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ARKANSAS MINUTEMAN



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Arkansas Guard News

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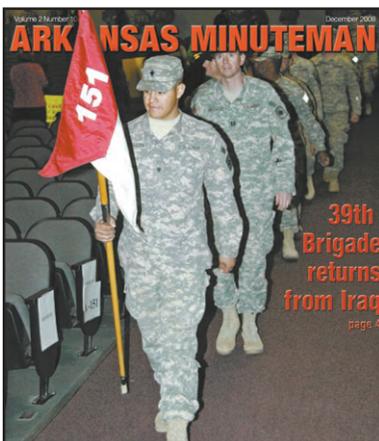


Photo by Capt. Christopher Heathscott,
National Guard Public Affairs Office

GUIDON BEARER. SPC. Daniel Pedraza carries the guidon of the 1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry Regiment as he leads the way for his unit at the welcome home ceremony. Capt. Jeffery Westbrook, directly behind his guidon bearer, said his unit conducted well over 1,000 personal security detail missions during their eight months on the ground.

FROM THE TOP

39th returning from second tour

Soldier, family support to continue

Although the economy has dampened the holiday season for many across the nation, the State of Arkansas will celebrate this season like never before as we are welcoming the return of 3,200 Arkansas Soldiers. The greatest gift we could ever receive is the safe return of our deployed troops.

We would love to have each of these returning Soldiers sit in their living rooms with their Families for the upcoming holidays, but I encourage our Soldiers and their Families to look just a little further into the future.

When it comes to demobilization, many of our Soldiers are their own worst enemy. They just want to go home – and that's understandable. But we need to ensure that those Soldiers do not get released until we identify any potential problems they may have as a result of this deployment, and work to get those issues corrected now.

The most effective method for a Soldier to get back to the life they left behind is by identifying any potential issues they may have while they are still on active duty.

We ask that our Soldiers take the demobilization process seriously and discuss any issues they have as a result of the deployment, whether it is something as simple as back pain or something as complex as post traumatic stress. As I have said before, it takes a Warrior to stand up and serve in time of war. It takes an even stronger Warrior to stand up and admit they need help as a result of it.

We ask that the Families of these Soldiers encourage them to be candid dur-



Maj. Gen. William D. Wofford

Photo courtesy of Arkansas National Guard

ing the demobilization process in order to help us help them. The only thing better than having your loved one home for the holidays is having them home and healthy during the holidays for years to come.

We happily welcome back the 39th Brigade and all of the additional Arkansas units and individual Soldiers that were deployed with them, but as you celebrate this return we ask that you remember those that are still away from home.

Among the thousands of US Servicemembers overseas, 34 members of the Arkansas Air National Guard's 188th Security Forces will remain deployed to Kyrgyzstan throughout the season.

On behalf of all of us who have the opportunity to enjoy this holiday season at home in peace, I offer my sincerest grati-

tude for your dedicated service.

Also remember those great Soldiers who will only join their Families in spirit due to the tragedies of their death. Remember Sgt. James Clay, from Mountain Home, a member of the 224th Maintenance Company who recently died while serving with the 39th Brigade's 2nd Battalion, 153rd Infantry.

Remember Sgt. Anthony Woodham, from Rogers, a member of the 39th Support Battalion who died serving with the Brigade's 1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry. Keep these great Soldiers and all of our Fallen in your thoughts, and even more importantly, I ask that you also pray for the Families left behind.

For the upcoming holiday season and beyond, we wish the best for all of our Soldiers, Airmen, their Families and all who stand behind them in support.

Enjoy the time you have with each other during the holidays and place safety as your priority when celebrating the season. Don't let your Guard down. Don't let your Family down. Don't let your celebration cloud your decisions.

On behalf of a grateful nation, your service is greatly appreciated.

Happy holidays to all and best wishes for a very happy new year. You deserve it.

RESOURCES FOR HELP TO SOLDIERS, AIRMEN AND THEIR FAMILIES

■ Little Rock Veterans Hospital Mental Health Clinic, 4300 W. 7th Street, Little Rock, AR 72205 (501)257-6748

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■ Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255) and press "1."

39th Brigade begins returning from Iraq

A, 1-151 Cav first to arrive at Camp Shelby for out-processing

CAMP SHELBY JOINT FORCES TRAINING CENTER, Miss. – Shedding tears of joy on the eve of Thanksgiving, a number of Arkansas Families gave thanks here one day early as they welcomed their Soldiers home from Iraq.

Approximately 160 members of the Arkansas Army National Guard's Crossett and El Dorado based Troop A, 1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry Regiment, arrived here late Wednesday night, leading the way home for the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. The remainder of the brigade's 3,200 Soldiers are scheduled to return throughout the month of December.

The brigade has conducted a security mission throughout various locations in Iraq since it initially deployed in March 2008. Based in the International Zone of Baghdad, Troop A alone conducted well over 1,000 personal security detail missions during their eight months on the ground in Iraq.

"My guys executed personal security detail missions for the U.S. Department of State, the United Nations, and the Baghdad Provincial Reconstruction Team," said Troop A's commander, Capt. Jeffery Westbrook, of Benton, Ark. "We were actually tasked with escorting the U.S. ambassador to Iraq, the special representative to the secretary general of the U.N., as well as other reps from the U.S. Department of Justice."

Although the return home came with multiple delays and timeline shifts, seeing their Families in time for the holidays left the Soldiers and their Families with a common emotion.

"It feels great. Glad to be home," said Spc. Curtis Aiken, of Hamburg, Ark., who was holding his daughter Kirsten in his arms with wife Stephanie by his side. "I'm very thankful I made it back."

The Aiken's were one of roughly 75 Family members who made the long drive from Arkansas to Camp



LEFT, TOGETHER AGAIN. A happy wife offers her husband a kiss as they are reunited on the eve of Thanksgiving.



RIGHT, THANKFUL. SPC. Curtis Aiken, of Hamburg, Ark., holds his daughter Kirsten on the eve of Thanksgiving after returning from deployment to Iraq. "It feels great. Glad to be home. I'm very thankful I made it back."

Shelby in hopes of spending Thanksgiving with their returning Soldier. Due to arriving so close to the holiday, the Soldiers were released for the evening and allowed to spend the holiday with their Families who made the trip.

Although these Soldiers have made it back to the states, their mobilization is not yet over. The troops begin the four-to-five-day demobilization process at Camp Shelby Friday

morning – a process the adjutant general asked them not to take lightly.

As the general addressed the Soldiers and their Families at the welcome home ceremony he thanked them for their service and their sacrifice. He also asked them to remember the words of former President Ronald Reagan when reflecting on that sacrifice.

"You need to remember that freedom is never more than one generation away

from extinction," quoted the general. "It's not something that's passed down in the bloodstream. It's a responsibility of each generation to protect that freedom, to preserve it, and sometimes to have to fight for it – just as you have done. Because if we don't do that, one of these days in our sunset years, we'll be telling our children and our children's children, what it was like to live in a country when men were free."



LONG AWAITED. SPC. Adam Cates spends a long awaited moment to hold his child while his fellow Soldiers do the same in the background. The Soldiers were initially called to active duty for training in preparation for this deployment on Oct. 1, 2007.

The 39th Brigade was the first National Guard brigade combat team to deploy for a second tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom. About half of the brigade deployed on the first mobilization which ran from October 2003 to April 2005.

Comprised of Soldiers from all four corners of the state, the 39th Brigade was

initially called to active duty for training in preparation for this second deployment on October 1, 2007, and was federally mobilized the following January.

Since September 11, 2001, the Arkansas National Guard as a whole has mobilized over 11,200 Soldiers and Airmen in support of the global war on terrorism.



THANKING THE 151. – Spc. Daniel Pedraza carries the colors of the 1st Squadron, 151st Cavalry as Maj. Gen. William Wofford, the adjutant general of Arkansas, offers his thanks in the background. The general asked the Soldiers and their Families to remember the words of former President Ronald Reagan when he said, "You need to remember that freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction," quoted the general. "It's not something that's passed down in the bloodstream. It's a responsibility of each generation to protect that freedom, to preserve it, and sometimes to have to fight for it."

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New front gate facility opens at Camp Robinson

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark. – A new multi-lane front gate facility at Camp Joseph T. Robinson officially entered into service at an opening ceremony here Nov. 5, 2008.

The modern metal and masonry complex was completed in October, and replaced the old wood guard shacks and mobile visitor pass structure that had stood at the entrance along Military Road in North Little Rock for years.

The \$1.3 million project began in 2006.

Officials and Camp Robinson personnel gathered under the new lofty truck inspection pavilion to celebrate the completion of the project. Maj. Gen. William Wofford, the adjutant general of Arkansas, spoke about the impressive stone work and steel construction of the new entrance.

“The significance of this day and the need for this strengthened entrance to our post comes with the change in times in which we live today,” said Wofford. “With the dramatically increased operating tempo our National Guard and Reserve forces have seen over the past eight years, Camp Robinson has played a vital role in training those Soldiers and Airmen with the three premier train-

ing centers located here on post. But not only are we training Soldiers and Airmen from all 54 states and territories, our facilities here on post are also used to train local, county, state and federal law enforcement agencies.”

The post was renamed after the death of Senator Joseph T. Robinson in 1937.

During World War II, the facility was an Army training post housing more than 50,000 troops. Shortly after the war Camp Robinson was turned over to the Arkansas Army National guard and 54 acres were transferred to the U.S. Army Reserves.

Until that time the Military Road entrance was used only as a minor gate, but became the main entrance to Camp Robinson when Camp Pike became an Army Reserve installation.

Phase I of construction was completed in March 2007, and included upgraded utilities, roadway reconfiguration and new masonry guard booths.

Phase II began in February 2008 and consisted of the visitor center, guard booth canopy, truck inspection canopy and area lighting.

The entire complex covers more than 6,000 square feet.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris A. Durney, Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs

NEW GATE CHRISTENED: A Camp Joseph T. Robinson public safety vehicle has the honors of “cutting the ribbon” at the official opening of the Arkansas Army National Guard post’s new main gate complex on Military Road in North Little Rock, Ark.

LITTLE ROCK Healthcare Profiles

early intervention:

The Key to Your Child's Mental Health.

As parents, it's difficult to watch a child going through tough times. How long should you muddle through on your own, supporting your child as best you can? At what point does concerning behavior cross the line into scary behavior?

Questions bring more questions: “If I take my child for mental health help, will he be on drugs for the rest of his life? Will she be doomed to carry a label throughout her school years? Where will it end?”

David Streett, MD, offers words of reassurance: “Most of the kids we treat are just briefly deviating from their normal, healthy developmental path. If they get help early on, chances are they'll never need it again.”

This father of three is a psychiatrist specializing in the care of children and adolescents. He serves as the Medical Director at Pinnacle Point Behavioral HealthCare System, Little Rock's premier provider of outpatient and inpatient mental health services for children and teenagers. Most kids, he says, will do fine with outpatient treatment. Therapy and perhaps medication will get them back on track. “The key,” he says, “is early intervention.”

Pointing out that most parents wouldn't hesitate to seek treatment for a child's possibly-broken limb, Dr. Streett urges parents to trust their instincts. “If you think something is wrong, do something about it,” he advises. “Call us. One of our professionals will provide a free assessment of your child's behavioral health and recommend an appropriate level of service.”

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Families in Crisis Don't Have to Wait

Pinnacle Point offers free, confidential assessment and referral services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week as a community service. Dr. Streett suggests that parents seek help if a child exhibits:

- Aggression toward other children
- An inability to cope with feelings
- Frequent crying
- Pleas for help
- Fears of everyday things and/or possible disasters such as the deaths of family members
- No interest in playing
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Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris A. Durney, Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs

NORTH LITTLE ROCK Mayor Patrick Henry Hayes addresses a group of officials and post personnel at the official opening of the new Camp Joseph T. Robinson main gate complex Nov. 5, 2008.

Arkansas celebrates Veterans Day at Capitol

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark. – Arkansas celebrated and honored its military veterans at the state Capitol during a ceremony that began on the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, and ended with a round of applause for everyone who has ever served their country.

The Arkansas Army National Guard's Col. Mike Ross, deputy chief of staff for Operations, served as Master of Ceremonies for the hour long event, held annually in the rotunda of the Capitol on Veterans Day. Maj. Gen. William Wofford, the adjutant general of Arkansas, and Brig. Gen. Rowayne Schatz, Jr., commander of the 19 Airlift Wing of the Little Rock Air Force Base were part of the official party.

Men and women representing military past and present gathered to hear the annual Veterans Day Governor's proclamation, and to hear Governor Mike Beebe explain why it's so important to honor those who have served, those who still serve and those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for their country.

"We shouldn't do this just on Memorial Day or Veterans Day," said Beebe. "We shouldn't do this just on the Fourth of July, or some other celebration. We should remember at every opportunity. We should be reminded many days of the month about the need to remember the sacrifices made by people who wear the uniform."

As the rotunda clock struck 11 a.m., a color guard from the 87th Troop Command marched smartly in through the crown of veterans – some struggling to stand due to advancing age – and presented the colors. Many of those standing in civilian clothes saluted at the playing of the National An-



Photo courtesy Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs Office

PRESENTING THE COLORS: Members of the Arkansas Army National Guard color guard present the colors during Veterans Day activities in the rotunda of the Arkansas state Capitol on Nov. 11, 2008.

them, taking advantage of a new ruling that allows military veteran no longer serving to salute instead of placing their hands over their hearts.

The Arkansas Army National Guard's 106th Army Band played before and during the ceremony, with two of the band's buglers using the Capitol's natural echoing sound to provide a dramatic element to the playing of Taps near the end of the ceremony.



Photo by Maj. Keith Moore, Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs

THE GOV THANKS VETS: Arkansas Governor Mike Beebe addresses a crowd of military veterans and serving troops during a Veterans Day celebration in the rotunda of the state Capitol, Nov. 11, 2008.

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Research project is pioneering new assessment for PTSD

By Maj. Keith Moore

National Guard Public Affairs Office

As over 3,200 members of the Arkansas Army National Guard make their way home to Arkansas from their second deployment to Iraq, the Veterans Administration is gearing up to provide care and services to those Soldiers for any deployment-related issues. Among the highest concerns is the growing number of veterans who return with a variety of conditions associated with Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. But researchers at the Veterans Administration in conjunction with the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock are pioneering not only a possible new treatment for PTSD, but also an analytic procedure to help diagnose the condition before it surfaces.

"Post traumatic stress disorder is one of those maladies that currently requires

the patient self-identify that they are experiencing issues or difficulty," said Dr. Jeff Pyne, research psychiatrist on the project.

Additionally, PTSD symptoms can surface three to six months or more after a Soldier has been back home.

"By using the virtual exposure model, we hope to test every Soldier upon their return and analyze their responses to be able to predict who is at risk before their symptoms become problematic," Pyne says.

Pyne and staff members in the virtual lab demonstrated the project to Maj. Gen. William Wofford, adjutant general of the Arkansas National Guard, and the State Command Sgt. Major Deborah Collins on Nov. 26. The visit was designed to show leaders of the Guard the progress being made in the assessment and treatment of PTSD right here in Little Rock.

A veteran Arkansas Guardsman volunteered to be a test subject for the demonstration. The analysis includes reactivity to prescribed noises, then exposes patients to several virtual-reality scenarios like Iraqi market patrols and U.S. street scenes. During the computer-generated and analyzed test, the Soldier wears a virtual-reality headset which depicts the scenario on the inside of the small eyeglass-sized screens along with headphones to carry realistic sounds.

"In this research we can simulate a number of stimuli that can trigger psychophysiological responses. A potential advantage of virtual reality simulations is being able to combine more than one sensory stimuli into one scenario," Pyne said.

Describing post-traumatic stress, Pyne said the condition is the mind's

SEE PTSD, PAGE 9

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Honky Tonk Tour rolls in the Rock

Wounded Warrior Project's 'Soldier Ride' makes rest stop at Camp Robinson

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark. – About 25 Arkansas Guard Soldiers and Airmen joined 12 combat-wounded veterans for the central Arkansas portion of the 2008 Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride, known as the “Honky Tonk Challenge,” Nov. 6.

The group pedaled onto historic Camp Robinson shortly before noon and stopped at post headquarters for a scheduled rest. Arkansas National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and civilian employees lined the way and cheered the group as they rode by.

The Wounded Warrior Project's Soldier Ride is a

rehabilitative cycling program for wounded veterans created to help provide the first steps in the return to an active lifestyle.

“This cycling program gives severely wounded servicemen and women the opportunity to reinvigorate their bodies and uplift their spirits,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Deborah Collins, state Command Sergeant Major of the Arkansas National Guard. The central region leg of this event has approximately 12 to 14 wounded warriors cycling through portions of Little Rock, Memphis and Nashville.



U.S. Army Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris A. Durney, Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs

MELISSA STOCKWELL, a former U.S. Army 1st Lieutenant who was injured in Iraq in 2004, and 11 other wounded combat veterans make a rest stop at the Arkansas National Guard's Camp Joseph T. Robinson post headquarters Nov. 6, 2008. The group, along with a large contingent of fellow cyclists from the Arkansas Army and Air National Guard, were taking part in the central region portion of the Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride, known as the “Honky Tonk Challenge.”



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Chris A. Durney, Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs.

ARKANSAS NATIONAL GUARD bikers ride with a combat-wounded veteran along a street at Camp Joseph T. Robinson Nov. 6, 2008, as part of the Wounded Warrior Project Soldiers Ride. Approximately 12 combat-wounded veterans took part in the central Arkansas portion of the ride. The program is designed to give wounded servicemen and women the opportunity to reinvigorate their bodies and uplift their spirits



U.S. Army photo By Staff Sgt. Chris A. Durney, Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs

JOE PEREZ OF Logandale, Nev., is greeted by a line of Arkansas National Guard Youth Challenge cadets as he pedals onto Camp Joseph T. Robinson Nov. 6, 2008. Perez and approximately 11 other wounded veterans were participating in the 2008 Wounded Warrior Project's Soldier Ride cycling program, which gives severely wounded servicemen and women the opportunity to reinvigorate their bodies and uplift their spirits. A large contingent of Arkansas Guard members rode with the veterans to Camp Robinson for a scheduled rest stop.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Chris Durney, Arkansas National Guard Public Affairs

LINING THE STREET members of the Arkansas National Guard and Camp Robinson civilian employees line the streets to cheer and support participants in the central Arkansas portion of the Wounded Warrior Project Soldier Ride.

Guard's first four-star ready to take Minutemen forward

By Air Force Master Sgt.

Mike R. Smith

National Guard Bureau

ARLINGTON, Va. – Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley officially became chief of the National Guard Bureau (CNGB) and was promoted to the rank of general by Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates in a ceremony Nov. 17 at the Pentagon.

Gates and Navy Adm. Michael G. Mullen, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, McKinley's wife, daughter and son helped add the fourth star to McKinley's uniform.

The crowd of more than 300 from all ranks, services and many states' National Guards then watched Gates administer the oath of office to McKinley, who sworn in as the first four-star general to lead the National Guard in its 372-year history.

"The promotion of Gen. Craig McKinley to this rank, to serve in this post,



U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy

AS HIS WIFE Cheryl McKinley holds a Bible, Air Force Gen. Craig R. McKinley is sworn in by Secretary of Defense Robert Gates as the 26th chief of the National Guard Bureau during a ceremony at the Pentagon, where he was also promoted to his current rank, Monday, Nov. 17, 2008. McKinley is the first Guard officer to be promoted to the four-star rank.

is in recognition of his outstanding leadership abilities and shows the confidence the president and I have in him to be the nation's senior Guard officer at such a critical time,"

said Gates.

McKinley succeeds Army LTG H Steven Blum, who served some five and a half years as chief of the Bureau and in January will become deputy com-

mander of U.S. Northern Command, the first Guard officer to hold that position.

McKinley joins the ranks of Army generals George Washington and

Ulysses S. Grant, and two other former, four-star officers who served as Guardsmen during their military careers.

"It's a rich and high honor to be the 26th chief of the National Guard Bureau," said McKinley. "I will give it every bit of energy, every bit of heart and soul that I can possess to make sure that our National Guard and our Soldiers and Airmen are well taken care of, and I will work very closely and faithfully with the services."

Of the more than 460,000 Citizen-Soldiers and -Airmen, some 68,000 Army and 5,700 Air Guard members were on active duty for Operations Noble Eagle, Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom today. Furthermore, on any given day an average of 17 governors call out their National Guard for a variety of domestic needs.

McKinley is the fourth Air Guard officer to serve

as CNGB. He most recently served as director for the Air National Guard. There, he was responsible for policies, plans and programs affecting more than 106,000 Airmen.

Gates credited McKinley for successfully leading the Air Guard during a time of severe manpower reductions and other, major challenges from the Global War on Terrorism, Base Realignment and Closure implementation, budget changes and the transformation of the National Guard from a strategic reserve to an operational force.

McKinley received his Air Force commission in 1974 after graduating from Southern Methodist University in Dallas with a degree in business administration. He holds master's degrees in management and economics and in national security strategy.

He is a command pilot with more than 4,000 flight hours.

▶ PTSD

Continued from Page 7

response to stimuli from a traumatic event. Sights, sounds, smells, movements all trigger the brain which recreates a physical response in the body to the stimuli. In analyzing subjects in the project, researchers evaluated color recognition, facial expression stimuli, familiar and traumatic sounds and traumatic images. The computers analyzed heart rates, respiration rates, skin conductance, and eye gaze tracking.

"This research could prove amazingly helpful to so many of our Soldiers and Airmen. Even if they don't have issues right now, the ability to predict conditions through the virtual reality exposure models could be very helpful," said Wofford after watching only a 90 second virtual scenario of the test subject and the dramatic responses to the stimuli.



Photos by Maj. Keith Moore, National Guard Public Affairs Office.

SUSAN JEGLEY, a technician in the psycho-physiologic test lab, explains the results of a reading taken on a volunteer subject. The analysis details the physical impact on heart rate, respiration rate and eye movement of various visual and audio stimuli using a virtual reality system.

The project is currently in review for acceptance and additional funding, but Pyne said they hope to gather a large group of Guardsmen from Arkansas' 39th Brigade Combat Team just returning from Iraq. "It would greatly benefit the program's research, and we hope to provide treatment options and relief for Soldiers who

have – or think they might be suffering from Post Traumatic Stress," said Pyne.

He added that the research project is voluntary for participants, but for the benefit of Soldiers, currently it is an "off-line" review of conditions; i.e.; confidential and findings are not reportable to a Soldier's command.

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39th families get reintegration training

Yellow Ribbon program prepares Families for Soldier's return to daily life

By Sgt. Charissa Bell
119th Mobile Public Affairs
Detachment

North Little Rock, Ark. – Approximately 20 Family members of Soldiers' assigned to the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team attended the Arkansas National Guard's new "Yellow Ribbon Family Reintegration Training Program" held at First Baptist Church located on Main Street, on Saturday, Nov. 1.

This was the third week of a four week training period for Family members who await the upcoming arrival of Soldiers' from Iraq due home in December. Training locations were held in different cities across the state.

Chaplain (Capt.) Jeremy Miller began the three hour training with programs such as "Marriage Enrichment" and "Battle-mind", which helps Soldiers to understand that it's fine to ask for the help that may be needed after a long-term deployment.

"The event is a series of reintegration spouse training. We've been trying to reach across the state of Arkansas to prepare spouses to properly bring home their Soldiers in the reunion and reintegration," said Miller.

A representative from Military One Source, Mary Ann Margosian, outreach assistant, briefed Fam-



ABOVE, SPIRITUAL DIRECTION: Chaplain Mark Goloway discusses counseling resources available to Soldiers and family members during a break in the Yellow Ribbon Training Program held Nov. 1.

ily members on what that particular program offers.

Twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, consultations, research and referrals for relocating to a new community, child care, spouse employment or any other special needs are available to Service members and their Families.

It also offers counseling for coping with deployment and returning from deployment, parenting and family matters, grief and loss, marital and couples concerns and many other issues that

may need to deal with. Educational materials and an interactive web site, www.militaryonesource.com, are made available to the Soldiers and their Families.

The information received from the Soldiers' Families was very helpful.

Fiancee, Aubri Young, awaits SSG Matthew Duran's, 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery, 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, arrival from Iraq and is enjoying the new program.

"It's really great and I'm learning all kinds of stuff.

I'm real excited about all the Army has to offer," said Young.

Miller stated, "These Soldiers have been doing a tremendous job to serve their nation to drop everything that they know here in the state and answer the nation's call. Then when they get there, they spend a year doing one thing, one habit, one mission, one goal and you expect yourself not to change. That's where we come in, a military team to try to teach them the skills to weave those families back together."



SARA COTHERN, WIFE of Staff Sgt. Richard Carr, Company G, 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Support Battalion, takes notes while being briefed about how to make the transition easier for a Soldier coming home from a long deployment and reintegrating back to normalcy at the Army National Guard's new "Yellow Ribbon Family Reintegration Training Program" held at the First Baptist Church on Main Street in North Little Rock on Saturday, 1 Nov.

AUBRI YOUNG, FIANCEE, and Pamela and Darrell Duran, the parents of Staff Sgt. Matthew Duran, 1st Battalion, 206th Field Artillery, 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, listen to the information briefed about how to make help make the transition easier for a Soldier coming home from a long deployment and reintegrating back to normalcy at the Army National Guard's new "Yellow Ribbon Family Reintegration Training Program" held at the First Baptist Church on Main Street in North Little Rock on Saturday, 1 Nov.



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Aviation facility tests crash response

Drill evaluates first responders plans for helicopter crash at the airfield

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, NLR., Ark.—The Army Aviation Support Facility here conducted a “crash drill” in the morning hours of Thursday, Nov. 13, much to the surprise of fire/rescue teams and most of the facility’s employees.

“We wanted to run the drill between 8 to 8:30 a.m. because operations and all the shops are settled and moving along with the days work by then. No one would suspect it,” said Maj. Jason Duvall aviation safety officer for the Arkansas Army National Guard. “We test the crash alarm every morning at 7 a.m. as part of the daily protocol. So we wanted to see how close everyone pays to the alarm when it does sound.”

The scenario was initiated at 8 a.m. when a UH-60 Blackhawk assigned to the 77th Aviation Brigade based at the Camp Robinson airfield took off to conduct normal flight training operations in the skies above the Camp Robinson Maneuver Training Center here. The pilots of the Blackhawk were in on the drill and had separate radio contact with the safety officer and the facility fire chief. As the helicopter made a number of or-



A UH-60 PUTS down behind a fire at the end of the runway to simulate a crash at the airfield.

bits in the flight pattern and approaches to the field, Duvall and the fire chief Master Sgt. Darius Johnson ignited a fire in some hay bales just beyond the end of the runway. As the smoke from the fire began to billow into the sky the flight crew aboard the helicopter radioed the operations center the dreaded “MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY, MAY-DAY” emergency message and executed a hasty landing.

“After the may-day call we wanted to enhance the realism for the guys in the tower, so we quickly put down in a small depression beyond the fire so we couldn’t be seen down the runway,” said Capt. Eric Ladd, pilot of the Blackhawk.

Having kept the drill plans secreted among the few planners, the resulting response was a true reflection of how an actual emergency would have been handled.

“One of our objectives with the drill was to see how quickly the crash/rescue team could get water on the fire. That’s one reason we did this first drill on the airfield grounds. We need to see what our

own response capabilities really are, before we test relationships with responders from off the post,” Duvall said.

As expected, most of the players experienced a variety of problems or miscues which impacted response time.

“It took just over five minutes for the first crash/rescue truck to get on scene and put foam on the fire, but the knowledge of the responders in what to do, how to get to the crewmembers in the helicopter and on-scene safety concerns was very good,” remarked Chief Warrant Officer 2 Darin Webb of the Arkansas National Guard Office of Occupational and Health Safety.

The real value of the crash drill came the following day when representatives from all offices and shops of the aviation facility were represented in an after-action-review meeting with safety and fire department officials.

“A lot of good feedback came out of the AAR meeting. We learned about some issues with communications, some problems with equipment for first responders, and we also picked up on some procedures in the crash-response standard operating procedures book that we need to fine

tune to avoid confusion and assign specific duties to particular players,” said Duvall.

“From a crewmember standpoint the AAR was encouraging. There was a lot of self-identifying of things that individuals said they could do better next time. In the event of a real emergency I know as a crewmember this organization on the ground is as committed to their roles as we are in trying to fly the aircraft safely,” said Ladd.

Additional potential problems with night maintenance crews responding to an emergency, and off-post location of a possible crash were also voiced.

“We all agreed, we had a good plan... we simply haven’t practiced it in some time. This drill and future drills will help us further examine those little things we need to thoroughly work out,” Duvall said.

At the close of the meeting Ladd and Duvall announced that they would most likely start conducting quarterly response drills. Ladd teased the group with information that the next drill would be on post – but not on the airfield.



TALKING IT OVER. Maj. Jason Duvall talks with crash crews in the aftermath of a crash response drill at the Robinson Airfield Nov. 13.



CRASH RESCUE TEAMS put foam on a fire simulating a helicopter crash during a drill at the airfield Nov. 13.



CAPT. ERIC LADD, pilot of the Blackhawk, talks with first responder to review rescue procedures for the flight crew.

39th Troops get moral boost from flight over Baghdad

Helo flight provides new perspective on mission

BAGHDAD - After eight months, the squad leader's actions are routine. He brings his Soldiers in for a quick huddle to go over the mission and to ensure they've all got the appropriate protective gear—just another day in Baghdad, Iraq. Yet, moments later they would find themselves with a much different perspective of the community—Makasib—they've patrolled daily for well over 200 days.

These seven 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldiers—Arkansas Army National Guard—mount up, and the mission is underway. They leave the confines of the Victory Base Complex and its 15-foot walls and security towers, and their area of operation—AO Warrior—is quickly in their site. But as the driver—or pilot in this case—banks hard right, these Soldiers quickly see this mission from a totally different perspective.

Staring straight down at the ground with nothing but air and about 500 meters separating him from the streets of Makasib, Spc. Keith Flynn of Charleston, Ark. takes a deep breath, looks across the aisle at Spc. Rickey Dixon of Benton, Ark. and smiles.

"After that turn, I was looking straight down at the ground, and while I'm not the biggest fan of heights I was like, oh yeah!" said Flynn. "It was definitely a good time, and a highlight of the tour."

With that said, the squad leader could view this mission a success.

"Without question, the guys got a different perspective from this particular mission, and the aerial view is very important to our mission so I wanted to take advantage of it," said Staff Sgt. Jeff Frisbee of Little Rock, Ark. "The secondary effect is that five out of my six Soldiers have never flown in a chopper before, so it was almost a reward for their hard work the past eight months. Bottom line, mission accomplished."

Flynn, Dixon, Pfc. Chad McGhee of Benton, Ark., Spc. Dustin Green of Watson, Okla. and Spc. Kevin Forreth of Fort Smith, Ark. had never flown in a helicopter prior to this day.

Safely on the ground and surrounded by the laughter of his peers, Green said, "I didn't know a helicopter could fly sideways! But, I didn't mind. It was a great flight and a lot more than I could have ever imagined. It was a great change of pace from what I've become use to patrolling our AO."

"It was definitely a different perspective in that the area looked much cleaner," said McGhee. "From the ground, you see a lot of garbage."

In addition to the bird's eye view of their area of operations, the squad was able to see Victory Base Complex. The center attraction of the base was Saddam Hussein's Aw Faw Palace which is surrounded by a man-made lake and is now home to the military forces. At each turn, the Soldiers could be seen taking pictures of grounds to help capture the moment.

As an added bonus to this mission, the Soldiers received a 'challenge coin' from the 4th Infantry Division's Command Sgt. Maj. John Gioia. Joining them on the mission, he could be heard thanking them for their service in Iraq as he presented each with his coin. Challenge coins are part of military tradition and are a way of promoting good morale among the troops and recognizing them for excellence.

The Soldiers, along with the rest of the men and women deployed with the 39th Brigade, are now counting the days until their next opportunity to fly – the flight that will bring them home from Iraq. The brigade is anticipated to see its first wave of troops return to the states in late November with multiple waves returning throughout the following month.



Photo by Maj. Craig Heathscott, 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE - 4th Infantry Division Command Sgt. Maj. John Gioia congratulates Spc. Chris Freeman, of Texarkana, Ark. - a member of 39th Brigade's, 1st Battalion, 153rd Infantry Regiment, for being named Soldier of the year for the battalion. Freeman had just joined Gioia on a Blackhawk flight over their area of operations. Freeman, along with the rest of the men and women deployed with the 39th Brigade, are now counting the days until their next opportunity to fly – the flight that will bring them home from Iraq.



ABOVE, HIGH MORALE. Spc. Rickey Dixon, of Benton, Ark., and Spc. Dustin Green, of Watson, Okla., share a little nervous laughter following a steep bank that had the Soldiers looking straight down at the ground some 500 meters below them. "I didn't know a helicopter could fly sideways!" said Green. "It was a great flight and a lot more than I could have ever imagined. It was a great change of pace from what I've become use to patrolling our AO."

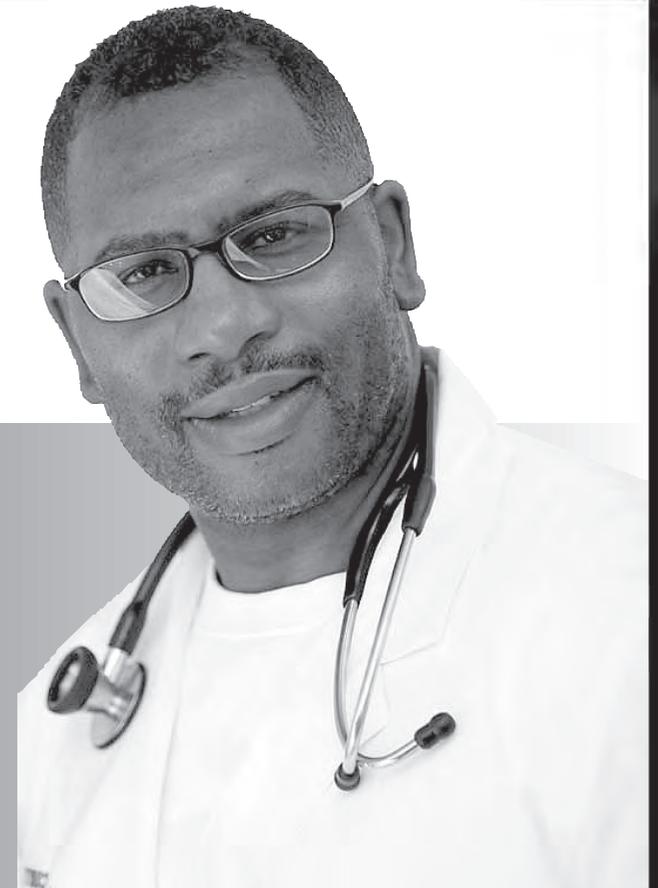
LEFT, FLYING HIGH. Spc. Keith Flynn, right, gets an aerial view of Baghdad during his first opportunity to fly in a Blackhawk helicopter while deployed with the 39th Brigade. "While I'm not the biggest fan of heights I was like, oh yeah!" said Flynn, a resident of Charleston, Ark. "It was definitely a good time, and a highlight of the tour." Staff Sgt. Jeff Frisbee, of Little Rock, center, said, "Without question, the guys got a different perspective from this particular mission. The secondary effect is that five out of my six Soldiers have never flown in a chopper before, so it was almost a reward for their hard work the past eight months. Bottom line, mission accomplished."



Photo by Maj. Craig Heathscott, 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs

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Warrior Transition Unit – success story

Soldier's success places him helping other Vets in program

By Maj. Keith Moore

National Guard Public Affairs Office

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, NLR, Ark. – November was declared as "Warrior Health Month" by President Bush in an effort to draw attention to the many ongoing physical and mental health needs of our many veterans, not only those returning from this war, but also from previous conflicts as well.

The Department of Defense took a bold step in 2005 in seeking to make the support to injured veterans a little easier to reach. The Army set up a series of Community-Based Health Care Organization units around the country to help manage care provided to veterans recovering from injuries and wounds.

These regionally positioned units act as coordination centers for medical care plans for Soldiers in up to five surrounding states. Recently re-designated as Warrior Transition Units, the CBWTU's focus is getting Soldiers back to their hometowns as soon as possible. Once at home, the CBWTU case managers assist the veteran with his/her care or treatment plan and coordinates appointments and work programs for the Soldier.

The community-based emphasis allows the Soldier to recover while at home, rather than having to stay at a major military installation medical facility. This approach also saves stress and financial difficulties for family traveling to visit the Soldier.

One local Soldier who himself was a wounded warrior going through the CBWTU program, and is now employed by it as a manager for other veterans is Staff Sgt. Solon Bivans. As a product of the CBWTU program Bivans has great empathy for those Soldiers he works with as a manager.

"I know what they are going through. The frustration with the system, the anger over always having to check in with the case manager, the back and forth to the doctor visits – but when I tell them I too was a warrior going through the program they calm down and open up to let me help them just like I was helped," says Bivans.

His story began when he was deployed in 2006 as a helicopter hydraulics mechanic with the 449th aviation maintenance unit of the Texas National Guard.

He was deployed to Balad, Iraq and provided maintenance support to a variety of rotary wing aviation assets there. Because they didn't have some of the same shop equipment in the forward location, some tasks had to be accomplished with two guys using common tools and brute strength. It



Photos by Maj. Keith Moore, National Guard Public Affairs Office.

was during one of these tasks that Bivans severely tore the rotator cuff in his shoulder joint.

"I had been infantry for 10 years before becoming a mechanic, so I was used to a little pain. After I hurt the shoulder I tried to keep on working, but over a period of about a month it kept getting worse. I got to where I couldn't sleep. Work all day was an agony," said Bivans.

Not knowing how severely he was injured, he finally sought help by going to sick-call one morning at the base. There doctors ran a couple of x-rays and had him do some range-of-motion exercises. The x-rays showed a severe tear so he was airlifted out the next day to Kuwait then on to Germany and then home to Ft. Hood where he underwent an MRI and several weeks of physical therapy. Then came the call from the Camp Robinson based Community Based Health Care Organization Unit.

Once in Little Rock his progress changed. He was seen by several specialists and had surgery in a couple of weeks. From there his treatment plan included physical therapy three days each week.

"It didn't seem like I was getting any better until I got into this program. It works your treatment through a variety of civilian doctors and therapists. The case managers

helped get the appointments set up, monitor the treatment plan and track your progress," Bivans said.

Bivans noted that the unique thing about the CBWTU staff was that his case manager and platoon sergeant not only tracked his medical care, but they also listened to him and monitored his general well being.

"All returning Soldiers are encouraged to talk to the counselor or psychologist. But the staff here could hear difficulties in my voice on the phone. They listened to me. Not just what I said about the medical plan or the weekly work report. They knew I was stressed and needed to let go of some of that in order to get better," explained Bivans. He added that in many cases the difficulty of the recovery period is magnified by the stresses of reintegration with Family and home life combined with constant trips to doctor visits and therapy appointments.

"I had a lot of difficulty back here at first. I had a lot of things playing on my mind and adding to the stress factor. I felt like I let my unit down because I got sent home before completing my tour; I didn't feel like I was contributing enough at my work site because I was out all the time to doctors and physical therapy two or three days per week; and I was on light duty restriction ... but to look at me I was fine," said Bivans.



ABOVE, SOLDIER CARE - Staff Sgt. Marion Bean (left) reviews documents with Staff Sgt. Solon Bivans (right) from a Soldier's case file. Bean is training Bivans to replace her as platoon sergeant at the Camp Robinson Community Based Warrior Transition Unit. In that role, Bivans tracks 23 wounded warriors through their rehabilitation and treatment plans to ensure they are well cared for. Bivans himself was a wounded warrior in the program just last year.

LEFT, STUDYING THE File - Staff Sgt. Solon Bivans checks information from a wounded warrior's file before coordinating arrangements to get the Soldier assistance with an issue in his treatment plan. Bivans, a former wounded warrior himself, began working for the Community Based Warrior Transition Unit in October. His experience in the program drew him to help other Soldiers with their care.

Having been in the program, Bivans says his best advice to injured Soldiers working through the WTU is "be receptive to what platoon sergeants and case managers tell you. They work hard to help Soldiers, but the Soldiers have to be open to the help and apply the treatment plan."

In addition to working the coordination and treatment plan for the wounded warriors in the program and allowing them to recover at home or close to home, Bivans says the principle characteristic that made him want to work as a coordinator at the CBWTU is the genuine concern and goal orientation of the staff of the CBWTU.

"They kept me organized and focused on the goal of getting better, while at the same time always seeming to have time to listen to what issues I may be having," said Bivans.

As a recovered veteran, Bivans focus now is on helping the 23 wounded warriors he works with to maintain their focus on the same goal – getting better and returning to the force.

Now having been at the CBWTU helping other Soldiers for a couple of months, Bivans has set his personal goals on attaining a bachelors degree in social work and expanding his horizons to continue to help his fellow veterans.

NEWS BRIEFS

COMMISSARY-SCHOLARSHIPS FOR MILITARY CHILDREN PROGRAM

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A minimum of one \$1,500 scholarship will be awarded at every commissary location where qualified applications are received. More than one scholarship per commissary may be available based on response and funding. The scholarship provides

for payment of tuition, books, lab fees and other related expenses.

If it is not possible (due to distance considerations) for the applicants to submit their applications in person, they may also mail, UPS, or FedEx their completed applications to the commissary nearest to where their sponsor is stationed www.commissaries.com.

Applicants who choose this method must contact that commissary and obtain the name of a person to whom the package will be directed. (A complete list of commissaries, along with phone numbers, can be found at www.commissaries.com).

Eligibility/How to apply/ Application forms: www.militaryscholar.org.

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NGAA/EAANG SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM APPLICATION

The National Guard Association of Arkansas (NGAA) maintains a trust fund from its operations to award annual scholarships to members of NGAA and the Enlisted Association of the Arkansas National Guard (EAANG) and their dependents.

This trust fund is managed by both NGAA and EAANG. The scholarships may be used for any and all college expenses. The associations review applications and award scholarships based on guidelines provided by the board of directors of each organization. Prerequisites to apply for the scholarships are:

Members of the Arkansas National Guard, their dependents, and dependents of deceased members of the Arkansas National Guard may apply.

Applicant or his/her sponsor must be a member of NGAA or EAANG (unless dependent of deceased member).

Applicant or his/her sponsor must be covered under the group life insurance program administered by NGAA (unless dependent of deceased member).

Dependents of deceased members of NGAA/EAANG may apply if the deceased member had coverage under the NGAA group life insurance program.

Members of the Arkansas National Guard applying for a scholarship must be their own sponsor and meet all the eligibility requirements listed above.

These scholarships apply to full time or part time enrollment at in-state or out-of-state colleges, four-year colleges, or vocational training. Thirty \$500 scholarships will be awarded for the school year 2009-2010.

The deadline for submission of applications is Feb. 15, 2009.

WINTER DRIVING QUIZ

1. Should you over-inflate or under-inflate your tires, during cold winter months?

a. Over-inflate, because tire pressure is lower in cold temperatures and you need more air.

b. Under-inflate, because you need the added traction that comes from having more tire tread on the road.

c. Neither, tire pressure should always be maintained at the level recommended by the manufacturer.

2. If your car is equipped with anti-lock brakes and you are skidding on snow or ice, do you

a. Pump the breaks repeatedly because it will keep you from going into a skid.

b. Pump the breaks repeatedly because that is how you engage the anti-lock feature.

c. Apply firm and continuous pressure to the breaks.

3. The usefulness of daytime running lights has never

been established as reducing the number of traffic accidents.

a. True
b. False

4. What day of the week are you most likely to get into a traffic accident?

a. Tuesday
b. Friday
c. Saturday

5. When sliding into a skid, is it best to?

a. Turn the steering wheel in the direction of the skid.

b. Turn the steering wheel in the opposite direction of the skid.

c. Turn the steering wheel straight ahead.

Answers from last month's quiz: 1. (D), 2. (C), 3. (C), 4. (C), 5. (True)

NAME _____

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PHONE _____

Guard members, families encouraged to nominate employers

ARLINGTON, Va. – The nomination season for the 2009 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award began on Nov. 3, 2008. National Guard and Reserve members and their families are eligible and encouraged to nominate employers who have gone above and beyond in their support of military employees.

Nominations will be accepted at www.FreedomAward.mil until Jan. 29, 2009. The Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award is the U.S. government's highest recognition given to outstanding employers.

The 2009 recipients will be announced in the spring and honored in Washington, D.C. at the 14th annual Secretary of Defense Employer Support

Freedom Award ceremony in September 2009.

Almost one-half of the U.S. military is comprised of the National Guard and Reserve. The Department of Defense shares these citizen warriors with their civilian employers, many of whom provide significant support to their employees who serve in the National Guard and Reserve. Past recipients of the Freedom Award have provided full salary, continuation of benefits, care packages and even home and lawn care to families of employees fulfilling their military obligation.

The Freedom Award was instituted in 1996 under the auspices of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) to recognize ex-

ceptional support from the employer community.

ESGR is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972. Its mission is to gain and maintain employer support for Guard and Reserve service by recognizing outstanding support, increasing awareness of the law, and resolving conflicts through informal mediation.

Previous national Freedom Award recipients have included such large businesses as Union Pacific Corporation, Wal-Mart, Baptist Medical System in Little Rock, and Tyson Foods of Springdale.

Additional recipients include state and local governments, and small businesses including a family-owned business in Iowa.

For questions regard-

ing the nomination process, please contact Mr. Greg White, Mr. Richard Green or SGT Leanna Higginbotham at (501) 212-4018/4096/4025.



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