

Spring 2014

GUARD DETAIL

A CHRONICLE OF THE MISSISSIPPI ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD



WARRIORS:
Targeting for success



THE ADJUTANT GENERAL
Maj. Gen. Augustus L. Collins

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FRONT COVER: Capt. Marilyn Upton displays the large male deer she shot during a four-day Hope For the Warrior adventure hunt near Port Gibson in January. Upton joined other women of the Mississippi Army National Guard in an unforgettable experience. (Article begins on page 6). Photos and graphics by Sandy Ates, JFH-MS Public Affairs.

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The Guard Detail is the official newsletter of the Mississippi National Guard. It is published quarterly with a circulation of 15,000 copies. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Army, Air Force, Army National Guard, Air National Guard or the Department of Defense.

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From the Editor

By Lt. Col. (Retired) Timothy J. Powell
Director, Public Affairs Office

GUARD DETAIL ONLINE - FOR NOW

Hopefully, by now you're wondering why the last issue of the Guard Detail Magazine never found its way to your mailbox. The winter issue didn't make it to print, so we posted it on our website for your reading pleasure. And for now, it looks like that's where it will remain. Several years ago, the Mississippi National Guard Public Affairs Office contracted with what's known as a Commercial Enterprise publishing company to publish the Guard Detail. This move garnered immediate annual savings of nearly \$70 thousand. End result is the publishing company sells advertising for the magazine, thereby defraying our costs for production and printing—a no-brainer. Most other states have made the same move because of tight budgets and the desire to maintain a quality product for Soldiers and Airmen. In the meantime, however, advertising budgets have taken a hit as well so these publishers have been closing their doors and forcing National Guard publications into online sanctuary.

So, please bear with us as we continue to produce the quality magazine you've come to expect, and also as we continue to explore new avenues to get the Guard Detail Magazine back in your mailbox. Meanwhile, please visit the online version at www.ms.ng.mil and click "Press Room." You can also visit our Mississippi National Guard Facebook page for various feature stories.

Until next time.....

The screenshot shows the Mississippi National Guard website. At the top is a banner with the text "MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARD" and "ALWAYS READY, ALWAYS THERE". Below the banner is a navigation menu with links: Home, HISTORY, ABOUT US, PRESS ROOM, LEADERSHIP, RESOURCES, CAREERS, and a search box. The main content area features a large image of Camp Shelby with the text "WELCOME TO CAMP SHELBY MISSISSIPPI" and "CAMP SHELBY JOINT FORCES TRAINING CENTER CAMP SHELBY, MISSISSIPPI". To the right of the main image are sections for "Leadership" (listing Phil Bryant and Augustus L. Collins), "Honoring the Fallen" (listing Fallen Soldiers of the Mississippi Guard), and "Join The Guard" (listing Army/Air Guard Recruiting, MSARNG Recruiting, and Special Forces). Below the main image is a "Service Member Recognition Programs" section with a grid of portraits and names of award winners from 2014 to 2015. At the bottom of the page is a "What's New?" section. A red arrow points from the text "CLICK HERE!" to a red circle around the "Publications" link in the footer, which includes "Guard Detail Magazine" and "Deployment Newsletters".

Camp Shelby mobiliz

CFIRE agreement gives base new

■ *Story and Photos by Maj. Deidre Smith
Camp Shelby Public Affairs*

CAMP SHELBY, Miss. (31 March 2014) - Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center has been at the forefront of an extensive mobilization mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and Overseas Contingency Operations for ten years now. Through Camp Shelby's professional and diligent efforts we have trained and prepared, mobilized and demobilized over 200,000 Service men and women

***The National Center
for Freight and
Infrastructure Research
and Education at the
University of Wisconsin-
Madison signed the
agreement to streamline
logistics for
equipment returning
from Operation
Enduring Freedom***

from the Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force to ensure that the continuous fight for freedom was not lost.

That mission came to a conclusion March 31 with the completion of the demobilization process for the remainder of the troops scheduled to demobilize through Camp Shelby.

The mission was initially only set to last for the duration of one unit for mobilization. A six month Guard Detail

mission turned into one year, and then one year turned into two. Now after ten years of dedicated service, the mobilization mission is coming to an end until the Nation needs it in that capacity again.

As one mission draws to a conclusion, Camp Shelby is proud to continue its efforts to support the modern war fighter by continuing vital research and development through venues such as Unmanned Aerial Systems and through a recent national Research Organization that can assist military planners in identifying the base as a critical part of a strategic military intermodal logistics hub, a vital step that could save the Defense Department millions of dollars as military equipment begins to make its way back to the United States from Afghanistan.

The National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education (CFIRE) at the University of Wisconsin-Madison signed the agreement after researchers assessed the potential for significant logistics cost savings and equipment lifecycle cost efficiencies afforded by the situational opportunity in the South Mississippi Defense Corridor (SMDC), officials said

Col. William "Brad" Smith, commander at the sprawling Mississippi National Guard installation located just south of Hattiesburg, said the opportunity for a cost-effective alternative to expensive legacy systems has presented itself with the \$570 million restoration of the Port of Gulfport underway, other nearby installations, and Camp Shelby as the platform to streamline the return, reset, redeployment, redistribution, and disposal (R4D) of equipment from Operation Endur-



ing Freedom.

"This is a rare opportunity to take advantage of the synergies that exist in the South Mississippi Defense Corridor. It's a military site selector's dream," said Smith of the five military installations that could play a critical role in the return of equipment. "It's reassuring that an organization like CFIRE can see this from 1,000 miles away."

Other installations in the SMDC include Keesler Air Force Base, Combat Readiness Training Center-Gulfport, the 1108th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group, Naval Construction Battalion Center-Gulfport, and Stennis Space Center

Dr. Teresa Adams, executive director of CFIRE, said "the time is right" to move forward to name the Port of Gulfport a "Strategic Seaport" and begin routing equipment to it. She cited several key factors

ization mission ends

focus as Southern logistical hub



including unmatched intermodal access, such as rail, unfettered access to the Gulf of Mexico, interstate connectivity, C-5/C-17 capable airports, and a 135,000-acre Army installation within an hour of the port. Adams also noted the significant infrastructure investments at the Port of Gulfport.

"Based on our experience, the joint utilization of the Port of Gulfport as a strategic seaport and Camp Shelby as a depot site will allow the Army to create an innovative logistics solution, maximize its limited resources, and realize benefits from the joint force capabilities within the South Mississippi Defense Corridor," Adams said. "Ultimately, this collaborative logistical relationship will provide a platform for further economic and community development that is more than ever, so important in the Gulf area."

Guard Detail

Adams added that other factors making the South Mississippi Defense Corridor attractive, include growing rail traffic west of the Mississippi River driven by the oil and gas industry and the Panama Canal expansion, Post-Panamax ships taking priority in major east and west coast commercial ports, and a recent study from the U.S. Government Accountability Office citing several current strategic seaports as having major deficiencies that present significant obstacles to mission accomplishment.

According to Army officials, the Defense Department will spend \$7 billion to ship nearly 750,000 pieces of equipment worth \$36 billion as combat operations come to an end in 2014.

The National Center for Freight and Infrastructure Research and Education (CFIRE) is a Tier 1 University Transportation Center funded by the U.S. Department of

Transportation Office of Research and Technology. The northern hub is led by University of Wisconsin-Madison, and includes partners at University of Wisconsin-Superior, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, University of Illinois at Chicago, Michigan Technological University, and the University of Toledo.

The southern hub is led by the University of Memphis and includes Vanderbilt University, University of Southern Mississippi, and the University of Alabama in Huntsville. The CFIRE consortium's annual budget is approximately \$3.5 million.

Camp Shelby continues to meet the challenge of providing for the Nation's defense by planning, developing, and providing a constantly evolving diverse and demanding training environment to meet new and emerging threats to our Nation's security.



More than 3,000 Soldiers of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment of Tennessee, Michigan and Kentucky Army National Guards march at Camp Shelby to a Feb. 5, 2010, departure ceremony for an Afghanistan deployment. The Soldiers conducted specialized pre-deployment training. The 278th ACR is the Tennessee National Guard's largest single unit. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. 1st Class Russell Klika)

WARRIOR WOMEN TAKE TO THE HUNT

"The weather was so bitter cold, but then when we knew we had a shooter (a deer that met size and weight requirements), and knew that was the one we were aiming for, it was an indescribable feeling seeing that deer walk out of the woods."

--Master Sgt.

Tammy McLendon

■ **Story and Photos by Sandy Ates**
JFH-MS Public Affairs

F

our Mississippi Army National Guard warriors braved the nipping of Jack Frost as record-freezing temperatures punctuated their wait for a first glimpse of movement in the early morning stillness.

These weren't just any camouflaged bodies huddled in tree stands overlooking the Mississippi River banks that January morning, these were four women of various rank with a purpose.

Capt. Marilyn Upton, Master Sgt. Tammy McLendon, Staff Sgt. Rhonda Dunn, all employed full-time with the Joint Force Headquarters, Mississippi National Guard in Jackson, Miss. and a former sergeant with the 113th Military Police Company in Brandon, Miss., Sgt. Carlotta (Elizabeth) Wray, were far too excited to notice the frosty temperatures as they waited for a trophy buck to show up in their crosshairs.

The pump of adrenalin was much more powerful than the cold, as the veterans paired with volunteer professional game managers and cameramen for a special adventure hunt with the "Hope For The Warriors" project.

With proven skills developed during deployments to Iraq and/or Afghanistan, this special group of veterans were invited by employees of Greif, LLC, of Davenport, Ohio; Soterra Land Management, LLC of Flowood, Miss. and Mossy Oak® enterprises of West Point, Miss., to prove their talents at game hunting on the first brutal 10 degree day of the 2014 New Year.

"We didn't know what to expect when we got out here," said McLendon, a Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of operations for the directorate of Personnel at JFH. "The weather was so bitter cold, but then when we knew we had a shooter (a deer that met size and weight requirements), and knew that was the one we were aiming for, it was an indescribable feeling seeing that deer walk out of the woods."

The females were provided an all-encompassing, four-day hunting experience, complete with full (and warm) camouflage clothing compliments of Mossy Oak®, delicious gourmet meals served by professional Greif chef, Mike Strohl, and round-the-clock mentors from all of the participating businesses.

An added treat for the women was the opportunity to meet former Arkansas Governor Mike Huckabee's wife, Janet, who enjoyed the experience of a big hunt with the Mississippi troops.

"I just can't say enough about the National Guard and how incredible these men and women are ... they are sent overseas and are the first called out during natural disasters," said Janet, adding how she ended up on the hunt with the guard women. "I am actually here because of Mr. David Fischer, president of Greif, Inc., whom I met during a Habitat for Humanity project in Haiti, he offered me to come hunt, and I was lucky enough to accept at a time when these women would also be hunting."

"I have heard the experience for these ladies was a wonderful one," said Fischer whose company has been making cooperage or large barrels since 1827 in Ohio. "From the very beginning of the company, our mission has always been to give back for the much we have been given and our veterans have given a great deal."



**Master Sgt.
Tammy McLendon**

The four said that they were unaware of such programs like “Hope For The Warriors” and the vast contributions by so many citizens who care for this country’s veterans.

From the expertise of Wray, who was the first deployed female Soldier from the state to earn a Combat Action Badge in Iraq and a lifelong hunter who tagged along with her father as a young child, to first-time hunter Dunn, who brought down a trophy buck the morning of her oldest daughters’ birthday, the experience was something they would never forget.

“It was an unbelievable adrenalin rush, a great gift for my daughter’s birthday. It was my first time to hunt, but it certainly won’t be my last,” said Dunn, a mother with two young daughters, and NCOIC of Operations in the Human Resources Office at the JFH. “I am so grateful to the people who support this program, I don’t think I ever would have done this on my own; but the people from these organizations stayed by our side the whole time, just so we would get the most from our experience. I just can’t thank them enough for all they have done for us.”

With the big hunt well underway, and buck fever climaxing at a quivering pitch, all of the lady hunters took their turn at trying to bag a trophy-size buck, with an option of killing an additional two does and a limited number of water fowl.

All four hunters were successful in shooting trophy-size bucks, with McLendon bringing down the biggest ever shot on Soterra’s land area near Port Gibson, Miss.

“The hunting adventures actually benefit the needs of the military and the companies involved in sponsoring the hunts,” said Soterra employee Matt Bonham. “With over 2,000 plus acres of bottom river land to manage, it is necessary to cull the wildlife in the area to keep the fauna and foliage healthy. It gives us an opportunity to do our job while giving these National Guard members a fun memorable opportunity.”

Employees from all three companies volunteered to assist with the hunt said Lt. Col. Dean Adkins, a medical battalion commander with the Regional Training Institute at Camp Shelby Joint Force Training Center.

“We stay with these Soldiers every minute, mentoring and assisting them,” said Adkins, who also enjoys helping with the Hope For The Warrior project. “This venture is completely sponsored and paid for by these companies and these women hunters were provided positively everything they needed for the four-day trip, including a professional film crew. The only inconvenience was a frozen water pipe that prevented one day without a shower.

The Warablisted to help veterans have a better quality of life, which this and other hunting adventures for veterans have been made available.

“We are so proud to give back to these warriors, and to thank them for their contributions and sacrifices,” said Fischer. 🇺🇸



**Sgt. Carlotta
(Elizabeth) Wray**



**Staff Sgt.
Rhonda Dunn**

**Capt.
Marilyn Upton**

**Master Sgt.
Tammy McLendon**

**Sgt. Carlotta
(Elizabeth) Wray**

**Mrs. Janet
Huckabee,
farmer First Lady
of the state of Ark**



**Staff Sgt.
Rhonda Dunn**



THANKING OUR MENTORS -- A certificate of appreciation is presented to Matt Bonham for organizing a January warrior hunt sponsored by Soterra Land Management LLC, Greif Inc. and Mossy Oak. (row 1) Matt Bonham, Adkins and Jody Davis of Mossy Oak; (row 2) Rusty McDaniels, Mossy Oak; forr Huckabee and Hunter McCool of Mossy Oak; (row 3) George Crawford of Soterra and MS Sgt. Rhonda Dunn. Hope For The Warrior's Outdoor Ventures program is a non-profit organization. It is made up of private individuals and corporations around the country as a way of giving



am (2nd left) of Soterra Land Management LLC by Lt. Col. Dean Adkins (2nd right), follow-
Mossy Oak enterprises. Pictured with the two are Chef Mike Strohl (front left) of Greif Inc.,
former Mississippi National Guard veteran and hunter, Carlotta Elizabeth Wray; Mrs. Janet
SNG veterans and hunters Capt. Marilyn Upton, Master Sgt. Tammy McLendon, and Staff
organization that provides veterans a way to readjust to being home from deployment.
ing back to the many men and women who have deployed in service to this country.

5K COLOR ME RAD

Mississippi National Guardsmen give time and support to children
at the Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital in Jackson, Miss.



Rainbows for Bray

■ Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes
JFH-MS Public Affairs

JACKSON, Miss. – Runners were splashed with a rainbow in memory of 11-month-old Brayden Kye Hearnss March 22 during the ColorMeRad 5k in Jackson.

Capt. Willie Hearnss, a medical operations officer with the 47th Civil Support Team of Jackson, established the “Rainbows for Bray” team for the event to honor his son, who died of appendicitis July 11, 2013.

“We’re trying to turn a bad thing into some-

thing positive,” he said. “At that time, Brayden was a patient in the Pediatric Intensive Care Unit of Blair E. Batson Hospital for Children. Though our son passed away, the staff at Batson worked tirelessly until the end. One of the nurses remarked that ‘everyday we play tug-of-war with God over these children and sometimes God just wants them a little bit more.’”

“What the staff does there is not just a job, but it has to be a calling,” Hearnss said. “They were some of the most genuinely caring and compassionate people that we’ve ever come across. What makes them even more special is the fact that they do this on a daily basis with all of their patients. Batson is the only facility of its kind in the state, so we take every opportunity we can to support them.”

In memory of their son, Hearnss and his wife, Alicia, were inspired to do what they could to help other children facing life-threatening situations by sponsoring a variety of fund-raisers for the hospital. Their efforts, in turn, have inspired others to help.

“We would be hard-pressed to attempt to put a value on the amount of money our family, friends and supporters have contributed,” he said. “The support has included more than just money.”

The 47th CST, spearheaded by Susan Rodriguez, the wife Tech. Sgt. Domingo Rodriguez, and Susan Johns, the wife of Tech. Sgt. James Johns, conducted a toy drive in memory of Brayden during the summer.

“We were able to present Batson with 14 large shipping boxes full of toys on what would have been Brayden’s first birthday, Aug. 8,” Hearnss said.

Participation in the ColorMeRad 5k was the latest in a string of fund-raisers. In addition to a portion of the sign-up proceeds benefitting the hospital, more than \$700 was raised through the sale of “Rainbows for Bray” team t-shirts.

“We had over 60 team members who were actually assigned to our team,” he said. “Due to signing up at different times, we weren’t all able to make it into the same wave, though.”

Hearnss said none of his efforts would have been possible without the support of fellow National Guard members.

“I am truly proud to be a member of the Mississippi National Guard,” he said. “During our darkest hour, members of the MSNG stepped in to make sure we were taken care of and to assure us that they were there should we need anything. I would like to take this opportunity to say thank you to the MSNG on behalf of myself and my family.”



Mississippi Army National Guard Capt. Willie Hearnss (right) and “Team Rainbows” release balloons with memorial messages before the ColorMeRad 5k in Jackson March 22 in honor of Brayden Kye Hearnss. Brayden died July 11, 2013, of appendicitis at the age of 11 months.



BEST



WARRIOR

■ Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams
Public Affairs NCO

Eleven of the Mississippi's Army National Guard finest warriors, representing five major commands throughout the state, gathered at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center Feb. 24, to compete in the 2014 Mississippi Best Warrior Competition.

During the five-day competition, Soldiers were tested on their physical fitness, board interviews, land navigation, common Soldier knowledge, assemble and disassemble of the MK19 Grenade Launcher, .50 Caliber machine gun and the M249 Light Machine Gun, evaluate a casualty, call to fire, combatives, combat stress shot, qualification on the M4 carbine and M9 pistol and a six-mile road march with a 40 pound ruck sack.

At about 4 a.m. on the first day of competition, competitors put on their physical fitness uniforms to complete the Army Physical Fitness Test, as spectators, graders and sponsors met up at the finish line.

This was just the beginning of a physical, exhausting and mental five-day challenge for the Soldiers. For one Soldier, not only would this be the first time but also making history in the Mississippi Army National Guard Best Warrior Competition.

Staff Sgt. Ashley Porter, 154th Regional Training Institute instructor, headquartered at Camp Shelby, is the first female to ever compete in the Mississippi Best Warrior Competition.

"I definitely didn't expect to be the first female Soldier to compete," said Porter. "I figured some other female had already competed before me but being that I am the first, I hope that I've set a good example and hope it motivates other females out there to try it."

Porter said that she started training in December and concentrated on her physical fitness in order to compete with other competitors but she said that this competition tested her fortitude.

"Through the PT test, land nav, AWT and finishing up with combatives, the hardest part for me would be the road march," said Porter. "I have been training on pavement and hills but the route we took was a lot harder than what I was training on."



Staff Sgt. Cody Espinoza, assigned to B Battery, 1st Battalion 155th Combined Arms Battalion, is competing for the title of "Best Warrior" and "Soldier of the Year" at Camp Blandon, Fla. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams)

R COMPETITION



These 11 Soldiers, comprised of Noncommissioned Officers and specialist and below, are not only competing for Soldier of the Year (SOY) and Noncommissioned Officer of the Year (NCO of the Year), but the two winners will have earned the right and respect to represent the Mississippi Army National Guard in the regional competition that will be held at Camp Blandon, Fla.

To ensure the best of the best, Soldiers are screened and tested at company, battalion and major support command levels, before competing at state level and moving on to regionals.

"It has taken a long time for these competitors to get to this point," said Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Graham, 154th Regional Training Institute senior enlisted noncommissioned officer. "We have a great group of competitors here. It's one of the greatest groups to come through here.

On hand to watch his Soldiers compete against one another with high morale and with extreme expectation was Command Sgt. Maj. George Miller, senior enlisted noncommissioned officer for the Mississippi Army National Guard.

"These 11 competitors were great Soldiers," said Miller. "The competition was really close. Their attitude and the way they entered the competition was really good.

"I think that's what makes the learning aspect so great because they came into it with positive attitudes. Mississippi has the best Soldiers; the best trained and knowledgeable and they want to prove that."

This year's competition brought back one competitor from last year. Army Staff Sgt. Cody Espinoza, B Battery, 1st Battalion 204th Air Defense Artillery, who won this year title NCO of the Year 2014 Mississippi Best Warrior Competition.

Espinoza said after competing last year made him realize how much he didn't know about basic soldiering.

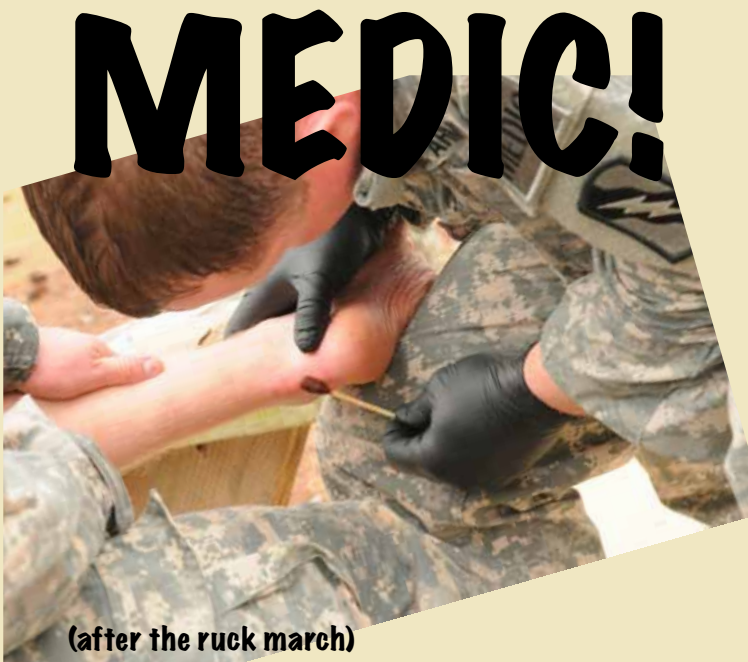
"It hit me the wrong way during last year's competition," said Espinoza. "So I had to study up and work harder."

Now that he is this year's Mississippi NCO of the Year and will be representing the state in regionals, Espinoza says that he will continue his routine physical training but work harder in studying the textbook.

Battalion 204th Air Defense Artillery and Spc. William Landrum, 1st Arms Battalion, run down a dirt road at Camp Shelby Joint Mississippi Best Warrior Competition. Both Soldiers won titles "NCO of the Year" at the MSARNG in the regional competitions that will be held at Camp Blandon, Fla. (Sgt. Williams, Public Affairs NCO)



(Above) A Mississippi Army National Guard Soldier competing in the 2014 Mississippi Best Warrior Competition qualifies with his M4 carbine Feb. 25 at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Eleven Soldiers, both Noncommissioned officers and specialists and below, competed in the competition to earn a spot to represent the MSARNG in regional competition. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams, Public Affairs NCO)



(after the ruck march)



"I'm going to continue to keep training like have been before," he said. "And I'm going to focus on those study guides and general knowledge. I can give you the answer in my own words but what they are looking for is the textbook answer."

This year's Soldier of the Year winner is Spc. William Landrum, Company B, 1st Battalion 155th Combined Arms Battalion. He will join Espinoza on behalf of the Mississippi Army National Guard in regional competition.

"I really wasn't expected for them to call my name," said Landrum. "I was excited and felt joy when I heard my name.

"This has been a great experience for me," he said. "The hardest part for me during this competition was the stress shoot. It definitely took a toll on me and the other competitors, especially after taking the pt test and the road march right after each other."

"This state level competition adds camaraderie throughout the state," said Graham. "It brings to light great training and any Soldier out there, this is a great opportunity to compete. This is great exposure to possible things that your unit don't train on."

Soldiers competing were Sgt. Matthew Brown, Company E, 106th Brigade Support Battalion, Staff Sgt. Eugene McCarty, Headquarters, 154th Regional Training Institute, Spc.

Jered Meeks, 113th Military Police Company, Sgt. Esau Moffett, 857th Horizontal Company, 890th Engineer Battalion, Spc. Ethan Scott, HSC, 890th Engineer Battalion, Sgt. Alexander Toups, Company A, 1st Battalion 155th Combined Arms Battalion, Spc. Robynn Walsh, D Battery, 1st Battalion 204th Air Defense Artillery and Staff Sgt. James Whitehead, 113th Military Police Company. 🇺🇸

Staff Sgt. Ashley Porter, 154th Regional Training Institute instructor, pulls a weighted dummy across the field during the "stress shot" portion of the 2014 Mississippi Best Warrior Competition Feb. 24 at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Porter became the first female to compete in the state's competition. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams, Public Affairs NCO)



Tournament nets money for charity

The Mississippi National Guard's Pick-a-Partner Bass Tournament at the Ross Barnett Reservoir was held April 21. There were 61 boats in the tournament. The annual event raises money for the Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital.



Golfers swing to help wounded warriors

■ Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes, JFH-MS Public Affairs

PURVIS, Miss. – Two hundred golfers from across the state braved near-freezing temperatures March 17 at Pine Creek Golf Course to drive in more than \$45,000 for disabled state National Guardsmen during the 4th Annual Wounded Minutemen of Mississippi Golf Tournament.

Nine Soldiers received \$4,750 each from the event to assist them with a variety of financial needs resulting from their injuries.

“It will take a lot of pressure off of me and my ability to pay bills,” said Grayson Galatas, a sergeant first class from Meridian wounded in Iraq in 2005. “I would like to pay off a few loans.”

Unable to work because of his injuries, he said his disability pension is much less than what he was making before his deployment and he has struggled to meet his obligations.

“It’s really difficult to honor debts incurred before my injury,” Galatas said. “It’s more help than you can imagine just having the piece of mind of knowing most of my retirement money isn’t going towards paying off those old loans.”

Matt Martin, of Purvis, said he participated in his third Wounded Minutemen tourney to honor the Soldiers.

“I just wanted to support our veterans and the military because I’m proud of what they do and I respect it,” he said.

Mike Vivien, a charter member of the Wounded Minutemen of Mississippi and owner of the Pine Creek Golf Course, said the organization was started four years ago to assist National Guardsmen from across the state wounded since 2001. He was inspired after hearing a wounded warrior speak while attending a golf tournament. He was aware of several organizations supporting wounded warriors nationally, but he and his wife Tina wanted their efforts to target state Soldiers. The Wounded Minutemen was founded after the couple inspired others and the Vivien’s donate the golf course for the tournament each year.

“We’re honored to be able to do this,” he said. “I think it’s the least we can do for them and it’s very rewarding.”

The assistance has grown remarkably each year, said Brig. Gen. (Ret.) Johnny Sellers, a charter member and co-chairman of the organization. In the previous three years, 15 disabled Guardsmen were able to share approximately \$75,000.

This year alone, \$45,000 was given to nine Soldiers.

“As long as they want to keep doing this, we’ll keep donating our help and services,” Tina Vivien said.

But it’s also about more than the financial assistance, said Kelly Sampson. Her husband, Carl Sampson, an 890th Engineer Battalion sergeant from Picayune, was injured in Iraq in 2004. Despite the odds, he survived to return home but hit an emotional low following numerous surgeries to repair the damage from an improvised explosive device.

“When I first met him, he had all his medals in a box called ‘junk’ because (after his initial return) he couldn’t find anyone who cared,” she said. “He wasn’t going to the places where he could see that.”

“I see what it means to find people who care now,” Carl Sampson said. “I’m a different person now.”

Now the box is gone, but the medals remain.



The Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Leon Collins, and Gov. Phil Bryant present a check to Carl Sampson, of Picayune, at the 4th Annual Wounded Minutemen of Mississippi Golf Tournament at Pine Creek Golf Course in Purvis March 17. The event raised more than \$45,000 for nine National Guardsmen wounded in Iraq or Afghanistan and who are unable to work because of their injuries.

MSNG hosts NGB personnel workshop

■ **Story and Photos by Lt.Col. Christian Patterson**
JFH-MS Public Affairs

CAMP SHELBY, Miss.— The Mississippi National Guard recently hosted the National Guard Bureau's 2014 G1 – Personnel Workshop at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center from March 4 – 6.

Approximately 200 Army National Guard personnel administration specialists from every U.S. state and territory attended the event. The workshop was held at the 154th Regional Training Institute on post and covered a range of topics from Human Resources Management, suicide prevention, to the new Officer Evaluation Report. Attendees received approximately 30 hours of training, updates and assistance with personnel issues during their stay at the site located just south of Hattiesburg. "This workshop gives us the opportunity to get together as a group in an effort to synchronize our human resources practices," said Col. Joseph R. Baldwin, deputy chief of staff – personnel, National Guard Bureau. "It also provides my staff with more visibility of the personnel challenges present on the state level."

Joint Force Headquarters, Mississippi National Guard G1 Soldiers were honored to host fellow ARNG human resources professionals from across the nation. The team feels that NGB made an excellent choice in selecting Camp Shelby as the location to convene. "We're very blessed to have the largest state-owned training site in the nation and embrace opportunities to support Soldiers," said Capt. Marilyn Upton, a personnel officer

assigned to the JFH-MSNG. "Our team has been planning for this event since December and we were very cost effective in doing so."

As the workshop concluded, it was very clear to all about the level of support provided by the MSNG. "The MSNG has been outstanding!" said Col. Baldwin. "They had everything set up which allowed for our attendees to focus on personnel matters and finding ways to support our war fighters."



Army National Guard Soldiers from every U.S. state and territory attend meetings during the 2014 National Guard Bureau G1 – Personnel Workshop at Camp Shelby on March 5. The human resources specialists were in the Magnolia State for the week-long event from March 3-7.



Honoring our employers

■ By Sandy Ates, JFH-MS Public Affairs

While all men and women in military uniform work for Uncle Sam, there are many Soldiers and Airman in Mississippi who answer to two bosses.

The National Guard and Reserve forces are more often than not employed by Uncle Sam on a “part-time” job only, but hold full-time jobs with civilian employers.

Scheduling time off from work for deployments and extended weekend training is difficult for employers who are running assembly lines or involved in other work environs where employees need to work to keep the business moving.

Recently, one Mississippi Army National Guard Soldier had the opportunity to let his civilian employer know just how much he appreciated his bosses’ support in being a member of the MSARNG.

Sgt. John Davis, a member of Company C, 2nd Battalion 198th Combat Arms Battalion, located in Senatobia, went with other members of his unit to pay Davis’ boss a special visit.

Surprised by the presents of Davis’ military escorts, Vice President Steve Hutton of Chuck Hutton Chevrolet of Memphis, welcomed the guardsmen to his business.

With flags posted, Hutton was presented a special “Mississippi Rifles” heritage print by Davis’s unit, with presentation by Capt. Brannon Poland.

The “Mississippi Rifles” or the 155th Infantry Regiment, is Mississippi’s oldest National Guard unit. Its history predates statehood, back to June 1799, and it is the seventh oldest infantry regiment in the United States Army. They patrolled the frontiers of the Mississippi Territory, captured Aaron Burr, defended Fort Mims during the Indian Wars, and served under General Andrew Jackson in the Battle of New Orleans in the War of 1812.

After presentation of the print, Capt. Nathan Hughes, Co. C, 2-198th CAB, gave the oath of reenlistment to Davis for another six year commitment with the MSARNG, as his civilian boss stood to witness the special honor.

“I really am thankful that I have such wonderful people to work with here at Chuck Hutton Chevrolet,” said Davis. “We have been deployed so much, but the folks at Chuck Hutton have been so generous and thoughtful with the time off needed to attend training and deployments. It is like a family here and everyone is treated like a family member.”



Maj. Gen. Crisler assumes command

Maj. Gen. Augustus L. Collins, the adjutant general of Mississippi passes the Mississippi Air National Guard flag to Brig. Gen. William J. Crisler during Assumption of Command Ceremony held at Thompson, Field, Jackson, Miss. April 5, 2014. Brig. Gen. Crisler assumes command of the Mississippi Air National Guard. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Marvin B. Moore)

210th FMSU in Kuwait

The Mississippi Army National Guard's 210th Financial Management Support Unit took control of financial operations in Kuwait on Feb. 27.



47th CST responds to spill

Members of the 47th Civil Support Team traveled to Hattiesburg early on Wednesday, March 12, to assist area first responders with a dangerous chemical spill.

The Flowood-based unit was called to respond to an incident that occurred March 11 at exit 60 on I-59. A tanker overturned and was hauling a dangerous chemical known as acrylonitrile. The highly flammable liquid can be fatal if inhaled, ingested or in contact with skin.





National Guard retreat focuses on teamwork, family

■ **Story and Photos by Maj. R. Brooks Little**
102nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

WARREN COUNTY, Miss. – The Mississippi National Guard’s Family Programs hosted a youth retreat at Tara Wildlife in the Eagle Lake community April 11-13, which was designed to enhance the quality of life of 23 five to eight-year-old military children and their parents.

The retreat gave participants a chance to get away for a weekend and focus on their family relationships through outdoor activities. Events included an open-air bus ride, scavenger hunt, fishing, photography competition, field games and a special appearance by Corey Hunt, Agent Alligator Trapper.

“We wanted to emphasize team-building and have the kids experience new things,” said Jan Reeves, child and state youth coordinator for the Mississippi National Guard.

Reeves has worked in Family Programs for more than four years with 10 to 15-year-olds and will oversee two additional youth camps for both Army National Guard and Air National Guard children this year. Reeves is also working towards establishing a Space Camp for Mississippi National Guard youth in the future.

Cooper Lewis Gant, 8, was one of many children enjoyed the Tara Wildlife Retreat experience. Gant said he loved the fishing part the most because he caught his first fish on his own, but thought the whole experience was great.

“I liked the bus ride because I got to ride on the levee,” said Gant. “I saw 19 deer!”

Tara Wildlife has eight miles of Mississippi River frontage and 9,000 acres of oxbow lakes and bottomland hardwood forests. It is widely known across the south for its premier deer and turkey hunting.

Senior Master Sgt. David Hammarstrom, 172nd Force Support Squadron, said he had a great time at this retreat

with his son, John David, 7. He said he was surprised that there was a program that allowed him to have this experience. Initially, he thought there would be limitations on what he could do, but he found that it was wide-open to experience like any paying guest.

“I am very impressed and I hope to come back one day,” said Hammarstrom. “I am thankful for whoever raises the money and pays for this because I know it is not totally free. Whatever organizations are out there donating money or whoever is out there beating the bushes getting donations, I just want to give a big thanks to them for what they are doing.”

Hunt was a huge success with the young audience. He was able to provide the children with a very thorough presentation about the habitat, attributes, instincts and the importance of being safe around the American alligator.

Parents were able to take a break under the trees as some of the children played kick ball, others climbed trees together and a few threw a Frisbee in an open field adjacent to lodge at the end of the day on Saturday.

“Seeing my little girl, Cameron, catch her first fish, the gator show and wide-open spaces were the best things about this weekend,” said Senior Master Sgt. Jeb Trammell, also with the 172nd Airlift Wing. “She also made three or four real good friends here.”

“Overall, this event is completely about the family and its contribution to the Guard,” said Reeves. The Mississippi National Guard Youth Program allows our Service Members to connect with their children in different and unique ways. Here at Tara Wildlife, the families can connect with nature and the outdoors, away from the business of the world. Our Service Members have made great sacrifices. It is our responsibility at Family Programs to make sure that we give back to them and their families.”

BOSS makes Guard



Col. Mike Nabors, commander of the 186th Air Refueling Wing, cuts the ribbon to officially open the BOSS during a ceremony at Key Field April 16. The simulator will save the National Guard hundreds of thousands of dollars in annual training and aircraft maintenance costs.

■ **Story and Photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes**
JFH-MS Public Affairs

KEY FIELD, Meridian – The Mississippi Air National Guard will save hundreds of thousands of dollars while receiving quality training with the debut of the Boom Operator Simulator System with the 186th Air Refueling Wing here.

The BOSS at Key Field is the first of 17 to be delivered to Air National Guard bases across the country. There are nine similar boom simulators at active duty bases based on a different design.

A boom is the critical piece that connects aircraft and delivers fuel during an in-flight refueling mission. It is controlled by an airman in a pod at the back of a KC-135R aircraft.

“When you drove in the gate this morning and saw all that infrastructure, looked out on that beautiful ramp and saw all these airplanes, all the money and energy that’s

spent here, the hundreds of maintainers, personnel managers, pilots and everyone else that shows up to work at Key Field; really we’re all focused down on a small group of people. Ultimately, the success or failure of this Wing rests in the hands of a couple capable airmen (who operate the booms),” said Col. Craig Ziembra, group operations commander for the 186th.

The BOSS is capable of simulating more than 26 different receiving aircraft and 100 different scenarios, including malfunctions, formations and maneuvers. Boom operators can run the simulation themselves or a controller can adjust a variety of conditions from an outside station to challenge the operator with a changing environment.

“The capabilities are simply amazing,” said Col. Mike Nabors, commander of the 186th. “Boom operators are going to be able to train here without spending the hundreds of thousands of dollars in annual costs that it costs us to put a plane in the air in fuel expenditures,

debut in Meridian

other salaries and all that for the pilot crew to fly them out to train. In the future, this system is going to be able to hook up with a simulator in another part of the country where a pilot is also working in that aircraft simulator and he will fly up and simulate getting behind our simulator with our boom operator and be able to train ... without ever leaving the ground. You can just imagine the cost savings from that in the fuel that will be saved, the man hours, the maintenance and the wear and tear on airplanes. All of that is the future of the Air Force.”

The training is especially crucial for the 186th as they transition back to the KC-135R. The unit is the home of aerial refueling and still holds the

record set in the 1930s for the longest sustained conventional flight by the Key brothers, whom the field is named after. However, in recent years the Air Force took away the unit’s KC-135s and changed its mission. That mission and those aircraft were restored last summer.

“It’s coming at just the right time,” Nabors said. “We’re right in the middle of a conversion into the KC-135. We have a lot of young boom operators that need the training and we only have eight aircraft. Our maintenance capabilities are in the process of training as well so we’re not able to put up a full complement of aircraft on a day-to-day basis. Being able to move our boom operators down here to the simulator is just going to double our

capability for training.”

Technical Sgt. David Gann, who has trained as a boom operator for less than six months but has completed more than 30 refueling missions, said the BOSS can prepare operators for conditions they cannot create, which allows them to plan and prepare for the unexpected.

“It’s pretty spot-on,” he said. “The malfunctions that you can get in a simulator that you can’t really get in a real airplane, you can practice it in here. Some people go their whole careers and not ever see a malfunction in a boom pod, but you need to be ready in case you ever come across one. You can do that in here and be prepared to react to it and possibly save the mission.”



William Eger, an equipment specialist for simulator certification, changes the mission environment in the Boom Operator Simulator System to present the trainee with an obstacle to overcome during a demonstration April 16 at Key Field. The BOSS at Meridian is the first of 17 to be delivered to the National Guard.



Master Sgt. Shane Haney, a master trainer from Air Military Command Detachment 2, demonstrates the Boom Operator Simulator System during its National Guard debut with the 186th Air Refueling Wing April 16 at Key Field, Meridian.