

GEORGIA GUARDSMAN

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More troops likely to join Georgia brigade in Afghanistan

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TRIBAL LEADERS

Georgia Soldiers engage Afghan tribal Leaders

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YAMA SAKURA

124th MPAD visits Japan for annual bilateral exercise

C27-J SCHOOL HOUSE OPEN

TRAINING FACILITY OPENS AT ROBINS AFB

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SEASONS GREETINGS

During this holiday season, as I take time to reflect on the past and contemplate the future, I am awed by what you, our Citizen Soldiers, Airmen and families, have accomplished in the past, I find myself humbled by what you will be asked to do for our nation in the future.

Your true character and selfless service has never been more evident. In spite of the difficult times facing our nation and the world, the future of our National Guard remains bright. Bright, because our Soldiers and Airmen never falter, never waver, and always accomplish the mission.

During this holiday season, I am sincerely grateful for the privilege to serve as your Adjutant General and I thank you for all that you do.

Letha and I wish you and your loved ones peace and joy this holiday season and throughout the New Year.

Major General Terry Nesbitt
The Adjutant General



GUARD HISTORY

A look at deployed Georgia Guardsmen during two Decembers: 1916 & 1917:

1916 - A report in the Jackson, GA weekly newspaper from a Jackson Rifles soldier along the Texas-Mexican border: "Since we have arrived in El Paso, we have been subjected to one test and inspection right after another. These inspections and tests are for the purpose of ascertaining our fitness to take the field in case of war. They include not only a test of our ability to use a rifle and bayonet, and the solving of actual war problems against imaginary enemies, but also a very close inspection of equipment each man is issued. ... Hopefully the weather has improved from November when a blizzard struck and the extreme cold caused one Jackson soldier to sleep under seven blankets trying to find warmth."

Units Mobilized for the Punitive Expedition from Georgia

1st Infantry Regiment Field Staff and Band Detachment Companies A thru M Hospital Corps	2nd Infantry Regiment Field Staff and Band Detachment Companies A thru M Sanitary Detachment
5th Infantry Regiment Field Staff and Band Detachment Companies A thru M Sanitary Department	2nd Squadron Cavalry Field and Staff Corps Detachment Troops B, F, K, L Hospital Detachment
Troop A, 1st Squadron Cavalry 1st Battalion, Field Artillery Field and Staff Batteries A, B, C	Hospital Company Field Hospital, Company #1 Company A, Engineers

1917 - Excerpts follow from letters written home in December 1917 in French villages by Pvt. Harry Kendall, a member of the 151st Machine Gun Battalion, which was formed at the onset of World War I from three companies of the Georgia National Guard's 2nd Regiment of Infantry. "Don't worry about me or any of the boys cause we are being well taken care of 'over here'. The YMCA is a great help to us in every way...It is good not to have Yankee strangers with us for Christmas. I wish I could tell you all that we have been thru."

He tells his mother in a later note that he and his fellow 151st members played a game of baseball in the snow for Christmas eve for the French villagers.

He also writes of the welcoming reception whenever they finally return home to the Volunteer Armory in Macon. The 151st returned in 1919 after serving as occupation troops in Germany



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Mission: *To celebrate and support the soldiers and families of the Georgia National Guard. To provide today's National Guard members with information about Georgia's Guardsmen.*

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Updated news and information on the Georgia DoD can be viewed at www.gadod.net

McChrystal calls Guard's effort 'extraordinary'

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 15, 2009 – The National Guard's contribution in Afghanistan has been "extraordinary," the commander of U.S. and international forces in Afghanistan told Congress on Dec. 9.

"Well, they are extraordinary," GEN Stanley A. McChrystal said in a hearing before the House Armed Services Committee. "But ... sometimes someone will ... say, 'Well, they're just as good as active-duty or active Army troops.' ... That's not the case. In many cases, they bring unique skills, like our agricultural development teams that are around the country; [they] bring ... skills and maturity active components don't have."

In response to a question from Rep. Ike Skelton of Missouri, McChrystal said that despite their differences, the Guard, Reserve and active components are working together as a team.

"They're not exactly the same, but together they are much better," he said.

McChrystal also said the Guard is making many sacrifices in lives lost and time away from families and employers. "I cannot say enough about their performance," he added.

Georgia Army Guard troops presently in country include Macon's 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) and its subordinate units from across the state. Also deployed is Savannah's Detachment 1, 169th Aviation Battalion, the Guard's Chinook helicopter unit stationed at Hunter Army Airfield and 248th Medical company is in Iraq.

Elements of the Georgia Air Guard's 165th Airlift Wing in Savannah and the 116th Air Control Wing at Robins Air Force Base, continually rotate in and out of Afghanistan.

Earlier in the day, McChrystal told Senate lawmakers that the training of tens of thousands of additional, capable Afghan soldiers and police is another crucial task necessary to achieving success in Afghanistan.

The 48th IBCT is among the units carrying out that mission.

"To pursue our core goal of defeating al-Qaida and preventing their return to Afghanistan, we must disrupt and degrade the Taliban's capacity, deny their access to the Afghan population and strengthen the Afghan security forces," he said.

This strategy, he said, requires reversing the current momentum of the Taliban, while creating "the time and space to develop Afghan security and governance capacity."

Many of the 30,000 U.S. forces deploying to Afghanistan in coming months will combat the Taliban, McChrystal said, while others assist NATO troops in training up new Afghan soldiers and police.

There are now between 180,000 to 190,000 Afghan security forces, McChrystal said, divided between military



forces and the police. "We need to significantly increase the Afghan national security forces," he said.

Afghan army trainers, such as those from the 48th Brigade, are working hard to close the gap.

Sixteen new Afghan National army companies, McChrystal said, are slated to deploy to Helmand province in early winter. More Afghan troops are planned to follow in the spring. "We are flowing everything we can build in the Afghan army into that area," he said.

By the fall of 2010, McChrystal said, there should be about 134,000 Afghan soldiers and just over 100,000 Afghan police. And by July 2011, he said, there should be about 300,000 Afghan security forces divided between soldiers and police.





More troops likely to join Georgia brigade in eastern Afghanistan

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, DEC. 7, 2009

– On the day the nation remembered the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor, it’s been learned that Macon’s 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) and its subordinate units are likely to have some company in eastern Afghanistan.

President Barack Obama announced Dec. 1 at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point, N.Y., that he’s sending more American forces – about 39,000 – to Afghanistan. A defense official has said some of the additional troops are likely to reinforce the country’s contentious eastern and southern areas. The 48th deployed in May to support Operation Enduring Freedom as an advisory brigade to Regional Command East.

GEN Stanley McChrystal’s job, as the top U.S. commander in Afghanistan, is to determine where to apply the added resources if the president authorizes them, a defense official said.

“I would think he would want to reinforce some of his forces in the east and the south where the main effort by the Taliban and associated forces have been,” the official said of McChrystal. “But it’s up to him, based on the types of troops he has and where he needs them first and how he’s going to use them.”

The distribution of additional troops would factor in the existing U.S. footprint in Afghanistan, which comprises about 68,000 troops – a mixture of combat forces and trainers – spread throughout the country, but with the east and south serving as focal points. Troops under NATO’s com-



Soldiers of Newnan’s 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry, rush the door to a simulated insurgent safe house at Camp Shelby, Miss. (Georgia National Guard photo by Spc. Mike Perry)



Soldiers of Newnan’s, 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry, move out to conduct live fire exercises (Georgia National Guard photo by Spc. Mike Perry)

mand add a complement of 42,000 personnel to the mix.

Soldiers of the 48th IBCT are among those mentoring and training Afghan army and security forces stationed throughout Regional Command East.

Though violence has risen in recent years across the board in Afghanistan, the bloodshed is most intense in the country’s east and south. Those areas have seen more than a two-fold increase in the use of improvised explosive devices, or IEDs, Pentagon spokesman LTC Mark Wright said.

Two Army brigade combat teams, or BCTs, each with about 3,500 to 4,000 Soldiers, are operating in Regional Command South – one of five regional commands in Afghanistan comprising international forces under NATO leadership.

The 2nd Infantry Division’s 5th Stryker BCT of Fort Lewis, Wash., operates in eastern and northern Kandahar province and western Zabul province, while the 82nd Airborne Division’s 4th BCT of Fort Bragg, N.C., performs advisory roles and training in the region.

Attacks involving IEDs – the No. 1 killer of U.S. forces in Afghanistan – is especially rampant in the south, Wright said.

“The Strykers have met a lot of resistance in the Kandahar province,” he said of the 5th Stryker BCT, which employs eight-wheeled armored combat vehicles. “Around Kandahar city and out farther into the countryside, there have been a lot of IEDs. They’ve suffered some really sig-

nificant casualties.”

The Institute for the Study of War, a think-tank headed by Kimberly Kagan, a member of McChrystal’s assessment team, cites the Taliban under Mullah Mohammed Omar as the main threat to stability in southern Afghanistan.

In July, U.S. Marines and Afghan security forces launched an operation in southern Afghanistan’s Helmand River valley, waging war against Taliban operatives in the area.

Currently, some 8,000 Marines of the 2nd Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) of Camp Lejeune, N.C., are responsible for southern and western Helmand province and in the western border province of Farah.

The biggest security threat in eastern Afghanistan, which includes a war-ravaged border area with Pakistan that spans some 450 miles, is the Haqqani network, an insurgent group with ties to al-Qaida, according to the Institute for the Study of War.

“In the east, it’s been pretty much a constant fight,” said Wright, citing a large battle in the area’s Nuristan province in October, where some 18 months earlier a battle raged for control of the Wanat district. “The same province has seen some fairly significant combat in significant numbers –

hundreds of Taliban gathered and launching attacks against U.S. forces. So it’s a pretty intense, ongoing fight there.”

Of the four American brigades engaged in eastern Afghanistan, the 10th Mountain Division’s 3rd BCT of Fort Drum, N.Y., has operated in the Logar and Wardak provinces since January. The 25th Infantry Division’s 4th Airborne BCT of Wahiawa, Hawaii, has been engaged in Paktia, Paktika, and Khowst provinces since March.

In addition, the 4th Infantry Division’s 4th BCT from Fort Carson, Colo., deployed to Nuristan, Nangahar, Kunar and Laghman provinces in June.

Even with the sustained focus on the south and east, more troops are likely to deploy there if McChrystal determines those areas to have the biggest needs, the defense official said.

“For whatever forces are authorized by the president, McChrystal’s going to have to make his decision based on priority of need and where they’d be most useful, where those additional resources can be applied,” the official said.



Soldiers of Newnan’s 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry, conducts room-clearing operations at Camp Shelby, Miss. (Georgia National Guard photo by Spc. Mike Perry)



New facility open

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 9, 2009 – Army and Air Guard crews are training here to fly the newest cargo craft in the inventory in a state of the art facility operated by the Georgia National Guard.

The C-27J Spartan, with short landing and takeoff capability promises to save warfighter's lives by reducing the need for ground convoys in dangerous areas. The pilots who'll fly it are training at Robins Air Force Base.

The C-27J Joint Cargo Aircraft Schoolhouse where they're receiving instruction is located at the former B-1 bomber facilities that belonged to the Georgia Air National Guard.

Officials from a broad coalition that includes Air Force, Army, industry and community partners celebrated the opening of the school. MAJ GEN Terry Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General, MAJ Barry Simmons, who oversees the new school facilities, and other Georgia Army and Air Guard officials participated in the celebration.

After years of development by the Army, the C-27J Spartan program now has shifted to the Air Force, but it will be a joint program in which Army and Air Force pilots and loadmasters will attend the school.

The school was operating temporarily in Waco, Texas but transferred here Sept. 9, when the first of

two aircraft arrived at Robins. That allowed the first graduating class of the school to be recognized at Wednesday's opening ceremony.

Officials said the course will undergo changes



A C-27J Spartan static display was on hand for visiting guests as well as Guardsmen during the school house opening. (Georgia National Guard photo by David Howell)

through 2011. A full-fidelity operational flight trainer and a fuselage trainer are going into the facility. A mockup C-27J cockpit is there now.

"This aircraft will provide the capability to fly in Afghanistan where they do not have the infrastructure to handle our larger aircraft," said Army Col. Anthony Potts. "It will have the capability to get supplies not within 50 miles of our forces but within the last tactical mile."

The C-27J team is lead by L-3 Communications, the prime contractor for joint cargo aircraft. Built by Alenia North America, an Italian company, the plane is an updated version of the C-27A, and carries with it a much greater transport capability. The plane, actually, is a derivative of Alenia's G.222.

Those who've seen the Spartan agree that it's a smaller version of the C-130 Hercules. What is the most noticeable difference between the two is that the C-27J has two engines instead of four like the C-130.

Also, the plane requires a ground

takeoff area of only 1,900 feet compared to the C-130's more than 3,000 feet (fully loaded).

While the C-27J program calls for a minimum of 38 aircraft, Nesbitt said he believes that number will eventually rise to 78. Although Georgia isn't sched-

"It will have the capability to get supplies not within 50 miles of our forces but within the last tactical mile."

COL. Anthony Potts

uled to get the Spartan, the aircraft will be assigned to Air National Guard bases around the country.

Nesbitt said after the ceremony that the aircraft will definitely save lives if the program's potential is fully realized.

"It will, if we field an adequate number of aircraft, but right now I don't think 38 is enough." He added.

Development of the C-2J school is a \$1.8 million project. About \$300,000 of that comes from the state of Georgia. Add to that \$125,000 from the city of Warner Robins and the Houston County Development Authority, and \$50,000 from the Macon - Bibb Development Authority.

(Original story was contributed by Wayne Crenshaw of Robins Air Force Base Public Affairs)



C-27J Spartan landing at Robins Air Force Base.

At a Glance

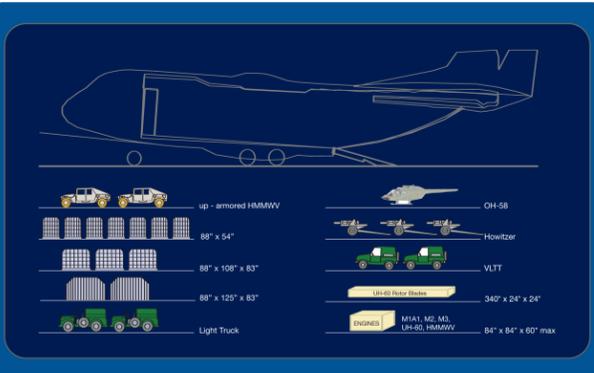
Weights				
Maximum take off weight (logistic)	(lb)	70,107	(kg)	31,800
Maximum take off weight (basic)	(lb)	67,241	(kg)	30,500
Maximum landing weight (6 FPS sink rate)	(lb)	67,241	(kg)	30,500
Normal landing weight (10 FPS sink rate)	(lb)	60,627	(kg)	27,500
Maximum payload	(lb)	25,353	(kg)	11,500
Fuel capacity	(US Gal)	3,255	(l)	12,320
Optional fuel tank	(US Gal)	402	(l)	1,520

Configurations and Loads	
Troop transport	up to 68 +2 loadmasters
Paratroop transport	up to 46 +2 loadmasters (seats @ 20" MIL-S-27174B)
Cargo transport/Low Velocity Air Drop (LVAD)	up to 25,353 lbs/19,842 lbs
12E (54"x88")	
7 HCU-12E (64"x88")	
12 A22 CDS Bundles with a maximum weight of 19,842 lbs	
LAPES up to 11,200 lbs	
Wheeled and tracked vehicles, spare engines, etc.	
Medevac	36 stretchers + 6 medical attendants

Powerplant	
Engine	Rolls-Royce AE 2100-D2
Power	4637 SHP
Propeller	Dowty R-391 six-blade
Diameter (m)	4.11 (ft) 13 a 5

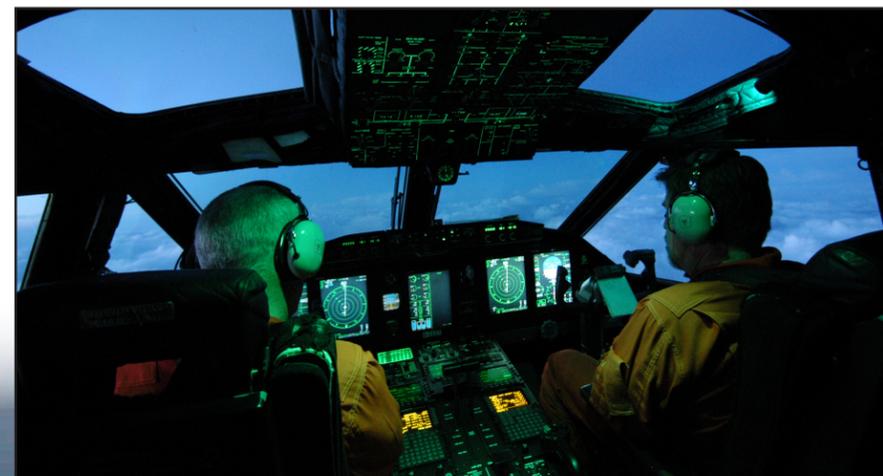
Performance				
Tactical take off ground run (MTOW, ISA, S.L.)	(ft)	1,903	(m)	580
One engine out ceiling at ISA, 95% MTOW	(ft)	14,500	(m)	4,420
Maximum service ceiling	(ft)	30,000	(m)	9,144
Maximum cruise speed		315 Ktas at MTOW		
Landing ground roll (MLW normal, ISA, S.L.)	(ft)	1,115	(m)	340

Range (logistic operation)				
• with 22,046 lbs of payload	(nm)	1,000	(km)	1,852
• with 13,227 lbs of payload	(nm)	2,300	(km)	4,260
• Ferry	(nm)	3,200	(km)	5,926



The wider cargo compartment provides:

- Easy walk around access to the cargo by the loadmaster to enhance for safety before all missions
- Easy drive-in/drive-out of a large variety of military vehicles without modifications, including up-armored HMMWV equipped with a crew-served weapon, gunner shield and protection kit



Cockpit of the C-27J Spartan (photo courtesy defenseindustrydaily.com)

560TH Battlefield Surveillance Brigade Uganda mission

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 21, 2009 – In what is probably the highlight of their year, 20 members of Ellenwood’s 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade and its subordinate units took part in what the commander of U.S. Army Africa calls the largest U.S. Defense Department-sponsored exercise in Africa.

It was the first time the 560th, stationed at Fort Gillem, participated in Natural Fire 10 (NF10) a humanitarian and disaster-relief exercise designed to enhance the capabilities of participating nations’ capabilities to work together in developing regional solutions to complex humanitarian emergencies.

“I hope it won’t be the last time,” said CSM Lance Rygmyr, the unit’s senior enlisted Soldier. “There’s no one I know of among our group, who didn’t find the



SPC Irene Wanjiru (right) of 221st Military Intelligence Battalion, a native Kenyan, poses with the command sergeant major of the army for Kenya. The command sergeant major was quite pleased that Wanjiru spoke fluent Swahili.

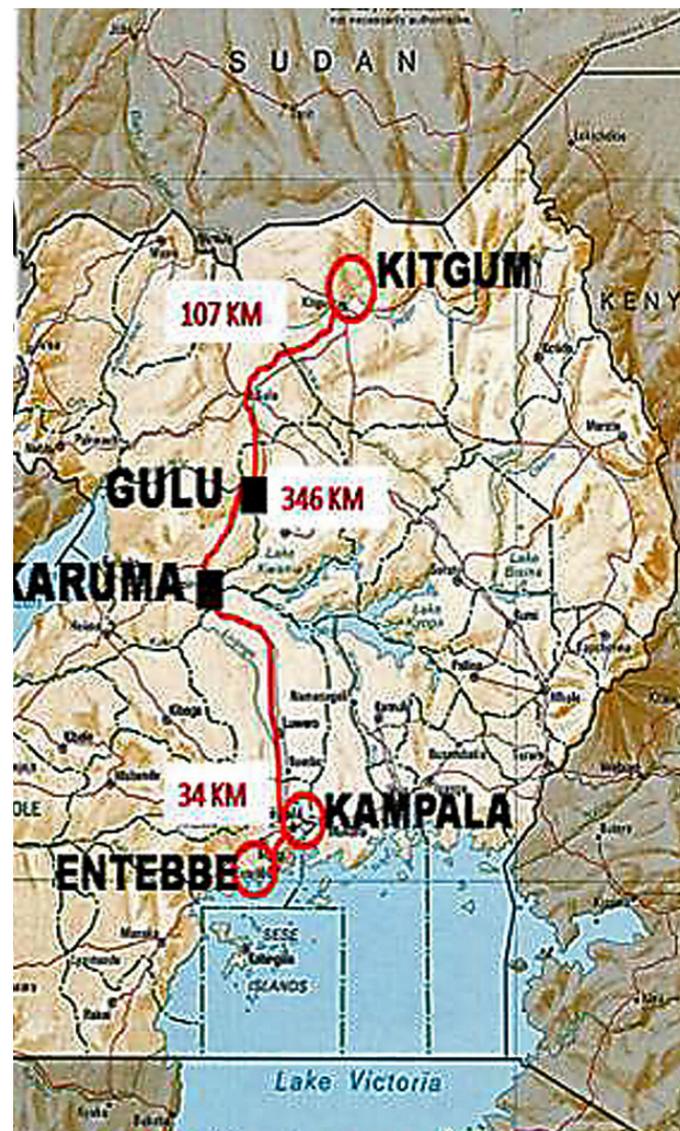
whole experience eye opening and completely gratifying.”

The members of the 560th, whose mission was to provide command and control support for Task Force Kitgum, were among 550 U.S. personnel participating in NF 10. Also on the ground were 133 military personnel from each of the five partner nations – Uganda, Burundi, Kenya, Rwanda and Tanzania.

As a component of U.S. Africa Command, or AFRICOM, U.S. Army Africa and its missions, such as Natural Fire10, engage African land forces to promote 10 - www.gadod.net

security, stability and peace within the continent. Besides medical and dental assistance to the locals, the exercise also allowed participants to complete three extensive construction projects as part of the community outreach.

In addition to the medical services provided, partner nations also tailored the exercise to focus on global health threats. Leaders and exercise participants came together in Kampala and Entebbe during a simulated natural disaster to learn how to address a global health threat that required international support and coordination.



Country of Uganda and locations covered by U.S. troops and East Africa military personal involved in Natural Fire 10.



CPT Leif A. Rivera (center), medical liaison to the 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, walks away with a medal and a Ugandan hand drum for organizing a U.S.-East Africa soccer



COL Peter VanAmburg (right), who commands the 560th BFSB, poses with officers and senior enlisted soldiers from the five East African nations.



Ugandans sell their wares to multi national troops participating in Natural Fire 10.



SSG Sandra Smith of 221st Military Intelligence Battalion tries to coax a smile from a Ugandan boy.



Ugandan youths who attend the new school built by East African and U.S. military construction crews, surround CSM Lance Rygmyr.



1LT George Allen, executive officer for the 560th’s 420th Net Signal Company (center right) and SSG Willie Hamler of the 560th’s Headquarters Company go over operations with East African troops.



Georgia Soldiers engage Afghan tribal leaders

Story and photo by Sgt. Tracy J. Smith 48th IBCT Public Affairs

NANGARHAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan, Dec. 2, 2009

Soldiers of Calhoun's 1st Battalion, 108th Cavalry and their Afghan partners bedded down for the night on Nov. 18 at the Afghan National Police Achin District Center here in preparation for a meeting with Shinwari tribal elders and Afghan security personnel.

The meeting was something of a first, and it proved historic for the 108th.

MAJ Andrew McDonald, the unit's operations officer, met with a group of elders to discuss the border tribes' ongoing efforts to thwart the insurgency. Shinwari tribesmen fight disruptive factions by taking up arms themselves, and meeting with the U.S. military, the local governor and Afghan security forces put the elders at great risk of reprisal.

Attempts on tribal elders' lives and kidnappings regularly occur when insurgents discover the elders have been sharing information and taking steps to defend their country.

"This is the first time, since the ousting of the Taliban, that a group of villagers have defeated the Taliban repeatedly without government help," McDonald said.

The officials of each group decided it was time to up the ante, and to initiate what will be a stronger tribal-government union while maintaining the traditions of daily life. Also, the plan creates a stepping stone toward unionizing other tribes with the Shinwaris, allowing them to find a common goal in defeating Afghanistan's insurgent enemies.

Working in and among the people is a central part of the Army's counterinsurgency doctrine, and has been at the forefront of the "Rough Riders" mission.

"They [the 108th] do counterinsurgency very well," said Ed Vowell, the U.S. State Department's district support team advisor embedded with the 108th Cavalry Regiment. "These young guys are in the more remote areas every day, engaging the people.

"We've already seen positive effects from that engagement," Vowell added.



Soldiers from 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry (right) hold lunch time meeting with tribal elders and Afghan security to discuss measures for dealing with insurgent activities in Nangarhar Province.

Yama Sakura 57

124th MPAD supports annual bilateral exercise.

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 14, 2009 – Five Soldiers from Marietta's 124th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, have returned from supporting an annual joint "table-top" exercise involving the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force (JGSDF) and U.S. Army personnel.

This year's Yama Sakura exercise took place at Camp Higashi-Chitose, a Ground Self-Defense Force military post on the island of Hokkaido.



Broadcast Journalist SGT Robert Freese checks his video camera shortly before the opening ceremony for Yama Sakura 57 begins at Camp Higashi-Chitose. (Photo by Sgt. Gerardo DeAvila, 124th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.)

"Yama Sakura provides a perfect training opportunity for the MPAD," said MAJ John H. Alderman IV, the unit commander, in a recent e-mail. "The team has aggressively covered the exercise with great photos, videos and print stories that really impressed the

regular Army folks." Apparently, it impressed them quite a bit. According to MAJ James Crawford, USARJ's chief of public affairs, it's the second time the 124th has provided command information coverage. The first was for last year's Yama Sakura (YS) 55 and now YS57.

Yama Sakura, which means "cherry blossom," began back in 1982. Since then, it's become the most important, and the largest, full spectrum, combined and joint exercise the Army conducts with the JGSDF, Crawford explained.

The exercise has four objectives: The exchange of ideas, techniques and military experience; training American forces for deployment to Japan; the exercise of JSDF and U.S. forces in the defense of Japan; and preparation of U.S. Army Pacific (USARPAC) forces for combined, multi-national and joint full spectrum operations.

"The Soldiers of the 124th have consistently proven over the last two rotations that they've got what it takes to do the job," he said. "They continually produce high quality products, and their professionalism is highly praised by general officers from both countries."

Providing command information for Yama Sakura is seemingly no walk among the cherry blossoms for Alderman and his team. They spent long hours providing photo coverage, news packages and videos on everything from operations to logistics to cultural events.

"And that means we covered everyone, from active Army to Guard and Reserve, and even members of

the Ground Self-Defense Force," said SSG Gerard Brown, the team's senior enlisted Soldier. "Back at home we provide all that to the Georgia National Guard.

"This is a great way for us to shift our focus and do it for folks we usually don't cover," he added. For Alderman, who lives in Lawrenceville and Brown, who hails from Stockbridge, it's their second trip to Japan, so both know the culture and the people well. However, for team members SGT Jerry DeAvila of Atlanta, SGT Robert Freese of Warner Robins and PFC Ashley Fontenot from Kennesaw, it's their first time.

"I was really excited to find out I was going to Japan," said Fontenot, a recent graduate of the Army



An overhead view of YS 57 the operations-intelligence center, manned by the JGSDF and USAPAC Contingency Command Post. (Photo by Sgt. Gerardo DeAvila, 124th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.)

Combat Correspondent Course at Fort Mead, MD. "Once I got here, though, and experienced the culture first-hand, I knew it was something I'd remember for the rest of my life."

With any luck, it won't be her last time in the "Land of the Rising Sun." Nor for that matter, the last time for any of the team. Who can say.



Project to build memorial underway

Story by SFC Roy Henry, Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CALHOUN, Dec 11, 2009 – Active and retired Guardsmen of 1st Squadron, 108th Cavalry have begun a project to build a memorial to its Soldiers who've died while fighting the Global War on Terror. The memorial will be located in front of the Bernard Franklin National Guard Armory.

According to the eight-member committee overseeing the project of the memorial, construction



1LT ABBEY HAUSEN

should be finished in February 2010. The majority of 1st Squadron, along with those elements in Rome, Dalton and Canton are in

Afghanistan supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

“Right now, none of our deployed troops know about what we’re doing,” said 1LT Abbey Hausen, who heads the committee. She’s also administrative officer for the 108th’s rear detachment and the unit’s operations and training officer.

“The idea is to have it completed before they start returning home in March, and then hold a dedication ceremony after everyone is back.”

During Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005 - 2006 – when the unit was designated which Battalion, 108th Armor division– the unit lost six Soldiers. A former Soldier was lost in 2006 while assigned to another unit. Going into the seventh month of the current deployment another six also have been lost.

“Whether we knew them personally or only casually, they are our brothers,” SFC Claude Bohannon, the senior enlisted Soldier for the rear detachment, said. “While they remain in our thoughts, memories may fade,” he added. “Through this monument, they’ll be with us as long as it and this armory stand, always reminding us of the price they paid for the freedom of others.”

The first phase of the project calls

for securing donations from among area businesses and through brick sales to area residents. The unit has also asked for assistance from the families of the fallen in spreading the word about the memorial.

Phase two is construction of the monument along the armory’s front grassy area that faces toward the front parking area parallel to River Street.

The names of 108th’s fallen and the Department of the Army seal will comprise the memorial. Atop the wall will be statue depicting an M16 rifle with its bayonet stuck in the ground. The rifle butt has a Soldier’s helmet on it with a set of dog tags dangling beneath and the



SFC CLAUDE BOHANNON

combat boots of a fallen Soldier below.

Two stone benches will adorn the concrete pad on which the wall containing those names will sit.

All of this, Hausen explained, will be separate from the armory’s existing front wall.

As the search for donors continues, a Calhoun builder, Fox and Brindle Construction Co., has offered to erect the memorial, she added. The hope of all involved is that construction begins shortly after the holidays in order to meet the completion date.

Soldier honors fellow Guardsman

Story by SFC Roy Henry, Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 11, 2009 – When SFC Gordon Spears does his four-mile morning run in Blairsville’s Meeks Park, he makes it a point to stop near the park’s covered bridge and visit an old friend, SSG Bobby Franklin.

Only it’s not Franklin, but a stone Soldier standing next to a small boulder adorned with a plaque dedicating the statue to the late Guardsman’s memory.

You see, Franklin – a military policeman with the North Carolina Army Guard’s 210th Military Police Company – died in Iraq in August 2003 from wounds suffered in an IED attack on the Humvee in which he was riding. Before his death, Franklin, who lived in Union County also worked as a correctional officer at Caralton Calwells Detention center along side Spears.

“Bobby was a close, close friend, a great coworker and one heck of a Soldier. Admittedly, it gives me comfort to stop, take a moment and remember him,” said Spears, an infantry skills trainer and officer candidate instructor with the Georgia Army Guard’s Regional Training Institute in Marietta.

Just how the stone Soldier came to be in Meeks Park is a story unto itself. Everyone who knew Franklin wanted to erect

a memorial in his honor, Spears said. No one, though, had an idea of what kind of memorial they wanted.

Not long after his friend’s death, Spears, who was attending training at Fort Stewart, came across a stone Soldier like the one in park at the Hinesville Wal-Mart. He recalled how the statue made him think of his friend and fellow Guardsman,



Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris (left) stands with SFC Gordon Spears and Spears wife, Shari, along side the statue Spears donated to Blairsville’s Meeks Park. The lone, “stone Soldier” is a memorial to SSG Bobby Franklin and others who’ve died in the service of their country. (Contributed photo)

and how he’d decided to buy it before leaving South Georgia. Time and training, however, didn’t allow for that, so he’d wait until later.

Hopefully the store would still have them...they didn’t. It had sold its last one not long after he’d been there – “Not that it had very many in the first place,” he said – and no one knew if the store would get any more. Still, Spears said, that didn’t deter him from trying to

find a store that did. “I checked with every other Wal-Mart in the state,” Spears related. “No one had any idea what I was talking about.

“And would you believe it, two years later, I walked into the lawn and garden shop at Stewart’s main PX and there one stood,” he said. Spears put money down so the store would hold the statue for him.

He later returned on another assignment to Fort Stewart and picked up his purchase.

With the statue finally in his possession, Spears had to decide where to put it. Since he passes the spot where the statue now stands during his daily run, “I thought, ‘what a perfect location for remembering my friend and all the others who’ve made the ultimate sacrifice.’”

He and his wife, Shari, talked with Union County Commissioner Lamar Paris and Larry Garrett of the county’s Parks and Recreation Department, and found them excited by the idea.

“We appreciate Gordon and Shari’s efforts,” said Paris. The hard work, time and money [for the statue] they put into this project paid off in memorial that allows the citizens of this county and other visitors to the park to pay homage, not only to Franklin, but to all our veterans for many years to come.”

Britt, Nelson visit Georgia's wounded

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office



BG Maria Britt, Georgia Army Guard commander, and CSM James Nelson, Georgia Army Guard command sergeant major, visit with a 48th IBCT Soldier at Fort Gordon.

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 18, 2009 – Despite the fact that her job as Georgia Army Guard commander keeps her on the go, BG Maria L. Britt, always sets aside time to visit Georgia Guardsmen wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. In October, Britt visited Fort Gordon's Warrior Transition Unit in Augusta and the Georgia Guardsmen recovering there from injuries suffered in combat and from combat related actions.

These Soldiers are assigned now to Warrior Transition Units (WTU) or to one of the VA centers in the

Augusta area for treatment and rehabilitation. BG Britt was accompanied by CSM James Nelson, Georgia Army Guard command sergeant major, as well as 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) Rear Detachment Command staff and the chaplain.

Britt and Nelson took the opportunity during their visit to award the Purple Heart to 48th Soldiers 1LT Matt Smith and SFC Jeffrey Boyles, among other awards. Britt also took time to visit with Gordon's WTU cadre. "One thing I do when talking with our wounded is to remind them that they are never "out of sight or out of mind," Britt said.

"The Georgia Army Guard," she emphasized, "has, and will continue, to support their full recovery and return to their families and units. CSM Nelson and I continue to encourage all leaders to make it a priority to visit our Soldiers, whether they're at the Fort Gordon, Fort Stewart or Fort Benning

WTUs. Let them know they are still part of the team." (Contributed photos)

Top: Nelson and Britt meet with members of the Fort Gordon Warrior Transition Unit cadre.

Center: Britt pins a Purple Heart to the uniform of 1LT Matt Smith for injuries received during combat operations.

Bottom: Britt and SFC Jeffery Boyles display Boyel's Purple heart and the citation that goes with the medal.



Ceremony celebrates new dormitory opening Commander hands over command, retires

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 18, 2009 – Abnormally cold temperatures in Savannah did little to dampen enthusiasm for the Dec. 5 dedication of



The official party, to include the CRTC incoming and outgoing commanders, prepare to mark the opening of a new 300-bed dorm.

a new dormitory at the Georgia Air Guard's Combat Readiness Training Center (CRTC) in Savannah. Bad weather, also didn't keep guests from attending the change-of-command and retirement ceremony for the center's outgoing commander.

MG Terry Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General; Maj Gen Scott Hammond, Georgia Air Guard



Sissors slice thru the ribbon to officially open the doors of the new dormitory.

commander; BG Maria Britt, Georgia Army Guard commander; three past CRTC commanders and three former Georgia Adjutants General

attended the ceremony. Also there were U.S. representatives Jack Kingston-R and John Barrow-D, and State Sen. Jack Hill-R.

Three years in the making, the new 300-bed, three-story facility at CRTC's southeastern end, provides needed housing for Airmen and Soldiers who come to the center for training. Projections for 2010 show more than 200,000 people will use the dorms as they prepare for deployments to Iraq, Afghanistan and other parts of the world.

"With this significant addition, the Savannah CRTC is on its way to becoming the premier air training center in the Air Force," said Col Floyd H. Harbin, Who's commanded the facility for the past six years. "We've got it all here... available airspace, excellent facilities and state-of-the-art warfighter technology."

There's no other training center in the country has what we now have, Harbin added.

"What it's going to do for us now is to put us in the very, very unique position of expanding into new cyber and space command training activities as they come to the Guard," he said.

Barrow said completion of the building represents "lots of work by lots of dedicated people. It showcases Savannah as one of the top locations for fulfilling Air Force high-tech training requirements. Nesbitt added that the new dormitory a "significant selling point" in Georgia's efforts to become the dominant air training center in the nation.

Kingston, later in the ceremony,

amused the audience with stories of how Harbin pushed for appropriations for Air Guard projects.

"On my first day in office after my election, Floyd [Harbin] met me at my door, congratulated me on my victory and then asked 'what have you done for the Guard lately,'" he recalled.

After celebrating the new dormitory's opening, more than 400



Retiring CRTC commander Col Floyd Harbin (right) receives a caricature during his retirement and change-of-command ceremony.

fellow Guardsmen, friends and well-wishers gathered for the ceremony during which Harbin passed leadership of the 75-member CRTC to Col Todd Freeseemann. Before coming to the Readiness Center, Freeseemann was director of support for the 165th Airlift Wing.

During his tenure as its commander, Harbin worked to bring more than \$150 million in technological upgrades and infrastructure improvements to the CRTC. Nesbitt later honored Harbin and his dedication to the Guard and the training center by awarding him the Legion of Merit Medal.



WOUNDED WARRIOR

Pick up the phone and dial...

Hotline helps Guardsmen, families pay, other issues answered 24/7

Georgia Department of Defense Public Affairs Office

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 21, 2009 – So you’ve got a problem with your pay, or you’ve got questions about a particular position for which you’re qualified.

Who do you turn to? How about 1-866-307-2729 – the Georgia Guard’s “Soldiers Hotline.”

Soldiers and Airmen can call and submit questions about any issue to the member of Joint Operations Center who will answer and I take the information, complete the appropriate form and then submit it to the appropriate section for resolution.

On line since February 2008, the hotline’s received more than 100 questions from Guardsmen looking for answers.

The program is administered through the Joint Operations Center (JOC) and the J-3 Operations and Training office. Soldiers Hotline began when a number of deploying Soldiers experienced pay-related issues.

“The Adjutant General sought a remedy for these recurring problems, which were prompt and effective,” said COL Mike Scholes, Operations and Training officer for the Guard’s Joint Force Headquarters.

“The TAG originally envisaged a ‘one stop shop’ for Soldiers and Airmen with pay related questions,” Scholes explained. “Every complaint, every concern we receive is legitimate, and we attempt to handle it confidentiality and promptly.”

Carl Jackson, deputy finance manager for the U.S. Property and Finance Office (USPFO) said, “Issues

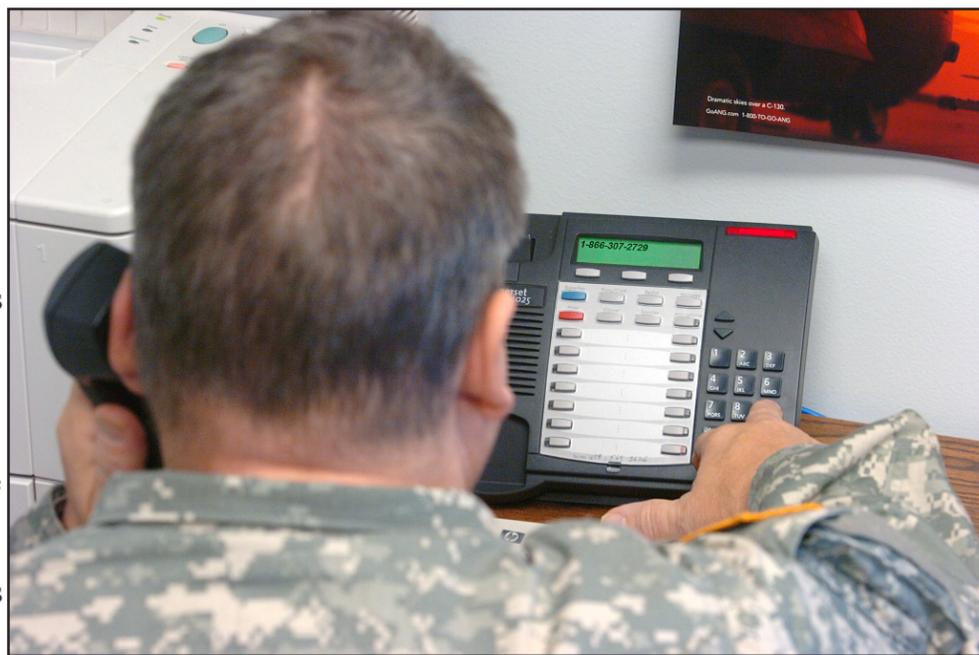
we receive routinely fall into either pay and benefits area or into the family assistance areas.”

Before any question can be handled, the caller must furnish, besides the nature of the problem, their name, e-mail address and phone number so that answers can be returned promptly, said Scholes. Each question is carefully logged, directed to a specific department and then tracked. The request remains open until an official answer is given to the Soldier or Airman. “We’ve been able, so far, to answer a question within a week,” he noted.

Spouses of deployed Soldiers often contact the hotline with benefit related issues. Scholes emphasized that the same sense of urgency and accuracy given to calls by service members is applied to every spouse call.

“We cut out any middle-man and get to the heart of the issue,” said Jackson. “Soldiers and Airmen, and spouses, need not be concerned as to the confidentiality of their answers. Only the person taking the question and the person looking for the answer have access to the question and the question isn’t sent to the unit.

Guardsmen and spouses wanting to take advantage of the Soldiers Hotline can call 1-866-307-2729. A member of the Joint Operations Center will take the information, complete the appropriate form and then submit the request to the appropriate people to be worked.



Company H, 171st Aviation deploys to Iraq

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 18, 2009 – Command staff from Marietta’s Company H, 171st Aviation, 78th Aviation Troop Command, left Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Sunday, Dec. 6, 2009, headed for Fort Benning in Columbus and the first leg of its journey on a 12-month deployment in Balad, Iraq. It’s the third time the unit has supported Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The staff, made up of CW2 Mindy Barbe, 1SG Howard Earhart, SGT Anthony Hust, CPT Joseph Parker, and CW4 Donald Spells (pictured from left to right below), will join detachments from Florida, Kentucky and Texas, and has overall command of the group. They’ll spend seven days at Benning validating for their upcoming mission before heading overseas.

Once in country, the group’s mission, according to 78th Aviation, is to provide “inter theater fixed wing support,” flying critical equipment and personnel around the country. The aircraft they’ll use is the C-23 Sherpa, a small twin-turbo prop cargo carrier. It’s the same plane flown by Company H here in Georgia.

No Georgia Guard aircraft, however, are going to Iraq. The unit, and its elements will take over C-23s already in country.

Company H, or some element of the unit, has deployed several times since The Global War on Terror began back in 2001. The last time was to Kuwait in 2007, and Iraq in 2003-2004. Statistics provided by the unit show that, to date, Company H has moved more the 6 million pounds of equipment, transported 24,000 personnel to their destinations and flown more than 9,000 accident free combat hours.



Memorial to Georgia fallen still stands at Stryker

CLAY NATIONAL GUARD CENTER, Dec. 18, 2009 – When CSM James Nelson, Georgia Army Guard command sergeant major, and MG Terry Nesbitt, Georgia’s Adjutant General, arrived at Baghdad’s Camp Liberty, in October, they found themselves reminded of those Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry who’d given their lives in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005-2006.

Nelson and Nesbitt were in Iraq as part of a visit sponsored by Assistant Secretary of Defense for Reserve Affairs Dennis McCarthy and Thomas Lamont, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs. The pair went to Liberty to visit Soldiers from several states who are part of a group that included the 197th Military Police Company, which had been in Basra.

“Though we would’ve liked to, we weren’t able to go to Balad and visit the 248th Medical Company because of bad weather,” Nelson recalled.

During their stay at Camp Liberty he and Nesbitt traveled to Camp Stryker which was home to Maccon’s 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team during its 3005-2006 deployment to Iraq. During that time the units of the brigade suffered several casualties, some of which were from 2nd Battalion

As they drove through Stryker, Nelson and Nesbitt discovered the memorial created in honor the nine Georgia Soldiers stationed there who paid the ultimate price for their service.

“Needless to say, this was a very emotional moment for me,” Nelson recalled. “At the same time, I was proud that the wall was still intact and is shown honor by the Soldiers who continue to pass through Camp Stryker.



Videos

(Click on photo to be redirected to the video gallery at gadod.net)



Holiday Greetings from the Field



Freedom Salute Award at 48th IBCT



265th RSG Annual Weapons Qualificaion



An Interview with SPC Cathy Brewer

Photos

(Click on photo to be redirected to the photo gallery at gadod.net)



Family and friends of the 560th BSB Gather for Family Day



221st Military BN Change of Command



560th Battlefield Surveillance Battalion Goes to Uganda



Log on and get all the up to date information on the Soldiers and Airmen of the Georgia National Guard!

The screenshot shows the Georgia Guardsman website interface. At the top, there's a search bar and navigation links for Home, Photo Gallery, Videos, Publications, Contacts, Security Disclaimer, and Web Links. The main content area features several news stories with images and titles, such as 'Guardsmen to re-enact march to Atlanta by Band of Brothers' and 'COL (P) Timothy Britt was promoted to Brigadier General'. On the right side, there's a 'TOP HEADLINES' section with more news items and a 'PODCAST: GEORGIA GUARDSMAN' section. At the bottom, there are logos for GKO, Georgia Guard Portal, and AKO Army Online.

NEWS STORIES

PHOTOS

VIDEOS

PODCASTS

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