in various marathons around the country, and help with recruiting efforts.

Any Soldier interested in being part of next year's Georgia Marathon Team can contact Stratis at 678-569-3992 or "ryan.stratis@ga.ngb.army.mil" or Olive at 678-569-8205 or "jeffrey.olive@ga.ngb.army.mil", Stratis said.

# Counterdrug takes to the skies, schools in war on drugs

Story by Ken Baldowski

Flying the Georgia skies, the OH-58 Kiowa helicopter of Georgia's Counterdrug Task Force is in search for the emerald green glint of marijuana plants. Hundreds of pine trees and acres of green fields ready for harvest, pass by below. To the uninitiated, all looks green, lush and normal.

But for the trained eye of CW4 Bobby Dennis, a 29-year Army National Guard veteran and a 3-year veteran of the Georgia's National Guard Counterdrug Task Force and four other Counterdrug taskforce pilots, "marijuana's distinct color is unmistakable."

The plant has become a highly lucrative 'cash crop' according to the nation's top drug enforcement officials. According to a NBC news special aired several years ago entitled "Harvest of Gold," Georgia ranks as one of the nation's most productive locations for raising marijuana because of its good soil, ample moisture, and a long growing season.

With such natural advantages, growers take great chances growing the contraband often right out in the open and in plain sight of authorities. A recent eradication mission found more than 8000 plants growing healthy in the midst of a wooded area where towering pine trees virtually concealed the plants from aerial and ground view.

"We support the local eradication efforts of law enforcement," said Dennis who explained that the services of the National Guard observa-



**A student sits behind the controls of the Counterdrug OH-58 Kiowa helicopter as part of graduation festivities from the Task Forces Keep on Track program.**



**A Guardsman in a 'ghillie suit' demonstrates surveillance tactics during a Drug and Demand Reduction demonstration.**

tion helicopters are provided free to communities who have few resources to counter this pervasive problem.

The OH-58 Kiowa is well equipped to carry out this marijuana eradication mission as well as many other types of counterdrug missions in support of local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies. Equipped with a FLIR, or Forward Looking Infra Red, and a 30-million candle power searchlight known as Nite Sun, and multi-band radios capable of talking with any law enforcement or drug agency, the helicopter is extremely versatile, making it an indispensable tool for the war on drugs. The helicopter can also videotape suspected locations and downlink in real time to law enforcement command posts in the area.

"In the state, the majority of our flying in support of marijuana eradication missions occurs in the summer months," said Dennis.

On another recent observation mission, a Counterdrug helicopter pilot directed a ground team through a heavily wooded area to a location that the pilot advised looked "suspicious" from his perch 500 feet in the air. Ground team members initially located nothing. The pilot radioed for the team to move only a few feet to where the pilot suggested that the ground cover looked disturbed. Removing the ground cover and debris, local law enforcement noticed several rusty trash can lids which, when moved, revealed underground trashcans filled with bags of marijuana cut, packaged and ready to sell.

"Among the more successful programs of Counterdrug Task Force is our Drug Demand Reduction program," said Lt. Col. Ben Sartain, Counterdrug commander. "Information on the dangers of drug abuse, especially directed toward youth is often our most effective first line of defense in combat drug abuse. Georgia's Drug Demand Reduction program focuses upon providing kids with an understanding of the hazards of drug usage. This program speaks of staying in school, not following the crowd and building self-esteem. Georgia's Counterdrug soldiers and airmen are called upon by school systems around the state to speak with kids.



**Students pose with Counter Drug Guardsmen after their graduation ceremony from the Task Forces Keep on Track Program.**

"To capture their attention," continued Sartain, "we often use the resources of our counterdrug program, especially the helicopter, to attract immediate interest before delivering our principal messages," said Sartain. The Drug Demand Reduction program presented more than 200 programs and reached more than 43,000 citizens of Georgia over the past year.

The ready availability of drugs, their enormous profit potential and the dangerous potential of the drug dealers continue to place enormous pressure on law enforcement.

According to Georgia Guard Counterdrug Task Force analyst, Atlanta is quickly becoming one of the nation's major hubs of drug activity. Two Air National Guardsmen, MSgt James Miller with the 116th Security Forces and SSgt Devonne West with the 116th Logistics Readiness Squadron (LRS), are both assigned to the Drug Enforcement Agency, to gather and sort volumes of data which assists local, state and federal law enforcement in the tracking of drug activities throughout Georgia and the Southeast.

Drugs cost Georgians millions of dollars annually and expose each of us to enormous challenges and dangers. Georgia's National Guard plays an important role in helping to combat the nation's drug menace. Through the efforts of skilled and courageous Guardsmen, high-tech observation resources, and its programs of education and information, Georgia's counterdrug operations is making a difference.

## June 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6 NASCAR 300, Lebanon, Tenn. 781st CERPF Change of Command in Kennesaw
7	8	9	10	11	12 110th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion Change of Command in Tifton	13
14	15	16	17	18	19 Become a Pilot Day	20
21 Become a Pilot Day	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 Concert by the 118th Army Band at the Walton Country Music Guild	29 530th Air Force Band at the Union City Independence Day Celebration	30	<b>Available Videos:</b> Click the event name for the video  BG Britt Speech at CBWTU BG Britt Speech at Memorial Day Ceremony HHC 1/121st INF REGT and Echo Company Family Day -Features MG Nesbitt and CPT Pomien speaking to the troops, family and friends.			848th Engineer Co (SAPPER) Freedom Salute Ceremony -Features MG Nesbitt speaking to the troops and handing them their awards 48th IBCT Receive Sendoff at Macon City Hall -GA Gov. Sonny Perdue, BG Dudley, COL Durham and CPT Avera speak in this one. Highlights from the first Georgia Army Air Basketball Challenge COL Steven Merkel's Family Support Message