

# GUARD DETAIL

January-July 2007

A CHRONICLE Of the MISSISSIPPI ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

## Redeployments for some Mississippi Army National Guard units



TAKE CARE  
OF OUR  
DAD



**COVER:** A large crowd of well-wishers gather at the old courthouse in Houston, Miss., for deploying Soldiers of the 288th Sapper Company in June. Related story on page 14. (Photo by 1st Lt. Murray Shugars, 102nd MPAD)

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Gov. Haley Barbour hugs gold star mother, Deborah Ladd, during the annual memorial Honor/Run for the Wall Event in Jackson, Miss. (See pages 8-10). (Photo by Sandy Ates)



ceremony for the Trail of

## GUARD DETAIL

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# Guard News and Views

## Army Stands Behind Interceptor Body Armor

After a May 17 NBC News report challenged the Army's use of Interceptor body armor instead of newer Dragon Skin armor developed by Pinnacle Armor Inc., an Army official said U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan still use the best available body armor.

At a May 21 Pentagon press conference, Brig. Gen. R. Mark Brown released test results that ruled out Dragon Skin a year ago.

The Army subjected Dragon Skin armor to the same endurance tests as Interceptor body armor at Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., May 16 to 19, 2006.

Of eight Dragon Skin vests tested, four failed, with 13 rounds penetrating completely on the first or second shot, General Brown said. After the first complete penetration, the vests technically failed the test, but he said the Army continued the testing to ensure fairness.

Other tests included subjecting Dragon Skin vests to extreme temperature variations, from minus 25 degrees Fahrenheit to 120 degrees Fahrenheit, which would reflect the cold temperature experienced during airplane transport to the war zone and the hot Middle East climate.

Temperature tests caused the adhesive holding the Dragon Skin's protective discs together to fail, and the discs gathered at the bottom of the vest, leaving gaps in protection.

General Brown also noted that extra large Dragon Skin vests are 47.5 pounds and 1.7 to 1.9 inches thick; large size Interceptor vests, which offer equivalent coverage, weigh 28 pounds and are 1.3 inches thick.

Congress is requesting that the Government Accountability Office look into the matter further.

## Air Force OKs Laser Surgery for Vision Correction

Air Force officials have changed a policy to allow people applying for aviation and aviation-related jobs to

have had LASIK surgery.

Effective May 21, the change also removes the altitude and high-performance aircraft restrictions for people who have had LASIK.

The decision is based on studies that showed LASIK-treated eyes experience little or no effect when subjected to the wind blast experienced during aircraft ejection or exposure to high altitude.

The recommended refractive surgeries are Wave Front Guided Photorefractive Keratectomy (WFG-PRK) and Wave Front Guided Laser In-Situ Keratomileusis (WFG-LASIK) using the femtosecond laser. The eyes are more trauma resistant after surgery using these methods compared to other forms of refractive surgeries.

An Air Force memo released this week, however, indicated that such surgeries are elective and are not covered by Tricare benefits. In addition, the memo stated that those "who undergo unauthorized [refractive surgery] treatment may be disqualified or restricted from certain duties."

Individuals still must meet the standards prescribed in AFI 48-123, Medical Examination and Standards, for entrance into the Air Force and aviation and special-duty positions.

Additional information can be found at <http://airforcemedicine.afms.mil/USAF-RS>. Air Force personnel are encouraged to follow specific application guidelines to ensure any such procedures meet force requirements.

Air Force officials also reiterated that there is no guarantee of perfect sight after such surgery.

## House Passes Bills to Improve Veterans' Health Care and Benefits

The House passed a number of bills that will expand health care and benefits for veterans. Designed to coincide with the upcoming Memorial Day holiday, the bills easily met the two-thirds majority required under the suspension of the rules. H.R. 612 (highlighted in last week's LEGIT) extends the term of free health care for returning veterans from two to five

years; H.R. 2199 authorizes research and funding for traumatic brain injuries; H.R. 1470 allows for improved chiropractic care; H.R. 67 authorizes a new grant program for veterans' outreach services; H.R. 1660 authorizes a national veterans' cemetery in Colorado; and H.R. 2239 expands vocational rehabilitation benefits to disabled servicemembers for a select group of personnel.

## Empowerment Act Continues Progress Through Congress

As noted above, the Senate version of the NDAA includes several provisions of the National Guard Empowerment Act. These provisions (increasing Chief of NGB to general and authorizing Secretary of Defense to prescribe the NGB charter) were also included in the House version of the bill.

Several other aspects of the Empowerment Act made their way into the House version of the NDAA and, while it is not known at this time just what the Senate version includes, it is hoped they will concur with a majority of the House's recommendations on this issue.

The House version (H.R.1585) authorized several key aspects of the Empowerment Act, to include:

*\* Establishing NGB as a joint activity of the Department of Defense*

*\* Allows the Chief - NGB to serve as a principal advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff*

*\* Allows a member of the National Guard to serve as Deputy Commander of the U.S. Northern Command (US-NORTHCOM).*

## Details of Senate NDAA Made Public

The Senate report on S.1547, the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of FY 08, was released this week, providing further insight as to the status of such issues as empowerment, retirement, and the Insurrection Act. Included in the bill are several provisions that translate into progress

for the Guard and our legislative goals. These include:

\* Requiring the Secretary of Defense, in consultation with the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Air Force, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to prescribe a charter for the National Guard Bureau.

\* Increasing the grade of the Chief of the National Guard Bureau from lieutenant general to general.

\* Reducing the age at which a member of the Ready Reserve could draw retired pay below the age of 60 by 3 months for every aggregate 90 days of active duty performed under certain mobilization authorities during a fiscal year.

\* Repealing section 1076 (relating to the Insurrection Act) of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 and reviving the provisions amended by that section as they were in effect prior to the effective date of that act.

One major concern with the retirement provision is that it did not make the qualifying active duty retroactive to September 11, 2001 as provided for in Senator Chambliss' bill (S. 648). Because the House Armed Services Committee rejected the House version of the Chambliss bill (H.R. 1428), in its markup, the retirement provision will face a major challenge should it clear the Senate and move to conference.

## Senate Appropriations Committee Approves MILCON-VA Spending

The Senate Appropriations Committee Thursday approved a \$109.2 billion spending bill for military construction and veterans' affairs. The bill includes \$4 billion more than the President requested, with the bulk of the increase slated for use on veterans' health care with a particular focus on traumatic brain injuries and stress disorders. Military construction accounts were appropriated \$21.6 billion, \$400 million more than the President's budget request, an increase driven the results of the 2005 BRAC process. The

House bill had been held up by a party dispute over earmarks (special member projects) and although House Democratic leaders say they will include earmarks in the measure, they will not disclose them for several weeks. The White House issued a statement Wednesday that lawmakers must find offsets in other spending bills if they seek more than the amount requested by the President or else face a veto of the other bills. It is not known when the Senate will debate the military construction and veterans' spending bill but the House is expected to consider their version on Friday.

## NGAUS Deputy Legislative Director Tours US-FHP TRICARE Facilities

Pete Duffy, Deputy Director of Legislative Affairs, completed a cross-country survey of several TRICARE facilities this week to gain further insight into a little known facet of the TRICARE health care system, that of the physician-managed health care delivered by the Uniformed Services Family Health Plan (USFHP). As part of the TRICARE Prime coverage program, the USFHP is available in six regions of the country to retirees, family members of deployed members, and enrolled National Guard members returning from deployment under the Transitional Assistance Management Program. (National Guard members should promptly enroll in TAMP upon their return as the coverage period will terminate six months from the end of deployment regardless of when the member enrolls).

USFHP health care is patient-centered and delivered through a network of health care providers based on a managed care model that focuses on disease management, prevention, wellness and continuity of care. Each eligible recipient is assigned a care manager with treatment decisions made by physicians. Independent surveys show patient satisfaction to exceed national norms. To be eligible the TRICARE Prime beneficiary must be located within a qualifying ZIP Code within one of six USFHP regions

in the country.

USFHP centers are based in six former Public Health Services facilities located at Martin's Point Health Care, serving Maine, New Hampshire and Vermont; Pacific Medical Centers serving the Puget Sound area of Washington State; Johns Hopkins Medicine serving Maryland, Washington D.C. and parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia and West Virginia; Saint Vincent Catholic Medical Centers serving all of New Jersey and parts of New York, eastern Pennsylvania and southern Connecticut; Brighton Marine Health Center serving Massachusetts, Rhode Island and northern Connecticut; and CHRISTUS Health, serving southeast Texas and southwest Louisiana.

## Photos are Lifeline for Guard Memorial Museum

The National Guard Memorial Museum reflects the 370-plus year history of the country's oldest fighting force, one that lives on with the help of each state sharing its unique experiences with the museum.

A museum kiosk containing images of the Guard in action in the war on terror tells the story of a living force, but only if states and territories continue to submit photos for display.

These photos would appear in the country's first national museum dedicated to the National Guard.

In addition to the war on terror, the museum takes visitors through 5,600 square feet of images, artifacts and interactive exhibits to tell the story of ordinary men and women who have made extraordinary contributions to their communities and their country—beginning more than 150 years before the American Revolution.

Citizen-Soldiers can ensure the museum recognizes their efforts by sharing their photos that tell the Guard story.

Please mail images to:  
John Sterne

The National Guard Memorial Museum, One Massachusetts Ave. NW, 20001 or e-mail to [john.sterne@nga.us.org](mailto:john.sterne@nga.us.org).

# Out on the hood





Staff Sgt. Terry Gann, NCO of the Year nominee for the 155th Brigade Combat Team of Tupelo gives a thumbs-up for the #24 car at Talladega SuperSpeedway for the NASCAR Bush Race in April. Casey Mears is driver for the #24 car, and also the #25 Nextel Cup series car; the National Guard is sponsor for both cars.

By Sandy Ates, JFH-PA

Talladega Superspeedway near Birmingham, Ala., was all motor and military April 28-29 for the Aaron's 312 Bush (Saturday) race and the Aaron's 499 Nextel (Sunday) Cup Race.

NASCAR (National Association for Stock Car Auto Racing) has always supported America's armed forces, but in April, the Hendricks Motorsports team carried their military pride along with them around the 2.26 mile track to honor this country's National Guard men and women in a very big way.

The National Guard wanted to select two groups of Soldiers to recognize during the NASCAR event at Talladega. Each group was made up of 25 troops each to represent the bravery, honor and duty with which the men and women of the National Guard serve the United States.

When the #24 car driven by Casey Mears pulled out to the line up at the Bush Race on Saturday not only could race-goers hear the thunder under the hood of the Chevrolet Monte Carlo SuperSport, but they could see thunder and lightening on the hood--the 155th Brigade Combat Team 'Dixie' Rolling Thunder and the streak of lightening representative of the 3,500-member brigade.

The Soldiers selected to represent the brigade were provided track passes to the race and access to a special hospitality trailer on the infield at Talladega. The biggest thrill for most of them, however, was having the brigade associated with a name as big as NASCAR.

"The emblem on the car did not say 'Dixie Thunder,' but instead, 'Rolling Thunder,' but nevertheless, it was impressive and something the brigade was proud of, not only to be associated with NASCAR, but to have a Mississippi National Guard unit represented on the the car was awesome," said one of the guest Soldier.



## Hero of the Year

During a weekend of racing excitement at California Speedway, tax preparation firm Jackson Hewitt Tax Service celebrated the grand prize winner of its "Heroes of the Year" campaign -- Staff Sgt. Quinton D. Martin. As the national honoree, Martin made racing history by having his image on the hood of a NASCAR Nextel Cup Car -- the #25 National Guard/GMAC Chevrolet driven by Casey Mears. This is the first time that a non-celebrity appeared on a NASCAR Cup vehicle. Jackson Hewitt CEO Michael Lister officially introduced Martin as part of the pre-race festivities on the day of the race.

"Through the 'Heroes of the Year' program, we were privileged to celebrate so many valiant Citizen-Soldiers around the country," said Michael Lister, president and chief executive officer, Jackson Hewitt Tax Service Inc. "All of the 10 monthly honorees truly demonstrate what it means to be a Citizen-Soldier. Selecting one overall hero was difficult, but we believe Sergeant Martin is an excellent example of what it means to be a Citizen-Soldier, and also represents the outstanding qualities and achievements of all of the monthly honorees."

The year-long "Heroes of the Year" initiative, which launched at last year's Auto Club 500, invited people around the country to nominate a National Guard Soldier, family or employer

making a difference at home or abroad. As the role of the National Guard has changed over the past few years, the demands have increased, and being a Citizen-Soldier now often requires these men and women to leave their civilian jobs, homes and families for active duty and multiple deployments away from home for longer periods of time.

Martin began serving with the Mississippi Army National Guard 24 years ago, working within his state and abroad in places such as Germany, South Korea, Panama, Honduras, and Costa Rica. His unit was called up for overseas deployment in late August 2005, on the day that Hurricane Katrina struck the Gulf Coast area. Although his unit was released from duty abroad to deal with the impact of the storm at home, Martin volunteered to continue with his assigned mission and left for Kuwait as a member of the 1108th Aviation Classification Repair Activity Depot (AVCRAD) shortly after contributing to the relief efforts.

He is based out of Camp Shelby with the 3rd Brigade 87th Division on Operation Warrior Training. He lives in Seminary with his wife, Pat and his son, Shawn, and daughter, Kimberly.

Martin notes that "the National Guard has done a lot for me. I appreciate everyone who voted for me. I know there are many troops who deserve it. (Story submitted by Jackson Hewitt Tax Service, Inc.)



# Gathered in Memory

## Mississippi Honors Soldiers on Memorial Day, throughout the year

Photos & Stories by Sandy Ates, JFH-PA

**LONG RIDE**--About 600 Freedom riders passed through the Jackson area on May 22, 2007, in the famed 'Run for the Wall' that ended in Washington, D.C., on May 28 at the Vietnam Veteran's Memorial. Riders join in the run from all parts of the U.S., the ride initiates in California, annually.

Memorial Day in the State of Mississippi is filled with ceremonies to remember the men and women who have fought and died to hold on to independence and freedom for all mankind be it on the fields of their homeland or on battlefields afar.

The Magnolia State likens its servicemembers to sons, brothers, and family. It was here on Mississippi soil that the first Memorial Day was beheld.

In an article by Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Parker Hills, entitled "Where Flowers Healed A Nation," he writes about the origin of the first Memorial Day.

...The Civil War ended in 1865, and three ladies of Columbus--Miss Matt Morton, Mrs. J. T. Fontaine and Mrs. Green T. Hill--decided to visit the cemetery to clean and decorate only for the Confederate graves, but as they caught sight of the familiar American names on the Union Soldiers' tombstones, they were deeply moved. These young men, too, were mourned by mothers, sisters, and wives, and the ladies decorated their graves along with those of the sleeping Southerners.

The other ladies of Columbus found inspiration in this beautiful custom, and the parlor of Miss Morton's Columbus home, Twelve Gables, was used to plan an annual decoration. The following day, a local editor wrote: "The procession of yesterday, in honor of the Confederate dead,

was large and imposing. First marched in twos, the young ladies and girls, dressed in immaculate white, each bearing her bouquet or chaplet of flowers. Next came the matrons dressed in mourning; like the others with flowers in their hands--their black dresses typical of Southern heart in gloom for its beloved dead--the fair flowers emblematic of woman's admiration and affection for all that was gallant and chivalrous in patriots. Lastly came the procession of carriages bearing the elderly ladies."

'Arriving at the cemetery, the ladies assembled around the graves of the Soldiers in the form of a square; from the center of the ground, an elaborate and eloquent address was delivered by Rev. G. T. Stanback, then following it, a fervent prayer by Rev. A. S. Andrews. The ladies then performed the beautiful and touching duty of decorating the graves with flowers.

...The graciousness of the ladies of Columbus was noticed by Horace Greeley's New York Tribune. In a small paragraph, the Tribune read: "The women of Columbus, Mississippi, have shown themselves impartial to their offerings made to the memory of the dead. They strewed flowers alike on the graves of the Confederate and National Soldiers."

Much bitterness and rancor remained from the war, and the act of the ladies impressed many of Greeley's readers as a symbol of peace. Francis Miles Finch, a young attorney in Ithaca, New York, who later helped found Cornell University, wrote a poem entitled "The Blue and the Gray." In September of 1867 "The Blue and the Gray" was required recitation by many of America's school children, and served to aid in the nations healing. The healing was to go deeper when in 1868, Congress dedicated May 30th as "Decoration Day," a day for the graves of all Soldiers to be adorned, and for their memories to be commemorated. Today, "Decoration Day" is known as Memorial Day.

Ironically, in October of 1867, the remains of the Union dead were disinterred from the cemetery in Columbus and





Re-enactors line the road in front of the Harley Davidson of Central Mississippi Cycle Store in Jackson and greet nearly 600 freedom riders arriving for memorial services there May 23. The re-enactors portray period military troops on the Trail of Honor, a special event showing the thousands of visitors what life was like for the Soldiers who have fought the many wars since the founding of America.

buried in the National Military Cemetery at Shiloh. Still, the cemetery in Columbus, appropriately named Friendship Cemetery, forever has the distinction of hosting America's first Memorial Day."

### ***Trail of Honor/ Run for the Wall***

In Jackson, one annual event memorializes armed forces members who have fought under all the flags that have flown during America's history.

Seven years ago, when Harley Davidson of Central Mississippi owner Earl Rottmann was contacted by the state coordinator of Run for the Wall -- a 10-day motorcycle convoy that runs from California to the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. -- to feed bikers coming through Jackson, Rottmann took them on.

He said six years ago the riders brought in a replica of a Civil War cannon and they conducted a short ceremony at the shop just off Interstate 55 south. The following year, the Trail of Honor was begun and a living history

of all American wars from the 1776 American Revolutionary War to Desert Storm evolved.

In 2007, the Trail of Honor/Run for the Wall extravaganza drew thousands. The three day event included authentic encampments with re-enactors and equipment, armored vehicles, helicopters and other military equipment displays. The Traveling Vietnam Memorial Wall display was also on hand as well.

Attendees were able to meet and greet veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom. Also, some U.S.S. Pueblo veterans, Navajo codetalkers and the Tuskegee Airmen were on hand to answer questions.

The festivities came to its apex when the Run for the Wall (freedom) riders began arriving after a parade through downtown Jackson. About 500 bikes and 600 riders made their way to the Harley-Davidson dealership on I-55 escorted by various law enforcement agencies. War re-enactors from every era, greeted the riders, as

military helicopters flew overhead.

The Black Daggers Parachute Demonstration Team from the U.S. Army Special Operations Command in North Carolina dropped in for an appearance, too, just before the bikers were treated to a big southern catfish lunch inside the motorcycle shop.

As bikers ate, a Quarterdeck ceremony was conducted to recognize the many special veterans in attendance, including a navigator who flew aboard the Enola Gay in World War II, and one of Mississippi's Medal of Honor recipients.

Other special guests were recognized and made remarks.

Gov. Haley Barbour, Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi; Dr. Robert S. "Doc" Foglesong, former four-star commander, U.S. Air Forces in Europe, and currently president of Mississippi State University, all noted Mississippi's patriotic pride and compassion for its military men and women, and how grateful they were to its citizens like gold star mother, Mrs. Deborah Ladd, mother of Sgt. Joshua Ladd (Mississippi Army National Guard Soldier killed



TOP LEFT--A parachutist with the U.S. Marine Corps parachute team, the 'Black Daggers,' comes in for a landing for a large crowd gathered for Memorial Day events at the annual Trail of Honor/Run for the Wall activities.



TOP RIGHT--Men who have served this country throughout America's history are all honored during a special memorial ceremony May 28, as re-enactors carry the hats of modern day armed forces members.

in Iraq). Mrs. Barbour presented Mrs. Ladd with traditional white roses.

An impressive memorial service was conducted for military members from all branches of service who had paid the ultimate price. Each of the era re-enactors carried the modern day cover or hat worn by each of the services today, and placed it neatly on display for the duration of the ceremony. A special tribute was made for POW and MIA Soldiers.

The ceremony was impressive to the many attending.

James Livingston, a retired Marine Corps major general and Medal of Honor recipient, said, "Great to get such a patriotic event, to see some of my fellow veterans. It's just a great day for everyone."

And for the bikers who call themselves "Rolling Thunder," the ride to Washington, is an honor, and the stop in Jackson, is another opportunity to honor the many American men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

### *When honor is duty*

The sentinel at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C., never sleeps. A guard is on duty at the tomb 24 hours a day, 365 days a year



Members of one of Mississippi's six Honor Guard/Funeral Details.

regardless of weather.

This has been a proclaimed 'duty of honor' for a special group of men since April 6, 1948. To have the privilege of wearing the Tomb Badge is a rare one, but it is duty for which one

rarely sees a greater passion.

The Mississippi National Guard's Honor Guard may not perform duty 24/7, but according to state honor guard coordinator, Sgt 1st Class Elroy Winding, the duty hours are extremely long.

"We have six teams with three to four men on each team throughout the state," said Winding. "We average 120 funerals a month, and that is for funeral honors for any armed forces member or veteran, regardless of branch of service, from the State of Mississippi."

Being an honor guard member is not an easy job.

"We've had a situation where we've had to perform three different ceremonies in one day in one area; and that takes up a whole day for duty and travel, and sometimes they have to get right back up the next day and go again," said Winding. "These Soldiers work Monday through Saturday--they get off on Sunday only because funeral services aren't held on Sundays. Many of them have families, and very little time off to be with them."

When asked why they would subject themselves to long hours, minimal pay and separation from families, Winding said, "It is all about respect. Respect for the person and his family, respect for the uniform, respect for the country, respect for the flag, and respect for the freedom of all Americans. They are all worthy of respect."

# OUR HISTORY

Folks around Jackson, Miss., still remembered the ‘Dutchmen’ as if it were yesterday, recollecting their overall personalities as wild and crazy, but equally generous and compassionate.”

Jackson became home to many Dutch in 1942, when Dutch forces were driven out of the Dutch East Indies by Japanese who had invaded and conquered most of Southeast Asia. Among the Dutch forces that fled to Australia were enough trained pilots from the Dutch Air Force and Navy to form a bomber squadron under the command of the Royal Australian Air Force.

The Royal Air Force had pilots but no planes. But, America had planes--thousands of them. Rosie the riveter and others kept a steady line waiting to be sent to England, to the Pacific and elsewhere so that America and its allies could keep a foothold and tilt the axis on World War II.

*“In May 1942, the City of Jackson was a small southern town of about 60,000 people. The war indeed seemed to be very far away. Some of our sons had been called into the services, but somehow everyday life did not change very much. All of this changed on the 8th of May 1942, in the early evening, some 800 Dutch aviators arrived in Jackson. They spoke some strange tongue and wore strange uniforms, noted former Jackson Mayor Kane Ditto in an address at Cedar Lawn Cemetery in 1992.*

*The people of Jackson welcomed them with open hearts and many stories prevailed of the hospitality and friendships between the people of Jackson and the Dutch Airmen. Some of them returned to Jackson and became U.S. citizens and we now have three generations of them in this area. On the 27th of May 1942, the first Dutch Airman was killed. This plot of land [at Cedar Lawn Cemetery] was deeded to the Dutch government for the burial of these men. There are now a total of 40 Airmen buried here and also three of their children who died at birth. We have been proud to maintain these gravesites for the past 50 years and I assure you that they will be maintained for the next 50 years.”*

On May 28, 2007, Ditto was back again to speak to the many who had arrived to pay homage to the Dutch Airmen on Memorial Day at the very same cemetery where he spoke in 1992. But this time, it was even more special. It would be a day that was set aside to inter the remains of a beloved family member and one of the Dutch pilots who had served in Jackson, Miss., and whose final wish was to be laid to rest beside his comrades at the Dutch Memorial at Cedar Lawn Cemetery.

With this year’s annual Memorial Day entourage from the Dutch Embassy in Washington, D.C., was Dutch flier Herman Aren’s widow, Ans Arens, who watched as the ashes of her husband were presented for burial at their final resting place at Cedar Lawn Cemetery. She had come with her children and grandchildren to ensure that his dying wishes had been granted and help lay the wreath on the graves of the other brave Dutch Airmen. A delegation of Dutch joined her; Rear Admiral (ret) Peter C. van der Graaf, director Netherlands War Graves Foundation, Mr. Johan J. Teeuwisse, Obituarist Netherlands War Graves Foundation, Mrs. Constance C. Willems, Honerair Consul of the Netherlands, Rear Admiral (LH) Michiel Hijmans, Defense Attaché to the Netherlands Embassy in Washington, D.C., and Lt-Kol Cor Diepeveen, Controller to the Netherlands Embassy in Washington, D.C., arrived in Jackson for the ceremony which was sponsored through the American Legion Post 1, and the Mississippi National Guard.

The eulogy was delivered by Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi who noted the bravery of the Dutch Airmen during the course of their training in Jackson. Later, the Arens family and the Dutch embassy entourage were given a tour of a more modern flying unit, the Mississippi Air National Guard’s 172nd Airlift Wing. They were given the opportunity to see the sophisticated operation of the C-17 and its superior maneuverability. Mrs. Arens remembered her husband, Herman, writing a letter to their only daughter, Gwen, talking about flying the B-25 and his start in aviation.

Much will be remembered about the displaced Dutch Airmen who came to Jackson in 1942. Before Mrs. Arens and the Dutch delegation departed for home, a new exhibit at the Armed Forces Museum at Camp Shelby was dedicated to the Dutch fliers and to their memory. *(continues on next page)*

Story by Sandy Ates



The United States offered to train Dutch military personnel after their forces were driven out of the East Indies and fled into Australia. These Dutch Soldiers and Sailors were trained as pilots, aerial observers, gunners, bombardiers and radiomen at the Jackson Army Air Base (now Hawkins Field) in Jackson, Mississippi in 1942. It was established as the Royal Netherlands Military Flying School (RNMFS) and was in operation from 1942-1944. Dutch women also served at the RNMFS as nurses and clerical assistants. A number of the flyers never made it out of Jackson, at least 30 lost their lives in training accidents. All are buried at Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Jackson.



**TOP LEFT**--The remains of Captain Herman J.A.C. Arens, a World War II Dutch Flyer, are presented to Rear Admiral (LH) Michiel Hijmans, Defense Attache to the Netherlands Embassy, by a member of the Mississippi Army National Guard's Funeral Honor Guard before interment at the Dutch Memorial plot at Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Jackson (shown top right). *(Photo by Spc. Charles Brice, 102 MPAD)*

**BOTTOM**--Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi stands with Mrs. Ans Arens, widow of Dutch flier, Capt. Herman Arens after laying a wreath at the Dutch Memorial at Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Jackson. *(Photo by Spc. Charles Brice, 102nd MPAD)*



# Museum Exhibit Honors 'Dutch Fliers'



The above picture is a donation made to the newest exhibit at Camp Shelby's Armed Forces Museum, the 'Dutch Fliers' exhibit. This Dutch air crew is special in that two of its members, co-pilot Fred Streuding (2nd left), and Capt. Herman Arens (2nd right), were recently remembered by family members during a Memorial Day weekend ceremonies in Mississippi. Arens' remains were interred at Cedar Lawn Cemetery, where many old friends attended. Widow, Ans Arens, and her daughter Gwen, met with Streuding's daughter, Sunnye Streuding-Forte, and together, made many donations to the new exhibit at the museum.

• *Reprint (AP) News Hattiesburg*

A new museum exhibit at Camp Shelby's Armed Forces Museum honors a chapter of military history little known on either side of the Atlantic.

During World War II, the Dutch military was forced out of the Dutch East Indies by early 1942. With Nazis occupying the Netherlands, the country's training battalions had no where to go.

Mississippi was an unlikely refuge, but when the United States offered to train Dutch military personnel, Jackson Army Air Base was selected.

"The Dutch fliers," as the troops came to be known, trained in Jackson from 1942-1944, according to published reports. Those who died during training are buried at Jackson's Cedar Lawn Cemetery.

The temporary exhibit features pictures, history lessons and other memorabilia. A permanent exhibit

is planned, say museum officials.

Many Dutch fliers became attached to the state - flier Herman Arens' dying wish was to be buried with his brethren, family members say.

Herman Arens came to Jackson from the Dutch East Indies as a flight instructor, widow Ans Arens said.

Ans Arens, also born in the Dutch East Indies, spent three years of the war interned in a Japanese prisoner of war camp, meeting Herman Arens when he returned to the East Indies, liberating her camp.

Many of the Dutchmen like Circuit Court Judge Bob Helfrich's father Jan Helfrich, married local girls.

Helfrich said his mother, Marjorie Helfrich, corresponded with his father for months after Jan Helfrich's departure.

"He proposed to her by mail, and she got on a boat and went to

Holland," he said.

The pair returned a number of years later, Helfrich said. Jan Helfrich died in 1966, when Bob Helfrich was only 12, but the judge said he has many memories of his father's war stories.

The exhibit grew out of the desire of Arens and other Dutch fliers to be buried at Cedar Lawn, said retired Col. Wallace (Pete) Sanders, who helped the Arens family secure a spot for Herman Arens.

"We brought them home, and we're going to keep them," he said. "Friends are forever."

Many of the items in the exhibit, Sanders said, were donated by families like Hattiesburg resident Sunnye Streuding-Forte, whose father Fred Streuding trained in Jackson.

"We've had a lot of the items in our possession," Streuding-Forte said. "I'm just awestruck that my father would be honored like this."

# Army National Guard

## Readiness Centers Dedicated



### Clarksdale Army National Guard Readiness Center

January 6, 2007, dedicated to

**Specialist Raphael S. Davis**, died Dec. 2, 2003; he was a member of Co. C, 223rd Engineer Battalion in Charleston.



### Columbia Army National Guard Readiness Center

February 1, 2007, dedicated to

**Specialist James A. Chance III**, died Nov. 6, 2003; he was a member of Co. C, 890th Engineer Battalion in Columbia..



### Starkville Army National Guard Readiness Center

March 3, 2007, dedicated to

**Staff Sgt. Travis S. Cooper**, died July 16, 2005. He was a member of HHB, 2nd Bn, 114th Field Artillery, Starkville.



### Kosciusko Army National Guard Readiness Center

March 4, 2007, dedicated to

**Sergeant Gregory L. Tull**, died Nov. 25, 2005. He was a member of HHB, 2nd Bn, 114th Field Artillery, Starkville.

**The Mississippi Army National Guard continues to remember its Soldiers who have paid the ultimate sacrifice during Operation Iraqi Freedom, and in their memories we honor them by dedicating state and federal facilities in their honor so that their fellow Soldiers will remember their honor and sacrifice. The following dedications were completed from January through July 2007.**

**Quitman Army National Guard  
Readiness Center**

**April 14, 2007, dedicated to**

**Sgt. Robert A. McNail, died Feb. 11, 2005. He was a member of Det 1, Co. B, 150th Combat Engineer Battalion in Quitman.**



**Morton Army National Guard  
Readiness Center**

**April 15, 2007, dedicated to**

**Sergeant Robert Shane Pugh, died on March 2, 2005. He was a member of HQ Battery, 1st Battalion, 204th Air Defense Artillery in Newton.**



**Natchez Army National Guard  
Readiness Center**

**June 9, 2007, dedicated to**

**Specialist Bryan E. Barron, died on May 23, 2005. He was a member of Company C, 155th Infantry, Natchez.**



**Ackerman Army National  
Guard Readiness Center**

**July 26, 2007, dedicated to**

**Staff Sgt. Tommy S. Little, died April 19 2005. He was a member of Battery A, 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery in Columbus.**



# Here we go, again

By Sandy Ates, JFH-PA

About 400 members of three Mississippi Army National Guard units were called to active duty in June as part of a presidential call-up for support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

With the deployment of the 288<sup>th</sup> Sapper Company of Houston, 1387<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster (QM) Company of Greenville and the 113<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company of Brandon, more than 600 Mississippi National Guard personnel will be supporting military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Houston-based, 288<sup>th</sup> Sapper Co., with approximately 97 Soldiers, said good-bye to families and well-wishers June 10, with a large crowd gathered at the Courthouse Square for their send-off ceremony before the Soldiers loaded buses and headed for training at Fort McCoy, Wis.

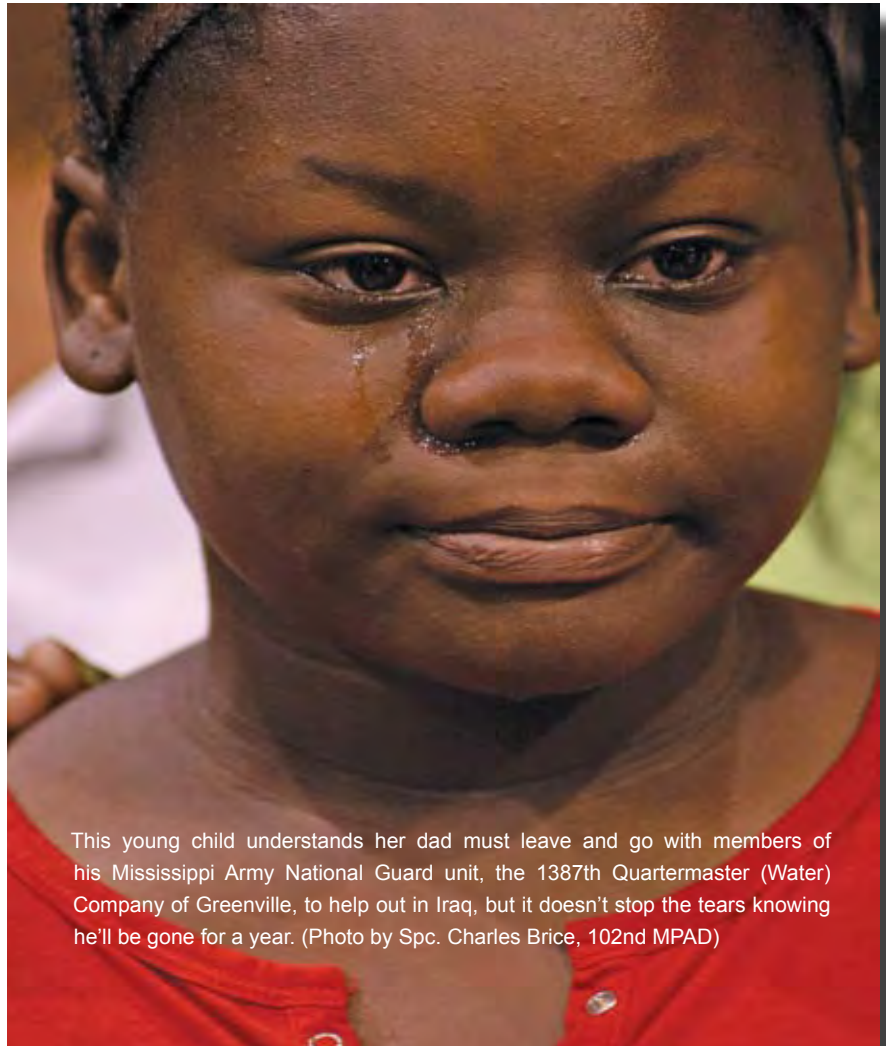
Most impressive was the large turn-out by the Patriot Guard riders. According to 1<sup>st</sup> Lt. Murray Shugars from the 102<sup>nd</sup> Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, one of the riders said that they had 288 Harley-Davidson motorcycles and nearly 300 riders to participate in the send-off of the Sapper Soldiers. They came from throughout the state to show their support.

this is not the first time the Houston unit has been deployed.

Between 1994 and June 2006, the Mississippi Army National guard unit located in Houston was known as Company C, 150<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. The unit was activated in Sept. 2004 as part of the 155<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III. Due to a change in force structure in June 2006, the unit was designated as the 288<sup>th</sup> Sapper Co.

On June 13, in Greenville, families and friends gathered to send 150 men and women of the 1387<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster (QM) (Water) Company, with well-wishes to Camp Shelby for a two-month train-up before deploying overseas.

The next day, the 113<sup>th</sup> MP Co. based in Brandon, witnessed hot early morning temperatures, but had a send-off by families, community and military



This young child understands her dad must leave and go with members of his Mississippi Army National Guard unit, the 1387<sup>th</sup> Quartermaster (Water) Company of Greenville, to help out in Iraq, but it doesn't stop the tears knowing he'll be gone for a year. (Photo by Spc. Charles Brice, 102<sup>nd</sup> MPAD)

leadership who held fast under the heat until the last hug and handshake was given to the 135 Soldiers boarding buses for training at Camp Shelby for a couple of months before their deployment overseas.

For members of the 113<sup>th</sup> MP Co., this marks the third deployment since the first Gulf War in 1991. This same unit was called up for Operation Desert Storm, however, deployed to Ft. Lewis, Wa., to replace active duty troops sent overseas when Iraq invaded Kuwait. They mobilized again in 1996 for Operation Joint Forge, but were assigned in Germany. In 2003, again they were mobilized for Operation Enduring Freedom, serving a year in Afghanistan, Pakistan and Uzbekistan.

Soldiers and Airmen of the Mississippi National Guard see military duty as an honor and privilege, and they

are highly esteemed by Mississippi's communities that proudly rally around them offering love, support and prayers while they serve.

"These Soldiers are our true heroes as are the ones that have gone before them," said Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi, who shook the hand of each deployed Soldier and wished them God Speed over the next 12 months or so until they return back home.

"Given their patriotism, expertise and quality of training, I can assure their mission success in Iraq," said Cross confidently, having knowledge of the great successes of his Soldiers and Airmen since the start of the Gulf War, "and we wish them the very best as they support the Global War on Terror."

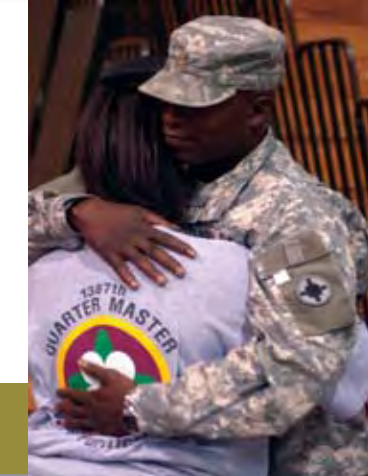




288th Sapper Company, Houston, Miss., say good-bye to family and friends June 10. (Photos by 1st Lt. Murray Shugars, 102nd MPAD).



113th Military Police Company, Brandon, Miss., deploy for the third time since Desert Storm on June 14. (Photos by Spc. Charles Brice, 102nd MPAD).



The 1387th Quartermaster (Water) Company, of Greenville, with about 150 Soldiers leave for their mobilization station at Camp Shelby on June 13. (Photos by Spc. Charles Brice, 102nd MPAD)

*“Given their patriotism, expertise and quality of training, I can assure their mission success in Iraq.”*

*Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the Adjutant General*

# Beating the Competition

## Best Food



Staff Sgt. Billy Hegood presents an award-winning meal.



WINNER - 2007  
 U.S. ARMY NATIONAL GUARD CATEGORY  
 Philip A. Connelly Award for Excellence in Army Food Service  
 PRESENTED TO  
 367<sup>TH</sup> MAINTENANCE COMPANY  
 MISSISSIPPI ARMY NATIONAL GUARD  
 PHILADELPHIA, MISSISSIPPI  
 International Food Service Executives Association  
 31 MARCH 2007  
 KANSAS CITY, MISSOURI



Maj. Gen. Ike Pylant presents the Connelly Cup to Staff Sgt. Dennis Rush during the Joint Food Service Awards Banquet in Kansas City.



Spc. Jerome Kitchens serves up noodles for beef stroganoff during the Connelly competition.



Spc. Dagard Hughes grills up a few pounds of meat.



Spc. Amanda Grace makes her near-famous pineapple upside-down cake.



Staff Sgt. Rush in the Applebee's test Kitchen.



367<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company  
 Philadelphia DeKalb  
 Commanders: First Sergeant

Members of the 367th Support Maintenance Company food service team show their 'pro-ability' for the 39th Annual Philip A. Connelly Food Service competition, and earned the right to be called the 'best food service team in the National Guard, following their win at the state, national and regional competition levels. The food service team includes (Standing left to right in the photo directly above) Specialists Jerome Kitchens of Jackson, Dagard Hughes of Louisville, Jobie Charlie of Philadelphia, Amanda Grace of DeKalb, all of them cooks on the team; Sgt. 1st Class James Forest of Winona, food operations sergeant; Staff Sgt. Macon Beamon of Carthage, first cook; Sgt. Dennis Rush of Philadelphia and Spc. Tarus Rush of DeKalb, both cooks. (Kneeling left to right) Capt. Christy Burton of Starkville, company commander; first sergeant Carroll Mooney of Lumberton, and 1st Lt. Andy Thaggard of Clinton, food service officer. (Photo by Debbie Myers, Neshoba Democrat). (All other photos on this page by 1st Lt. Andy Thaggard, JFH-PA).

It started in a staff meeting while conducting Hurricane Katrina relief operations in Gulfport. It ended in a national championship.

The 367<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company, of Philadelphia and DeKalb, was recently awarded the top prize in the 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Philip A. Connelly Awards Program for Excellence in Army Food Service, National Guard division.

"We were just so enthused about having an opportunity to be involved in the Connelly," said Sgt. 1st Class James Forrest, of Winona, the unit's food operations sergeant, "to show our expertise for what we do in the military."

That expertise was honed while the 367<sup>th</sup> was mobilized for Operation Iraqi Freedom. From September 2003 to December 2004, the food service section worked near the Turkish border. For nearly a year, they worked off of their mobile kitchen trailer (MKT), providing coalition forces with the best food they could muster.

During Katrina, their combat-proven skills were put to the test. At the Mississippi Air National Guard's Combat Readiness Training Center, in Gulfport, the core of the team staffed the main dining facility.

For four weeks, during the peak of the military mission, the facility served more than 12,000 meals a day. Not a single instance of food-borne illness occurred under their watch. Long gone are the days when cooks were known as 'cookie' or 'spoon'. Today's food service professionals are just that, professional.

It is restaurant-quality food, served hot, fresh and on-time. Food that is prepared on a trailer in harsh conditions, regardless of temperature, even if it is raining water or mortars.

The Connelly Awards Program evaluation is based on 10 major areas, such as: food preparation and quality; food and water safety procedures; use and maintenance of equipment; accounting procedures; handling of stored food; technical knowledge; and tactical site selection and setup.

Another major area, perhaps one that will give the best indicator of how the other areas will score, is attitude. The Connelly evaluation process is a team-effort, and a good attitude is required to obtain the silver cup that is

given to the winning team.

For the 367<sup>th</sup>, that good attitude made all the difference.

For instance, while preparing for their regional evaluation at Camp Shelby last summer, the team loaded up and moved to the field. Once there, they discovered that Katrina had ravaged the once-perfect field site.

Out came chain-saws, weed-eaters and lots of sweat. In came a regional victory on a much-improved site.

Now the team was to be evaluated against six other regional winners. Each team could choose their own evaluation location, and a tough decision had to be made.

The 367<sup>th</sup> could try again at Camp Shelby, or perhaps take a chance at Camp McCain, near Grenada. Instead, it was time to call for the home-field advantage.

Thanks to Mayor Rayburn Waddell, Philadelphia's Northside Park became temporary home to a field-training site, along with local youth baseball and soccer programs.

For seven days, more than 30 Soldiers worked through cold November rains to prepare the site.

And on the sixth day, Veterans Day, the 367<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Company's food service team became only the second Mississippi Army National Guard team to earn the national title since HHB, 1/114 Field Artillery, of Greenwood, did back in 1999.

"I started participating in the Connelly program back in 1985," said Forrest, also a member of the '99 winning team. "And this was setup perfectly."

The layout was a system of camouflage tunnels, connecting the MKT to the dining area, the food sanitation area, or any of the other 10 tents that were part of the site.

"It was almost like a shopping mall. Once inside, you were under cover until you were ready to exit the dining tent," said Forrest.

Even one of the evaluators commented on the site, saying that in 20 plus years of food service, this by far exceeded anything he had seen.

To give credit where credit is due, the idea for the tunnel system came from a former commander of the 367<sup>th</sup>, Maj. Gen. James I. "Ike" Pylant, now the assistant adjutant general-Army of Mississippi.

Pylant, now a fan of Spc. Amanda Grace's pineapple upside-down cake, was there to support the company

during the regional and national evaluations.

"I'm so proud of what these Soldiers have accomplished," said Pylant. "They have worked together so well, and put forth such an outstanding effort. They represented the Mississippi National Guard well, and deserved to win."

The Connelly Awards Program is sponsored by the International Food Service Executives Association (IFSEA) and the Department of the Army. The joint food service awards presentation, recognizing all winners of the competition, was held at the IFSEA's 2007 national convention on March 31, in Kansas City.

Members of the 367<sup>th</sup> food service team were present to accept the award. Also in attendance were Maj. Gen. Pylant, who presented the Connelly Cup, state Command Sergeant Major Don Cooley, 298<sup>th</sup> Support Battalion commander Lt. Col. Mark Prine, and 298<sup>th</sup> Command Sergeant Major Billy Ward.

In addition to receiving the Connelly Cup, Staff Sgt. Macon Beamon, first cook, was sent to culinary training course at Johnson and Whales University, in Denver, the week prior to the award ceremony.

Beamon and Staff Sergeant Dennis Rush were also treated to a mini-workshop at the Applebee's test kitchen in Kansas City.

Winning the Connelly does more than bring home a silver cup. Soldiers are challenged in their craft, and become more proficient. Recruiting and retention is enhanced by the positive attention to an oft-overlooked trade. Equipment is brought into tip-top shape.

Then there is pride.

"We are looking forward to the competition that's coming. We are going to defend our title against anyone, anytime," said Forrest. "We want them to know that we are still number one."

The road to back-to-back titles began in May, with the regional evaluation of the 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Connelly Competition. The unit currently awaits word to hear if it will defend their cup at the national level.



# Beating the Competition

## ● Best Soldier



**Camp Shelby, Miss.**—Some of the best Soldiers in the Mississippi Army National Guard competed for top honors during the third annual Soldier of the Year Competition held here March 8-10.

Soldiers selected by their commanders as being the best within their major command element competed to earn the title of Soldier of the Year-2007, NCO of the Year-2007, and AGR Soldier of the Year-2007; there were 10 Soldiers competing for the three titles this year.

The program was hosted by the command sergeants major and sergeants major of the Mississippi Army National Guard and conducted through the enlisted leadership at the 154<sup>th</sup> Regional Training Institute, Infantry Training Battalion (Bn), Camp Shelby.

Soldiers are assessed in many areas to include the standard Army Physical Fitness Training test (APFT), weapons skills, warrior skills training tasks, land navigation and various written examinations to test Army knowledge. They must also present themselves formally before a panel of three board members who evaluate the Soldiers' dress and appearance, knowledge of current events.

This year's events and selection, according to State Command Sergeant Major Don Cooley, was difficult because all of them are exceptional Soldiers.

"Although only three Soldier of the Year awards are given, I believe, as do our other sergeants major, that they are all winners. They may not be able to take home an eagle plaque, but they will all be taking home a rewarding experience and the ability to become mentors to other Soldiers within their respective units," Cooley said to attendees of the Soldier of the Year awards banquet.

This year's top three award winners were: Specialist David Hester of Terry, 114<sup>th</sup> Military Police Company, Clinton, Miss. (Soldier of the Year); Staff Sergeant Terry Armstrong of Ocean Springs, 154<sup>th</sup> RTI, Infantry Training Bn, Cp Shelby (NCO of the Year); and Sergeant Jesse Lindsey of Amory, HHT,



1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 198<sup>th</sup> Armor Reconnaissance Sqdn., 155<sup>th</sup> Brigade Combat Team, Amory (AGR Soldier of the Year).

Other participants were Staff Sgt. Phillip J. Patrick of Canton, 154<sup>th</sup> RTI, ITB, Camp Shelby; Staff Sgt. Jason L. Denton of Batesville, E Co., 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 185<sup>th</sup> Aviation, Jackson; Staff Sgt. Henry B. Gann of Ecu, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn., 198<sup>th</sup> ARS, 155<sup>th</sup> BCT, Pontotoc; Specialist David Odom of Waynesboro, 3656<sup>th</sup> Maintenance Co., Waynesboro; Sgt. Chris Tracy of Bay Springs, A Battery, 1<sup>st</sup> Bn, 204<sup>th</sup> Air Defense Artillery, Bay Springs; Spc. James D. Tisdale of Pascagoula, 859<sup>th</sup> Vertical Co., Pascagoula, and Sgt. David Bernardi of Hattiesburg, 154<sup>th</sup> RTI, ITB, Camp Shelby.

Presenting awards to Soldiers of the Year, with special runner-up awards for other competitors, was the adjutant general of Mississippi, Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, and assistant adjutant general-Army, Maj. Gen. James "Ike" Pylant. Commanders and command sergeants majors representing each of the major commands were also present for the event.

### **Region III Competition**

State winners went on to represent Mississippi in the Region III NCO/Soldier of the Year competition in Tennessee.

In the regional competition, Soldiers from the states of Alabama,

Kentucky, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Florida, Mississippi, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, were challenged with the same tough standards Mississippi Soldiers had endured during its state competition.

At the end of the regional competition in May, two Soldiers were selected as the Soldier of the Year and the NCO of the Year. Mississippi's Sgt. Jesse Lindsey, was named NCO of the year.

In mid-August 2007, Lindsey will travel to Fort Benning, Ga., to compete for the National Guard Bureau's Soldier of the Year competition and later travel to Washington, D.C., for the Outstanding Soldier/Airman of the Year Week. He will then travel on to Oklahoma and join the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS) for their national convention where all winners will be announced and recognized.



Sgt. Jesse Lindsey  
Region III NCO of the Year

# Beating the Competition



## ● Best Unit



Major General Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi, attached the twelfth Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (AFOUA) streamer to the 172nd Airlift Wing unit flag on June 2, during a special ceremony at the base.


Special Order G-0603, signed by Michael W. Wynne, Secretary of the Air Force, was awarded to the 172nd AW for "...exceptionally meritorious service, of national and international significance, that clearly sets this unit above and apart from other units."

The period covered for this award, 1 July, 2004, to 30 June, 2006, was a particularly busy time frame for the unit who had just converted to the C-17 Globemaster in 2003. Still, the unit demonstrated extraordinary capability by providing superior airlift support to the Air National Guard, United States Air Force and Department of Defense.

The 172nd AW supported the Intercontinental Medical Operation plan that returned injured personnel to their home base. the Operations and Maintenance Group deployed

to Incirlik Air Base in Turkey and led the air Mobility Command Fleet in both mission-capable rate and cargo delivery in theater. The unit re-deployed to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, to assume the Operation Iraqi Freedom Aeromedical Evacuation mission, where the wing delivered critical war-fighting supplies to locations within Iraq, then repositioned in-theater to provide airlift for wounded troops to Germany.

While continuing to support these missions, the unit flew multiple missions supporting operations for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. The Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron deployed and provided direct medical support for the devastated Gulf Coast region. They evacuated over 1,400 patients from the Texas and Louisiana areas before the landfall of Hurricane Rita. The Medical Group operated the first Expeditionary Medical Support Hospital, providing medical support and treatment for over 2,300 military and civilian personnel.



A Mississippi Air National Guard C-17 Globemaster III lands July 9 at the Air National Guard's first assault runway training facility at Camp Shelby, Miss. The 210-acre Shelby Aux. Field is one of only two facilities in the world designed for C-17 short-field landing operations. It was constructed to meet the training demands of the Air National Guard. (Photo by Master Sgt. Andy Miller, 172nd AW, MSANG)

# First Air Guard Assault Runway at Camp Shelby

The Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center (CSJFTC) just got better, and the 172nd Airlift Wing's C-17 training facilities just got bigger.

Already a premier training center operating at a full-scale mobilization station as needed as a U.S. Army Forces Command Power Support platform, operations and training capability were further enhanced in July with the official opening of the Air National Guard C-17 Assault Runway.

Mississippi National Guard members and special guests gathered in the summer heat of the CSJFTC July 9 to cut the yellow ribbon for the Air National Guard's first C-17 Globemaster III assault landing training facility.

The runway is the first of its kind for an Air National Guard unit, and one of two airfields in the world designed and constructed for C-17 short field assault landing operations. Further, it is the only one owned by the Air National Guard.

Called Shelby Aux Field, the 210-acre airfield is designed to provide proficiency in training for the 172nd's short landing and take off mission under the most demanding conditions, either in deployed combat operations or emergency civil support for the state of Mississippi, or other domestic emergencies nationwide.

More than 300 people attended the ceremony. They watched a C-17 flyover and landing that demonstrated the airfield's and the airplane's capabilities. Speakers included Lt.

Gen. Craig McKinley, director of the Air National Guard; Lt. Gen. Russel Honoré, commanding general of the 1st U.S. Army, and Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi.

"It's great to come out and see something that has been on the drawing books for many, many years and now it's ready to be used fulltime," said McKinley. "It means a lot to our country, it means a lot to the state of Mississippi and it will provide a lot of training for many years to come for Airmen flying the C-17."

The Jackson-based 172nd was the first Guard unit to fly the C-17, which the Air Force calls it's "most flexible cargo aircraft." Air Force officials say it can operate from small, austere airfields including assault runways as short as 3,500 feet and only 90 feet wide. The aircraft turns around on narrow runways by using its backing capability to make a three-point turn.

Capt. Brian Matranga, a pilot for the 172nd, said such maneuvers are generally performed by aircraft commanders. The wing has approximately 44 of them, and all are required to make assault landings every training cycle. "That's a lot of training we have to accomplish ... and a lot of times it's hard to schedule at out-of-state facilities," said Matranga.

An aircraft commander or mission pilot is the only one who can conduct the steep and swerving descents and short arrests using thrust reversers and brakes during an assault landing.

It's an initial qualification achieved at aircraft commander upgrade school at Altus Air Force Base, Okla.

Such landings can be conducted in blackout conditions in which aircrews wear night vision equipment to see special lights defining the runway. It could be compared to landing on an aircraft carrier at night, except that the runway is a lot longer and is not pitching and rolling.

However, a C-17 is longer than three Navy F-18 Hornets and can carry a 70-ton Abrams tank and more than 100 Soldiers.

A new three-stall fire house and operations center has also been built at Shelby Aux Field to support the training operations. Officials said they would share the facility with active duty C-17 units. It will provide users with real-time scoring and feedback on their landing maneuvers.

With the 172nd managing weekly airlift missions to Iraq, and with a history of supplying airlift to joint forces in Turkey and Afghanistan, the training is relevant. The wing's Airmen said they remain ready to respond to all requests, including natural disaster missions and combat missions into joint force operations overseas.

"This [facility] is one little part in our national defense mosaic that continues to make us the greatest nation in the world," said Cross. "It's an asset to the state of Mississippi and the nation."

# SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN .

PHOTO BY 1ST LT. ANDY THACKER



## New Stars

The careers of two top officers at the Joint Force Headquarters, Mississippi National Guard, seemed to be in the 'stars' the first part of 2007.

(TOP PHOTO) James I. "Ike" Pylant (center) was promoted to the rank of major general in the Mississippi Army National Guard in January 2007, with pinning on of new rank by Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi (left) and wife, Nancy Pylant. Pylant serves as the assistant adjutant general-Mississippi Army National Guard.

(BOTTOM PHOTO) Mitchell L. Brown, center, is promoted May 22, to the rank of brigadier general in the Mississippi Army National Guard. Pinning Gen. Brown is his wife, Cathy, and Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi. Brown, of Brandon, who had served as chief of staff, assumed responsibilities as the director, Joint Staff/Land Component Commander, Joint Force Headquarters, Mississippi Army National Guard (MSARNG), in Jackson.

PHOTO BY 1ST LT. ANDY THACKER



## Guardsmen selected to lead Miss. Fire Chiefs Association

Technical Sgt. John K. Elliott, chief of the 172nd Airlift Wing Fire Department, Mississippi Air National Guard, was recently elected as the 2007-2008 president of the Mississippi Fire Chiefs Association during their annual meeting held in Natchez in June. Elliott, a Brandon resident, is the first Air National Guard Fire Chief to hold the position.

The mission of the Mississippi Fire Chiefs Association is to provide leadership and direction to both career and volunteer firemen through information, education, services, and representation in order to enhance the full spectrum of service and de-



Tech. Sgt. John Kelly Elliot

liver it to citizens of Mississippi.

Elliott, a Pontotoc native, began his military and firefighting career on active duty in the U.S. Air

Force in 1991. Leaving the service in 1995, he worked with the Tupelo Fire Department and later went to work at the State Fire Academy in Rankin County. He began his stint as fire chief in the Mississippi Air National Guard in May 2006.

"I'm proud to be elected as president of the association, and I'm going to work very hard to increase the membership pool," said Elliott. "One of my main goals is to work toward locating another burn center in the State of Mississippi. I think it is very crucial that our firefighters and citizens of Mississippi have the capability to be treated here at home."



# .. IN THE NEWS



Master Sergeant Eddie Jenkins (center) from the State of Mississippi receiving the Master Seven Award from Lieutenant General Clyde A. Vaughn (right), Director of the Army National Guard.

## Master Seven for 2007

Master Sergeant Eddie Jenkins was recently recognized as one of seven top production area supervisors in the nation (Master Seven Award). The Master Seven Award is made up seven regions of recruiting across the nation. Each region consists of several states and territories across the United States. Master Sergeant Jenkins was recognized as the top production recruiting and retention NCOIC for the State of Mississippi for RY 06. He then traveled to Wilmington, NC, where he appeared before a Recruiting and Retention Advisory Board made up of eight states and two territories. Master Sergeant Jenkins was then recognized as the overall Master Seven Winner for RRAC III. In December 2006, Master Sergeant Jenkins and his family traveled to the Strength Maintenance Conference in Washington, DC, where he was recognized as one of the seven Master Seven Winners for RY 06. He received an award and a Master Seven Ring from the Director of the Army National Guard.

Master Sergeant Jenkins is one of few that have received both; the

Chiefs Fifty-four award/ring (Top Production Recruiter) and the Master Seven Award/ring.

Master Sergeant Jenkins had to overcome several obstacles when he took over Area Seven. He took over this area in 2005, and little as he knew this area had never been 100%. This area hasn't made 80% recruit production in over eleven years. His area is mostly a rural area, and only had two qualified recruiters out of nine. The first year he concentrated on building a strong and solid recruiting team. That year his team, which is known as the "Magnificent Seven," due to the area name being Area Seven, made 90%. In 2006 his team produced 106% of their assigned mission. Master Sergeant Jenkins was honored to receive the Master Seven Award, but he knows that he couldn't have done it without the hard work and the dedication of the Magnificent Seven.

★ ★ ★



## Raymond Revisited

By CW2 Keith Davis

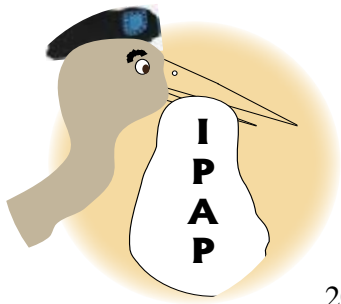
On a wet spring morning the sounds of musketry and whizzing minnie-balls shakes the oak leaves free of the moisture of the previous nights deluge and rankles the cottonmouths along Fourteen Mile Creek from their slumber. The sounds of yelling can be heard amid the cornfields as the morning mist dissipates with the sun. Could it be the attack of General James B. McPherson's Federal XVII Corps against General Gregg's Brigade of 2500 Confederates? No! Today's battle is a field trip and the troops are students from Carver Middle School.

Active and retired Mississippi National Guardsmen and a JROTC Cadet lent a hand as part of a living history program that was held in conjunction with the Raymond Country Fair on May 5. These Civil War living historians' primary mission was to educate local area students and the public of the six hour battle that took place near Raymond on May 12, 1863, during General Ulysses S. Grant's third and final Vicksburg Campaign.

Civil War era uniforms, weapons, rations, camp life, and the Battle of Raymond were the topics discussed with the students along the ancient railroad bed that is now part of the Raymond Military Park and interpretive trail that opened in April of this year.

Live fire demonstrations of Civil War era rifles, carbines and muskets added another dimension for the students. Active program participation was encouraged by the historians by rewarding authentic Civil War bullets to the students who answered questions.

What do these events have to do with present day? Plenty! Some of the living historians are veterans themselves of Operations Desert Storm and Iraqi Freedom. Soldiers are Soldiers no matter what era! The weapons, uniforms, tactics and technology may change, but the heart the Citizen-Soldier remains the same!



## Stork delivers IPAP message

In October 2000, 32-year old Lee Stork worked in the catheter lab at Wesley Medical Center in Hattiesburg, Miss. He wanted to continue his education in the medical field, but was unsure how to accomplish this and provide for his family. That's when Lee heard about a new program with the National Guard called the Inter-service Physician Assistance Program (IPAP).

Wow! What a deal!

IPAP allowed qualified Soldiers to attend school at Fort Sam Houston, in conjunction with the University of Nebraska, for two years and be paid active pay, while training to become a physicians assistant (PA).

Lee was prior service, already familiar with the military and had a medical and science background. He studied and trained as an x-ray and radiological technician at Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College. These courses gave him the requisite number of hours (60) to qualify for the IPAP. He appeared to be a perfect fit for this new program.

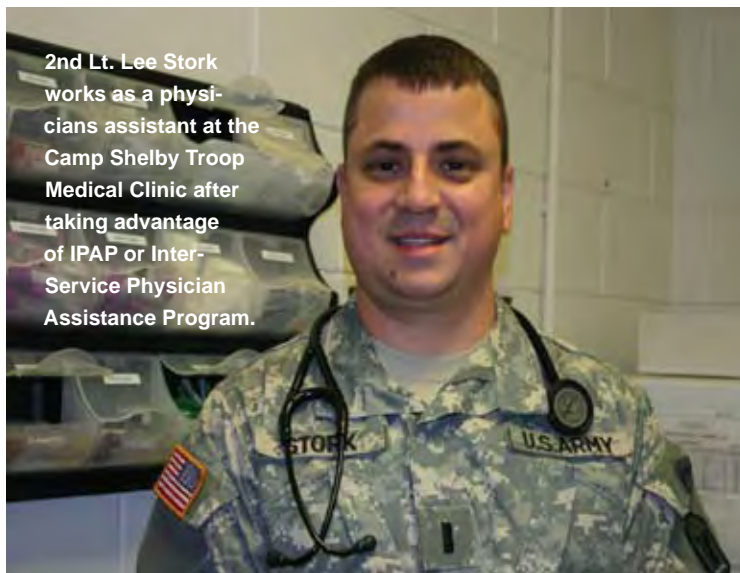
Lee made the decision to join the Mississippi Army National Guard and began the application process for the PA program.

While working on the application process Lee attended officer candidate school and graduated prior to being accepted to the program.

This was not a requirement for

IPAP, it was a personal goal.

The new second lieutenant (2nd Lt. Stork) completed the extensive application process which consisted of a transcript evaluation by the University of Nebraska, a background check for a secret security clearance, and achieved an acceptable score on the ACT (currently only the SAT



2nd Lt. Lee Stork works as a physicians assistant at the Camp Shelby Troop Medical Clinic after taking advantage of IPAP or Inter-Service Physician Assistance Program.

PHOTO BY SGT. JACKQUINE HERRING CSJFTC

is accepted for entrance into the program).

Stork was accepted into the IPAP at the age of 33 and moved his family to Ft. Sam Houston to begin a new chapter in their life.

"The experience was almost overwhelming at first," said Stork recalling his first few months at IPAP. "The operational tempo for the program was simple; during the first year, Phase I, there was class from 0830-1630, study from about 1830-0100, and then wake up and do it all over again, five days a week."

He was off weekends but spent most of the time studying. Stork said that a background in Biology, Chemistry, and Anatomy and Physiology would help prospective candidates exponentially.

Phase II consisted of clinicals, which were broken down into 3-6 week cycles involving rotations through the various areas of medical specialization, i.e., surgical, psychiatry, family medicine, etc. The 'hands-on' phase.

Upon graduation from the program 1LT Stork was awarded his Masters of Physician Assistance Studies Degree from the University of Nebraska.

The benefits of completing this program to the individual who is able to accomplish this feat can be extremely rewarding, both emotionally, as well as monetarily. Not only does Stork get to help the good citizens of Mississippi, both Soldiers and civilians, with their medical issues, he says that the lack of qualified PA's in Mississippi leaves a wide open job market for those who are willing to accept the challenge.

After graduating from IPAP Stork returned to Hattiesburg and began work for Southern Bone and Joint as a PA. Currently, he is on orders at Camp Shelby working at the Troop Medical Clinic.

There are currently vacant PA slots in the Mississippi Army National Guard awaiting Soldiers like 1LT Lee Stork who want to utilize the benefits available to them through the guard to make a better life for themselves and their families.

If you would like more information on this program or would like information on other medical opportunities in the MSARNG please contact 1st Lt. Richard Rowland at 601-313-6720 or richard.rowland1@us.army.mil.



Sgt. Katherine Grace shakes hand with her newest recruit, Cadet Christopher Stump, whom she recruited under the Simultaneous Membership Program. He will work with the Judge Advocates Office during drill.



Sgt. Katherine Grace, center, accepts a donation of DVDs and games from Hollywood Video district manager Walker Welch, left, and store manager Bryant Carter. Hollywood Video has donated more than \$4,000 worth of videos, games and snacks to the Mississippi Army National Guard's Family Readiness Programs, which have been sent to Mississippi Guardsmen serving in Iraq.

PHOTO BY 1ST LT. AMY TUCKER

## Amazing Grace

By Sandy Ates, JFH-PA

Don't get in her way! She has come a long way, baby, and she just keeps on rolling.

Sgt Katherine Grace of Byram, said she has come a long way from the young woman who signed up for the U.S. Army in 1990, and today is one of the Mississippi Army National Guard's top recruiters.

Her story is an interesting one.

"I was a student at Jackson State University and literally partied myself out," she said. "I realized that I had made a boo-boo."

Leaving college and heading for the marriage altar, Grace and her soon to be husband, joined the United States Army together in 1990.

"I was a lab tech for both clinic and research and stationed at Fort Stewart, Ga.," she said. "Marriage, raising a family and military just didn't work."

Grace, having completed her commitment with the Army, got out of the military in 1995.

Things began spiraling for Grace.

The marriage ended after ten and a half years, and she had the responsibility of raising her daughter, Jasmine. Her thoughts were she had to get control and take care of herself and her child.

Grace decided to try the military again.

"I went to the MetroCenter Mall and asked about joining the Army Re-

serves, or getting back into the U.S. Army," she said, knowing it would help with expenses. "They kept telling me that I was too old, or too big, (I had gained a lot of weight). Finally, they said, try the National Guard."

Grace said she didn't know there was such a thing as the National Guard.

"I knew about the Army and the Reserves, I had never heard of the Army National Guard, before they told me to contact the National Guard," she exclaimed.

But then, she met Sgt. 1st Class Carmen DePowell, a recruiter with the Joint Force Headquarters, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, Mississippi Army National Guard in Jackson.

They enlisted her into the National Guard and immediately she lost 60 pounds to meet the necessary standards.

"Then they kind of tricked me into becoming a recruiter," she laughed, noting she's glad they did. "I came in to take advantage of the Inter-Service Physicians Assistance Program."

Instead she started out with assisting the R&R battalion with recruiting efforts. Before long, she was enrolled in recruiter school.

She has met, and exceeded expectations in all recruiting goals. She had four over her required 16 enlistments during her first recruiting year (June-July). She received her second Army Achievement Medal for her success.

And already for this recruiting year, has attained five of her required 24 recruits.

She said she credits much of her success to the leadership of DePowell, Sgt. Maj. Greg Hillman, Master Sgt. Rodney Hall and other area five recruiters in the battalion, as well as other women in the military that have broken down barriers in areas women have never been previously.

"If they wouldn't have let me express myself, and be who I am, I wouldn't have enjoyed it," she said. "My growth goal is to become the first black female sergeant major over recruiting and retention in Mississippi."

Some of her enthusiasm has rubbed off on 18-year old daughter, Jasmine. She recently completed a public service video for television for National Guard recruiting, and was enrolled in the JROTC at her high school in Terry. She wants to attend ROTC in college and become an officer.

Everything was worth the wait, and Grace enjoys exactly what she is doing now, as a military liaison for JSU ROTC program and recruiter for several local high schools and ROTC programs. She is also involved in a family support program through Hollywood Video and other community projects that put her with new faces and potential recruits.

She says she uses her experience to recruit others, "I made a boo-boo. Let me tell you how to get back in."

# Net Working for Soldiers

By Sandy Ates, JFH-PA



Chief Warrant Officer Two Wesley Taylor shows off his web site for Soldiers.

Chief Warrant Officer Two Wesley Taylor of Brandon, Miss., likes to think that one should use his or her talents for the benefit of all mankind.

He put that ideology to work for him first at his church, the Park Place Baptist Church of Pearl, Miss. It was at church that he began using his talent for computer web site design to establish a network of “helpers”—like if some of the elderly needed a hand with lawn mowing, they would have a ready source to contact.

Taylor knew how everyone needed “help lines.” He realized that more readily when he spoke with fellow Guard members who had deployed, leaving families behind. Specifically following Hurricane Katrina when skilled help was hard to find.

“If it helped those people in my church, I thought, it would be very beneficial to have a network to establish a resource for the National Guard, too,” Taylor said. “It’s like Soldiers helping other Soldiers.”

Taylor said he has established a web site for Soldiers or Airmen who have a privately owned business to advertise their talent or trade. It is a National Guard only site.

As a network engineer for the Mississippi Army National Guard’s Information Management branch, Taylor said his hobby, web hosting, web design and networking solutions he felt, should be put to beneficial use.

“Anywhere you go in Mississippi, more than likely there will be a National Guard unit nearby,” he explained. “Where there is a unit, there are talented guardsmen with businesses. Since they are fellow guard members there is a certain trust and security involved.

If you are deployed, and your car breaks down on your spouse and she needs it fixed, it would be great to have a number he/she could call knowing they, too, were a member of the Mississippi National Guard.”

If you would like more information about this service, visit his website at [www.dwtsolutions.com](http://www.dwtsolutions.com).



## 2nd Annual Dixie Thunder Run

The Dixie Thunder Run (DTR) is a benefit ride to raise money for injured troops and the families of Soldiers who have, and continue to make the ultimate sacrifice during Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This year’s rally held May 19-20, was a tri-state event involving Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee. An organization from each state received proceeds totaling \$2,250.

According to the DTR president and Mississippi Army National Guardsman, Staff Sgt. Tony Shackelford, Mississippi riders gave its portion to the Military Family Relief fund established through the State Treasurer’s office in Jackson.

“It is all about Soldiers Helping Soldiers,” said Shackelford. “Just returning from Iraq about a year ago, there are still needs out there. We have to be able to help each other.”

The motto “SOLDIERS HELPING SOLDIERS” is testimony to the ride’s beginnings when a few members of the 155th Brigade Combat Team of Mississippi chose to get together to help out fellow unit members. As it spread by word of mouth, Soldiers and citizens from numerous units and states wanted to show their support for America’s Finest by participating in the Dixie Thunder Run.

The motorcycle route began in Tupelo, Miss., to Tuscumbia, Ala., and on to Memphis, Tenn. Shackelford said he hopes to see the run get bigger every year.



Chief Warrant Officer Two Keith Davis (above), a member of the 890th Engineer Battalion, has varied interests as far as the military is concerned. As a member of the Mississippi Army National Guard, he has served overseas and now creates cartoons for the Guards state magazine, the Guard Detail.

## Guardsman creates cartoons

Chief Warrant Officer Two Keith Davis has many things to keep him busy, but takes time to create wonderful cartoons to be used in the Guard Detail magazine for members of the Mississippi National Guard.

A lifelong resident of Ocean Springs, Miss., this Mississippi State Graduate, when not trying to keep up with three rowdy sons, is keeping up with the property of the 890<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion. Keith Davis has served in the capacity of Property Book Officer since 1998. A veteran of Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom, his interests are hunting, fishing, military history and attending Civil War reenactments. He likes old movies, old books and collecting relics from previous conflicts (in other words a Pack Rat!). When not attending drill he can be found at his church on Sundays teaching Bible stories to the kids. When he completes military service he aspires to be a history teacher.



Maj. Gen. Harold A. Cross, the adjutant general of Mississippi, center, holds a celebratory cake with World War I reenactor Travis Husted, right, looking on as Maj. Gen. (Ret.) Cohen Robertson, left, uses a 1917 bayonet to cut the cake during Camp Shelby's annual 2007 Retiree Day and 90th Anniversary commemoration in July.

## ARRIVALS

EST DEMOB

230th Finance Det., Jackson AUG 07  
1687 Truck Co., Southaven SEP 07

## DEPARTURES

EST DEMOB

288th Sapper Co., Houston JUN 08  
1387 Quartermaster Co., Greenville JUN 08  
113th Military Police Co., Brandon JUN 08  
1/185 Avn Bn., Tupelo/Jackson AUG 08  
230th Eng Det. (Concrete), Purvis JUL 08  
231st Survey & Design Tm., Gulfport JUL 08  
1108th AVCRAD, Gulfport AUG 08

Currently, the Mississippi National Guard has 1,784 Soldiers mobilized in support of operations CONUS and OCONUS.

# DIGGIN' THE DETAILS



*A not so serious, humorous view at what is taking place in the Mississippi National Guard today. By CW2 Keith Davis*



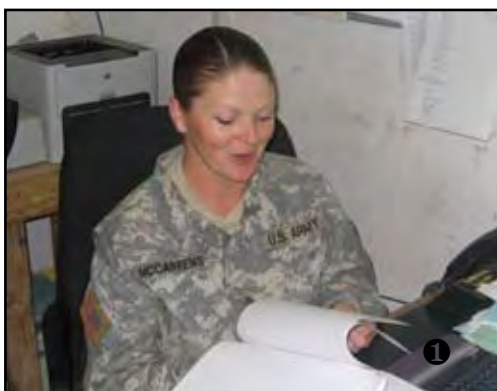
Soldiers of the 231st Survey-Design Team from Gulfport in July 2007, just before departing for mobilization station. (Photos by Spc. Charles Brice, 102nd MPAD)



The 1108th AVCRAD Soldiers spend time with family and friends before deploying. (Photos by Spc. Charles Brice, 102nd MPAD)



The 1st Battalion, 185th Aviation of Tupelo are a much sought-after group of Soldiers when duty calls. This is a third and fourth deployment for some members of the battalion. The entire unit departed in July 2007, again. (Photos by 1st Lt. Andy Thaggard, JFH-PA)



1687th Combat HET Company members have tough duty in Iraq. Here from left are ① Sgt. Kelly McCarrens of Southaven checking a prescribed load list (PLL); ② Sgt. David Snyder looking for a maintenance part; and lastly, ③ Specialists Andrea and Richard Cordle who found it hard to have a honeymoon on a short R&R as they decided to tie the knot on March 27, during a break from war. (Photos submitted by 1687th CHC)



## Remembering Our Soldiers

Colonel Robert S. "Stacey" Coleman  
2nd Battalion, 20th Special Forces Group  
(Former Commander)

June 15, 2007

and

Sgt. 1st Class William C. Spillers  
230th Finance Detachment  
February 17, 2007



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