

# ARKANSAS MINUTEMAN



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**ARKANSAS MINUTEMAN**

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FROM THE DESK OF COMMAND CHIEF MASTER SGT. STEPHEN ARNOLD

**Why we serve**

“I will always do my duty, no matter what the price, I’ve counted up the cost, I know the sacrifice.”

Those words from the popular song “American Soldier” do a great job of expressing the commitment and dedication of the proud men and women who wear the uniform of our country. Both the Soldier’s and Airman’s creeds reflect similar ideals.

The Soldier’s duty is stated in the words “I will always place the mission first. I will never accept defeat. I will never quit. I will never leave a fallen comrade.”

The Airman’s Creed captures the same basic concepts with the words: “My mission is to fly, fight and win ... I will never leave an Airman behind, I will never falter and I will not fail”.

The concepts of duty and sacrifice are the common bond of every man and woman in our armed forces. Perhaps this is one reason that in spite of the political divisions in our country concerning the

wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, America’s fighting men and women are still held in very high regard by the public at large.

Most people instinctively recognize that there is a code of honor among members of the military that has nothing to do with the decisions of our elected leaders. For the true warrior, duty transcends politics.

Honor is not based upon a national security decision. The commitment to never desert one’s fellow warrior has nothing to do with public debate. These are traits which are born of one’s character, and proven in adversity.

In his address to the U.S. Military Academy on May 12, 1962, General Douglas MacArthur stated: “The Soldier, above all other men, is required to practice the greatest act of religious training – sacrifice. In battle and in the face of danger and death, he discloses those divine attributes which his Maker gave when He created man in His own image.”



**Command Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Arnold**

child, then ask yourself the question: “If it were not for the courage of America’s fighting men and women, what would this child’s future look like?”

In the words of President Ronald Reagan: “Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same, or one day we will spend our sunset years telling our children and our children’s children what it was once like in the United States where men were free.”

If you are ever tempted to doubt the reasons as to why you wear the uniform and why you serve, remember America’s children. They need you. Our country needs you. America’s freedom depends on it!

Many of you have experienced the meaning of sacrifice firsthand.

Deployments and the numerous stresses that accompany them have impacted not only you, but your families and friends as well.

Some of our members have made the supreme sacrifice. At times we may be tempted to ask our-

selves whether or not the sacrifice is worthwhile.

Let me suggest what I believe to be one of the surest ways to measure the worth of your sacrifice.

Look into the eyes of a



Photo by Lt. Col. Keith Moore, Arkansas Agriculture Development Team Public Affairs

**ON THE COVER**

**GETTING READY. Members of the Arkansas Agriculture Development Team (ADT) practice their combat skills amidst the harsh winter weather of central Indiana. The team is slated for deployment to Afghanistan in early March 2010.**

**michael smith**

# Airmen gain valuable experience at Guantanamo Bay

**By Capt. Heath Allen**  
188th Fighter Wing Public Affairs  
officer

## 188th Civil Engineering Squadron reflects on historic deployment

FORT SMITH, Ark. – The last day in January marked the first time in more than six months that many 188th Fighter Wing Civil Engineers had a chance to spend time with their families.

Thirty-eight members of the 188th Fighter Wing's Civil Engineering Squadron returned Jan. 31 from a six-month deployment to U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, where they joined the 474th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

The 188th CES' primary function was to ensure the conditions at Camp Justice's expeditionary legal complex remained acceptable to facilitate optimum trial conditions.

"They made sure billeting conditions were sufficient for the lawyers, media, human activist groups and dignitaries, who were involved in the trials of the detainees," said Maj. Joe Harrison, 188th Base Civil Engineer. "They were tasked with making sure the courthouse was up and running and that the air conditioning, power and things of that nature were operating so that there were no interruptions during the commissions. They also focused on the quality of life issues for the detainees."

The 188th CES served as the lead unit during its deployment to Cuba. The 188th partnered with elements of the Maryland



JTF Guantanamo photo by Army Spc. Tiffany Addair

**THE END OF A CHAPTER.** Lt. Col. Denise W. Boyer (left), outgoing commander of the 474th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron and member of the Arkansas Air Guard, relinquishes command to incoming commander Lt. Col. David M. Kennard of the Mississippi Air Guard, during a change of command ceremony held at Camp Justice, Jan. 28, 2010. Thirty-eight members of the 188th Fighter Wing's Civil Engineering Squadron returned Jan. 31 from the six-month deployment to U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay in Cuba, where they joined the 474th Expeditionary Civil Engineering Squadron in support of Joint Task Force Guantanamo.

Air National Guard's 175th Fighter Wing, Illinois Air National Guard's 183rd Fighter Wing and the New York Air National Guard's 109th Airlift Wing during the tour.

But it wasn't just Air National Guard units that the 188th toiled with during the deployment. Senior Master Sgt. Tim McConnell, a member of the 188th CES, who functioned as the operations flight non-commissioned officer in charge while deployed to Cuba, said the unit logged valuable experience while executing a diverse mission under unique circumstances.

"It was a different kind

of deployment and gave us the chance to do a lot of tasks and training in a real-world mission that we can't get anywhere else," McConnell said. "It was different in that we worked closely with the Navy, Marines and Coast Guard on a daily basis."

The 188th CES helped maintain generators and electricity, provided carpentry skills, pest control services, utilities maintenance and heavy equipment operation.

"We provided the bulk of the support, command structure and personnel while there," Harrison said.

McConnell called the

deployment "high-visibility" but added that it afforded 188th CES personnel the opportunity to encounter arduous yet valuable challenges under stressful circumstances.

"We had to make sure that nothing went wrong and that the detention center was well represented from a civil engineering standpoint," McConnell said.

The assorted tests didn't halt there. Harrison said during the final two weeks of the deployment the 188th CES worked with U.S. Army in migrant operations at the Joint Task Force to help with the Haitian relief ef-

orts, erecting more than 100 tents in preparation for Haitian evacuees, following a 7.0 earthquake in Haiti Jan. 12

"We felt a slight tremble," McConnell said. "It wasn't long after the earthquake that things starting ramping up over there."

McConnell said that many of the efforts to assemble the tents were mustered prior to the earthquake as part of an exercise that was slated for February.

"We had the earthquake in January so the exercise they were supposed to have turned into the real McCoy," McConnell said.

"We geared up for the possibility of migrants right about the time we were rotating out. They were talking about setting up about 1,400 tents before we left."

For the 188th CES, it was an experience they won't soon forget.

"We got to be around a lot of history while we were there and whether or not the place closes down eventually or it doesn't, we know we were a part of that history," McConnell said.

The 188th CES last deployed to Kirkuk Air Base in Iraq for four months in 2005 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom as part of an Aerospace Expeditionary Force rotation. The 188th was also the lead unit during its stint in Kirkuk Air Base in Iraq.

The 188th CES experienced a surge of deployments in 2009. The 188th CES also had eight firefighters deployed to Kuwait for six months. They returned last September.

Five CES members, including one CE officer, three heavy equipment operators and one power production specialist embarked on a year-long deployment to Bagram Air Base in Afghanistan in July 2009.

## webster

# Support earns St. Edwards nurse manager ESGR honor

By 188th Fighter Wing  
Public Affairs

Patriot Award presented for outstanding support of the 188th Fighter Wing

FORT SMITH, Ark. — The Arkansas Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR), an agency of the Department of Defense, announced Feb. 16 that Deborah Bader with St. Edward Mercy Medical Center was honored with a Patriot Award in recognition of extraordinary support of her employees who serve in the Arkansas National Guard and Reserves.

“The Patriot Award was created by ESGR to publicly recognize individuals who provide outstanding patriotic support and cooperation to their employees, who like the citizen warriors before them, have answered their nation’s call to serve,” said Jon Woodham, ESGR Arkansas Employer Relations specialist. “Deborah

was nominated for being highly supportive of the National Guard and Reserve by her 188th Fighter Wing Air National Guard employee, Capt. Kimberly Sosebee. Supportive supervisors are critical to maintaining the strength and readiness of the nation’s Guard and Reserve units.”

As the 1.3 million members of the National Guard and Reserves continue to perform an increasing number of unique missions with America’s borders and beyond, ESGR will continue to be the resource for the employers of citizen warriors. ESGR recognizes outstanding support, increases awareness of the law, and resolves conflict through mediation.

“Debbie Bader is a nurse manager of a Maternal

Child Area and the past couple of years have been a high-tempo pace for the 188th Fighter Wing,” Sosebee said. “Debbie has been extremely supportive in allowing me to be flexible with my schedule so I can continue to serve with our local Air National Guard.

“I realize also that she covers me while I am gone and remains selfless in her actions. She would have made a wonderful member of our unit but has found her place by supporting the individuals that are members. I cannot thank her enough.”

More information about ESGR Employer Outreach Programs and volunteer opportunities is available at [www.esgr.mil](http://www.esgr.mil), or by calling Richard Green at 501-212-4096.



U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Master Sgt. Dennis Brambi, 188th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

**HONORING A PATRIOT.** From left: Lt. Col. Anderson Neal; Col. Tom Anderson, 188th Fighter Wing commander; Debbie Bader, Patriot Award recipient and nurse manager at St. Edward Mercy Medical Center in Fort Smith, Ark.; Capt. Kim Sosebee, 188th maintenance officer and nurse at St. Edwards; Chief Master Sgt. Larry Madden; and Chief Master Sgt. Randy Barentine. Bader was nominated for a Patriot Award by her employee, Sosebee. Bader was presented the accolade Feb. 16 at St. Edwards.

## Arkansas Airmen lead the way for the 188th Fighter Wing

Advanced party deployed; awaits arrival of 250 more to Afghanistan



**TOP LOCK AND LOAD.** Staff Sgt. Kyle P. Shaw, left, and Master Sgt. Craig W. May load a GBU-38 onto an A-10C Thunderbolt II “Warthog,” Feb. 2, 2010, at Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan. Shaw and May are weapons loaders deployed from the Arkansas Air National Guard’s 188th Fighter Wing based in Fort Smith, Ark. The 188th deployed approximately 50 Airmen to Afghanistan for a four-month Aerospace Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotation. The remainder of the 188th personnel, approximately 250, will begin its portion of the rotation in early March 2010, when the 188th’s official rotation begins.

**SERIOUS BUSINESS.** Master Sgt. Craig W. May, left, secures a GBU-38 as Staff Sgt. Charlie Parker waits to drive the bomb over to an A-10C Thunderbolt II “Warthog,” Feb. 2, 2010, at Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan. May and Parker are weapons loaders deployed with the Arkansas Air National Guard’s 188th Fighter Wing from Fort Smith. The 188th deployed approximately 50 Airmen to Afghanistan for a four-month Aerospace Expeditionary Force (AEF) rotation on Jan. 4, 2010. The remainder of the 188th personnel, approximately 250, will begin its portion of the rotation in early March 2010, when the 188th’s official rotation begins.



U.S. Air Force photos by Tech. Sgt. David Speicher

## ARK neu



**ROAD MARCH.** A competitor in the 2010 Soldier of the Year competition participates in a test of endurance with a road march on the way to the next event.



**WARRIOR TASKS.** A Soldier sets up a claymore mine as part of the test of each individual's ability to successfully complete their warrior tasks.



**ON THE RANGE.** Soldiers fire their individual skill on the range.

# Guard announces

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark – The Arkansas National Guard announced its 2010 outstanding Soldiers and Airmen during a luncheon Feb. 27 at Camp Joseph T. Robinson's Chappell Readiness Center.

After two and a half days of grueling competition, the Arkansas Army National Guard announced Pfc. Gary Grantham of the 142nd Fires Brigade as the 2010 Soldier of the Year, and Staff Sgt. Eric Evans of the 142nd as the 2010 Noncommissioned Officer of the Year.

Grantham competed against three other lower enlisted individuals. Spc. Arturo Leal represented the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Spc. Kyndalyn Cardwell represented the 87th Troop Command and Spc. Nicholas Metheny represented the 77th Theater Aviation Brigade.

Evans competed against four other NCO's. Staff Sgt. Jamie Donaldson represented the 87th Troop Command, Staff Sgt. Joseph Reisz represented the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Staff Sgt. Christopher Lingo represented the 77th Theater Aviation Brigade and Staff Sgt. Justin Fisher represented Joint Force Headquarters.

The Arkansas Army National Guard's 233rd Regiment Regional Training Institute, based at Camp Robinson, hosted and administered the Army competition, which tested



**TOP SOLDIERS.** The Arkansas Army National Guard announced its 2010 outstanding Soldiers and Airmen during a luncheon Feb. 27 at Camp Joseph T. Robinson's Chappell Readiness Center. From left to right: Staff Sgt. Joseph Reisz, Staff Sgt. Justin Fisher, Pfc. 1st Class Gary Grantham, Staff Sgt. Eric Evans -- Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, and Staff Sgt. Nicholas Metheny, and Staff Sgt. Jamie Donaldson.

each warrior on their physical, mental and military skills.

The Army Soldier and NCO competition kicked off at 5:00 a.m. Feb. 25 with an Army Physical Fitness Test, and ended Saturday morning with each competitor appearing before a panel of Arkansas Army National Guard command sergeants major. The competition included

warrior task tests, a 100-meter race, a 26 the group test in a combination of a one mile of gun live fire and a road march.

Maj. Gen. V. adjutant general. ed the nine Ar



Individual weapons in a test of



**PHYSICAL FITNESS.** A test of each individual's physical fitness was a major qualifier to determine who would be selected as the top Soldier.



**TEST OF SKILL.** A member of the 233rd Regional Training Institute evaluates a Soldier as he prepares to throw a grenade as part of the test each individual's skill as a Soldier.

# top Soldiers and Airmen for 2010



Outstanding Soldier of the Year competitors, left to right: Staff Sgt. Gary Grantham -- Soldier of the Year, Spc. Kyndalyn Cardwell, Spc. Arturo Leal, Staff Sgt. Christopher Lingo, Spc. Nicholas

...sting, weapons accu-  
...navigation. On Feb.  
...faced their toughest  
...ed event that includ-  
...combat run, machine  
...d a four mile rucksack

William Wofford, the  
...ral, then present-  
...my competitors with

the Army Achievement medal. Grantham and Evans were presented the additional honor of the Arkansas Distinguished Service medal. Each Soldier received an Morale, Welfare, Recreational Fund check, the Adjutant General's Coin of Excellence and a host of other items.

The Arkansas Air National Guard also presented its top Airmen for the



**TOP AIRMEN. THE 2010 Arkansas Air National Guard Outstanding Airmen of the Year, left to right: Tech. Sgt. Scott Lang, Noncommissioned Officer of the Year, Tech. Sgt. David Smith, Air Honor Guard Member of the Year, Senior Airman Kyle Kalkbrenner, Airman of the Year, Senior Master Sgt. Virgil Healy, 1st Sgt. of the Year, Master Sgt. Jillian Churchill, Senior NCO of the Year, Col. James Summers, commander of the 189th Airlift Wing, Master Sgt. Brian Mays, Air Honor Guard Program Manager of the Year, Col Rick Oxnar, 189th Mission Support Group commander, Command Chief Master Sgt. Stephen Arnold, command chief master sergeant of the Arkansas Air National Guard, and Command Chief Master Sgt. Asa Carter of the 188th Fighter Wing.**

year at the event. Senior Airman Kyle Kalkbrenner was named the Airman of the Year and Tech. Sgt. Scott Lang was named the Air Noncommissioned Officer of the Year. Master Sgt. Jillian Churchill received Air Senior Noncommissioned

Officer of the Year honors, and Senior Master Sgt. Virgil Healy was chosen as the First Sergeant of the Year. Master Sgt. Brian Mays won Air Honor Guard Program Manager of the Year, and Tech. Sgt. David Smith was named Air Honor Guard

Member of the Year.

General Wofford presented each of the six Air Guard honorees with the Air Force Achievement medal, the Adjutant General's Coin of Excellence, a check from the MWR and a host of other items.

# Promotions highlight training progression for Agriculture Team

By Lt. Col. Keith Moore  
Arkansas Agriculture Development  
Team Public Affairs

CAMP ATTERBURY, Ind. – The night air was punctuated with cheers and a resounding Hooah, as nine members of the Arkansas Agriculture Development Team received promotions following the completion of an arduous week of field training in preparation for their deployment to Afghanistan next month.

The nine promotions included: Aaron Christman of Gravel Ridge to Sgt.; David Hafer of Helena to Sgt.; Eric Holcomb of Pine Bluff to Sgt.; Ray Medley of Fayetteville to Sgt.; Brandon McClellan of Hatfield to Sgt.; Brandon Milton of Jacksonville to Sgt.; Jorge Moran of Bentonville to Staff Sgt.; Cory Trammel of Fayetteville to Staff Sgt. and Aaron Miner of Fayetteville to Corporal.

The promotions came during an early evening formation at the end of four arduous days of training in which the team operated from a tent facility mimicking the forward operating base where they will be established while in Afghanistan. The training included long days of providing security for the base camp location, personnel and vehicle searches, combat convoys, defending against ambushes, procedures for dealing with improvised explosive devices and meeting with Afghan role players in small village training centers.

Col. Stephen Redman, commander of the Arkansas ADT Team said, “The training has been tough, and the harsh temperatures and snowfall has made it even more challenging for our Soldiers and Airmen. Nevertheless, they have continued to adapt, plan and succeed at each mission scenario that the trainers have thrown at

## Training nears completion as team prepares to deploy to Afghanistan



**WINTER WONDERLAND** - A convoy of vehicles from the Arkansas ADT Team prepares to move out on a convoy exercise along the snow covered roads of Camp Atterbury, IN. The cold winter temperatures and nearly daily snows have challenged the team of Arkansans to get acclimated quickly. The team has several more weeks of training at the post in central Indiana before deploying to Afghanistan in March.

them.”

In his address to the troops during the promotion ceremony Redman said that promotions are not the result of past achievements, but rather a challenge of future responsibilities.

Sgt. First Class Anthony Cox one of leaders of the training team working with the Arkansas ADT said he was impressed with the improvement and motivation of the security force section of the ADT.

“During the time that we have worked with the team they have exhibited a 100 percent improvement in their communications, their convoy tactics

and honing their own standard operating procedures as a team. When we started last week, most of the team members knew the procedures and what and how to communicate – but were somewhat shy about executing the details. But once they ran the convoys, and were challenged by the situations the training team put them through they quickly saw what they needed to improve. The security force has not only made improvements, they have done so very effectively” Cox said.

He added that he was thoroughly impressed with the level of experi-



**SAMPLE DISCUSSION.** Master Sgt. Paul Fair (left) of Fort Smith and Sgt. 1st Class Mike Hester of North Little Rock discuss the characteristics of soil samples during training at Perdue University. The Team trained at Perdue in order to enhance their knowledge on soil sampling and analysis, irrigation methods and water resource management, and grain storage.

See TEAM, page 9

## ► New

Continued from Page 8  
ence, planning and the performance of the security team. He specifically noted that the patrol leaders utilized the sand table and rehearsed their plan to move the agriculture team and secure meeting locations. This helps the team build confidence in their tactics and know their individual and group responsibilities.

Sgt. First Class Joseph McLaughlin, platoon sergeant for the security force said, "The realistic training helped us develop and hone our standard procedures, and some good learning took place here. The troops have subse-

quently jelled into applying all the Soldiers in a vehicle as a combined weapon system."

But the training went far beyond maneuver tactics and security concerns for the agricultural specialty team members. They also got the opportunity to interact with actual Afghans in order to learn how to conduct meetings and work through interpreters in real situations.

"Interacting with the Afghan role-players is a major plus for our team. The training on cultural issues, organizing a meeting with farmers and village elders, and working with an interpreter is a vital aspect to our ability to function effectively once we get to Afghanistan," said

Lt.Col. David Sheely, team leader for the agriculture specialists.

The Afghan role players participating in the ADT training are actual Afghan nationals that have lived in the United States for several years and are hired by the training facility to assist with language skills, cultural training and in-

teracting in scenarios with units mobilizing to the Afghan theater of operations. They provide a realistic variable to training that cannot be simulated, as well as providing cultural and civilian perceptions of military operations as feedback for building relationships with local populations.

As the ADT enters the final few weeks of their pre-deployment training, now their trainers evolve to more of a role of observers and advisors as the ADT command group takes the reins to direct the final iterations of training as a fully prepared unit.

The members of the Agriculture Development

Team, a specialized team of Soldiers and Airmen of the Arkansas National Guard are scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan in March with a mission to assist the provincial government and farmers in redeveloping agricultural productivity through assessment, education and improved farming practices.

## pinnacle



Photo by Capt. Chris Heathscott, Arkansas National Guard State Public Affairs Office

**PROUD FATHER.** David Hafer of Helena was one of nine members of the Arkansas Agriculture Development Team recently promoted at the team's mobilization station. Hafer, who was promoted to the rank of sergeant, is pictured here with his daughter at the team's going away ceremony at Camp Robinson earlier in February.



**NEWLY PROMOTED** – Nine members of the team stand in formation immediately following a promotion ceremony on Saturday, February 20 at Camp Atterbury, Ind. The team is nearing the end of their pre-deployment training here in preparation for their deployment to Afghanistan in March.

# Arkansas Guard alerting Soldiers of data loss

## Unsecure hard drive with personally identifiable information reported missing

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark. – An unsecure hard drive containing personally identifiable information on a currently unknown number of current and former Arkansas National Guard Soldiers was reported missing on February 22.

An Arkansas Guard Soldier reported the loss after conducting an exhaustive search to locate the drive when it was first realized as missing on February 15. The drive was a backup storage device used by the Soldier to archive work related information over the past six years.

Although there is no evidence to suggest the device was stolen or in the hands of anyone with bad intentions, the Guard is making every effort to identify how many Soldiers are affected and exactly who they are in order to alert them of the potential data risk.

The drive is said to include names, social security numbers and other personal information on a number of Soldiers primarily having served with the Arkansas Guard's 1st Battalion, 153rd Infantry Regiment of the 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, from January 2004 to March 2009. The 1st Battalion is headquartered in Malvern with units in Prescott, Arkadelphia, Texarkana, Hope, Mena, DeQueen, Sheridan and Benton.

The drive also potentially contains personal information on Soldiers who served with the 39th Brigade Special Troops Battalion from April 2009 to the present. The 39th BSTB is headquartered in Conway with units in Clarksville, Pine Bluff and Little Rock.

While the Guard is

warning caution to all who have served in these units during those times, the Guard's Information Management personnel are working closely with the 39th Brigade to identify specifically who is affected by this loss in order to assist the unit in ensuring each individual Soldier is notified by mail as soon as possible.

All potentially affected Soldiers are recommended to be extra vigilant and to carefully monitor bank statements, credit card statements and any statements relating to financial transactions since November 2009 when the device was last used. Unusual or suspicious activity should be immediately reported to the financial institution involved. Soldiers are also recommended to contact one of the three major credit bureaus if they suspect suspicious activity.

Contact information for the three major credit bureaus as recommended by

the Federal Trade Commission follow:

Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com)

Experian: 1-888-EXPERIAN (397-3742); [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com)

TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289; [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com)

These organizations can also place fraud alerts on one's credit upon request of the individual in order to receive an alert notification when new credit is applied for under his/her name.

This and other information on how to protect oneself from identity theft can be found at: <http://www.arguard.org/PublicAffairs/WhatDoesIdentityTheftMean.pdf>.

This inappropriate handling of our Soldiers' personal information is an isolated incident which is now under investigation to help ensure steps are taken to help prevent such an incident from occurring in the future.

## moose lodge

# Guard called to support MEMS with ambulances, personnel

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark. – The Arkansas National Guard answered the call to provide 4-wheel drive ambulance support to Pulaski and Faulkner Counties due to severe winter weather in the state on February 8.

The Guard supported the Metropolitan Emergency Medical Services (MEMS) with a total of four military ambulances with four stretchers each. A total of eight Guardsmen were tasked to support this mission with a driver and co-driver for each of the four vehicles. The Soldiers were solely responsible for vehicle operations and transportation of MEMS personnel and civilian patients as necessary.

The missions were approved by Governor Mike Beebe and tasked to the Guard by the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management. The 87th Troop Command, headquartered at Camp Robinson in North Little Rock, Ark., was tasked to support MEMS in Pulaski County with three of the ambulances, 12 stretchers and six Soldiers. The Faulkner County mission was tasked to the Guard's 39th Infantry Brigade Combat Team with provision of the fourth ambulance, with four stretchers and two Soldiers.

Missions such as these begin with a request for support from the mayor, county judge or county sheriff over the location in need. The request goes through the Arkansas Department of Emergency Management and coordinated through the Arkansas Guard's Directorate of Military Support



**WINTER MISSION.** Icicles hang from the MEMS training center in Little Rock where an Arkansas National Guard military ambulance is parked awaiting a call.

as appropriate.

This year's call for winter weather response have paled in comparison to 2009 when nearly 1,000 Guard personnel were called in response to severe weather across north Arkansas. Severe ice storms which downed thousands of light poles across the northern third of the state resulted in Guard missions that included power generation, emergency shelter, health and welfare checks, route clearance, and the provision and delivery of fuel, water, shower systems cots and blankets.

## bridgeway

# Organizations throughout state unite to spread suicide awareness

Story and photos by

**Ms. Donna Shelton**

*Arkansas National Guard  
Public Affairs Office*

CAMP JOSEPH T. ROBINSON, Ark. – Hope, relief and gratitude are not usually associated with the topic of suicide. These were the recurring themes mentioned by participants at the first-ever meeting of the Arkansas Suicide Prevention Network. Hope for the future of Families across the state; relief from having to face it alone; and gratitude that so many are willing to help combat the stressors that could cause someone to take their life.

On February 25, over 40 organizations from across the state of Arkansas met at Camp Robinson to combat the stigmas associated with suicide. The network included over 100 professionals in the mental health profession, military leaders, community leaders and concerned Family and friends who attended the meeting to pool all of their resources and create one organizational network.

The Arkansas National Guard hosted the event which was also sponsored by the Governor's office, the Arkansas Attorney General's Office, and the Arkansas Division of Behavioral Health.

Arkansas also recently celebrated another first with the introduction of the Arkansas Strategy for Suicide Prevention. The plan not only solidifies the partnerships between the organizations, but will help the state qualify for grants to aid in suicide awareness and prevention programs. The plan was recently signed by Gov. Mike Beebe; Dustin McDaniel, the Arkansas attorney general; David Laffoon, the director of the Division of Behavioral Health Services; and Maj. Gen. William Wofford, the adjutant general of the Arkansas National Guard.

Prevention and awareness has been an important topic in the military with the increasing number of service members who have taken their own lives in recent years. In September of 2009, Gov. Beebe joined General Wofford in making a plea to the communities of Arkansas to aid the Arkansas National Guard in identifying service members who may be at risk.

In its efforts to combat the stigma of psychological health, the Arkansas National Guard has spurred collab-



**AWARENESS.** Capt. Tanya Phillips shares information about awareness that was discussed during one of the workshops at the Arkansas Suicide Prevention Network while members of the Arkansas Youth Challenge Program assist her.

orative efforts from throughout the state.

“As a result of this press conference, we saw an overwhelming response. Not just from Soldiers and Airmen and communities in helping to identify those who they felt were in need, but also from external organizations, stepping up and offering their help and their expertise in this fight,” Capt. Chris Heathscott said during a previously recorded interview.

The guard itself has provided leadership and brought these groups together. The best way to solve a problem is to first talk about it, recognize it and recognize the symp-

oms,” said the governor.

“We have made major efforts and I personally feel we have made major steps toward success. But the issue still remains, which is why we are here today. It is not easy for a service member to ask for help when they need it, but allow me to lead by example and tell you today that we need help, your help,” Brig. Gen. William Johnson, the deputy adjutant general, told the audience during the first network meeting.

Throughout the day, members of the network stressed the importance of awareness – recognizing signs of behavioral issues or at-risk behav-

ior and reducing the stigma of asking for help. “When our children are very young, we teach them tornado drills,” said Capt. Tanya Phillips, the Arkansas Guard state suicide prevention program manager. “Three people died last year in Arkansas due to tornadoes. Four hundred were lost to suicide,” she said emphasizing the need to teach awareness.

Phillips said that through her work on the issue, she quickly realized that there were many resources and services available but the people were either unsure of where to go for help or reluctant to ask for help. The formation of

the network creates a broad-based level of support never before seen in the state.

“When you are sitting in a room of 10-12 people and you are thinking that we have the weight of the whole state on our shoulders, you think how are we going to do everything that needs to be done? I look out here today and realize that we don't have to do it alone. There are others willing to help us do the work,” said Tammy Klutts, a board member of the Arkansas Chapter of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention and a “suicide survivor.”

The all-day workshop included a discussion panel of survivors of suicide – those left behind when a Family chose to take their own life. Klutts was one of the panelists. She became a survivor when her 16-year-old son, Zack Klutts committed suicide in May 2008. In addition to Klutts, the panel included Steven Blackwood of the Alex Blackwood Foundation, Dr. Leigh Anne Bennett of the Dr. Robert Elliott Foundation and Nikki Ball, a high school student determined to keep the memory of her brother, Tyler Ball, alive.

“No one is immune to suicide. It has no boundaries. It does not discriminate. Yet it

is one of the most stigmatized causes of death,” said Dr. Bennett. Bennett, a local psychiatrist, is a survivor and the daughter of the late Dr. Robert Elliot of Searcy. Bennett told the audience that Elliott suffered from depression unbeknownst to his Family and friends for years.

The strategy for suicide prevention has been signed, over 40 organizations have joined the newly formed network, and now community leaders and Families are ready to help reduce the stigma of mental health and/or behavioral issues to prevent another Family from suffering due to suicide.

“Every time someone's precious story of lifelong discovery is told, we are one day closer to a time when suicide and is no longer shrouded in secrecy but is discussed openly,” said Dr. Bennett.

It takes the strength and courage of a Warrior to ask for help. If you, a Family member, or fellow Soldier or Airman is in need of help, contact these numbers below.

Arkansas National Guard Chaplain at (501)212-5621.  
Ronnie Goff at (501) 242-1867.

Captain Tanya Phillips, state suicide prevention program manager at (501)554-3974.

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# Heye selected as the 189th AW vice commander

**By 2nd Lt. Chris Nelson**  
189th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

LITTLE ROCK AIR FORCE BASE, Ark. – The 189th Airlift Wing has announced a new vice commander and he is eager to get to know all aspects of the wing and how everyone contributes to the success we share. Lt. Col. Paul F. Heye Jr. found out during January drill he had been selected as the 189th AW vice commander.

“I am really excited about the opportunities and challenges that go with the position, said Heye. “We have some challenges up ahead of us with the newer modern aircraft heading our way, but I know this wing is ready and willing to move forward with those changes and, as always, accomplishing the mission safely and effectively.”

The new vice commander stated that he is an ardent believer that this wing is the premier C-130 wing ever.

“The main goal I have for this po-

sition is to continue to support the outstanding people we have in the wing doing what we do best and that is training students,” said Heye. “As the mission of the C-130 evolves with different variants, I also want to ensure this wing remains a viable and desired part of the training environment.”

Heye started his military career June 1988 as a 2nd Lieutenant in undergraduate pilot training. He progressed through the ranks holding the titles of executive officer, aircraft commander, instructor pilot, evaluator pilot, 189th Operations Support Flight commander, and his last assignment, the Director of Operations, Joint Force Headquarters, Arkansas ANG.

From early on in his career Heye said he has had the privilege to work for some great leaders that have allowed him to express his opinions

and to be part of the decision making process.

“I have always tried to observe and learn from leaders and followers throughout my career,” said Heye. “There is always something to learn from all types of personalities and situations.”

Heye, also a first officer pilot for Delta airlines, balances a military career and a civilian career. His advice to busy drill status Guardsman is to remember to take care of yourself and your Families.

“The drill status Guardsman must balance the three legs that support him or her: Family, civilian job, and military job,” said Heye.

“If any one of those three gets over emphasized then the balance is off. It is very difficult at times keep the three balanced and in synch and every drill status guardsman learns to do this.”



**Lt. Col. Paul Heye Vice Commander,  
189th Airlift Wing**

## AFCU