

129th supports Hurricane Katrina relief efforts

By Sgt. Mark Watson
129th MPAD

NAVAL AIR STATION BELLE CHASSE, La. – Only days before South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers were to depart to Egypt for a three-week training exercise, their orders changed from a training exercise to a real-world mission.

The 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, headquartered in Rapid City, changed the location of their annual training to southeast Louisiana to support the Hurricane Katrina rebuilding efforts.

The 129th's mission was to report on the nearly 16,000 National Guard Soldiers rescuing citizens in need of help and rebuilding New Orleans and its outlying areas.

"Our mission was a dual purpose mission," said Maj. Joe Jacobson, the unit's commander. "Our primary mission was to tell the story of the National Guard Soldiers assisting in the relief efforts of Hurricane Katrina. Our secondary mission was to assist in documenting the relief efforts by the National Guard for the National Guard Bureau."

Although members of the 129th said they were looking forward to traveling outside the U.S. for their annual training, they said they were glad they were able to help their fellow countrymen.

"I wanted to go to Egypt," said Master Sgt. Calvin Crooks, the unit's senior enlisted member. "But when I was told this was a humanitarian mission and that we would be helping our own, U.S. citizens, I was excited." The newest member of the unit, Pfc. Nichole Kueter agreed.

"I joined to help my country and state in time of need," Kueter said. "This is a time that they (the citizens of southeast Louisiana) need everyone they can get."

Kueter graduated from her advanced individual training only nine days before she left South Dakota for the deep South.

"I wasn't nervous about doing my job. I got good training at (my school)," she said. "What I was nervous about was seeing all this in the news, right there in your face. You hear about all the chaos, and I was nervous about being dropped right there in the middle of it."

The 129th arrived at Naval Air Station Belle Chasse on Sept. 14 and immediately setup operations.

"We hit the ground running," Jacobson said. "We produced stories the first day we were on the ground. Within 24-hours we were fully operational."

During their time in the disaster area, unit members reported on Soldiers who conducted search and rescue



Photos by 1st Lt. Anthony Deiss (above) and Sgt. Mark Watson (left)

ABOVE: Pfc. Nichole Kueter (middle) and Sgt. Mark Watson of the 129th MPAD, interview Col. Mike Ross, commander of Task Force Louisiana, about ongoing relief operations in southern Louisiana after Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. **LEFT:** Sgt. Wes Nowitzki of the 129th MPAD, views the flooding caused by Hurricane Katrina, as he cover a search and rescue mission with Soldiers from the Massachusetts Army National Guard.

missions, medics, mechanics, Louisiana Guardsmen who lost their homes, yet are still helping their fellow statesmen and more.

"I feel that the unit performed very well," Jacobson said. "We came in under some very austere conditions. The high temperatures and humidity created some problems with equipment that we didn't see coming."

A little more than halfway into their annual training another hurricane, Hurricane Rita, threatened to push the 129th out of the disaster area as the storm had the possibility of hitting the New Orleans area, forcing the Soldiers to "hunker down."

"Hurricane Rita challenged us in ways we weren't ready for," Jacobson said. "It made us react and cover a new portion of the story, one that was almost the same scenario as pre-Katrina. We had to be flexible enough to plan for the new mission while continuing our current operation."

From the most experienced to the newest member, Jacobson said his Soldiers did an exceptional job.

"I think this was a good test of the unit. It allowed the unit to practice deploying," he said. "If the governor called tomorrow to tell us that we were going to deploy, we'd be ready."

Photo by Spc. Joe Bungert
Sgt. 1st Class Kim Smith of the 129th MPAD, video tapes the devastation on Jackson Barracks, Headquarters for the Louisiana National Guard, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.

Army National Guard undergoes transformation

By 1st Lt. Anthony Deiss
129th MPAD

CAMP RAPID – There is no doubt that America has changed forever after September 11, 2001. Since then, the country has been engaged in a Global War on Terrorism. From Afghanistan to Iraq to right here in the United States; our Armed Forces have been conducting offensive operations abroad and implementing homeland defense measures at home, to help make America more safe and secure.

As a part of the effort to sustain combat operations across the globe and to counter the threat of terrorism in America, the Army has been transforming to better respond and equip itself against this ever changing threat.

Since the U.S. Army is transforming to meet these challenges of tomorrow, the National Guard is also transforming to meet those same challenges.

“As the Army’s demands have changed for our local National Guard units, we must adapt to these future missions,” said Governor Michael Rounds in a news release. “The National Guard is an important asset in our country’s defense. These changes will give the Guard better flexibility to respond to any mission it is asked to do; whether it be local natural disasters, homeland security, or the global war on terror.”

Throughout the next three years,

the South Dakota Army National Guard will implement changes that will affect most Guard communities across the state, with the majority of these changes scheduled to take place in 2007 and 2008.

“The transformation within the SDARNG is part of the military’s overall shift to a modular, lighter and more capable force,” said Maj. Gen. Michael A. Gorman, the adjutant general for the South Dakota National Guard.

“The Guard has moved from a strategic federal reserve to an operational force.”

For the SDARNG it means new units will be activating, others units will be inactivating and some units will be reorganizing. Currently the South Dakota Army National Guard is authorized a strength of 3,400 Soldiers, and will continue to be authorized this number.

“Many of our current units won’t have the same structure they do now,”

said Gorman. “We are keeping the same number of Soldiers, and at the same time, our new units will allow us to provide better support to our local communities. Many of the traditional opportunities for Soldiers will remain the same.”

Gorman reassures Soldiers that they will not lose their jobs, rank or benefits. Service members from inactivating units will have to opportunity to transfer to a different unit with a



similar mission using the skills they already know very well, or they may reclassify to an entirely different field. The new changes will also allow more opportunities for females to join more units.

Some of the major changes to take place are the following:

- Military police officers will be in Sioux Falls, as well as in Custer and Rapid City. There will also be a public affairs presence in Sioux Falls, in addition to Rapid City.
- A new signal company in Aberdeen will provide communications to help in wartime and with homeland security.
- More engineers and related earth-moving and construction equipment in the eastern part of the state.
- Water purification specialists will be located in the more populated southeast part of South Dakota.
- More opportunities for female Guard members because fewer jobs will be combat related.

The only community to lose a unit will be Elk Point. The 727th Transportation Company will move out of Elk Point and consolidate with the Brookings and Flandreau detachments.

“The main reason for the departure is related to the temporary facilities provided in Elk Point,” said Gorman. “The unit will consolidate in a location closer to higher headquarters for better administrative and logistical support.”

The adjustments won’t come without pain, added Gorman.

Units to be inactivated include the 109th Engineer Group in Rapid City, the 109th Engineer Battalion in Sturgis, and the 147th Field Artillery Brigade and 1st Battalion of the 147th in Sioux Falls.

“There are a few things here that are going to happen that most of us don’t like,” said Gorman. “As the Army changes, so must the National Guard. This is a major change for South Dakota. But our bottom line with this entire thing is our future potential for the people of South Dakota and this nation.”

Guard Soldiers eligible to receive new award

By 1st Lt. Anthony Deiss
129th MPAD

South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers who have engaged or been engaged by the enemy in battle are now eligible to receive the Army’s new Combat Action Badge.

Eligibility requirements were established for the new award, as well as changes to the Combat Infantry Badge and Combat Medic Badge, in a letter published June 3 by the Department of the Army.

This policy affects individuals who deploy and serve in a combat zone or imminent danger area since 18 Sept. 2001. The CAB may be awarded to any Soldier performing duties in an area where hostile fire pay or imminent danger pay is authorized.

The Soldiers must also be personally present and actively engaging or being engaged by the enemy, and performing satisfactorily in accordance with the prescribed rules of engagement, according to the specific

eligibility requirements.

A Soldier’s branch or military occupational specialty does not limit their eligibility for the award. Assignment to a combat arms unit or a unit organized to conduct close or offensive combat operations, or performing offensive combat operations is not required to qualify for the CAB; however a Soldier must not be assigned or attached to a unit that



Combat Action Badge

would qualify the Soldier for the CIB or CMB.

“Many Soldiers in different units up until now have not qualified for any type of badge,” said State Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Birnbaum. “The

Army’s new Combat Action Badge will recognize many South Dakota Soldiers that have seen combat.”

For the purpose of awarding the CAB, attacks by mortars, rockets, rocket-propelled grenades, improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers, or other projectiles qualify for the CAB.

Since 18 Sept. 2001, more than 1,900 SDARNG Soldiers have deployed to a combat zone or imminent danger area. Unit commanders received instructions for processing Soldiers for the award in July.

The CAB was developed and approved by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter J. Schoomaker on May 2, to provide special recognition to Soldiers who personally engage or are engaged by the enemy.

“Warfare is still a human endeavor,” said Schoomaker.

“Our intent is to recognize Soldiers who demonstrate and live the Warrior Ethos.”

The CAB which depicts both a bayonet and grenade should be available this fall through unit supply or military clothing sales stores.

the Coyote

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The Coyote Magazine is an unofficial publication of the South Dakota Army National Guard published quarterly.

The Coyote is published by the 129th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Camp Rapid, 2823 West Main Street, Rapid City, South Dakota 57702, in accordance with AR 360-81.

Views and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the South Dakota Army National Guard. Contributions to the Coyote are encouraged.

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OCS program graduates three, starts training four more

By Sgt. 1st Class Kim Smith
129th MPAD

FORT MEADE – The South Dakota Army National Guard's 147th Field Artillery Brigade gained three new officers following Officer Candidate School (OCS) graduation ceremonies Aug. 20 at the 196th Regional Training Institute (RTI) at Fort Meade.

Senior Officer Candidates Kevin Burkman, Brian Webb, and David Larson, all assigned to the 147th Field Artillery Brigade or one of the brigade's subordinate units, completed the three phases necessary for graduation from the traditional OCS program.

Four Basic Officer Candidates from the South Dakota Army National Guard started their initial phase of a 14-month OCS program in June. They are Cathrine White and Samuel Kenton of the 147th Field Artillery Brigade, Sarah Wetzler of the 109th Engineer Battalion, and Duston Mullen of 88th Troop Command.

The three phases of traditional OCS include an initial phase at the 196th RTI, a second phase that involves attending monthly drills at Fort Meade for one year, and Phase III at Fort Lewis, Wash. After successfully completing all three phases, an officer candidate is eligible for commissioning as a second lieutenant.

The OCS program also offers a 56-day fast track program for officer candidates to more quickly be eligible for commissioning as a second lieutenant.

As a regional host for the OCS program, the 196th RTI hosts officer candidates from 13 western states, including South Dakota, North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona, California, Nevada, Idaho, Utah, Oregon, Washington, and Alaska, and one U.S. Territory, Guam.

As officer candidates go through the OCS program, Soldiers receive both classroom instruction and hands-on field training. The mix equips Soldiers with the skills necessary for appointment as second lieutenants.

The training can be challenging. Practical exams include both day and night land navigation.

It can also be rigorous, such as when candidates complete a 5 or 12-mile road march.

According to Capt. Corey Norris, training officer for the 196th RTI, consolidating states for regional training allows states to pool their resources and instructors, and that results in better overall training.

The 48-person staff at the 196th RTI includes members from each of the states and territory within the region.

And if success is measured by the ability of graduating officer candidates to lead in battle, Norris says many of those who trained at Fort Meade in recent years either have served or soon will be serving as second lieutenants in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Photos courtesy 196th RTI

ABOVE: Two Officer Candidates radio in a situation report during a field exercise as part of the evaluation and training received at the 196th RTI. **BELOW:** An Officer Candidate is questioned by three TAC Officers during a training event located at the 196th RTI.



Photos courtesy 196th RTI

ABOVE: An Officer Candidates (right) receives a mission from an evaluator at part of a field training exercise at the 196th RTI. **BELOW:** An Officer Candidate is pulling security for his team during a training event at the 196th RTI.

196th Regional Training Institute *Where leaders are made*

By Sgt. 1st Class Kim Smith
129th MPAD

In 1995, following concerns from National Guard Bureau (NGB) about rising costs associated with 50 states and territories conducting Officer Candidate School (OCS) programs, and a desire to standardize those OCS programs, NGB regionalized OCS in to seven regions.

South Dakota was assigned to Region G along with North Dakota, Montana, Wyoming, Colorado, Arizona, California, Nevada, Idaho, Utah, Oregon, Washington, Alaska, and Guam.

Each region was assigned a mission to conduct a consolidated OCS Phase I during the summer. That initial phase would then be followed by a traditional OCS Phase II, where states would conduct OCS in their home states on drill weekends.

After completing the first two phases, states would send their Officer Candidates (OCs) to Fort Lewis, Wash., for the third and final phase of the program.

North Dakota was the first state to host a Region G consolidated OCS. It was held in 1995 at Camp Grafton near Devils Lake, N.D. The following year it was moved to San Luis Obispo, Calif., then held at Fort Carson, Colo. in 1997.

Region G consolidated OCS was assigned to South Dakota in 1998 and has been held at the 196th Regional Training Institute at Fort Meade since.

According to Capt. Corey Norris, training officer at the 196th RTI, all states in the region assist in the planning, resourcing, and execution of OCS phases for Region G. He says the South Dakota OCS program has developed a positive reputation among other states, with many of the nation's other regions looking to the 196th RTI for advice or ideas for conducting OCS programs.

He says the Fort Meade program has attracted students from every state in the nation.

The 196th RTI's leadership includes Col. Steven Harding, commander; Command Sgt. Maj. Richard Powers; Lt. Col. James Ross, OCS TASS battalion commander; Lt. Col. Timothy Moran, GS battalion commander.

AG GOLF TOURNEY RESULTS

By Sgt. 1st Class Kim Smith
129th MPAD

RAPID CITY – Two brothers joined forces to win the 2005 Adjutant General's Golf Tournament played Aug. 13 and 14 at two golf courses near Rapid City.

Joe and Charlie Jacobson easily outdistanced the field of 63 two-person teams with a 9 under par 63 at the Hart Ranch Golf Course on Aug. 14. That round came a day after shooting an 11 under par 61 during the qualifying round on Aug. 13 at the Rapid City Elks Golf Course.

The two-day tournament was played in a two-person scramble format.

Top finishers in each flight were:

Championship Flight

1. 63 – Joe & Charlie Jacobson
2. 69 – Merle Frederickson & Ryan Bohy
3. 70 – Brad & Bill Limbo

First Flight

1. 68 – Don Ludens & Larry Dafoe
2. 69 – Larry Riddle & Randy Kurtz
3. 69 – Tim Cheever & Bob Morcom

Second Flight

1. 71 – Jim Didier & Tim Haggerty
2. 74 – Mark Burd & Doug Hebert
3. 75 – Bill Freidel & Chuck Mimack

Third Flight

1. 78 – Don Zwart & Kevin Kruelen
2. 78 – Adam Punt & Kevin Miller
3. 81 – Josh Schaeffer & Rob Powles

Fourth Flight

1. 79 – Ray Herron & James Forbes
2. 81 – Barry Whitney & Dan Wilson
3. 86 – Darold McElroy & Jerry Duba

SDNG WALLEYE TOURNAMENT RESULTS

By Rodger Anderson
SDNG Public Affairs Office

PIERRE – "GO DEEP!" That's the best advice the winning team could give out to others gathered at the final weigh-in of the 25th Annual South Dakota National Guard Walleye Tournament held Aug. 13-14 in Pierre.

Scott Hansen, of Harrisburg, and Todd Schurenbrand, of Mitchell, captured first place in the two-day event, catching 12 fish for a total weight of 23.44 pounds. For their efforts, the top finishers were awarded trophies and a check for a \$1,000. Here is a wrap-up of top finishers:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Scott Hansen & Todd Schurenbrand | 23.44 lbs |
| 2. Kevin Pudwill & Doug Pudwill | 22.30 lbs |
| 3. Charles Marsh & Don Massa | 20.54 lbs |
| 4. Scott Pollreisz & Bob Pollreisz | 20.30 lbs |
| 5. Don Berger & Mike Richards | 19.28 lbs |
| 6. Gary Kafka & Gordon Kotab | 18.84 lbs |
| 7. Eric Jennings & Bob Jennings | 18.60 lbs |
| 8. Bob Stahl & Jason Stahl | 18.36 lbs |
| 9. Lowell Somsen & Ken Klein | 17.98 lbs |
| 10. John Robinson & Susie Robinson | 17.28 lbs |

- | | |
|--|----------|
| Largest Walleye (Sat.)
Don Massa | 6.14 lbs |
| Largest Walleye (Sun.)
Jason Swartz | 4.78 lbs |
| Largest Northern
Charles Marsh | 8.60 lbs |
| 25th Norris and Norris
got their entry fee back | 9.74 lbs |

Operation Sand Castle: Rebuilding the levees



Photo by Sgt. Wes Nowitzki

A Chinook helicopter attaches to two, 3,000 pound sandbags and prepares to air lift them to a levee breach. One of the pilots is a former South Dakota National Guard Soldier, Capt. Jody Wilkerson, who once served with the 109th Engineer Group.

By Pfc. Nicole Kueter
129th MPAD

NAVAL AIR STATION BELLE CHASSE, La. – Television images of damage from Hurricane Katrina and Rita seem endless. Video of helicopters carrying giant sandbags and dropping them into breached levees - all in an effort to stop the water from rushing into the homes and businesses on the other side.

Thirty-two members of Task Force Coyote's service and support section spent the last week aiding in that mission. The South Dakota National Guard volunteers worked in two shifts throughout the night, using backhoes and skid loaders to fill 3,000 pound bags, averaging nearly 400 bags per night. Most say they don't mind working through the night.

"I'm excited to just make a difference for somebody, even if I don't get to see it," said Spc. Lee Lohff, of Yankton. "I'm just glad to be doing something that helps out."

Platoon leader 1st Lt. Evert Olesen, of Sioux Falls, says he's proud of how well his Soldiers have done on the mission.

"It gets the troops out here, and gives them some experience, and it gives them the opportunity to be involved in the relief effort," Olesen said.

Although they are unsure of how long the mission will continue, Olesen said his section would be there until it's over.

Task Force Coyote impacting relief efforts

By 1st Lt. Michael Fields
Task Force Coyote

NAVAL AIR STATION BELLE CHASSE, La. – In just 10 days, South Dakota's Task Force Coyote has already started making an impact in the hurricane relief efforts in the New Orleans area.

Establishing its operations at Naval Air Station Belle, the 213 Soldiers and Airmen from South Dakota's Army and Air National Guard are conducting on-going missions that include hauling garbage, providing sick call for the civilians and military, and filling 3,000 pound sand bags for levee breaches.

They remain busy cleaning local schools, providing law enforcement at the local naval exchange, and reacting to accomplish numerous other missions.

"I have a greater appreciation for what I have back home," said Sgt. Lisa Bamas, of Mitchell, who volunteered along with her husband Shawn.

The troops are living in "Tent City" on the base where housing, showers and dining facilities are provided. The base provides mail service, laundry, fitness center, recreation center, internet and phone stations, and chapel services.

Supplies, equipment and trucks

are located on an open, airstrip where members provide maintenance support for the task force.

Troop morale remains high and all feel good about lending a helping hand. Most Guard volunteers have taken leave from their civilian jobs

and families to help the people of Louisiana. Many have served overseas supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom and now have volunteered to get as much work completed during the 30-day deployment to New Orleans.



Photo by 1st. Lt. Michael Fields

Pfc. Justin Schwartz of the 2nd Battalion, 147th Field Artillery of Watertown, fills a Palletizing Load System truck in preparation for daily missions.

Charlie Battery, 1st Bn, 147th deploys to Iraq

By Maj. Orson Ward
SDNG Public Affairs Office

FORT DIX, N.J. – After nearly three months of training, the 151 National Guard Soldiers of Yankton's Battery C departed from McGuire Air Force Base on Oct. 7 for duty in the Middle East.

"You look fantastic and we are all so very proud of you and what you've already accomplished," Brig. Gen. Ray Carpenter told of the unit members as they gathered prior to departure.

"Stay safe and take care of each other," said Carpenter, assistant adjutant general for the state's Army Guard.

"You have a tough mission, but you are ready, and you have tremendous leaders that will take care of you."

The unit has been training since July at Fort Dix, N.J., learning the skills necessary to conduct the security force mission it will face for the next year while supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Although the focus of Charlie Battery's mission is new, many of the skills the Soldiers already perform as artillerymen has made the transition to a security force smoother.

"I think we have transitioned well. It's a different focus rather than a different mission," said Battery Commander Capt. Phillip Stiles. "Skills such as securing a perimeter, defending a convoy and running an operations center we already have trained on as artillerymen."

Traditionally trained on the Multiple Launch Rocket System, the unit used the time at Fort Dix to be proficient in a variety of realistic tasks that involve security force operations.

These operations include everything from convoy and route security, live-fire convoy lanes exercises, traffic check point operations, guarding detainees, unexploded ordnance and improvised explosive device recognition and reacting to enemy contact battle drills.

"We've learned a lot while we've been here and we practiced a lot on



Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Don Matthews (above) and Maj. Orson Ward (below)

ABOVE: Brig. Gen. Raymond W. Carpenter, assistant adjutant general, South Dakota Army National Guard, gives some last minute advice to members of Battery C, 1st Battalion, 147th Field Artillery, prior to their departure in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. **BELOW:** Soldiers from Charlie Battery begin loading bags onto a trailer as they prepare to depart for the Middle East from Fort Dix, N.J.

what we've learned," said Stiles. "The realism of the training, to include civilians who speak Arabic, gives our Soldiers a sense of what to expect and how to handle situations. We still have a lot to learn over there, but the basics we've received here are important."

"The training has been really good, but I'm sure we'll learn more when we hit the ground," said 1st Sgt. George Arends. "I feel we're as ready as we can be. These guys are real hard chargers."

Though, the unit may have many challenges to overcome as it faces the many uncertainties that lie ahead - the unit leadership has full confidence in its Soldiers.

"These Soldiers are the best," said Arends. "This is the A-Team. You couldn't go with a better group of Soldiers."

"I've been in the military for 19 years and I've been in different Guard units within different states," added Stiles "These guys are the best Soldiers I have ever served with."

"I'm new to the National Guard but I can tell it's a close-knit bunch and I'm glad I made the call to sign up," said Staff Sgt. Brooks Schild.

That confidence radiated from each of the Soldier's faces. All received the Adjutant General's Coin of Excellence and a firm handshake from Carpenter and members of the unit's entire state chain of command.

The state leadership also confirmed that although the unit had an Active Duty chain of command, the South Dakota National Guard is always there to help and support during the deployment.

"Anything you need, you call," said Carpenter. "We will take care of your families while your gone, and be here waiting for you when you return."

The South Dakota Army National Guard now has 173 Soldiers serving in Iraq and 213 serving in Louisiana conducting Operation Coyote Aid, hurricane relief. Other units serving in Iraq include Detachment 3, Company F, 238th Aviation and Detachment 3, Company A, 249th Aviation, as well as two doctors.

National Guard/Reserve assist in civilian capacity

By Sgt. 1st Class Kim Smith
129th MPAD

BELLE CHASSE, La. – Three citizen Soldiers were among the first group of five sent from the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office to assist with hurricane relief efforts in Louisiana.

The team arrived in Jefferson Parish, a suburb of New Orleans, shortly after Hurricane Katrina devastated southeastern Louisiana. They stayed until a week after Hurricane Rita brought follow-up destruction to an area still fragile from Katrina.

The citizen Soldiers included Jim Hoekman, a patrol division commander with the Minnehaha County Sheriff's Office and Guard TAC Officer/Instructor at the 196th Regional Training Institute at Fort Meade near Sturgis; Corey Stanley, a sheriff's deputy and truck driver with

the 740th Transportation Company out of Milbank; and Scott Voeltz, a sheriff's deputy and canine handler who also serves with the U.S. Army Reserve's 2nd Battalion, 361st Regiment of the 91st Division out of Sioux Falls.

"The reason I came down here is I would hope that if something serious happened in South Dakota, that other agencies would come help us," said Hoekman.

"There's no doubt in my mind that if something happened in South Dakota, and these guys were able to, that every one of them would volunteer to come and help out," echoed Voeltz.

"Whenever tragedy or crisis happens in the United States," said Stanley, "it's neat to see how people help out and respond. It's been real rewarding to be a part of that and see how people help."

The three are part of a group assisting law enforcement officials in

the Jefferson Parish southeast of New Orleans. They provide security and law and order in an area where many residents lost virtually everything when Hurricane Katrina spun through the area in late August. Much of what was not destroyed by the strong winds was later flooded when levees in the area could no longer hold back the rising waters.

Hoekman and Stanley also deployed to Iraq with the 740th Transportation Company in 2003.

"You always had to be aware of your surroundings," Stanley said of the deployment to Iraq, "and the same is true for down here."

The citizen Soldiers say they've come across numerous residents carrying weapons. Some carry them for their personal protection, while others carry them for less noble reasons.

"We've found quite a few weapons," said Stanley. "People feel

they need to protect themselves, but at the same time we don't know what they're up to, so it brings a challenge sometimes."

"Here you're finding guys with multiple handguns in their car, semi-automatic pistols, and stuff like that," said Hoekman. "It's not the same weaponry you find in South Dakota."

Through all the challenges, however, all three indicate that they would volunteer again for such an assignment.

"You come down here and you actually see the appreciation from these guys," Hoekman said. "I've got the utmost respect for these people."

"The most rewarding thing is that a lot of these guys are thanking us," said Stanley. "You see a lot of these guys who have lost everything they had. I think it's a pretty minor sacrifice for us to come down and help these guys out for a few weeks."

ODT increases readiness for 665 Soldiers

By 1st Lt. Anthony Deiss

129th MPAD

KAISERSLAUTERN, Germany – Soldiers from South Dakota Army National Guard's 665th Maintenance Company of Mitchell, and Detachment 1, 665th from Rapid City, traveled to Germany this year for an overseas deployment tour (ODT).

The 665th provided general support maintenance for General Support Center Europe (GSC-E). GSC-E provides supply, maintenance and distribution services to U.S. Army units in the European Command area of responsibility.

Members from both units participated in one of two rotations. The first rotation, which consisted of 75 personnel, was on tour from April 16 to May 7, and the second rotation, 59 personnel, was on tour from August 6 to 27.

The overseas training event provided the Soldiers with an opportunity to not only improve upon their skills as mechanics, but also better prepare them for a real-life deployment.

"There are many aspects to an overseas deployment tour which enhances a Soldiers readiness," said 1st Lt. Lona Wiens, the maintenance control officer. "Soldiers are more prepared for the (mobilization process).

They are more aware of security requirements and procedures while in country. Soldiers get hands-on-training with different types of equipment they are not used to working on and they work along side local nationals to overcome language and cultural barriers."

Unit members provided support at one of four maintenance activity facilities in and around the city of Kaiserslautern. The majority of unit personnel provided support at Maintenance Activity Kaiserslautern where they did everything from tearing down and rebuilding 6.2 and 6.5 liter diesel engines, providing allied trades and welding, as well as receiving, issuing and storage of bench stock parts, Wiens said.

At Maintenance Activity Pirmasens, unit members mainly refurbished generators, air conditioning units and air compressors, with additional personnel providing administrative and dining facility support.

Mechanics at Rhein Ordnance Barracks provided component rebuilds of 8V92 engines for vehicles such as Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks and Palletized Loading System Tactical Trucks, while Soldiers stationed at Maintenance Activity Mannheim refurbished a 7.5 ton forklift and managed theater supply receiving and distributing.

Soldiers from the 665th also worked along side German civilian workers which quickly developed into a friendly and productive working relationship.

"The German civilians welcomed us with open arms making our training here much more beneficial," said

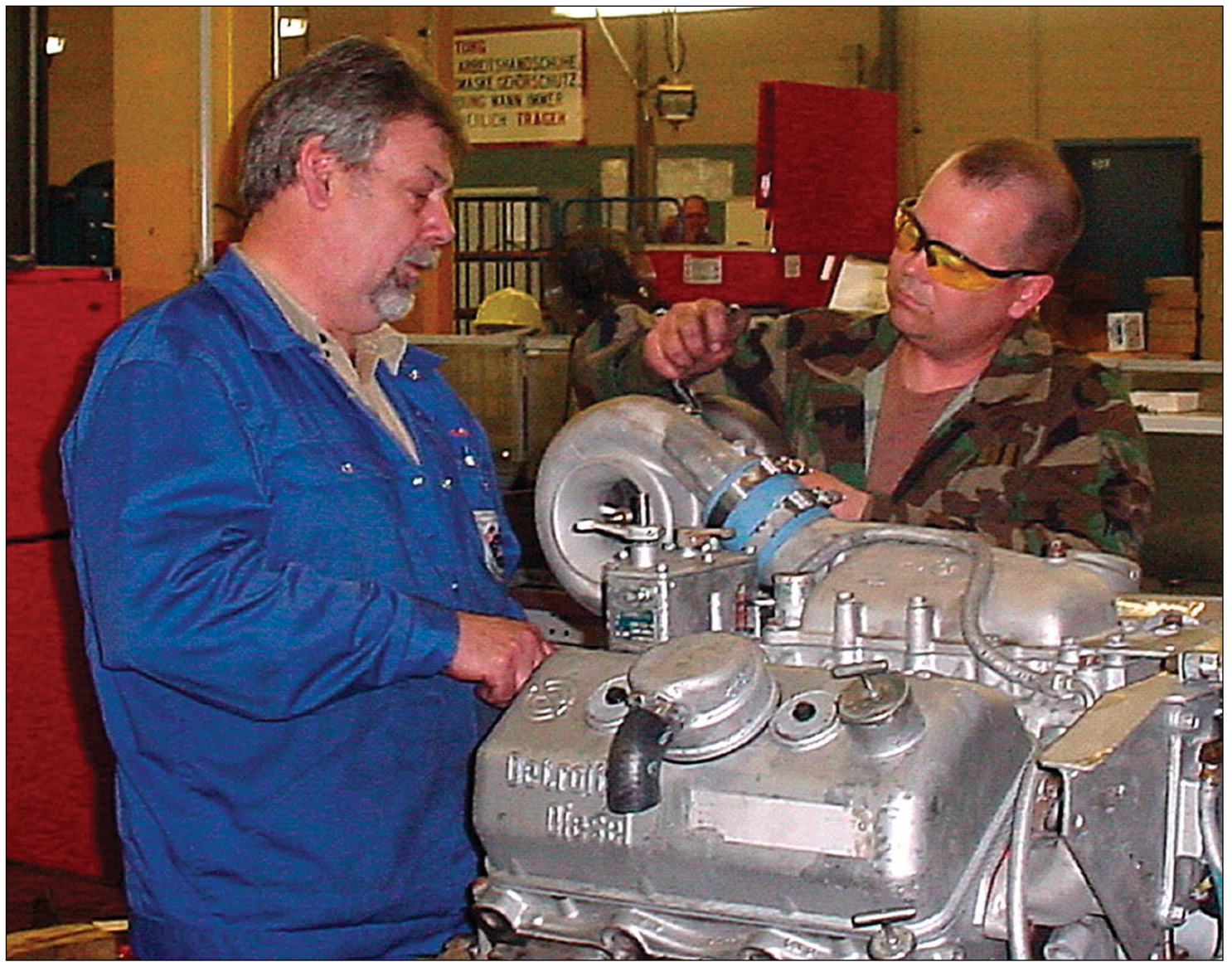


Photo courtesy 665th Maint.Co.

□ **Ordnance Barracks, Germany.**

Sgt. Shawn Siemonsma, a supply and administration non-commissioned officer. "Working with the local nationals and preparing our military equipment to return 'down range' shows our Soldiers that we are not alone in this international cause for peace and freedom. They get a chance to see first hand that we can and do work hand-in-hand with other countries and their people."

Among the training, unit members were able to enjoy some of the history and culture Germany had to offer.

Some of the company departed for an overnight getaway to Munchen, which included a tour of the Neuschwanstein Castle and a tour of Dachau Concentration Camp. Other Soldiers went on a tour of the Rhein River while others went to the ancient city of Rottenburg.

"Germany is a beautiful country. The people are very friendly and welcome Americans with open arms," said Siemonsma. "Germany has a lot of history, and to have the ability to visit these sites, for most people, is

an opportunity of a lifetime. In some cases it is quite sobering when you think about all that has happened here throughout history."

665th members also had the opportunity to meet and greet town officials in Kaiserslautern Wiens said. Town officials welcomed the unit and offered information on their services and everything the town and surrounding communities could provide to make their stay more enjoyable. Some of the Soldiers returned the sentiment and supported the town by volunteering with the community in their Special Olympics, for which thousands of kids participated.

Although the unit's time in Germany was short, and with overseas training tours available normally once every four years, the training event provided some Soldiers with an opportunity and experience they will never forget. And for some, it's a motivating factor that keeps them serving in the Guard.

"It was a great training opportunity as well as an excellent opportunity to see some history and culture," said Wiens. "You never forget these moments, because you get to experience something in your life most people don't get a chance to."

"Overseas annual training events are definitely good for retention in the Guard. It gives Soldiers the opportunity to travel outside the states and experience other cultures," said Siemonsma. "Most people never get an opportunity to travel outside the U.S. In my 12 years in the Guard I have been to the Netherlands once and now to Germany, and I look forward to my next ODT, wherever that may be."

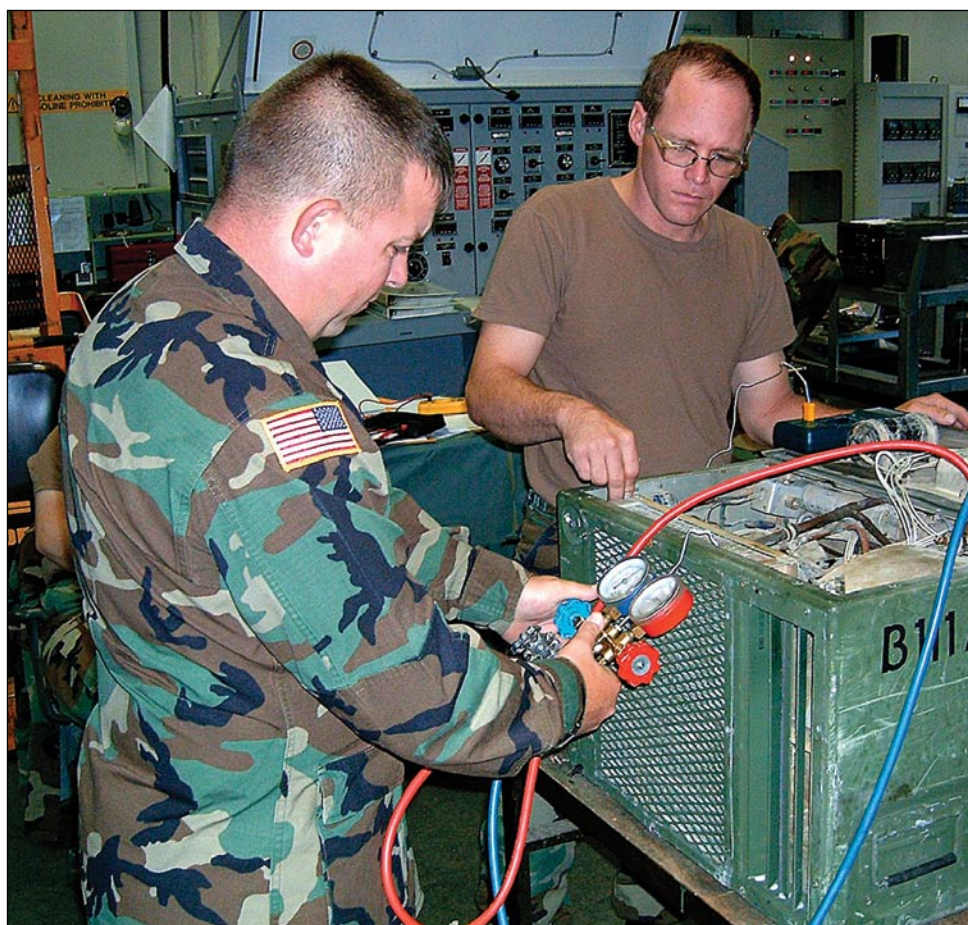


Photo courtesy 665th Maint.Co.

□ **Pfc. Andy Crawford (left) and Sgt. Terry Wesseling recharge an air-conditioning unit at Maintenance Activity Pirmasens, Germany.**

Officer Symposium generates awareness

By Sgt. 1st Class Kim Smith
129th MPAD

PIERRE – The South Dakota National Guard is looking for a few good Soldiers to take on the challenge of being leaders in tomorrow's military.

To that end, more than 70 enlisted Soldiers attended a one-day Officer/Warrant Officer Symposium on Aug. 20 in Pierre. Those attending heard about different options available for moving from the enlisted ranks to commissioned officer or warrant officer. Options include Officer Candidate School (OCS), Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), Army Medical Department (AMEDD), and Warrant Officer Candidate (WOC) School.

"There is an overall lack of awareness of the options and general 'how to' become an officer," said Capt. Cynthia Porter, an officer recruiter with the National Guard who also serves as a ROTC recruiting operations officer at South Dakota School of Mines and Technology and Black Hills State

University.

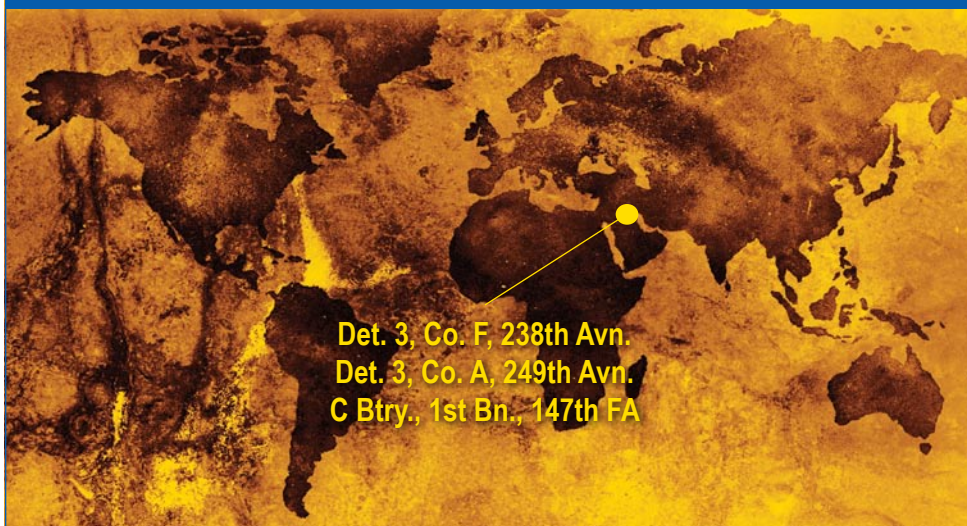
Porter said the Officer/Warrant Officer Symposium was brought back this year after not being held for several years. Potential officer candidates to attend the symposium were pared down from an overall list of the state's enlisted Soldiers based on eligibility ages and college attendance.

"Officers are necessary and needed," said Porter "You can make a huge difference if you lead from the front."

Porter said the routes for becoming an officer that were discussed during the symposium "require effort and work and perseverance." But, she said, there is support available for those who want make it through.

Speakers for the conference included Porter; Maj. Charles Blasdel, state education officer; Sgt. 1st Class Mickey Higgins, AMEDD strength manager; Chief Warrant Officers Paul Wilson and Darla Crown; and Capt. Corey Norris, training officer at the Regional Training Institute at Fort Meade.

CURRENT SOUTH DAKOTA ARMY NATIONAL GUARD DEPLOYMENTS



Det. 3, Co. F, 238th Avn.
Det. 3, Co. A, 249th Avn.
C Btry, 1st Bn., 147th FA

Prep Bowl Color Guard



Photo courtesy 881st Troop Command

The South Dakota Army National Guard Soldiers (left to right) Sgt. Robert Stickney, Spc. Nick Kruse, Staff Sgt. Jeff Nord and Staff Sgt. Robert Shulte, provided this year's color guard at the Oahe Prep Bowl on Sept. 3. The doubleheader football event held each year in Pierre is hosted by the Pierre and Stanley County High Schools. This year Stanley County defeated Winner 13-6 and Pierre defeated Huron 27-6. The Guard also supported the event with recruiting tents and exhibits.

COMMANDERS COMMENTS

The Adjutant General

Change is not easy for anyone, but as the Army changes so must the National Guard. The recently announced force structure changes will allow the South Dakota Army National Guard to better support the war fight, respond to domestic crises, provide the state with a balanced capability to support homeland defense, and provide more stability and predictability to our Soldiers, their families and employers.

This change also allows us to maintain our current end strength of 3,400 Soldiers and provide more opportunities for women to serve. The majority of these changes take effect in fiscal year 2008.

Our staff started working the "command plan", the force structure changes received from National Guard Bureau, almost one year ago. We were able to negotiate some force structure changes and others we were directed to retain. We held a meeting with all of the state staff, major commands and battalion commands leadership. It was very important that they were part of the process in selecting the best locations for the future force.

It was imperative that we remain in all but one of our communities. Our smaller communities provide the majority of our recruits at this time. We still need to keep working on getting more recruits from our larger communities if we are going to be successful. We regret that we have to leave Elk Point but there was no other option because of the facility in Elk Point.

My promise to you is that no one will lose their job, rank, bonus or other incentives, but if you want to stay in your current branch, you may have to drive to a different location. Job fairs will be held to provide all Soldiers with as much information possible on the new force structure so you can make a sound decision on your career. This is a difficult process but I can assure you, my staff and I will do everything possible to aid you during this transition period.

The SDARNG is a great organization because of Soldiers like you. Your service and sacrifice has made the Guard what it is today, and I have no doubt you will continue to make this organization as great tomorrow.



Michael A. Gorman
MG, SDARNG
Adjutant General

State Command Sergeant Major

These are historic times for the South Dakota Army National Guard. Unlike any other time in history, the Guard has been called upon time and time again. We are at the forefront of our nation's call to respond to terrorism around the world. We are among the first called to respond to domestic crisis and natural disasters here at home. You are America's best. The sacrifices you and your families make are great and much appreciated.

Many new changes will be coming for the Guard. From force structure transformation to new uniforms, there will be exciting new developments and a few growing pains to get us through this transition period over the next few years. The Guard has relied upon its Soldiers to make it the great organization it is today, and will look to you to continue to make it a great organization in the future.

To the Soldiers who have deployed and are deployed to Afghanistan and Iraq; you have answered your country's call to serve and protect it against foreign enemies. You've brought the fight to them, to help keep America safe and secure. Ensuring the American people that you are there for them, whenever, wherever.

To the Soldiers who have deployed to southwest Louisiana in support of Hurricane Katrina relief operations; you too have answered your nation's call to serve and protect it against domestic enemies and natural disasters; supporting your neighbors and offering your hand of help to our national brothers and sisters.

Your role as an American Soldier spans across states and across nations. Your nation calls upon you, looks upon you to help carry this country through some of its darkest times. Many of you volunteer and leave your families, friend and jobs at a moments notice. You leave the comfort of your homes and lives so others can enjoy theirs.

I thank you for your service, your sacrifice, and your commitment to this great organization.



Michael L. Birnbaum
GSM, SDARNG
State Command Sergeant Major

The Coyote

Volume 2, Issue 4

South Dakota Army National Guard

Fall 2005

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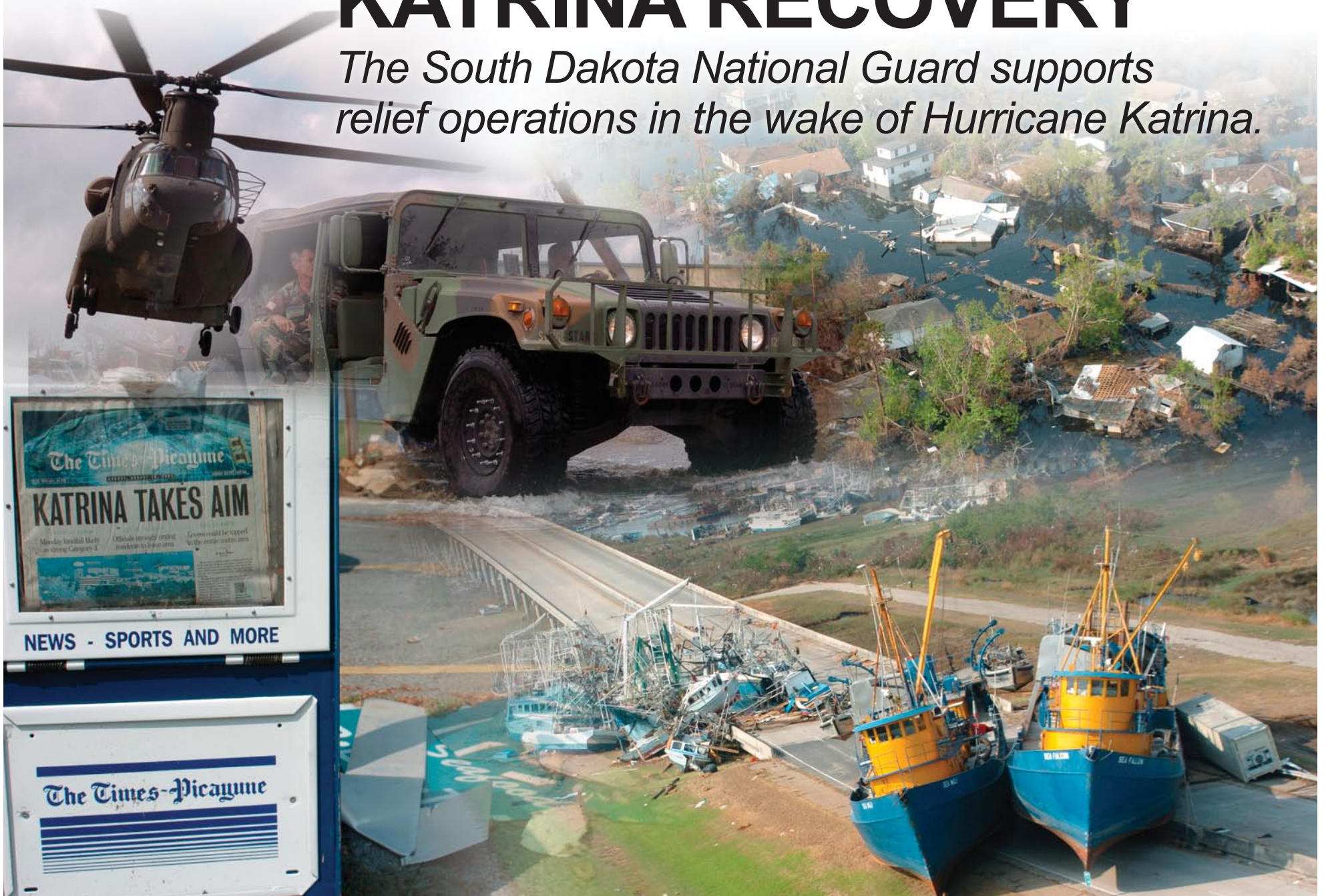
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KATRINA RECOVERY

The South Dakota National Guard supports relief operations in the wake of Hurricane Katrina.



In the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, Soldiers from the South Dakota Army and Air and National Guard responded to the devastated city of New Orleans and surrounding areas within southwest Louisiana to assist in recovery and relief operations.