EXPECTING GREATNESS - HOME TO SERVE

MINNESOTA
NATIONAL GUARD
2007 ANNUAL REPORT

Soldiers stand in formation during a deployment ceremony.

Reflections on 2007

To the Citizens of Minnesota:

2007 was a monumental year for the Soldiers, Airmen and families of the Minnesota National Guard. The nation will look back on 2007 with admiration and appreciation for our armed forces in general and for the Minnesota National Guard in particular.

The 2,600 Soldiers comprising the 1st Brigade Combat Team's "Red Bulls" gallantly supported the President's "troop surge" strategy in Iraq. On January 10, 2007, the President announced a four-month extension of the 1st Brigade. As a result, the "Red Bulls" became the longest serving unit – of any military component, Active, Guard, or Reserve – in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Other brave Minnesota Guard Soldiers and Airmen served throughout Iraq, providing heavy-lift capabilities with Chinook helicopters, security and support forces on the ground and – in the case of the 148th Fighter Wing – dominance of the skies.

Elsewhere, talented Airmen of the 133rd Airlift Wing used precision airdrop technology to supply ground forces throughout the mountainous regions of Afghanistan. Other Minnesota Army Guard Soldiers trained the Afghan National Army and provided critical support to the U.S. military. The Minnesota Guard deployed a battalion to Kosovo to perform peacekeeping operations in the United Nations protectorate. In sum, the Minnesota Guard deployed a total of 2,355 troops to 14 countries in 2007.

Minnesota faced challenges at home in 2007 that exemplified the value of today's Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen. Within an hour of the tragic collapse of the Interstate 35W bridge, a Minnesota Army National Guard medical evacuation helicopter was on the scene, prepared to assist local first responders. Soldiers responded to save lives and protect property when devastating floods engulfed southeast Minnesota. In northern Minnesota, raging fires were quelled by highly-trained aviators and crews. The Minnesota National Guard executed other specialized missions in 2007 as well, such as assisting local authorities in recovering a downed civilian aircraft and providing relief to travelers during blizzards.

As our valiant Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen return from combat, we have taken the national spotlight with our pioneering reintegration program, *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon.* More than 3,000 troops and their families have benefited from this series of candid engagements designed to educate troops, families and communities on the issues surrounding returning combat veterans. *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* is being codified by the U.S. Congress as the national model, and we can be proud that our communities, as well as our federal, state and local partners embrace the concept of an orchestrated plan to welcome home our heroes.

As I reflect upon 2007, I offer the humblest appreciation to the citizens of our great state. I see daily public reminders of those Minnesota Guardsmen who died in a combat zone during 2007 – Staff Sgt. James Wosika, Sgt. Maj. Mike Mettille and Staff Sgt. Greg Riewer. I am confident that Minnesota remembers their sacrifice and will do so into perpetuity.

Sincerely,

Larry W. Shellito
Major General, Minnesota Army National Guard
The Adjutant General

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Governor Tim Pawlenty

Major General Larry Shellito

2008 Priorities
1. Returning Home
2. Growth
3. Construction
4. Defense
5. Partnerships
6. Republican National Convention
More info on page 25
JFHQ-MN
34 CAB
148 FW
175 RTI
84 TRC

Minnesota National Guard forces established new Homeland Defense capabilities in 2007.

Joint National Guard Units

The Joint Force Headquarters is an operational military unit with an integrated Army and Air staff responsible for the command and control of the Minnesota National Guard.

In the event of a large multi-service military operation in Minnesota, such as the 2008 Republican National Convention, the Joint Force Headquarters has the capability to provide the leadership and staff to execute any assigned mission.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/jfhq

Joint Force Headquarters

Camp Ripley is *The Warrior's Choice* for training. In 2007, more than 251,000 military and 64,000 civilian personnel trained in the renowned facilities at Camp Ripley. The installation continued to expand its capabilities in 2007 by establishing a new UH-60 Blackhawk simulator, Improvised Explosive Device (IED) training lanes, an Unmanned Aerial System landing strip and hosted the Wildland Fire Crew Academy.

Improvements are expected to continue in 2008 with the Collective Training Facility range enhancements to be completed in July.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/camp_ripley

Camp Ripley

The Minnesota National Guard's capability to provide Homeland Defense was dramatically enhanced in 2007 with the establishment of a highly-trained Chemical, Biological, Radiological/Nuclear and Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P).

The CERF-P augments the Minnesota National Guard's established homeland defense assets: a Rapid Reaction Force, a Quick Reaction Force, a 24-hour Watch Office, the 55th Civil Support Team, the 148th Fighter Wing's Explosive Ordnance Disposal Unit and the Counterdrug Team.

Homeland Security

In 2007, the two Minnesota Air National Guard Wings flew more than 1,500 combat sorties.

Air National Guard Units

The Duluth-based 148th Fighter Wing distinguished itself in 2007, deploying 302 Airmen to 12 different countries. The F-16s of the 148th Fighter Wing logged 2,385 combat hours in the skies above Iraq, while simultaneously performing Air Sovereignty, Air Expeditionary Force and Expeditionary Combat Support missions throughout the world. In addition to the "Bulldogs'" stellar performance in combat, the 148th Fighter Wing performed 251 crash and rescue responses at the Duluth International Airport, and responded to 28 Explosive Ordnance Disposal incidents at the request of local law enforcement.

In 2008, the 148th Fighter Wing will continue to seek out opportunities to acquire more advanced aircraft and develop improvements in the Maintenance Support Facility.

Photo courtesy John M. Dibbs

148TH Fighter Wing

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/148fw

The 133rd Airlift Wing, located at the Minneapolis-St. Paul International Airport, is comprised of 1,280 people dedicated to supporting the needs of the State of Minnesota and the nation. During 2007 the Wing deployed more than 350 Airmen on Air Expeditionary and Combat Support missions to 14 different countries. Using the latest airdrop technology - the Joint Precision Airdrop System - more than a thousand combat sorties provided supplies and equipment to ground forces.

In 2008, the 133rd Airlift Wing will continue to provide tactical airlift of troops, cargo and medical patients during military operations in Europe, Central and South America and Southwest Asia.

133RD Airlift Wing

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/133aw

Soldiers perform a "four man stack" during a training exercise with Canadian Forces.

Army National Guard Units

The 34th Infantry Division, headquartered in Rosemount, provides oversight for more than 8,200 Soldiers in Minnesota and has training responsibility of Army National Guard units in three other states.

In 2007, 34th Infantry Division troops participated in combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as training exercises in Egypt, Canada and Croatia. Under the command of Maj. Gen. Rick Nash, the 34th "Red Bull" Infantry Division is poised to continue to be recognized as the best division-sized unit in the Army National Guard in 2008.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/34id

34th Infantry Division

2,600 members of the Bloomington-based 1st Brigade Combat Team returned in July and August from the longest combat tour of any military unit – Active, Guard, or Reserve – in Operation Iraqi Freedom. In 2007, the Soldiers of the 1st Brigade Combat Team distinguished themselves in Iraq by traveling more than 2.2 million convoy miles, disarming more than 400 explosive devices, building seven water purification plants and constructing 90 miles of roadway in the Dhi Qar region. In 2008, the returning Soldiers of the 1st Brigade are focused on reintegrating back into civilian life through the pioneering *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* program which is currently being codified by U.S. Congress as the national model.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/1bct

1st Brigade Combat Team

Soldiers of the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade supported multiple missions with excellence in 2007. B Co., 2nd Battalion, 211th General Support Aviation Battalion safely returned home after flying CH-47 Chinooks on 5,400 combat missions in Iraq. The 2nd Battalion, 147th Assault Helicopter Regiment deployed to Iraq with UH-60 Blackhawks and is expected home in summer of 2008. Minnesotans relied on the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade to assist in suppressing fires, providing emergency transportation during floods, providing heavy-lift capabilities at the I-35W bridge collapse and assisting with recovery of a downed aircraft. In 2008, the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade is preparing to deploy troops in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/34cab

34th Combat Aviation Brigade

Minnesota National Guard Soldiers secure a medevac landing zone in Iraq.

Army National Guard Units

The 347th Regional Support Group is an Army National Guard Brigade headquartered in Roseville that provides combatant commanders and the State of Minnesota specialized capabilities with it's military police, medical, personnel, band, transportation and finance units. In 2007, the 347th Regional Support Group deployed finance and personnel specialists overseas. In addition, the 114th Transportation Company was established in Chisholm.

In 2008, the 347th Regional Support Group will remain active by participating in drills and exercises throughout Minnesota.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/rsg

347th Regional Support Group

The Minneapolis-based 84th Troop Command provides essential field artillery, chemical and engineering capabilities for both federal and state missions. In 2007, the 849th and the 851st Engineer Companies deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In Minnesota, the 84th Troop Command established, trained and validated a new Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosive (CBRNE) Enhanced Response Force Package (CERF-P). This new CERF-P will continue to train with Minnesota law enforcement and first responders in 2008.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/84tc

84th Troop Command

The 175th Regional Training Institute provides Combat Arms, Leadership, Military Occupational Specialty and General Studies training for the Army National Guard, Army Reserve and Active Component Army Soldiers at the Camp Ripley Training Center.

In 2007, the 175th Regional Training Institute successfully trained 45 commissioned officers and 12 warrant officers, and trained Soldiers transitioning to the Army's modular structure in record numbers.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/175rti

175th Regional Training Institute

2007 was the 60th Anniversary of the US Air Force.

Minnesota National Guard History

The Minnesota National Guard takes great pride in being a vibrant participant in shaping Minnesota's history. Since the days before statehood, the National Guard embraced whatever role history would unveil: protector of settlers, guardian of freedom, provider of relief, peacekeeper to nations, or homeland defender.

- The Territorial Militia ushered in the Minnesota National Guard in 1850. Charged with protecting the interests of settlers, the Minnesota Pioneer Guards were formed in 1856. Minnesota's frontier was ably protected by these militiamen. In fact, local Guard units served as the only line of defense during the Dakota (Sioux) War of 1862.

- The Minnesota National Guard distinguished itself during the Civil War. The "First Minnesota" is recognized as the first regiment to volunteer troops to serve for the Union cause. They became a legend for their gallant charge at Gettysburg on July 2, 1863.

- As the United States transformed into a first-rate military power, so too did the Minnesota National Guard. Troops served in the Spanish-American War, Mexican Border Patrol and World War I. The addition of the 109th Aerial Observation Squadron brought Minnesota the first recognized flying unit in the National Guard in 1921.

- World War II spotlighted the Minnesota National Guard's excellence and commitment to victory. The annals of the Minnesota Guard's combat lineage in World War II are legendary: the 34th "Red Bull" Infantry Division in North Africa and Italy; the 175th Field Artillery in Italy; the 194th Tank Battalion at Bataan; 136th Infantry at New Guinea and Luzon; and the 109th Observation Squadron in Europe.

"Red Bull" Soldiers fire into Cassino, Italy from the north edge of town on Feb. 24, 1944.

- War in Asia and Europe during the latter half of the 20th Century provided other venues for the Minnesota National Guard to answer the Nation's call: Korea; Berlin; Vietnam; the Persian Gulf; and the Balkans. This capable and versatile force performed admirably, all the while responding to state activations such as fires, floods, tornadoes, missing-person searches and homeland defense.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/history

The attacks of 9/11 brought an unprecedented need for military forces, and the Minnesota National Guard has again responded to the call to arms to fight the Global War on Terror. More than 2,300 Soldiers and Airmen deployed in support of combat operations in 2007; 2,600 "Red Bulls" of the 1st of the 34th Brigade Combat Team (1/34th BCT) returned from a 22-month deployment in July and August.

1/34th BCT Soldiers were responsible for safeguarding logistics bases and routes in Iraq during 2007.

Airmen display the U.S. and Air Force colors prior to a Minnesota Twins baseball game.

As the U.S. Air Force celebrated its 60th Anniversary as a recognized military branch in 2007, Minnesota reflected with pride at the contributions of our Citizen-Airmen. On January 17, 1921, Minnesota's 109th Observation Squadron was the first National Guard unit to receive federal recognition following World War I. Minnesota Air National Guard units have served in every major conflict since its earliest days, including World War II, Korea, the Berlin Airlift, Vietnam, the Persian Gulf War, Operation Enduring Freedom and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Aircraft flown by the 133rd Airlift Wing 1921-2007

JN-4 Jenny
JN-6H Jenny
O-1 Falcon
O-3H Observer
O-2H Observer
O-17 Courier
O-38 Observer
O-38E Observer
O-47A Observer
A-20A Havoc
Mark 76 Spitfire
P-51 and F-51 Mustang
T-33A Shooting Star
TB-25K Mitchell
T-28A Trojan
C-47 Skytrain
F-94A Starfire
F-89H Scorpion
C-97 Stratofreighter
C-130 Hercules

Aircraft flown by the 148th Fighter Wing 1948-2007

F-51 Mustang
T-6 Texan
T-33A T-Bird
F-94 Starfire
F-89J Scorpion
F-102 Deuce
F-101 Voodoo
RF-4C Phantom II
F-4D Phantom II
F-16 Fighting Falcon

109th Observation Squadron JN-4 Jennys staged in formation at Wold-Chamberlian Field in St. Paul.

1/34th BCT Soldiers fire a mortar during combat operations.

1st Brigade Combat Team

After 22 months away from their families, the Soldiers of the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team returned home. They were deployed to Iraq in March 2006 to conduct theater security in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

- Longest deployed unit in Operation Iraqi Freedom (16 months in a combat zone).
- Drove more than 4,500 convoy escort missions.
- Drove more than 2.2 million convoy miles.
- Discovered more than four hundred IEDs before they were detonated.

Spc. Nathan Reynolds of 1-34th Brigade Troops Battalion hands out school supplies to children of the new Coalition-Forces-built school in Um Eneej, Iraq. Community Connections of Sauk Centre, Minn. donated the supplies.

- Re-enlisted more than 1,100 Soldiers ($17 million in bonuses).
- Conducted hundreds of joint patrols with Iraqi Security Forces.
- Provided a Military Training Team for an Iraqi Battalion in Al Anbar.
- Received more than a million hits on RedBullWeb.com.
- Completed 107 reconstruction projects worth $11 million.
- Built or upgraded seven water purification plants, providing clean water for tens of thousands of Iraqi citizens.
- Constructed 90 miles of roads in Dhi Qar.
- Cleared 310 miles of roads using an innovative "Adopt a Highway" program to disrupt IED concealment.
- According to a 1/34th BCT survey, potable water satisfaction was increased by 22% and electricity satisfaction grew by 40% in Dhi Qar.
- Produced 28 documentaries (more than 23 hours) on reconstruction efforts for Iraqi television stations.

(left) Soldiers from the 1/34th BCT stop during a patrol in Iraq. (right) Soldiers greet their returning comrades as they step off the plane at Volk Field Air National Guard Base, Wisc. during the arrival of 1/34th BCT troops.

1st Lt. Dave Colemer (right) of Moorhead, Minn., 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry and an Iraqi Army Soldier wait as a vehicle approaches a traffic checkpoint.

Minnesota National Guard units B Co., 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry and B Co., 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 194th Armor were directly involved in "The Awakening" that took place in Al Anbar Province.

Working with village sheiks and Iraqi Emergency Response Units, Minnesota National Guard and Marine Corps units built alliances with the Iraqis in Al Anbar and empowered them to eliminate Al Qaeda insurgency in their villages. The movement, which became identified by the sheiks as "The Awakening," was due in part to the Iraqis' frustration with murderous acts by Al Qaeda in their region.

> "I have commanded three times in combat, and they are the finest group of Americans that I have ever had the privilege to command."
>
> Col. George Bristol, USMC, 2nd MEF Headquarters Group Commander, on B Co., 2-136 Infantry

There were several key events during Minnesota National Guard operations in the region, including the discovery and disbanding of an Al Qaeda "torture house" and the training of Iraqis to patrol their own regions.

A "Red Bull" peers into the distance before her mission begins in Iraq.

Expecting Greatness

Gov. Tim Pawlenty pins the Silver Star medal on Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg for his heroic actions during combat operations in Iraq.

For the first time since World War II, a Minnesota National Guard Soldier was awarded the Silver Star medal. Staff Sgt. Chad Malmberg of 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry was presented the Silver Star medal for valor in combat by Minnesota National Guard Commander-In-Chief Governor Tim Pawlenty and 34th Infantry Division Commanding General Maj. Gen. Rick Erlandson on Sept. 22.

"There is no doubt about it, he's a hero" said Gov. Tim Pawlenty.

Malmberg, a Minnesota State University Mankato student, distinguished himself by his heroic actions during an insurgent ambush on his convoy. While departing Baghdad International Airport, his troops were ambushed by a roadside bomb and then by insurgent machine-gun fire and rocket propelled grenades. Staff Sgt. Malmberg engaged 40 insurgents with small arms weapons and an AT-4 Rocket Launcher. Putting himself in the line of fire, he coordinated clearing debris from the road so that he could lead his convoy safely back to base with no casualties sustained by any of his Soldiers.

In 2007, more than 4,700 Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen either mobilized or returned from deployment in support of federal wartime missions. Combat service has enhanced the capabilities of our force, and Minnesota can expect great things from these troops.

First All-Female Flight

Christmas 2007 will not soon be forgotten by the talented aviators and crews of the St. Paul-based 2nd Battalion, 147th Assault Helicopter Regiment. Flying from Logistics Support Area Anaconda in Balad, Iraq, the National Guard's first two helicopter combat mission planned and executed entirely by a female crew successfully delivered cargo and passengers throughout battlefield landing zones.

This all-female crew successfully planned and executed a combat mission on Christmas Day 2007.

Air Guard Bronze Stars

Five members of the Minnesota Air National Guard were awarded Bronze Star medals in 2007. The recipients were; Col. Greg Haase, 455th Expeditionary Operations Group Deputy Commander, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan; Col. Frank H. Stokes, 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group Commander, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan; Col. John H. Spencer, Jr., Deputy Commander, 332nd Expeditionary Operations Group, Balad Air Base, Iraq; Chief Master Sgt. Michael D. Layman, 455th Expeditionary Maintenance Group Chief Enlisted Manager, Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan; and Tech. Sgt. Scott T. Castleman, Explosive Ordnance Disposal Craftsman at the 506th Expeditionary Civil Engineer Squadron, 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq.

Four Members of the 148th Fighter Wing received the Bronze Star Medal for distinguished service while deployed in 2007.

Duty. Honor. Country.

While commanding his unit in Iraq, Capt. Scott Rohweder became one of only seven commissioned officers in the National Guard to be named winner of the "General Douglas MacArthur Leadership Award." Rohweder, a 34-year-old husband and father of two from Princeton, Minn., humbly said most of the accolades for the award should go not to him, but to a much larger group of people—his Soldiers.

Capt. Scott Rohweder was selected as one of the best company grade leaders in the U.S. Army in 2007.

Minnesota Soldiers present arms at their departure ceremony before heading to Kosovo.

People

The Minnesota National Guard consists of Soldiers and Airmen who give their best daily whether they are on missions stateside or serving overseas. These servicemembers are recognized by their peers, their community, their state and their nation.

- The Minnesota National Guard grew by 1,000 Soldiers last year, the equivalent of a combat battalion.
- Ranking only 21st in state population, Minnesota ranks 5th in military strength.
- The 133rd Airlift Wing achieved a strength level of 102%, compared to a national Air National Guard average of 96%.

Maj. Gen. Rick Nash assumed command of the 34th Infantry Division from Maj. Gen. Rick Erlandson during a ceremony at Camp Ripley on Oct. 13, 2007.

- The Air Force selected Capt. Mike Donat to participate in the "High Flight" program, in which Air Force future leaders explore both contemporary and future issues.
- The 148th Fighter Wing achieved a record personnel end strength of more than 105%, the seventh year in a row over 100%.
- Maintaining a personnel retention rate of 93.5 %, the 148th Fighter Wing ranks as the #1 Wing for retention in the Air National Guard.
- The Minnesota Army National Guard Recruiting & Retention Command finished fiscal year 2007 second in the nation.
- The state's top recruiter, Sgt. 1st Class Brad Bond, was responsible for 42 enlistments in fiscal year 2007 and was named the Army National Guard "Recruiter of the Year" at a Dec. 8 ceremony in Washington, D.C.
- More than 500 backpacks filled with school supplies were distributed to children of deployed or recently returned parents.

(left) Sgt. John Kriesel throws out the first pitch before a Twins game against the Boston Red Sox at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome as his family looks on. (right) Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Morris gained national recognition for being the key architect of the *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* reintegration program. He was a 2007 Army Times "Soldier of the Year" finalist.

Newly appointed 148th Fighter Wing Command Chief, Chief Master Sgt. Jodi Stauber addresses the Wing.

Chief Master Sgt. Jodi L. Stauber is the first woman ever to be appointed to 148th Fighter Wing Command Chief, the highest enlisted position at the Duluth-based Air Guard unit. She now serves as the primary advisor to the Wing Commander on all enlisted issues.

Distinguishing herself in her previous role as Personnel Superintendent of the 148th Fighter Wing Military Personnel Flight, Chief Master Sgt. Stauber played a key role in a variety of missions for both state active duty and service abroad.

Her dedication to the advancement of the 148th Fighter Wing and the Airmen who make it successful is a direct reflection of her dual role as a citizen and an Airman.

> "Command Chief isn't a job you can do well for the wrong reasons. It has to be from the heart. You have to care for people," said Stauber.

"First and foremost, I am a wife and mother," said Stauber. "With that comes a spirit of taking care of others. Command Chief isn't a job you can do well for the wrong reasons. It has to be from the heart. You have to take care of people."

Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum (left), Chief of the National Guard Bureau, speaks with a Soldier in Iraq.

Tough Questions

The Minnesota National Guard faced difficult decisions in 2007 and responded to some tough questions from our Soldiers, Airmen and families.

Q: Why was the notification of the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team's extension so uncoordinated?

A: Even though there was public speculation related to an extension, neither the Minnesota National Guard nor the 1/34th BCT in Iraq had advance notice of the 125-day "troop surge" extension.

The Adjutant General received notification from the National Guard Bureau on Wednesday, January 10th at 7:30 p.m., with authorization to release the information at 9 p.m. Maj. Gen. Shellito informed family readiness group leaders of the extension at 9 p.m. and released the notification to the public through the media shortly thereafter. While most Soldiers in Iraq found out about their extension from families, the media or from conversation with key leaders in Minnesota, the Army Headquarters in Iraq did not officially notify the 1/34th BCT until Monday, Jan. 15.

Brigade Commander, Col. David Elicerio, announced receipt of official notification to the unit on Tuesday, Jan 16 and followed up with a press conference on Wednesday, Jan. 17. His assessment was straight-forward: "Leadership within the Department of Defense did 'goof this one up.'"

Col. Elicerio addresses Minnesota media via live video satellite on Jan. 17.

Q: With only half of its assigned equipment available, is the Minnesota Guard ready to fight wars abroad and assist with disasters at home?

A: Minnesota's National Guard has about half of its equipment still in the state for responding to all manner of natural or man-made disasters.

The Minnesota Guard has 57 of its 153 tractor trailers for carrying heavy equipment to disaster areas, 571 of its 1,200 Humvees, six of its 22 helicopters and 371 of its 698 tactical vehicles for transporting people and supplies.

With more than 13,600 Soldiers and Airmen assigned to 63 armories statewide, the Minnesota Guard can simultaneously assist state and local authorities while conducting federal combat operations overseas.

A 34th Military Police Company Humvee idles atop a hill while a 34th Combat Aviation Brigade UH-60 Blackhawk Helicopter hovers in the distance during flood-relief operations near Winona, Minn.

Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito and Sgt. Benjamin Hatton testify before Congress at a House Veterans' Affairs subcommittee hearing.

Q: Why didn't all returning Soldiers receive the same education benefits?

A: Upon return to the U.S., the Minnesota National Guard learned that orders for 1,162 1/34th BCT Soldiers were written for 729 days or fewer. Had they been written for 730 days, one day more, the Soldiers would receive additional Chapter 30 GI Bill benefits to assist in paying for school.

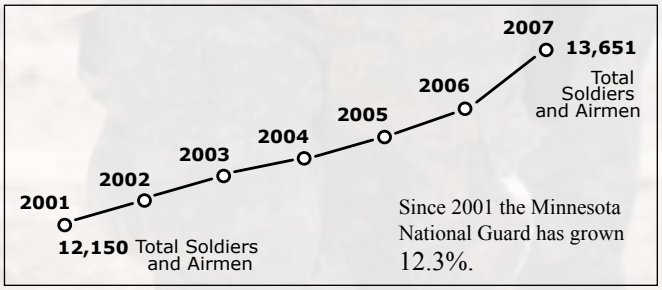
"Roger that, Congressman," said Sgt. Hatton.

On Oct. 18, Minnesota Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito and Sgt. Ben Hatton testified before a Veterans Affairs subcommittee to address the issue.

Since the issue was brought before federal officials, more than 97% of the returning troops have had their orders corrected and will receive full Chapter 30 GI Bill benefits.

Q: Have the continued wars in Iraq and Afghanistan negatively affected Minnesota National Guard Recruiting?

A: No. The citizens of Minnesota continue to boldly step forward in record numbers to serve their state and their nation.



An F-16 "Fighting Falcon" lifts off from the Duluth Air Base to provide Air Sovereignty.

Accomplishments

The nation took notice in 2007 as Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen achieved unprecedented national recognition.

"And the Emmy® goes to..."

The 'Board of Governors Award' Emmy, which recognizes excellence in broadcaster-community partnerships, was presented to the Minnesota National Guard at the 7th Annual Regional Emmy Awards Gala on Saturday, Oct. 20 in Minneapolis.

The Minnesota National Guard, along with Fox Sports Net North, the Minnesota Twins, Twin Cities Fox affiliate KMSP-TV, KFAN Radio and Charter Communications, received the Emmy for collaborative efforts resulting in the production of *Freedom Week* and *Operation Home Base*, a unique, week-long series of radio and television broadcasts that aired during the Major League Baseball season.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/emmy

Best employers in the nation — four years in a row.

(l-r) Brig. Gen. (Ret) Denny Schulstad, Don Tomann (President of UMC), Karin Jacobson (spouse of Sgt. Lou Jacobson, who was then deployed with the 1/34th BCT) and Minnesota Governor Tim Pawlenty.

Monticello-based Ultra Machining Company, known as UMC, won the state Pro Patria Award and the national 'Freedom Award' for its Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve in 2007.

UMC was selected as one of only 15 national "Freedom Award" winners. Minnesota is the first state to have won the award four years in a row.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/esgr

Best equal opportunity officer in the National Guard.

The NAACP 'Roy Wilkins Renowned Service Award' was presented to Lt. Col. Trancey Williams on July 10 in Detroit, Michigan.

Of the 54 states and territories within the National Guard, Lt. Col. Williams was chosen as the only officer recipient for 2007.

Lt. Col. Williams distinguished himself by making a significant contribution to his country in the areas of civil/human rights, race relations, equal opportunity, affirmative action, human resources and public service.

Lt. Col. Trancey Williams at the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Breakfast.

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/eeo

The 34th Infantry Division "Red Bull" Band performs during professional sporting events at the Hubert H. Humphrey Metrodome.

Best Band in the Army.

The 34th Infantry Division "Red Bull" Band was awarded the "Col. George S. Howard Citation of Musical Excellence" for Military Concert Bands April 21 at the Rosemount Armory.

The award was presented to the band by Minnesota National Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Larry Shellito during the ceremony. The committee of the John Phillip Sousa Foundation judged recordings of three concert performances that were submitted by bands from all around the country.

"We are going to do our best to honor veterans through our music, regardless the venue," said Skaar.

"This was a goal we have strived for," said Band Leader Chief Warrant Officer Trygve Skaar. "And through the process we have grown, and that's the real reward of it. By getting the award, it just proves to me the excellence of the people in the unit, the commitment they have to one another and the commitment they have to represent all the Citizen-Soldiers from Minnesota and to honor all past veterans."

www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/band

A Minnesota National Guard Soldier advances cautiously through Al Naumyah village in Iraq.

Federal Missions

When directed by the President, the Minnesota National Guard provides combatant commanders with mission-tailored Soldiers, Airmen and units to support U.S. involvement in worldwide armed conflict and contingency operations, who are also capable of performing full-spectrum homeland security missions.

Iraq

- 2,600 Soldiers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team of the 34th Infantry Division had their tours extended by four months; as a result, the "Red Bulls" served longer in a combat zone than any other military unit in Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- More than 300 Airmen of the 148th Fighter Wing deployed to Balad Airbase and flew 581 combat sorties.
- 117 members of the Minnesota Army National Guard's 849th Mobility Augmentation Company deployed to Iraq.
- 290 Soldiers from the 2nd Battalion, 147th Assault Helicopter Regiment are currently conducting combat missions with UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters.
- The 851st Vertical Engineering Company deployed in support of the 769th Engineering Battalion of Louisiana.

Sgt. Jeff Woodford of Walker, Minn. speaks to an Iraqi civilian waiting for medical care.

- 51 Soldiers from the Roseville-based 347th Personnel Services Detachment have been deployed and will support in and out-processing personnel actions for servicemembers at military bases in Kuwait and Qatar.
- B Co., 2nd Battalion, 211th General Support Aviation Battalion returned from Iraq after transporting passengers, cargo and materiel aboard Minnesota National Guard CH-47 Chinook helicopters.
- The 247th Finance Detachment is providing critical finance services for deployed troops in Iraq.
- East St. Paul-based B Co., 1st Combined Arms Battalion, 194th Armor returned to Minnesota after a 13-month combat tour.

148th Fighter Wing Airmen meet with Minnesota Gov. Tim Pawlenty at Balad Airbase, Iraq.

Afghanistan

- Approximately 80 Airmen from the 133rd Airlift Wing provided critical C-130 cargo support in Afghanistan in 2007.
- 32 Soldiers from the Roseville-based 147th Personnel Services Battalion managed Joint Personnel Reception Centers, Soldier Support Centers and Army Post Offices in Afghanistan and provided Human Resource support to 14 Forward Operating Bases in four different countries.

Soldiers meet with civilians as part of Afghan National Police training during Operation Enduring Freedom Sept. 2007.

Kosovo

- 400 Soldiers of the Minnesota National Guard's 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry are deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. It is the unit's second deployment to Kosovo.
- In the Kosovo mission, Soldiers of the Minnesota National Guard's Task Force Bayonet work along side Soldiers of other NATO nations performing peacekeeping operations.

Airmen load a 133rd Airlift Wing C-130 Hercules in preparation for the next mission at Bagram Airbase in Afghanistan.

Federal Missions

A loadmaster secures a C-130 Hercules ramp after dropping critical supplies to replenish U.S. ground forces in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

- 15 Minnesota Army Guard Soldiers are currently deployed to Afghanistan as embedded Tactical Trainers for the Afghan National Army. They are scheduled to return in late spring 2008.

A Soldier prepares to fire a M240B machine gun as part of training for the peacekeeping mission to Kosovo.

Croatia Norway Canada

- The Minnesota National Guard and the Norwegian Home Guard began their 34th Annual Troop Reciprocal Exchange in February, when more than 100 Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen trained at Vaernes Training Facility, Norway. 100 Norwegian Home Guard Troops simultaneously trained at Camp Ripley.

- Begun in 1974, the Minnesota-Norway partnership has become the longest-running military exchange between any two nations.

- Minnesota's 10-year State Partnership Program with Croatia is assisting the Croatians as they strive for membership in NATO. In 2008, the State Partnership Program will begin to shift focus from military-to-military training to more emphasis on civilian-to-civilian events.

- Soldiers from the 38th Canadian Brigade Group and the 34th Infantry Division took part in Exercise Bison Warrior at Dundurn, Saskatchewan.

(top) Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen battle poor skiing conditions while moving out to the Field Training Exercise at Haltdalen Training Center, Norway. (middle) Spc. Josh Heibel and Lt. Zlako Pasaric confer over grid coordinates during training at Camp Ripley, Minn. (bottom) U.S. and Canadian forces train together in April 2007.

- The 148th Fighter Wing provided air sovereignty missions on short notice in 2007. In addition to the Duluth alert mission, pilots, aircraft maintenance personnel and other support staff were deployed to Shaw Air Force Base, South Carolina and Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

(left) A 148th Fighter Wing F-16 taxis upon arrival at Shaw Air Force Base while conducting Air Sovereignty Alert missions. (right) 148th Fighter Wing Airmen await departure in a C-17 Globemaster en route to Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii.

U.S. Missions

- More than forty members of the 133rd Civil Engineering Squadron, Minnesota Air National Guard, were mobilized in support of Operation Jump Start, a federal initiative utilizing National Guard Soldiers from across the nation to help secure the U.S.-Mexico border to deter illegal immigration.

- 200 members of the Minnesota Army Guard's 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry deployed to surveillance sites along the border in New Mexico.

(top) From a hilltop on the U.S.-Mexico border, Spc. Michael Elmer spots four people on foot moving toward the fence below. (left) 133rd Airlift Wing Civil Engineer Tech. Sgt. Kurt Huver checks the level on the concrete forms for a fence along the U.S.-Mexico border near San Luis, Ariz.

Commander-in-Chief Gov. Tim Pawlenty expresses appreciation to troops and families at a ceremony.

State Missions

National Guard Soldiers and Airmen work on a simulated causality during a Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and High Yield Explosive training exercise as part of CERF-P certification. Minnesota's new CERF-P can provide immediate response capabilities, including searching damaged buildings, rescuing trapped people, providing decontamination, performing medical triage and initial treatment to stabilize patients for transport to medical facilities.

Homeland Security

The Minnesota National Guard possesses a unique capability to assist local law enforcement in the event of a homeland security incident, a natural disaster or other emergencies. At the direction of the Governor, the Minnesota National Guard can commit community-based people, equipment and facilities such as:

- **Joint Force Headquarters:** Provides command and control of all National Guard forces in the state. At the direction of the President, can act as a joint-services headquarters for all military forces operating in Minnesota during specially-designated operations.
- **55th Civil Support Team:** Assesses hazards, advises civil authorities and facilitates military support during emergencies and incidents of suspected weapons of mass destruction.
- **CERF-P (Chemical, Biological, Radioactive, Nuclear or High Yield Explosive Enhanced Response Force Package):** Provides immediate response capability at the request of local authorities.
- **Quick Reaction Force/Rapid Reaction Force:** Provides the first ready force capable of delivering a company-sized unit within hours of being requested by local law enforcement.
- **Explosive Ordnance Disposal:** Assists northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin law enforcement agencies with the detection, diagnosis and disposal of hazardous devices.
- **Counterdrug Team:** Uses specialized equipment and National Guard facilities to assist law enforcement agencies and community-based organizations in response to the changing drug threat.
- **Critical Infrastructure Assessment Team:** Provides the capability to uniformly and consistently evaluate the vulnerabilities of physical security and information security assets.

Disaster Response

The Minnesota Air and Army National Guard responded to the collapse of the I-35W Bridge in Minneapolis on Aug. 1 and continued to support with transportation of diving equipment to aid in the search and rescue operations.

- A UH-60 Blackhawk medevac helicopter was on-site immediately following the collapse. The helicopter was at the disposal of the incident commander to provide hoist and personnel rescue assistance.
- Airmen from the 133rd Airlift Wing received and off-loaded diving and rescue equipment, then transported 22 Navy rescue personnel and 90,000 lbs. of gear to and from the Mississippi River staging area near the bridge collapse.

A Minnesota Army National Guard Blackhawk hovers over the bridge collapse.

A Military Police Soldier stands guard during flood relief operations near Winona.

State Missions

The Minnesota National Guard was a critical component to assisting in the emergency flash floods in Winona, Houston and Fillmore Counties in late Aug. More than 17 inches of rain fell within a few hours, causing widespread damage and an immediate threat to the citizens of southeast Minnesota.

- Within three hours of notification, a Rapid Response Force was assembled and on-site, checking on residents door-to-door, providing medical assistance, directing traffic, conducting security and delivering supplies.
- Helicopters flew through marginal weather to provide emergency transportation and aerial observation.
- Minnesota National Guard mobile communications platforms supported civilian and military responders in the devastated town of Rushford with power, satellite internet and radio communications.
- Small unit leaders adapted to changing mission needs as the incident evolved from search and rescue, to security, to route reconnaissance, to victim search and recovery, to mission termination and final turnover to the local authorities.

Minnesota National Guard troops were called from all parts of the state to respond to the floods in Aug. 2007 in southeast Minn.

Floods

A Minnesota National Guard Blackhawk hoists a crashed plane from the water.

Soldiers of the 34th Combat Aviation Brigade deployed a UH-60 Blackhawk to Todd County to recover a downed aircraft, which had crashed in a marsh Oct. 24.

- St. Paul-based C Co., 2nd Battalion, 211th General Support Aviation Battalion, worked with the Todd County Sheriff's Department to recover a crashed plane from a bog near Browerville, Minn.
- The Blackhawk crew began its mission by surveying the scene from the air, then landing and meeting with the incident commander and recovery workers from Todd County, Morrison County, Browerville Fire and Rescue, as well as fellow Minnesota National Guardsmen from Camp Ripley.
- The Blackhawk hoisted the entire plane free from the bog to allow officials to begin their investigation.

Search, Rescue & Recovery

The Minnesota National Guard was involved in supporting efforts to suppress the Ham Lake Fire – the fourth largest fire in Minnesota history. The 148th Fighter Wing deployed a P-19 Crash/Rescue vehicle to Grand Marais to permit a fleet of heavy water-dropping helicopters to operate closer to the fire.

Fires

Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen assist crews as they fight fires in northern Minnesota.

A military snowplow clears a road during the blizzard of March 2007.

During two blizzards in southern Minnesota, National Guard armories were opened as emergency shelters to assist stranded motorists. Additionally, Minnesota National Guard tracked personnel carriers traversed heavy snow to assist in rescue operations. Guardsmen operated military generators to ensure that power was available to critical facilities.

Blizzards

Minnesota National Guard troops returned to Kosovo in 2007 to conduct peacekeeping operations.

Operations

More than 2,300 Minnesota Army National Guard Soldiers and Airmen were mobilized in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, Operation Enduring Freedom and Kosovo in 2007.

- The 133rd Airlift Wing performed more than 1,000 combat sorties, with 20 utilizing the newest technology for airdrop – the Joint Precision Airdrop System – in order to re-supply ground forces.

- The 133rd Airlift Wing maintained a deployed aircraft "mission capable" rate in excess of 90%. By comparison the Air Force average for C-130s was 71.5% in 2007.

The 148th Fighter Wing successfully completed an Operational Readiness Inspection. An Airman ties down cargo in preparation for the evaluation exercise.

- The 34th Infantry Division headquarters participated in Operation Bright Star, a multinational exercise conducted in Egypt, the Mediterranean Sea and Suffolk, Virginia.

- The 147th Personnel Services Battalion processed more than 17 million-pounds of mail during its rotation in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

- Minnesota Army National Guard units exceeded Army requirements during the mobilization process. Minnesota units deployed with 103% of authorized strength to active duty mobilization stations; upon arrival, only 4% of troops left training, far fewer than the national average of 7% for Army National Guard units.

- The Minnesota National Guard Drug Demand Reduction programs supported federal, state and local prevention programs by using positive role models to present a drug-free life style. In 2007, we reached more than 15,000 Minnesota youth with our programs.

- 2nd Combined Arms Battalion, 136th Infantry searched more than 331,500 vehicles and 15,000 local national personnel at Entry Check Points at Camp Fallujah, Iraq with no injuries or deaths occurring on the base due to Improvised Explosive Devices, smuggled explosives or suicide bombers.

Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen conducted combat, peacekeeping, support and disaster relief operations in 14 countries in 2007.

Sgt. Scott Stroud on a mission in Iraq during his tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Sgt. Scott Stroud has relatives who fought on both sides in the Civil War, another relative who "hit the beach" in the Battle of Normandy during World War II and an uncle who served three tours as an infantryman in Vietnam.

He is one of few Soldiers of the 1/34th BCT to earn two Purple Hearts during the recent combat tour. Since 1917, the Purple Heart has been awarded in the name of the President of the United States to servicemembers who have been wounded or killed in action against an enemy of the United States.

In 2002, at the age of 39, Stroud volunteered to rejoin the Guard after the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. He had been honorably discharged from the Army Reserve in 1987. "This time I did it for whatever help I could do," said Stroud of his reason for rejoining the Guard.

When he earned his first Purple Heart on May 15 he was driving the lead Humvee of a patrol when his vehicle hit a roadside bomb. Stroud escaped with cuts on his legs from shrapnel and a badly sprained right foot.

"All of sudden it was just BOOM! ...complete blackness," said Stroud.

Just two months later, on June 23, Stroud's Humvee was hit by another bomb while returning to the camp from a patrol. Stroud suffered ruptured and bleeding eardrums and 10 pieces of shrapnel in his cheek.

1/34th Brigade Combat Team members traveled more than 2.2 million miles escorting convoys in Iraq.

Technology and Logistics

The Minnesota National Guard's logistics community provided support during 2007, handling multiple deployments, redeployments and transformations simultaneously. Meanwhile, the Minnesota National Guard continues to be a national leader in technological systems.

- The national Chief of Staff Supply Excellence award went to the Mankato-based Headquarters. 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry and the Rochester-based B Co., 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry.
- The Minnesota National Guard's logistics community redeployed more than 4,000 Soldiers and 1,000 vehicles from mobilizations and training events.

Mechanics prepare a UH-60 Black-hawk helicopter for a mission.

- Transported more than 10,000 Soldiers to training destinations in 2007.
- Minnesota National Guard performed pre-deployment maintenance on 95 tracked vehicles, 357 wheeled vehicles and fielded 2,049 Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio Systems.
- The Counterdrug program issued law enforcement agencies $996,574 in excess military weaponry, vehicles and other equipment.
- Conducted 98 separate Morale Welfare and Recreation video teleconference events in which 347 deployed Soldiers were connected to their families in Minnesota from Iraq, Afghanistan and Kuwait.
- Facilitated a video teleconference between Minnesota and Iraq so a deployed father could see his daughter graduate high school.
- Executed two separate video teleconferences from the Metrodome to Iraq and Afghanistan during Minnesota Twins games so that 24 family members could speak with their deployed Soldiers.
- 35,783 Soldiers used 15 Distance Learning classrooms and labs for formal military education.
- Utilized more than 18,316 hours of video conferencing to save costs and enhance productivity.
- Hosted four video teleconference weddings between Minnesota and Iraq, and connected three video teleconferences between Minnesota and Iraq so a deployed family member could participate in the wedding.

Minnesota National Guard Soldier Spc. Keith Swanson of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 135th Infantry and his new spouse, Amanda, reached through a combat zone and across half the world to express their love and get married Feb. 14.

Amanda Watson walked down a different kind of aisle at the Inver Grove Heights Armory to use the National Guard's video teleconference system. Spc. Swanson reported to the video teleconference connection in Al Asad Forward Operating Base, Iraq. The two said their vows to each other through the video connection and instead of kissing each other, they blew kisses through the screen.

"The hardest part is saying goodbye to him again," said Amanda.

"I figured that blowing a kiss is the best we can do for now," said Amanda.

(left) Airmen with the 210th Engineering Installation Squadron disconnect cables during an antenna tower removal operation on May 2007. (middle) Unmanned Aerial Vehicle. (right) Soldiers of the Minnesota National Guard's newest unit, the 114th Transportation Company, demonstrate the load/unload speed of their Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Trucks during an open house at the newly reopened Chisholm, Minn. armory on Apr. 21, 2007.

Minnesota's approach to reintegration inspired a national model to bring troops "all the way home."

Reintegration

After discovering there was not an existing program, the Minnesota National Guard pioneered a new reintegration initiative to assist returning servicemembers.

- *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* seminars are provided around the state to educate community leaders about the challenges of reintegration and what they can do to assist combat veterans and their families to successfully reintegrate back into the community.

- While Soldiers are deployed, "Family Reintegration Academies" are conducted to empower and resource families so they can address the effects of combat operational stress and become familiar with other reintegration issues and resources.

Video, podcasts and other resources on reintegration are available at www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org/btyr

- Upon initial return from the combat zone, Soldiers attend a one-day session in order to get connected with service providers who can assist them in overcoming the challenges of reintegration and to get enrolled in the VA system.

- After the Soldiers are home for 30 days they are brought back together for their first reintegration event. During this one-day session, the Soldiers and families are reintroduced to service providers and attend workshops on marriage, reconnecting with children, single Soldier challenges and recovering from divorce.

- At 60 days after they return home, Soldiers and their families are then brought together again, this time to address negative behaviors related to combat stress. Specific workshops during this one day event include anger management, chemical abuse prevention, compulsive behavior prevention and drivers' safety.

Jan Donahue has found a way to turn the hardships of deployment into a creative and unique comedy act.

Her husband deployed to Afghanistan with the Minnesota Army National Guard from 2003 to 2004 and then to Iraq from 2005 to 2007. Their eldest son is also a Minnesota National Guard Soldier.

"My husband can take out a terrorist cell, but he can't take out the trash," said Jan Donahue, Army Guard Wife and Comedian.

Jan's performances appeal to both military and civilian audiences. She has performed at military bases throughout the Midwest, local comedy clubs and has been featured on national television.

- The final event occurs at 90 days after a unit returns. This unit-focused event includes a thorough Post Deployment Health Reassessment of combat veterans.

- For troops that deploy and return individually or cannot attend the events at 30, 60 and 90 days, the Minnesota National Guard hosts Monthly Individual Reintegration Training sessions. The content is identical to the unit training.

In 2007, more than 4,700 Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen either returned from or mobilized to wartime deployments. Minnesota developed the first-in-the-nation program to ease their return.

Soldiers and their families are greeted as they arrive at a 30-day reintegration event.

Beyond the Yellow Ribbon

While still a relatively new program, *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* has yielded positive results. Officials from all levels of government and the military have visited the ongoing programs in order to expand the Minnesota model to a national prototype. Specific measurements of *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* initiative include:

- Federal policy changed: The Secretary of Defense was persuaded to waive the 60-day "hands-off" policy.
- Federal and state funding secured: $3.5 million from a congressional add-on to the 2008 Defense Appropriations Act and another $1.5 million from the Minnesota Legislature.
- $23 million has been approved in Congress and is awaiting the signing of the 2008 National Defense Authorization Act.

The Minnesota National Guard informed the public about the *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* program through television, newspaper and radio interviews. Brig. Gen. Joe Kelly discusses the program on KTLK-FM.

- TRICARE insurance coverage in Minnesota rose from 485 to 4,702 providers, and the number of hospital systems providing care increased from 4 to 27.
- On Oct. 10, Gov. Pawlenty announced with TRICARE executives that mental health coverage would be expanded by way of embedding mental health professionals in National Guard armories throughout the state.
- 1,890 family members attended the Family Reintegration Academies and received information from federal, state, local and non-profit partners.
- Post-deployment assistance to Soldiers and families: Based on data from the 30- and 60-day reintegration events, federal, state, local and non-profit partners coordinated the following: 119 Soldiers have been employed through job fairs, 175 legal cases have been initiated; 3 Soldiers requested suicide prevention counseling; 320 Soldiers and families have received on-site counseling, 79% of all troops initiated some form of education enrollment; 285 Soldiers enrolled in motorcycle safety training, and 500 Soldiers took advantage of on-site registration for free deer hunting permits.

Nearly 3,000 Soldiers returned from deployment in 2007.

With the leadership of Minnesota National Guard Chaplain (Lt. Col.) John Morris, the Minnesota National Guard devised the *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* reintegration program. A network of federal, state, local and non-profit agencies assists at reintegration events to provide services and resources for service members and their families.

Some of the Minnesota National Guard Reintegration partners include:

- "Yellow Ribbon" Task Force
- The Department of Veterans Affairs and Veteran Centers
- Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources, Tourism, Revenue, Health and Human Services
- Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MNSCU)
- University of Minnesota
- Minnesota Workforce (DEED)
- Minnesota State Patrol
- Minnesota County Veteran Service Officers
- Lutheran Social Services
- Sioux Trails Mental Health
- Lakeland Mental Health
- Minnesota Military Family Foundation
- Minnesota Veterans of Foreign Wars
- Minnesota National Assoc. of Insurance and Financial Advisors
- Military One Source
- TriWest
- Office of the Secretary of Defense
- Department of the Army, Benefits
- National Guard Bureau

Soldiers and Airmen are greeted by their loved ones at welcome home ceremonies. The ceremonies are only the first step in the troops' long journey of reintegrating back into their homes, families and communities.

The Patriot Guard was on hand to honor and welcome home Minnesota Guard troops in 2007.

Communities

Minnesota National Guard Soldiers and Airmen are always ready when requested by local leaders to perform services and to be involved with the communities around the state. Servicemembers consistently remain at the forefront in their home towns and add value by the tasks they perform.

- Minnesota was awarded the 2007 Malcolm Baldridge-based Army National Guard Army Communities of Excellence Award. This was the 2nd time in three years that Minnesota has won the overall first prize.
- Guardsmen improved their education with more than $8 million in State Tuition Reimbursement payments and $25,000 in State Leadership Scholarships.

The St. Paul-based civic group "Serving Our Troops" shipped more than 11,000 steaks provided by local restauranteurs to Minnesota National Guard troops in Iraq. To make "Sunday dinner with family" complete, the group also provided a steak dinner for deployed Soldier's families at the Roy Wilkins Arena in St. Paul and linked everyone via satellite.

- Working with business leaders, the Minnesota Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve ombudsman reduced case completion time from an average of fifteen to five days.
- "Operation Military Kids" provided activities for more than 2,500 youths and delivered "Hidden Heroes" training to 47 communities.
- The Minnesota National Guard Marathon Team ran to its best finish in the 23-year history of the National Guard Bureau Marathon Championships. Fielding two teams, the eight runners placed 2nd and 11th nationally.
- The 34th Infantry Division Band was proud to honor all past and present Veterans by performing 76 concerts before 197,815 people in 2007.
- More than 6,100 individuals had an opportunity to visit Camp Ripley's environmental classroom, bog walk or a black bear den.
- In 2007, Camp Ripley's Army Compatible Use Buffer acquired $4.6 million of federal funding.

(left) 434th Chemical Company Soldiers display an American Flag with local youth sports team members at the Veterans Field Sports Complex in Minnetonka, Minn. (center) Col. Rich Weaver speaks on WCCO-AM with host Jack Rice during a live broadcast from Camp Ripley. (right) Minnesota Wild Chairman Bob Naegele, Jr. receives a symbol of appreciation from a Minnesota Air National Guard crew on the ice between periods at a Minnesota professional hockey game.

Master Sgt. Rick Goodell, Airman 1st Class Leilani Dumancas and Senior Airman Tiffany Josephson, 332nd Expeditionary Fighter Squadron life support section, attach night vision goggles to pilots helmets. Airman Dumancas deployed with her mother to Balad Airbase, Iraq.

The 148th Fighter Wing's deployment to Iraq in 2007 was truly a family affair. Of the 250 Minnesota National Guard Airmen who fell in on the mission at Balad Airbase, 41 of them were blood relatives. In all, 19 families were represented in this tightly-knit unit.

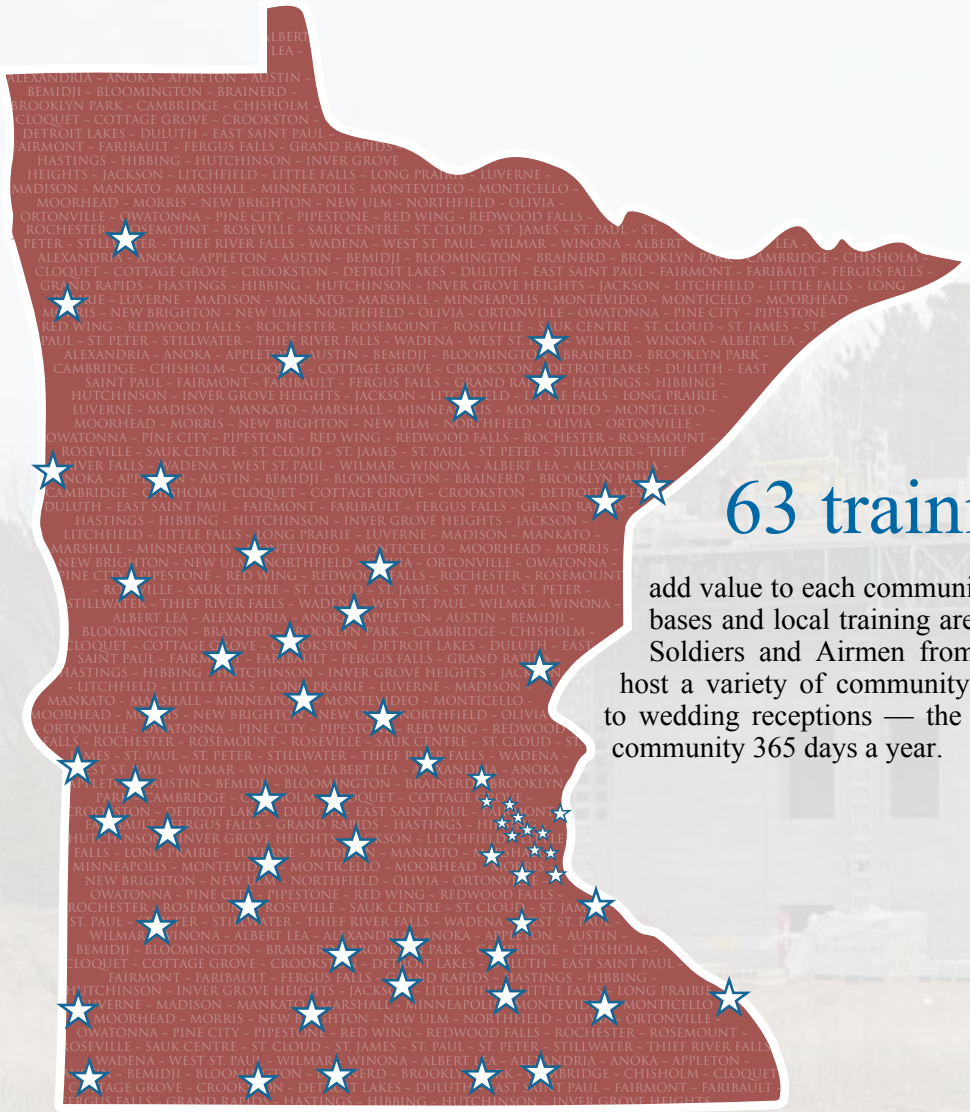
"Being here together with my son is emotional for me ...To see him here doing such great things, I'm just so proud of him." Senior Master Sgt. Stephen Vanderburg about his son.

The Airmen from the Duluth-based 148th Fighter Wing joined the famed Tuskegee Airmen of Balad's 332nd Air Expeditionary Wing, while many 'blue star' tapestries were displayed in windows back home to symbolize their absence.

Duluth is one of Minnesota's largest cities, with a population of more than 86,000. However, the hundreds of National Guard Airmen flying off to war created an impact that was heavily felt in their northeast Minnesota communities. The 148th Fighter Wing is the seventh largest employer in the area, having an annual economic impact of nearly $11 million.

Camp Ripley continues to expand ranges to develop the Combined Arms Collective Training Facility.

Facilities



63 training areas

add value to each community by providing armories, air bases and local training areas to train more than 13,600 Soldiers and Airmen from across the state. Armories host a variety of community events — from ceremonies to wedding receptions — the doors are open to serve the community 365 days a year.

State $ 5.5%
Federal $ 94.5%

State Expenditures

Headquarters Operations	$2,004,297
Enlistment Incentives	$9,289,899
Army National Guard	$7,845,497
Air National Guard	$806,676
State Active Duty	$525,070
Total State Expenditures	$20,471,439

Federal Expenditures

Army National Guard	$208,704,909
Air National Guard	$145,088,318
Total Federal Expenditures	$353,792,227

Total Expenditures	$374,263,666

The Maintenance Complex at the Duluth National Guard Air Base services F-16 "Fighting Falcons."

Economic Impact

Community	Assigned Personnel	Federal Pay and Expenditures	State Pay and Expenditures
Albert Lea	186	$623,353	$94,310
Alexandria	126	$162,714	$443,640
Anoka	165	$759,568	$43,820
Appleton	94	$898,867	$633,175
Austin	168	$767,168	$41,688
Bemidji	51	$151,261	$29,350
Bloomington	580	$2,662,840	$84,297
Brainerd	122	$1,128,112	$56,489
Brooklyn Park	318	$475,559	$99,212
Cambridge	172	$993,948	$8,781
Chisholm	49	$120,929	$16,574
Cloquet	113	$538,438	$40,242
Cottage Grove	219	$1,226,739	$90,124
Crookston	166	$156,768	$47,200
Detroit Lakes	183	$607,997	$23,436
Duluth	318	$1,629,084	$384,710
Duluth (Air Base)	1,034	$85,418,729	$412,850
East St. Paul	256	$272,489	$43,573
Fairmont	30	$111,952	$33,932
Faribault	51	$405,982	$53,921
Fergus Falls	47	$256,329	$24,299
Grand Rapids	102	$118,274	$28,313
Hastings	65	$490,799	$38,080
Hibbing	71	$426,646	$31,537
Hutchinson	71	$379,874	$47,701
Inver Grove Heights	270	$2,246,014	$101,846
Jackson	152	$226,313	$27,463
Litchfield	88	$832,362	$23,395
Little Falls (Camp Ripley)	1,332	$39,598,016	$280,513
Long Prairie	77	$263,684	$25,343
Luverne	41	$164,652	$27,292

Army aviators from around the region utilize the new UH-60 Blackhawk simulator at Camp Ripley.

Economic Impact

Community	Assigned Personnel	Federal Pay and Expenditures	State Pay and Expenditures
Madison	69	$298,094	$50,290
Mankato	144	$2,078,154	$91,675
Marshall	124	$1,499,307	$48,931
Minneapolis	195	$1,725,761	$97,774
Minneapolis/St. Paul (Air Base)	1,254	$64,198,298	$421,965
Montevideo	93	$1,162,609	$88,548
Monticello	180	$1,000,379	$851
Moorhead	446	$1,220,727	$90,661
Morris	61	$446,850	$47,544
New Brighton	31	$1,885,717	$0
New Ulm	176	$867,101	$24,648
Northfield	82	$374,619	$35,907
Olivia	61	$218,906	$56,318
Ortonville	55	$256,323	$23,183
Owatonna	119	$118,177	$220,861
Pine City	59	$325,180	$37,613
Pipestone	44	$199,683	$52,819
Red Wing	58	$252,996	$18,292
Redwood Falls	56	$370,677	$23,828
Rochester	151	$908,248	$29,802
Rosemount	457	$12,609,362	$20,290
Roseville	353	$3,826,390	$286,815
Sauk Centre	101	$284,396	$152,699
St. Cloud	305	$1,453,473	$26,846
St. James	62	$145,091	$34,974
St. Paul	1,270	$111,247,037	$195,470
St. Peter	201	$488,883	$199,911
Stillwater	183	$1,118,016	$30,479
Thief River Falls	44	$189,200	$54,275
Wadena	64	$528,241	$25,502
West St. Paul	318	$906,530	$28,217
Willmar	228	$1,422,889	$29,281
Winona	166	$526,863	$32,507

Minnesota National Guard officials and St. Cloud city leaders shovel the first scoop of dirt during the ground-breaking of the new Army Aviation Support Facility in St. Cloud, Minn.

2007 Legislative Accomplishments

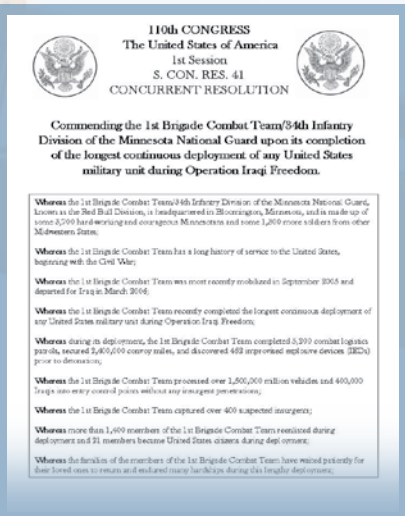
Minnesota's federal and state elected officials were passionate supporters of Minnesota National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and families in 2007.

State Accomplishments:

- State Reintegration Initiative provides $1.5 million for redeployed servicemembers.
- $2 million is directed to Minnesota National Guard armories for maintenance.
- Established a State Achievement Ribbon to recognize excellence in support of state missions.
- Enhanced state consumer protection laws for deploying servicemembers.
- Provided free hunting and fishing licenses for 24 months following a deployment.

Federal Accomplishments:

- Provided $17 million for Camp Ripley training facility construction.
- *Beyond the Yellow Ribbon* is now authorized to become a national model due to a pending $23 million allotment.
- $1.5 million invested in the Duluth Airbase storage facility.
- Provided $1.3 million for Mankato maintenance facility design.
- $3.5 million for a Joint Force Headquarters design in Arden Hills.



110th CONGRESS
The United States of America
1st Session
S. CON. RES. 41
CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commending the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard upon its completion of the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team/34th Infantry Division of the Minnesota National Guard, known as the Red Bull Division, is headquartered in Bloomington, Minnesota, and is made up of some 3,500 hard-working and courageous Minnesotans and some 1,200 more soldiers from other Midwestern States;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team has a long history of service to the United States, beginning with the Civil War;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team was most recently mobilized in September 2005 and departed for Iraq in March 2006;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team recently completed the longest continuous deployment of any United States military unit during Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas during its deployment, the 1st Brigade Combat Team completed 5,200 combat logistics patrols, secured 2,400,000 convoy miles, and discovered 482 improvised explosive devices (IEDs) prior to detonation;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team processed over 1,500,000 civilian vehicles and 400,000 Iraqis into entry control points without any insurgent penetrations;

Whereas the 1st Brigade Combat Team captured over 400 suspected insurgents;

Whereas more than 1,600 members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team reenlisted during deployment and 31 members became United States citizens during deployment;

Whereas the families of the members of the 1st Brigade Combat Team have waited patiently for their loved ones to return and endured many hardships during this lengthy deployment;

July 17, 2007, the entire Minnesota congressional delegation co-sponsored a resolution commending the 1/34th Brigade Combat Team.

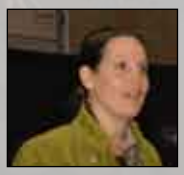
Sen. Norm Coleman talks to Minnesota 1/34th BCT Soldiers during a visit to Camp Adder, Iraq.

Sen. Amy Klobuchar with 148th Fighter Wing Fire Fighters at Baghdad International Airport.

Rep. Tim Walz (1st District) addresses Soldiers departing for Kosovo at a ceremony in Austin.

Rep. John Kline (2nd District) accompanies Maj. Gen. Shellito to a meeting with the Secretary of the Army.

Rep. Jim Ramstad (3rd District) makes remarks at a "Welcome Home" celebration.



Rep. Betty McCollum (4th District) speaks at the official state Veterans Day Ceremony at the Inver Grove Heights Armory.

A servicemember adjusts Rep. Keith Ellison's (5th District) gear during a visit to Iraq.

Rep. Michelle Bachman (6th District) presents a military award.

Rep. Collin Peterson (7th District), Maj. Gen. Shellito and Sgt. Ben Hatton pose prior to their testimony before a House Subcommittee.

Rep. Jim Oberstar (8th District) represents both the Duluth Air Base and Camp Ripley.

In a ceremony at the Capitol Rotunda attended by members of the executive, legislative and judicial branches of state government, May was declared "Minnesota Military Family Appreciation Month."

Gov. Tim Pawlenty, Commander-In-Chief of the Minnesota National Guard, traveled to both Iraq and Afghanistan to visit Minnesota Army and Air Guard members in 2007.

Looking Ahead to 2008

Returning Home

This year your Guard will welcome home more than two thousand Soldiers and Airmen from Iraq, Afghanistan, and Kosovo. We will leverage the experience we gained last year from our Beyond the Yellow Ribbon program to refine our processes, and, in conjunction with other state agencies, will continue to place the well being of our Soldiers and Airmen as our first priority.

Growth

Continue into our second decade of consistent personnel growth by recruiting and retaining Soldiers and Airmen, reflecting the spirit of service resident in the hearts of our citizens and the perceived value of our organization. This growth will result in enhancing our ability to meet the requirements of our communities, state and nation.

Construction

We will continue to assess our requirements and lay groundwork for future facilities to meet the changing needs of our organization. Planning will continue to meet the necessary gates to begin a new Joint Force Headquarters complex in Arden Hills. We will work hard to shape the future with our service component headquarters to ensure viable missions and equipment for a relevant Minnesota National Guard for decades to come.

Defense

Our Federal mission, executing the Global War on Terror, will continue throughout the coming years. We will continue to deploy units in support of Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, as well as other missions worldwide. We will continue to support the defense of the Continental United States through of air soveriegnty and homeland defense missions.

Partnerships

In 2008 we will continue to work with our Partner Nations (Norway, Croatia and Canada) to enhance our relationships and work toward common objectives, particularly in support of Croatia's aspirations toward membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Our State Partnership Program with Croatia will begin to shift focus from military-to-military events to more emphasis on civilian-to-civilian events, and we will conduct our first tri-lateral events with Norway and Croatia together here in Minnesota and in Norway.

Republican National Convention

In addition to the ongoing requirements to mobilize and deploy, your Guard will support civil authorities as it always has. This year, we will support civil authorities in ensuring the safe and effective conduct of the Republican National Convention to be held in Minnesota in September.

Staff Sgt. James M. Wosika Jr.
B Co., 2nd Combined Arms Battalion,
136th Infantry
Hometown: Saint Paul, Minn., Age: 24
Killed Jan. 9, 2007 in Fallujah, Iraq

Sgt. Maj. Michael C. Mettille
A Co., 134th Brigade Support Battalion
Hometown: West Saint Paul, Minn.,
Age: 44
Died Feb. 1, 2007 in Camp Adder, Iraq

Staff Sgt. Greg N. Riewer
A Co., 2nd Combined Arms Battalion,
136th Infantry
Hometown: Frazee, Minn., Age: 28
Killed Mar. 23, 2007 near Habbaniyah, Iraq

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