

A CHRONICLE OF THE MISSISSIPPI

ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

GUARD DETAIL

Spring 2016

**GUARD APACHES
TRANSFER TO
ACTIVE DUTY**



**MSNG AWARDED
CYBER PROTECTION
TEAM**



SPECIAL ISSUE:

RECRUITING AND RETENTION

**FROM
BEARD TO
BOOTS**



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What is this?

Mississippi Minuteman
Spring 2016



A Quick Response (QR) code is a type of barcode that allows someone with a mobile device to scan it and be redirected to a website or other form of data. There are several free QR code readers available on the Internet for phones and tablets.

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR



THE SEASON FOR POLITICS

It won't be hard to hear opinions as to who should be America's next commander-in-chief as the 2016 Presidential election draws near. Battle lines have been drawn and Americans on each side are primed to push for their candidate to reach the White House.

Politics is a sensitive issue here in the United States and around the world. As American service members, we're obligated to honor our obligations of citizenship (voting), but there are a few political activities we're prohibited from participating in.

According to Department of Defense guidance regarding Political Campaigns and Elections and the Hatch Act, service members "should not engage in partisan political activities and should avoid the inference that their political activities imply or appear to imply (Department of Defense) sponsorship, approval, or endorsement." In addition, "all Armed Forces members, including active duty members, members of the (reserve components) not on active duty, and retired members, are prohibited from wearing military uniforms at political campaign or election events." Furthermore, no service member or any federal civilian employee "shall attempt to influence the voting or participation of any other member."

Adhering to these directives is extremely important, especially when communicating via social media. Maj. Gen. Augustus L. Collins' social media policy allows SM usage, but lists several guidelines for Mississippi National Guard Soldiers, Airmen and civilians to follow. He encourages all personnel to maintain operational security, refrain from disparaging remarks, and to be professional at all times. Gen. Collins also reminds everyone that upon logging in, we still represent the MSNG and are subject to the Uniform and Mississippi Codes of Military Justice.

These directives are designed to maintain good order and discipline within our force. A neutral political stance and professional social media practices allow us to focus on defending freedom overseas and saving lives and property at home.

Thanks again for reading and we hope you enjoy this issue!

Christian Patterson

Christian Patterson
Lt. Col. Christian Patterson, APR+M
Editor-in-Chief

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MANEUVERS

Grappling Win

Staff Sgt. Gerald Peck with the 154th Regional Training Institute at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center grapples with Sgt. First Class Ferila Langkilde of the 1687th Transportation Company, headquartered in Southaven, during the combatives event in the 2016 Mississippi National Guard Best Warrior Competition March 4 at Camp McCain Training Facility. Peck was named NCO of the Year for the state at the end of the four-day competition. (Mississippi National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes, Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs)



Video of the Best Warrior Competition may be found here.





LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP



As we approach the halfway mark in 2016, the Mississippi National Guard is poised to complete another successful year in service to our state and the nation.

The months ahead of us will be very important towards our organization's future. The 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, assisted by the 184th Sustainment Command, and several enabler units will participate in a Multi-echelon Integrated Brigade Training exercise at Fort Hood, Texas; the Gulfport Combat Readiness Training Center will host the National Guard Bureau's Diversity Conference – as well as exercises Emerald Warrior and Southern Strike; and, several units and individuals are preparing for forward and stateside active duty missions. These events, along with potential state emergencies, are just a few of the many activities on the horizon for our joint force.

Success in meeting these obligations will require continued commitment, focus, time and effort. In the midst of the increased operations tempo, our team must place a special emphasis on recruiting, retention, readiness, and resilience.

Mission accomplishment begins first and foremost with people. Our MSNG recruiting personnel have done an excellent job in this area, but your help is needed to attract the next generation of heroes to our ranks. Provide your unit recruiter with prospect leads, encourage friends to meet your unit's leadership, and share the benefits of belonging via social media. A collective recruiting effort to land bright and motivated talent will propel the MSNG to new heights in the years to come.

In addition to recruiting, it is imperative we make strides with retention. Training each Soldier and Airman requires tremendous time and a significant financial investment. We all have years of valuable operational, technical, and leadership experience. Losing a Guardsman early hurts readiness and begins the long and complex process to replace knowledge, skills, and expertise. Retention management is everyone's responsibility. We all possess the power to encourage potential losses to stay. Discover what their needs are and work relentlessly to address them. Our future depends on keeping as many as possible on the team.

Gen. Mark A. Milley assumed the role as the U.S. Army's 39th Chief of Staff on Aug. 7. Readiness has been stressed as his number one priority. It is also the top priority for Gen. Mark A. Welsh, the U.S. Air Force Chief of Staff, and Gen. Frank J. Grass, Chief of the National Guard Bureau. It is my number one priority as well. We will maintain this requirement – both individually and collectively – in Mississippi. Individual readiness includes everything from passing the annual physical fitness test to completing all professional military education obligations. Team readiness spans from maintaining war-fighting skills to sustaining medical, equipment, and administrative levels. Make every effort to be ready to serve here at home and abroad.

Finally, the MSNG must be resilient. It's no secret our services are needed more than previous years. We have been successful with accomplishing each task and mission in the face of increased individual and collective training requirements. Thank you for your dedication to duty! Also, please thank your families and employers on my behalf for their support towards the MSNG.

Our Guard family has much to be proud of. We are Mississippi's largest employer, possess the most educated workforce in the state, and have dedicated Soldiers and Airmen in our formations. When combining these blessings with our exceptional training facilities and equipment, we will continue our legacy of exceptional service to Mississippi and the nation.

Shoulder to Shoulder!

Augustus L. Collins

Major General
The Adjutant General of Mississippi

LETTER FROM SENIOR NCO



For those of you that I have not had the pleasure of meeting, I am Chief Master Sgt. Robbie Knight and I am your State Command Chief Master Sergeant for the Mississippi Air National Guard.

I would first like to thank Guard Detail for giving me the opportunity to address the Airmen and Soldiers of the great state of Mississippi. This position is gratifying, humbling and demanding.

Leaders need to be more about giving empowerment to our Airmen and Soldiers - providing them training, giving them guidance, setting the example, and then getting out of the way and letting them do the job. Execute your mission to the best of your ability, trust in the leadership that you have, don't be afraid to raise questions up. Go out there and be the best Airmen and Soldier that you can be.

As senior leaders, it is imperative that we pay attention to our Airmen and Soldiers. Our role is critical to their success and we must deliberately develop those who will lead in the future. Your responsibility is to provide direction and vision to meet mission goals and standards. Stay strong. Continue to stay focused on your personal readiness; mentally, physically, socially and spiritually.

Everyone should continue your professional development through on- and off-duty education. Join professional organizations such as EANGUS, MSNG NCO Association (MSNCOA), National Guard Association of Mississippi (NGAMS) and the National Guard Association of the United States (NGAUS). Participate in organization and community events through volunteerism as there are immeasurable benefits and rewards when you give of yourself.

Airmen and Soldiers inspire, engage and recruit men and women for the future Air and Army National Guard. Help our recruiters look for quality men and women, the best candidates possible, in your community to replenish the combat capability of America's National Guard.

Lastly, senior leaders focus on what we do and ensure we let our Airmen and Soldiers know how much they have accomplished and how each of us fits into the mission of the National Guard, at home and abroad. Recognize and reward Airmen and Soldiers' military conduct and duty performance that clearly exceed established standards. Tell your story and share real life personal experiences, failures as well as victories. Stay engaged, exceed expectations, develop relationships and maintain visibility. Mentor the next generation. Every day add value to people; listen, learn and lead. Be proud of who you are and what you do! Be proud to say "I am an American Airman" or "I am an American Soldier!"

Today's National Guard is Always Ready, Always There and Always on Mission. We are the First Choice, Proven Choice and Enduring Choice.

Robbie Knight

Chief Master Sgt.
State Command Chief

"Watch your thoughts, for they become words; watch your words, for they become actions; watch your actions, for they become habits; watch your habits, for they become character; watch your character, for it becomes your destiny."

- Ralph Waldo Emerson

Apache Skies

MSARNG Releases 6 Apaches to Active Component

An AH-64D Apache attack helicopter from Company A, 1st Battalion, 149th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion flies over California's San Fernando Valley enroute to the Los Alamitos Army Airfield. The helicopter was one of six Mississippi Apaches transferred to the 2nd Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade in mid-March. (Photos by Col. Dane Powell)

■ **Story by Lt. Col. Christian Patterson**
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

The Mississippi Army National Guard has transferred several AH-64D Apache attack helicopters to the active U.S. Army. The action is a component of the 2015 National Defense Authorization Act.

Company A, 1-149th Attack Reconnaissance Battalion (ARB), headquartered in Tupelo, released six AH-64D Apache attack helicopters to the 2nd Squadron, 6th Cavalry Regiment, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade from March 13-19 at the Los Alamitos, Calif. Army Airfield.

The 2-6th CAV is based at Wheeler Army Air Field in Hawaii. The handover was arranged prior to the National Commission on the Future of the Army's Jan. 28 announcement regarding the presence of AH-64D Apaches in the Army National Guard. The NCOFA was established by the Fiscal Year 2015 National Defense Authorization Act. The group was tasked to examine the U.S. Army's structure and policy assumptions related to its size and force mixture between the active and reserve components. They were also asked to examine the transfer of AH-64D Apache attack helicopters from the ARNG to the active Army. Their report recommended that four Apache battalions remain in the ARNG rather than all aircraft moved to the AC via the Army's Aviation Restructure Initiative. As a result, the "Punishers" will retain seven Apaches at the Tupelo Army Aviation Support Facility.

"We're very happy to continue Apache flight operations," said

1st Lt. Rudy J. Pyron, who recently assumed command of Co. A, 1-149th AV in April. "We have a great group of brothers and sisters in our unit who are passionate about what they do. I'm honored and humbled with the opportunity to continue service with them and our Apaches."

The flight time from Tupelo to Los Alamitos took approximately 16 hours over the course of three-and-a-half days. Approximately 20 MSARNG personnel were present to release the aircraft.

"We logged our final flights and transferred the aircraft files back to Mississippi for migration onto our server to create a transfer file to be sent back to 2-6th CAV production control," said Chief Warrant Officer 3 Derek J. Abbott, a maintenance pilot assigned to the Tupelo AASF. "We conducted final inventories, completed fuel card changeover procedures, and provided them with each aircraft's weight, balance, and historical files. Chiefs Stanley Caldwell, Mark Stevens and our entire team did an excellent job executing the mission."

Company A, 1-149th ARB deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom from August 2006 to July 2007. They were known then as Troop E, 104th Cavalry Regiment. The unit was awarded the Valorous Unit Award in 2012 for extraordinary heroism in action against an armed enemy. They're looking forward to continued service in Mississippi and forward.

"Our unit takes pride in flying Apaches," said Pyron. "We'll be ready to answer the call to duty if needed."





For more information, or to donate,
visit www.umc.edu/childrenshospital/

FISHING FOR CAUSE

PARTICIPANTS HOOK CHARITY FOR BLAIR E. BATSON HOSPITAL

■ *Story and photos by 2nd Lt. Terry Hill
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs*



Anglers from across Mississippi were geared up and ready to go April 4 at the Ross Barnett Reservoir in Brandon. More than 150 fishermen participated in the 2016 Blair E. Batson Pick a Partner Annual Bass Fishing Tournament.

A special guest was on hand to fish for a familiar cause. Zachary Stephens, of McComb, Miss. is a 15-yr old young man who has spent a significant portion of his life as a patient at Batson. "Thank you for sponsoring me, this is so much better than sitting in the hospital," said Stephens. "I learned a lot about fishing from Mr. Mike."

Stephens was partnered with Mike Tidwell, a representative from Bass Pro Shops of Pearl,

Miss., who has fished with patients in the past. "For me, it's just a privilege to get these young men out in a boat and let them see something like this." Said Tidwell. "There are 80 boats ready to blast off and it really is a great show of support for Blair E. Batson and these kids. It's a great merge of two organizations, the National Guard and Batson Children's Hospital, that do so much for our community."

The event, which raised more than \$3,100 for Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital, included cash prizes for the winners. One winner, who wished to remain anonymous, donated their winnings back to the hospital. It was a great example of selfless service in a day filled with charity.



Jimmy Carruth and Joel Ross, winners of the 2016 Blair E. Batson Pick a Partner Annual Bass Tournament, stand with Col. David O. Smith, chief of staff at the Joint Force Headquarters. Approximately 160 fishermen participated in the event to raise money for Blair E. Batson Children's Hospital. Left, Mike Tidwell and Zachary Stephens weigh-in.

Participants in the tournament return to the weigh-in point at the conclusion of the event.



Calling all Cyber Geeks...

■ **Story by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Rachel Henson
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs**

If you're a service member from any branch of the military, you've probably heard about the cyber attack last year on the United State's Office of Personnel Management. Over 21 million current and former SM and government officials' records and private data were stolen by Chinese hackers. With the continued increase in commercial and personal reliance on technology, breaches like this have become a fact of life.

"With the way the world is now, it's not so much the prevention of all the technical vulnerabilities, it's more what you're doing to mitigate the threats," said Warrant Officer Candidate Dennis Harvey.

Harvey is a member of the Mississippi National Guard's recently awarded cyber protection team, one of only 10 in the nation. Its goal is to thwart off cyber attacks by protecting state infrastructure and defending its networks.

Harvey is an information systems technician and is pursuing a Master's degree in cyber security. He uses the G.I. Bill and Federal Tuition Assistance to pay for his degree; benefits that he is eligible for because of his service in the MSNG. Henry says this field in the Guard can help anyone prepare for a long-term career in the civilian sector.



First Lt. Ronald Forest and Warrant Officer Candidate Dennis Harvey conduct a spot inspection on servers at the Directorate of Information Management office in Flowood.

"You're getting trained to industry standards, such as the (Global Information Assurance Certification Certified Incident Handler) course. It's a \$6,000 course that the military pays for. So that's a benefit that can help you, and you have to have experience to go with it, but

that's how you get those six figure job offers," said Harvey.

Members of the MSNG have been collaborating with Mississippi's congressional delegation for several years to promote cyber defense within the National Guard. The efforts paid off when the state was awarded its CPT in November.

Mississippi Senator Thad Cochran is a long-time supporter of the MSNG. He is hopeful this program will give

***The things that we train on and
get to see and do here,
you can't do anywhere else.***

- Warrant Officer Candidate

Dennis Harvey

Guard members the opportunity to use their technological capabilities to defend the State.

"Mississippi has a strong tradition of supporting national security, so it is natural to promote our state when the Defense Department is looking to fulfill evolving national security missions. I'm pleased that our guardsmen and women will be part of this cybersecurity team," said Cochran.

The MSNG is paired with the Texas and Louisiana National Guards to form one collective CPT comprised of both Army and Air personnel. First Lt. Ronald Forest of the Mississippi Air National Guard is the Air Force liaison to the CPT and he enjoys working in the joint environment. "I get to see both sides of the house," said Forest. "It's definitely interesting seeing what technology the Army has versus what the Air Force has and how we are able to integrate."

He says both branches have their strengths and weaknesses, so working together allows them to cover down on those areas to create one extremely efficient team. "Trying to bring both sides together to work on a purple team has been challenging, but rewarding," Forest added.

There are approximately 6,000 cyber SMs in all branches of service, both active and reserve.

Interested in Cyber Security?

Here are the requirements to be a part of the MSNG's Cyber Protection Team.

- Be a standing member of the MS Army or Air National Guard and hold one of these military occupational specialties: AR - 25A, 53A, 25B, 252A/S, 35F, 17 series; AF - 17 series, 3D0, 1B4

- Possess or working towards completion of a Bachelor's degree in Computer Science, Computer Engineering, Information Technology, Programming, Software Development or Application Development.

- Possess the ability to obtain a Top Secret/SCI security clearance.



Capt. J. Slaughter

For more information, contact the CPT Deputy Team Chief Capt. Julian Slaughter at 601-313-6851 or julian.c.slaughter2.mil@mail.mil.



Maranger's Skills Solve Career Puzzle

■ Story and photo by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Rachel Henson
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

When most people think of the date Sep. 11, they are reminded of a day of terror that forever changed the United States. When Sgt. Annalea Maranger thinks of Sep. 11, she remembers the day in 2012 when she enlisted in the Mississippi Army National Guard.

Maranger decided at the age of 18 to serve her country and become a military intelligence (MI) systems maintainer.

At the time, she had never heard of the career field. Her recruiter said with her high Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) scores, she should go into a position that would challenge her. After almost four years in the field, Maranger agrees that she is definitely challenged.

"It's like trying to solve a puzzle. This piece works, this piece works, but this one doesn't; why doesn't it work?" said Maranger.

A MI systems maintainer, or a 35T, is responsible for maintaining MI computers, networks and systems used by MI Soldiers. Maranger is trained to support the Trojan Spirit satellite, Tactical Ground Station and the Prophet systems used in Company A, 155th Brigade Special Troops Battalion. She is one of two qualified 35Ts in the MSARNG. Maranger says she loves her job and is glad her recruiter talked her into this career path.

"You get a sense of accomplishment and you know that you helped promote the mission and get everybody back rolling along doing what they need to do," said Maranger.

She plans to have a long career in the MSARNG and strives to become a warrant officer one day.

"Even though I respect the officer route, I feel like it would be nice to be a warrant officer and have control of my section and focus on the technical side," said Maranger.

Maranger is enjoying her GI Bill benefits while she studies information technology at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg. She will graduate with a Bachelor's degree in May 2017 and has already received offers for internships based on her experience in the Guard.

"I feel fairly confident with the skills I have from the military, I won't have a problem finding employment," said Maranger.



Members of A Company, 155th Special Troops Battalion, work on the Trojan Spirit satellite system at Camp McCain in February. (Photo courtesy of A Company)



Do you want to add intel to your resume?

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WOgeninfo_mos.shtml](http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/warrant/WOgeninfo_mos.shtml).




Soldiers Compete for State's Top Honors

Staff Sgt. Gerald Peck with the 154th Regional Training Institute and Spc. Quashena Lee with the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center were named the state's NCO of the Year and Soldier of the Year March 4 following a grueling four-day competition at the Camp McCain Training Center near Grenada.

Events included a Army knowledge board, ruck march, individual and crew served weapons qualifications, stress test, combatives and other Soldier skill tests.



Best Warrior Co



om-

Guard De-

Airman 'Spanns' bridge from

Public Affairs Specialist Earns Accolades to Begin Career

■ Story by Master Sgt. Connie Reed
172d Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The Mississippi National Guard has seen numerous recruits recognized as distinguished graduates from their basic training and specialty schools. Although those successful journeys are completed with awards and accolades, it's the inspiration behind each individual's success that often adds a unique perspective.

Desiring to follow the military footsteps of her older brother, the 172nd Airlift Wing's Airman First Class Kiara Spann joined the Air National Guard in 2015 and quickly garnered many honors.

Unlike many new recruits that join the military out of high school, the Northwest Rankin High School honor graduate didn't join the military ranks until deep into her collegiate career at the University of Southern Mississippi. Spann credits the influence of her brother that helped her decide to temporarily trade in her marketing major books for an Air Force uniform.

"I kept listening to all of my brother's stories about traveling the world and all the great friends he was making," Spann said while referring to her brother, active duty Army Staff Sgt. Michael Spann. "I just couldn't quit thinking about what he was getting to experience."

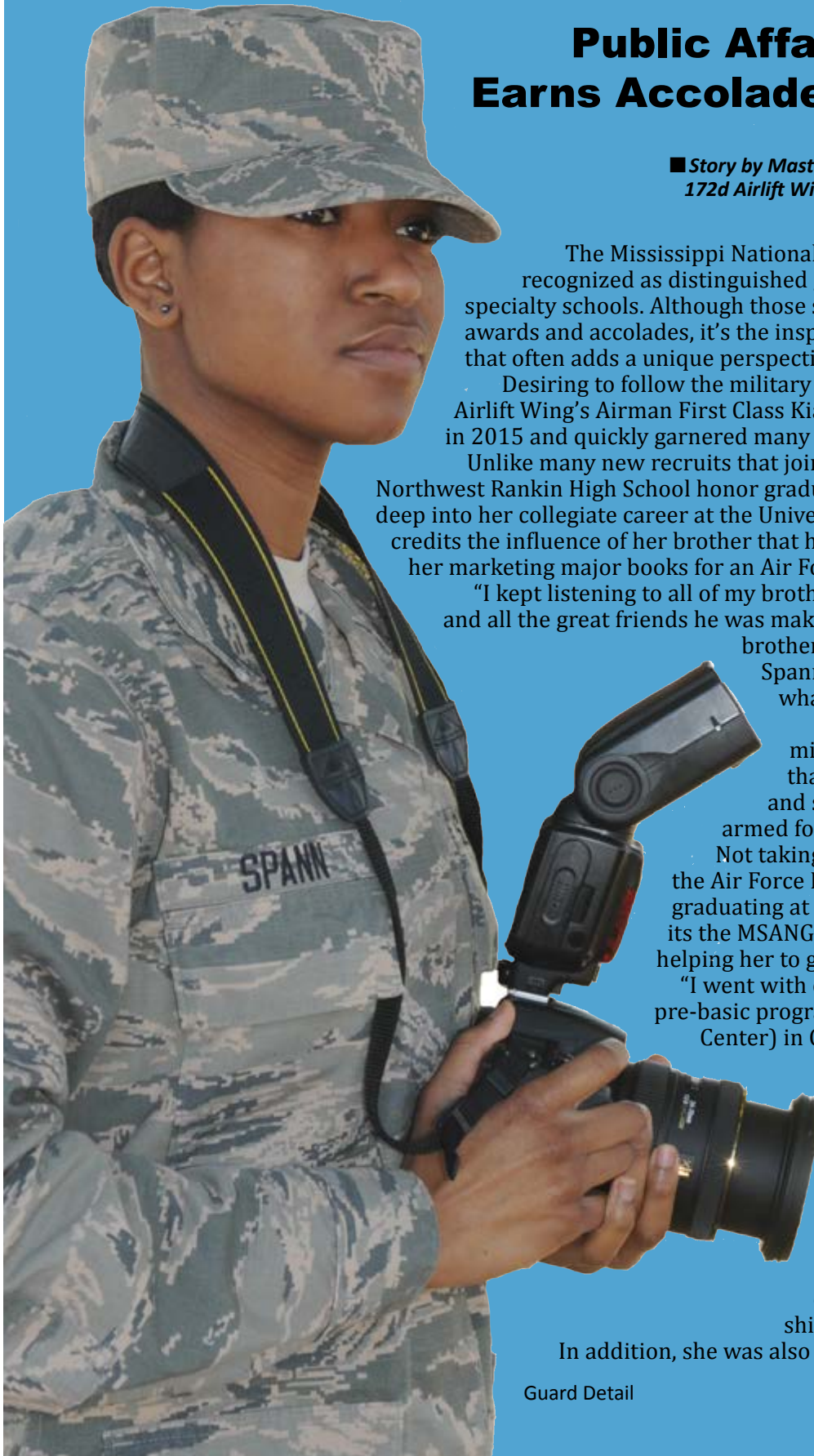
After sharing her desire to join the military with her brother, he convinced her that she could finish her last year of college and still seek the adventure of being in the armed forces at the same time.

Not taking her new career lightly, Spann received the Air Force Basic Training Thunderbolt Award when graduating at Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. She credits the MSANG's pre-basic training orientation class for helping her to get off to a fast start at basic.

"I went with other student flight members to the pre-basic program at the (Combat Readiness Training Center) in Gulfport," she said. "The weekend-long program was excellent in preparing me for what to expect at basic training."

Spann's achievements continued to gain momentum while she distinguished herself as the top Airman Leader in her training squadron at the Basic Photojournalism Course at the Defense Information School in Maryland. Along with focusing on her courses, she quickly assumed a leadership role.

In addition, she was also recognized by school leadership for



civilian life to military service

upholding good order and discipline through her leadership and participation in detachment morale and volunteer events.

Spann served as vice secretary of the Airman's Council, which planned events such as cookouts, hiking trips and game nights for Airmen. Additionally, she led the Garrison Flag Detail on Veteran's Day, volunteered to honor fallen service members at Arlington National Cemetery, and was one of 10 Airmen selected to attend President Barack Obama's Worldwide Troop Talk on Sept. 11, 2015.

Furthermore, she was named Airman Troop Leader of the Month in November, an award chosen by peers, and earned the Sharp Troop Award in September, which requires majority votes from detach-

I kept listening to all of my brother's stories about traveling the world and all the great friends he was making. I just couldn't quit thinking about what he was getting to experience.

- Airman First Class
Kiara Spann

ment staff members. Overall, her leadership helped boost spirit de corps, maintain good order and discipline and set a positive example for her fellow Airmen.

Now back in college, Spann is closing in on a marketing degree while enjoying some of the team spirit her brother told her she'd find in the military. She's confident that this gained experience will help her with her civilian career or in active duty if she decides to follow that path after graduation.

"When you meet people in the military for the first time, you overcome being strangers fast," Spann said. "You immediately obtain camaraderie and start working as a team to get the mission done."

ALWAYS READY
ALWAYS THERE

...that I will support and defend the constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic...

MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARD

I Am An American Soldier

REENLIST and stay ARMY

SCAN FOR MORE INFORMATION



The staff of the Mississippi Army National Guard Family Programs Department was recently recognized by the National Guard Bureau Council of Accreditation for their work in supporting the families of Soldiers.

■ **Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams**
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

JACKSON, Mississippi. -- Beyond salary, education and housing benefits, there are valuable Army family support services for service members and their families. Some can be found in the Mississippi Army National Guard Family Programs Office.

The MSARNG Family Programs center recently achieved its Military Family Readiness Program Accreditation, a prestigious recognition by the Council of Accreditation.

"This achievement has proven that our staff is committed to thinking 'outside of the box' in order to provide quality information to every Soldier and Airmen within the state," said Marion Newbury, MSARNG Family Readiness Support assistant.

The COA is an independent, nonprofit, accrediting entity that collaborates with human service accrediting organizations worldwide. It works to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying and promoting accreditation standards.

"The Mississippi Army National Guard Family Programs is among 21 National Guard programs that have completed the process thus far," she said. "During the on-site accreditation visit, the Council of Accreditation representatives verbally ranked our program in the top five among all of those accredited so far."

The MFR Program Accreditation includes the accreditation of family readiness services provided to active duty, Reserve and National Guard service members and their dependents. These services include community capacity building initiatives, emergency family assistance, exceptional family member program family support, family advocacy, financial readiness, military lifestyle support and education, financial education and counseling, non-medical individual, and family counseling and volunteer coordination.

"The success of the accreditation process has proven to the National Guard Bureau that Mississippi has a state run family program that has worked in collaboration with the entire outreach services department to

provide the state with quality services available to all of our service members and their families," Newbury added.

As technology continues to evolve, the Mississippi Army National Guard Family Programs is taking advantage of many opportunities that will help distribute information to family members and service members.

Currently, the Mississippi Army National Guard Family Programs are managing 24 virtual family readiness groups throughout the state that have pertinent information for family members. These sites are listed under several Mississippi Army National Guard battalion headquarters' name.

Information about children's events, strong bonds and even noncommissioned officers conference information can also be found at www.armyfrg.org.

"These sites also contain important information about MyPay, GI Bill, job announcements, MWR offices and much more," said Newbury.

Other events that are hosted by Family Programs are ACT workshops, college days, wildlife camps, space and sports camp, and youth symposiums.

Family Programs offices can be found at Camp Shelby, and Guard facilities in Vicksburg, Raymond Road, Joint Force Headquarters (JFH), Senatobia, Laurel, Newton, Monticello, and Tupelo.

To highlight what the family programs offices have to offer, Newbury said the Camp Shelby Family Programs office has a food pantry and clothes closet. She also mentioned that the Camp Shelby location includes a computer lab along with employment services, suicide prevention, and many other services.

"Family programs has done the work so that Soldiers and their families can have easy access to tons of Mississippi specific information all in one place," said Newbury.

The program will maintain its accreditation until 2019.

For more information on what the Mississippi Army National Guard Family Programs Office has to offer, visit www.armyfrg.org or www.jointservicesupport.org, or call 601-313-6379.

Retirement

Planning for Long-Term Career Goals

■ Story and photo by 2nd Lt. Terry Hill
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

One of the most integral parts of a mission is planning. Leaders do not plan for a portion of the mission, they plan for the entire event through completion. When it comes to military careers, planning should be no different.

The finish line for any career is retirement. When service members reach that milestone it indicates “mission complete.” Understanding retirement benefits can have a major impact on the decisions made every day, both in military and civilian life. National Guardsmen have the unique responsibility of balancing military and civilian careers. There is so much more available to Guard retirees beyond a pension.

Retired State Command Sgt. Maj. Butch Smith served over 40 years in the Mississippi National Guard before retiring in 2003.

“The medical benefits outweigh the monthly paycheck,” said Smith. “When I look at the money I’ve saved from my healthcare being covered through my retirement, it was worth it every day I spent serving. I’ve talked to service members who decided not to stay until retirement and it seems like each one has regretted that decision.”

Healthcare insurance through Tricare is one of the many benefits of serving in the National Guard. Traditional Guard members are eligible for Tricare Reserve Select. This is a premium-based plan available worldwide. Tricare Retired Reserve is available for service members who are qualified for a non-regular retirement, or a retirement from a traditional National Guard component. TRR is a supplement between retirement and age 60. Once a service member reaches age 60, they are eligible for Tricare For Life. TFL helps to cover specific healthcare costs that Medicare does not. Other benefits

associated with Tricare include access to military base pharmacies and the Tricare mail order pharmacy.

Retirees also enjoy recreational benefits such as Space Available travel. Depending on the individual’s status they may be able to fly for a nominal fee on military flights all over the world. Retirees are able to enjoy affordable lodging at military bases worldwide as well, this includes Recreational Vehicles (RV) and campers. There are specific criteria for eligibility so be sure to check www.dodlodging.com.

Life insurance provides a sense of security for a service member’s family in the unfortunate event that a member passes away. Servicemember’s Group Life Insurance is available while a member is still in a drilling status. SGLI can be converted to Veteran’s Group Life Insurance upon retirement. VGLI is a way to maintain peace of mind and security for your family after retirement.

Many Guard members enlist as a way to serve and be a part of something bigger than themselves. As they gain experience, they are entrusted with greater responsibility. This responsibility is accompanied by an increase in compensation. Drill and annual training income is a nice supplement to civilian job pay. The average retiree can continue drawing a monthly paycheck for the rest of their lives starting at age 60. Service members who were on active duty after June 28, 2008, may be eligible to draw early retirement based on specific criteria.

Sgt. 1st Class Tim Mize, a Recruiting and Retention NCO with the MSNG, took a four-year break in service before returning to the Guard.

“The grass is never greener on the other side,” said Mize. “I’m so glad I got back in because the retirement and benefits are great; but one of the biggest things I missed was the brotherhood, these are relationships that last a lifetime.”



Learning to do it Differently ...

Uzbeks, MSNG Share Aeromedical Skills

■ Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

Five members of the Uzbekistan Ministry of Defense visited Mississippi Jan. 11-15 to exchange information on medical practices.

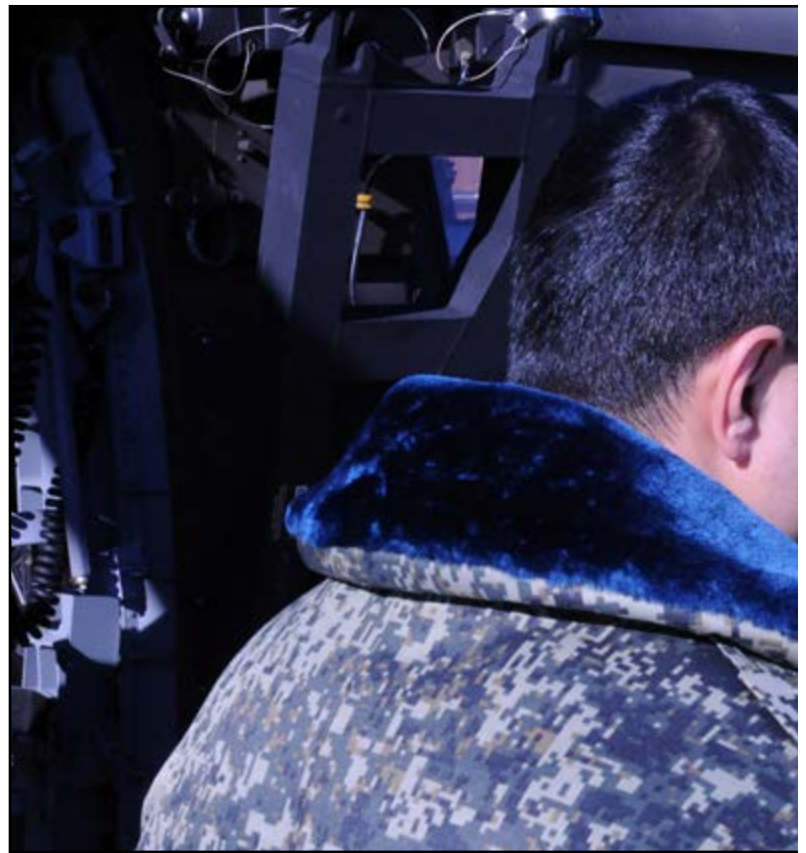
The Military Medical Subject Matter Expert Exchange visit was part of the State Partnership Program, which forges and maintains security cooperation among partner nations.

"The hope and mission is to enhance interoperability and flourish partnerships," said Air National Guard Maj. Amanda Villeret, director of Mississippi's SPP. "Another goal is to share best practices from both sides and learn from each other. It allows us to interact with foreign militaries and learn other ways of operating."

The program arose from Department of Defense ef-



Airmen of the 172nd Air Wing demonstrate transportation techniques on an Uzbek soldier during his country's visit to Thompson Field.



Staff Sgt. Robert Balla describes the hook up for hoisting operations

orts to assist the militaries of former Soviet bloc nations of Central and Eastern Europe transition to democratic rule following the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. It has steadily expanded since its inception. The National Guard joined the effort early and each state is assigned partner nations to share cultural and professional best practices.

"You can get better interaction and more access at a National Guard level. We have a continuity in personnel who participate in the events and so we start to develop relationships that can help us in future operations," Villeret said. "Active duty has a high turnover in positions, but the National Guard (personnel) stay the same with each visit and that helps to nurture trust and improve understanding."

Villeret said Mississippi and Uzbekistan typically share an average of 15 five-day exchanges per year.

The January visit was Mississippi's turn to host a medical exchange. Members of the Mississippi National Guard traveled to Uzbekistan in April to share knowledge.

During their visit here, the Uzbekistan military officials visited with the adjutant general of Mississippi, Maj. Gen. Augustus L. Collins, tour the state's medical facilities and learn about military medical practices both on the ground and in the air.

Their first stop was an Army National Guard air crew from Company F, 171st General Support Aviation Battalion (Aeromedical) at Thompson Field Jan. 12 to share information on battlefield recovery and transfer.

"We explain the overall mission of a medevac company and how it provides in-theater medical evacuations. We also discuss doctrine and practical applications of aeromedical evacuations," said Maj. J. Andrew Birmingham.



to members of the Uzbekistan Ministry of Defense at Thompson Field.

ham, the company commander.

This was Birmingham's second time to work with the Uzbeks as part of the SPP.

"They're very receptive and very interested in the equipment and medical professionals in the company," he said. "Their system is very different from ours."

The Uzbekistan aeromedical community operates primarily from medical facilities. Their primary mission is search and rescue and Birmingham said they are incorporating more aeromedical into their mission parameters. The mission of F Co. is primarily aeromedical with SAR as a secondary mission.

"They're learning how to apply their skills in an aeromedical situation," he said.

Afterwards, they toured a 172nd Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster with 183rd Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron members and learned how the U.S. transfers patients from a helicopter or medical facility for transport to more advanced medical facilities outside the area of operations.

The Uzbeks also toured the Mississippi Army National Guard Medical Detachment in Jackson, the 106th Support Battalion's Charlie Company at Crystal Springs, the Troop Medical Clinic and Regional Training Institute's Medical Battalion training site at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, and the 209th Special Operations Civil Engineering Squadron in Gulfport.

Uzbek Mission Prepares Commander to Lead

■ Story and photo by Chief Warrant Officer 2 Rachel Henson
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

On a cold day in February, Lt. Col. David (Bryan) Olier, accompanied by a group of Mississippi National Guard Soldiers and Airmen, departs from the Jackson-Medgar Wiley Evers International Airport for his first leg of a 36-hour trip to Uzbekistan.

The purpose of their journey across the 'pond' was to conduct a Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) information exchange with the Uzbek Ministry of Defense through the State Partnership Program (SPP). The MDMP is a tool used by militaries to assess a threat and develop sound courses of action to eliminate or counter the threat.

Olier currently serves as the 2nd Infantry Battalion, 154th Regional Training Institute commander at Camp Shelby, Miss. During his 28 years of military service, he has had the opportunity to deploy forward to conduct MDMP on many foreign soils, to include Iraq, Kuwait, Bosnia, Saudi Arabia, and now Uzbekistan.



Lt. Col. David Olier greets an Uzbek Ministry of Defense officer while visiting that country to share military decision-making knowledge.

The group lands in the country in the wee hours of the morning, tired, ready for a shower and eager to begin their journey. For the majority, this is their first visit to the country, which sits just north of Afghanistan and is most known for its hospitality, noodle-rich cuisine and abundance of cotton.

Once the jet lag wears off, Olier ventures out of his hotel and is pleasantly surprised to enjoy similar temperatures to back home. He and his comrades are also relieved to frequently hear conversations in their native tongue. After enjoying some local dishes, the guardsmen prepare for their week-long exchange at the Uzbek Academy of Armed Forces in the capital city of Tashkent.

In April, Olier will become the commander of the 2nd Battalion, 198th Combined Arms Battalion. He says SPP training helps prepare him for the position. Olier boasts that these types of experiences will push Soldiers' and Airmen's skills to the next level.

"What it did for me as a future commander and having my own staff is to make sure they understand the importance of step-by-step processes," said Olier. "It gives me a new fresh perspective when I'm talking to another country about the steps {of the MDMP}."

"Walk away for me personally is I understand the MDMP and I feel like I'm good at it, but to go and teach it made me sharpen my skills of how to explain it to my staff," he added.



Mississippi Guardsman Named 2016 Dole Caregiver Fellow

■ Story by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs

PURVIS, Mississippi -- The life altering decision to join the military is challenging both physically and mentally. For many service members, the inner turmoil and physical pain they experience while serving can be so great that in many cases it transfers to loved ones caring for them at home.

Caregivers are first line resources when it comes to physical and emotional support. For one Mississippi Army National Guardsman, providing a higher quality of life for her loved one is at the fore-front of her to-do list.

The Elizabeth Dole Foundation has selected Staff Sgt. Marjory Harris as a 2016 Dole Caregiver Fellow. Harris, a MSARNG Active Guard Reserve Soldier at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center, cares for her husband Robert, who was medically retired from military service in 2013 after sustaining multiple internal and structural injuries and illnesses during operations and deployments.

"This is a huge personal honor and a huge responsibility," said Harris. "This is more than a title to me; it is a chance to do something right and if done well, it can really effect a chance for so many."

Harris is the Operations Non-commissioned Officer for the Directorate of Plans, Training, Mobilization and Security at Camp Shelby.

"For many military and veteran caregivers, it means putting your life on hold for someone else," she said. "Many caregivers sacrifice their careers, school and personal lives to help the wounded warrior in their lives. Together, we reflect the diverse spectrum of military and veteran caregivers in our nation."

The Elizabeth Dole Foundation is a nonprofit organization founded by Senator Elizabeth Dole. The organization's goal is to strengthen the resources offered to the 5.5 million loved ones and friends caring for wounded, ill and injured Service members and veterans. The Dole Caregiver Fellowship is one of the foundation's principal programs for raising awareness and driving change for

America's military and veteran caregivers.

"The stories and experiences of our Dole Caregiver Fellows are at the heart of our Foundation's work," said Dole in a press release as the foundation announces new advocates. "I am grateful for these individuals who have found it in their hearts to extend themselves beyond the challenges of caregiving to shoulder the responsibility of acting as a voice for their peers, our nation's hidden heroes."

Harris became a caregiver when her husband, Robert's health declined when he was stationed at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. After nearly 20 surgeries and procedures later, the energetic couple is a dynamic team striving for a higher quality of life. They dedicate

a great deal of time to helping other veterans, caregivers, and children.

"Caring for people is really something I was born with," said Harris. "I've tried to help veterans in several aspects my entire career and my husband and I served together which is really brought the lack of resources to light."

Approximately 5.5 million people are listed as registered caregivers in the nation.

"In Mississippi alone, we have the second or third highest number of registered caregivers in the country," said Harris. "This number is only 220, which is literally only one percent of the population of registered veterans in our state."

Harris' story demonstrates the myriad of challenges that are encountered by military and veteran caregivers, but with her positive attitude and can-do spirit, she feels guard members can profit from this organization.

The Purvis resident plans to add her energy and drive to finding assistance and resources for a broad range of medical, social, educational and, mental health concerns of caregivers.

"When we can strengthen our families and communities, we strengthen ourselves," said Harris.

*When we can
strengthen our families
and communities, we
strengthen ourselves.*

- Staff Sgt. Marjory Harris

WELCOME HOME!



Senior Airman Austin B. Crouch is greeted by his family when the 172nd Airlift Wing welcomed home the 172nd Security Forces Squadron of Flowood from deployment to Kuwait in early February. (Photo courtesy of Jona Mitchell)



Senior Airman Randy Breland, Jr., of the 172nd Civil Engineering Squadron of Flowood, is welcomed home from a deployment to Kuwait in early February by his dog, Jewels, and his family. (Photo courtesy of Michelle Pennington)



Tech. Sergeant Wendy Smith Neal, 172nd Force Support Squadron of Flowood, is welcomed home in January from a deployment to Kuwait.



Sgt. 1st Class Clay Channell, TF ODIN, Det. 16, Mississippi Army National Guard soldiers assigned to Task Force ODIN (Observe, Detect, Identify and Neutralize) returned from a nine-month deployment to Afghanistan. The Task Force, which is a fixed wing aviation unit, provided support to the 10th Mountain Division.

Guests Share History of Unit During Visit

■ *Story by Senior Master Sgt. Richard Davis
186th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs*

KEY FIELD ANGB, Miss. - Former wing commanders and command chiefs gathered as honored guests to remember the past and learn about the future of the 186th Air Refueling Wing and its tenants here Jan. 29.

Col. Mike Nabors, 186th ARW commander, briefed the former leaders on Key Field's history, which each guest influenced, and explained current conditions and future plans for the base.

Those in attendance were retired wing commanders Gens. Sam Forbert Jr., Erik Hearon, Jim White, and Franklin Chalk. Retired command chiefs in attendance were Chief Master Sgts. Billy Allen, Ron Holloway, Gerald Goodin, and Lindsey Keene.

Nabors presented the former wing commanders and command chiefs with Key Field's new history book, a commemorative coin, and squadron patches. The guests also toured the base to see the changes and progress that has occurred.

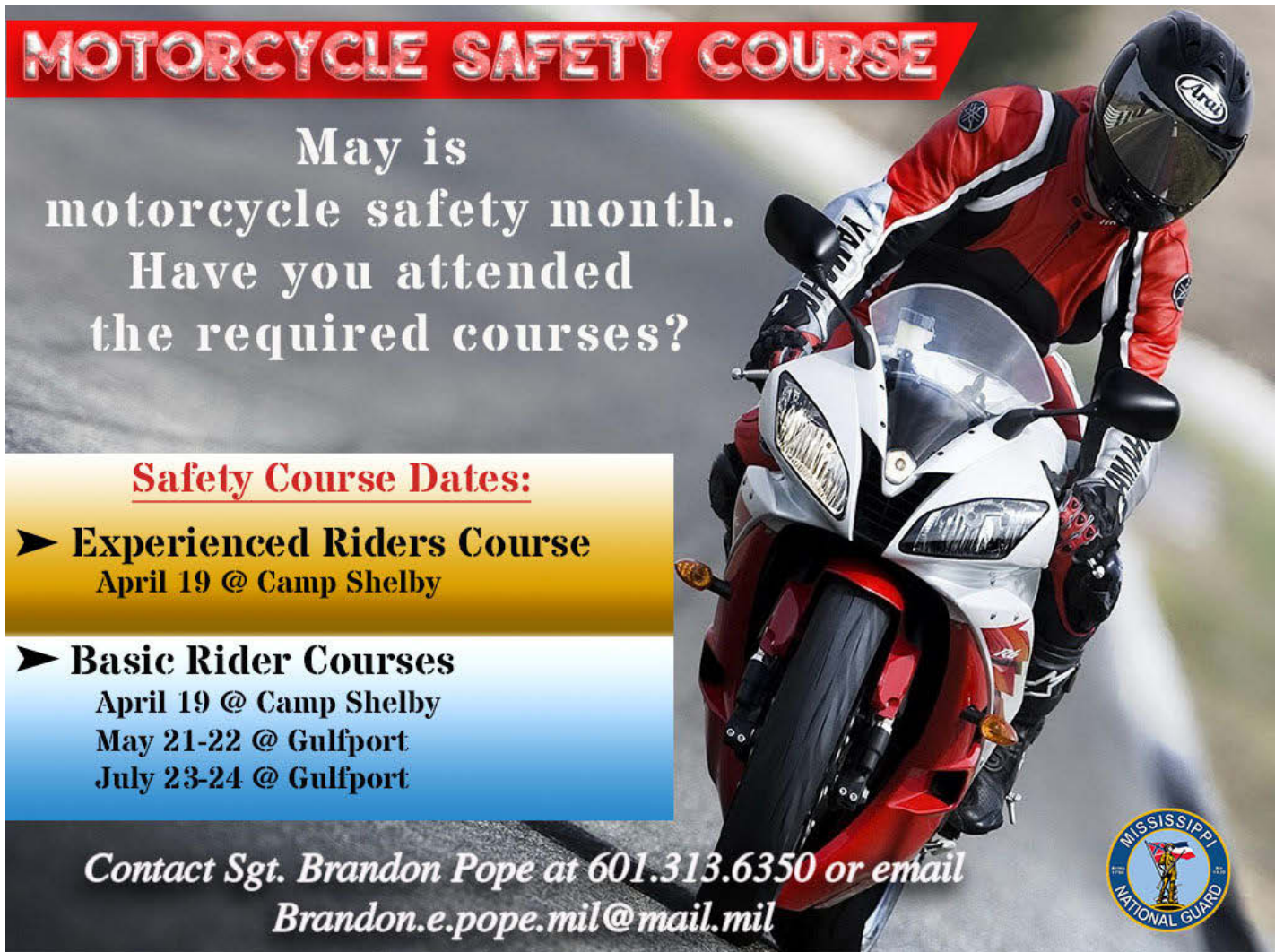
Forbert, who led the unit from 1970 to 1978, has seen the most progress of all the honored guests. He began his career in the Air National Guard in the late 1940's as a fighter pilot. Forbert was mobilized during the Korean War, the Berlin Airlift, and other global events.

"If anyone is interested in some aspect of the military, I would certainly tell anyone that you can get a good education, have a good life, and learn discipline," Forbert said. "The military is a wonderful thing, especially if there is some job in the military that you are interested in."

Attendees reminisced about their time at Key Field and what they missed the most.

"I always thought it was a real privilege to be associated with this unit," said Keene, who was command chief from 2006 to 2011. "It has an amazing history, and I still try to be associated with it even today."

The Wingman Concept that is inherent to the Air National Guard is alive and well at Key Field because of the positive impact that the former leaders left on today's Citizen Airmen.




MOTORCYCLE SAFETY COURSE

May is
motorcycle safety month.
Have you attended
the required courses?

Safety Course Dates:

- **Experienced Riders Course**
April 19 @ Camp Shelby
- **Basic Rider Courses**
April 19 @ Camp Shelby
May 21-22 @ Gulfport
July 23-24 @ Gulfport

Contact Sgt. Brandon Pope at 601.313.6350 or email
Brandon.e.pope.mil@mail.mil



General Commends 186th ARW on Unit's Flexibility, Mobility

Mission at Key Field Continues to Evolve with Aircraft Change

■ Story by Senior Master Sgt. Richard Davis
186th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

KEY FIELD ANGB, Miss. - U. S. Air Force Gen. Carlton Everhart II sat down with Rep. Greg Harper (R - MS, 3rd District) and key leaders from the Mississippi National Guard and Key Field Air National Guard Base to discuss the mission conversion back to the KC-135R tankers here Feb. 5.

Everhart, commander of Air Mobility Command, stated that, as the Department of Defense's sole provider of air refueling supporting joint and multinational operations, he depends heavily on the more than 70,000 experienced Guard and Reserve members who are a part of the team.

"In the current global environment, we simply couldn't do what we do every day without our total force partners," said Everhart. "Whether it's a nation around the globe in desperate need of humanitarian relief or an adversary contemplating a hostile act, the world knows the United States can be there in a matter of hours. That's because of rapid global mobility. That's because of you."

Due to the Base Realignment and Closure Commission's (BRAC) recommendation in 2005, the 186th Air Refueling Wing lost the refueling mission which brought questions as to whether the wing would retain a flying mission. That question was answered quickly when the base was awarded the MC-12 Project Liberty training mission in 2008 and later obtained the Army and Air Force's latest cargo aircraft, the C-27J, in 2011.

With budget cuts looming, however, the recently procured C-27Js would be removed from the Air Force's inventory and retired. Once again, the 186th's future was in doubt.

The old saying that history repeats itself once again proved true. In May 2013, on the heels of Air Force restructuring that took away the C-27J, it was announced that the KC-135R would be returning to its roots at Key Field.

Since the return of the KC-135R in 2013, 186th Air Refueling Wing Airmen have been busy fulfilling U.S. Air Force mission requirements overseas. The visit to Key Field allowed Everhart to see firsthand the accomplishments and hard work of the men and women at Key Field.

"Our purpose today is to show off the incredible men and women of the 186th," Harper said. "When you look at the history of this base and what it means for air refueling, going back to the Key Brothers, it's pretty spectacular. We're here to showcase the great job this base has always done when they've been called on to do something. I'm

very proud of them."

The Air Mobility Command's KC-135 fleet has been a leader in air refueling for 60 years and is the lifeblood of their ability to respond to crises and contingencies anywhere in the world.

"While the KC-46A will lay the foundation for the future of air refueling capability, we will still rely on the KC-135 for years to come."

Air Mobility Command, headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Ill., provides worldwide cargo and passenger delivery, air refueling and aeromedical evacuation. The command also transports humanitarian supplies to hurricane, flood, and earthquake victims both at home and around the world.



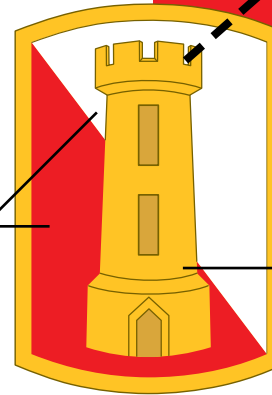
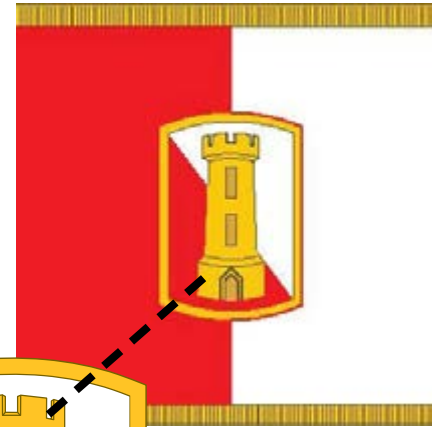
U.S. Air Force Gen. Carlton D. Everhart II, Air Mobility Command commander, commends Key Field's Outstanding Airmen of the Year winners during his visit to Key Field Air National Guard Base Feb. 5. (U. S. Air National Guard photo by Senior Master Sgt. Richard Davis)

BEHIND THE PATCH

168th Engineer Brigade

Vicksburg

The shoulder sleeve insignia of the 168th Engineer Brigade, headquartered in Vicksburg, was approved on June 18, 2008. It reflects the unit's rich history and its role in the Army National Guard.



The red and white background references the brigade's history as an Engineer Group. Red and white are the colors traditionally associated with Engineer units.



The tower denotes alertness and emphasizes the unit's mission.

SHOULDER TO SHOULDER

PREVENT SUICIDE

Ask ☆ Care ☆ Escort

Talk to your Chain of Command, Supervisor, Chaplain, or Behavior Health Professional or call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255).

Scan QR Code to watch Suicide PSA

Hurricane Season

June 1 - November 30

ARE YOU PREPARED?

10 STEP Survival Plan

Step 1:
Decide where you will go

Step 2:
Learn the evacuation routes and procedures

Step 3:
Prepare your survival kit

Step 4:
Prepare for those with special needs
(*infants/children/elderly, disabled*)

Step 5:
Make provisions for animals

Step 6:
Prepare important documents & memorabilia

Step 7:
Create insurance & property inventory

Step 8:
Protect your home and property

Step 9:
Plan for family notification & communication

Step 10:
Financial planning



Not sure how to begin?

Start and End With Stretching

Stretching is as important as exercise for your body and mind. it helps improve flexibility by increasing your range of motion, assists in correct posture by lengthening tight muscles that pull areas of the body away from their intended position, decreases the potential for injury by preparing muscles for work before activity, increases blood and nutrient supply to muscles to possibly reduce muscle soreness and even a short amount of time (10-15 minutes) of stretching can calm the mind, provides a mental break, and gives your body a chance to recharge.

High Knees

Stand in place with your feet hip-width apart. Drive your right knee toward your chest and quickly place it back on the ground. Follow immediately by driving your left knee toward your chest. Continue to alternate knees as quickly as you can. If you are incorporating this exercise into your warm-up, begin with slower, controlled movements to prevent pulling a muscle.



Air Lunges

Lunges are one of the most important multi-jointed exercises for targeting the lower body muscles. By executing lunges in a proper way you will be stimulate all of the muscles in your lower body; the quadriceps, hamstrings, glutes, gastrocnemius and soleus muscles.



Cardio Killer

Jump Rope	1 Minute
High Knees	1 Minute
Jumping Jacks	1 Minute
Air Lunges	1 Minute
Burpees (Alternate: Push ups)	20 Reps

Run 5-10 Minutes

Repeat 3 Times

Burpees

The burpee is a full body exercise used in strength training and is an aerobic exercise. The basic movement is performed in four steps known as a "four-count burpee":

Begin in a standing position.

Drop into a squat position with your hands on the ground. (count 1)

Kick your feet back, while keeping your arms extended. (count 2)

Immediately return your feet to the squat position. (count 3)

Jump up from the squat position (count 4)



SOLDIER ENDS



DUCK DYNASTY

CAREER FOR ARMY SERVICE



Maj. Gen. Allen E. Brewer, assistant adjutant general - Army of the Mississippi National Guard, swears in Sgt. 1st Class Tim Mize at the home of Phil Robertson in Monroe, La., Feb. 11.

■ *Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes
Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs*

MONROE, La. – From duck calls and shooting cameras to telephones and rifles, Tim Mize gave up a “dynasty” to return to service in the National Guard.

Mize was the personal assistant, property manager and a cameraman for Phil Robertson and made six appearances on his popular television show “Duck Dynasty.” He gave that up Feb. 11 at Robertson’s home in Monroe, La., when he placed one hand on the iconic patriarch’s personal Bible and raised the other to swear the oath of service to the Mississippi Army National Guard.

Robertson said he was not surprised when Mize announced his intentions.

“I thought it was a very wise decision on his part,” Robertson said. “It’s in his blood. He’s a hard worker and a go-getter. A very serving man.”

It’s not Mize’s first time to enlist. He spent more than 18 years in the Army, the last six as a recruiter for the Louisiana Army National Guard in the Monroe area, and left the service in 2011.

After more than 18 years of service, why would Sgt. First Class Mize end a career just short of retirement?

Mize stared pensively at the wall for a few seconds and rubbed his freshly shorn chin. “Look, I really enjoyed my time with the Louisiana National Guard, but I needed to try something else. I wanted to try something new. It was a troubling time in my



Tim Mize poses with J.D. King, the senior enlisted advisor of the Louisiana National Guard, and Phil Robertson in 2014 at the Robertson home, when he still wore the iconic Duck Dynasty beard. (Photo courtesy of Tim Mize)

life and I needed to get away for a while.”

The Tensas Parish native enlisted in the Army in 1992 and remained active until 1996. A year later, he enlisted into the LAARNG’s 528th Engineer Battalion in Monroe. He deployed to Olanchita, Honduras, in 1999 as part of Joint Task Force New Horizons to assist them in recovering from damages from Hurricane Mitch.

Soon after, tragedy struck when his brother died. Mize and his brother, Daniel, were very close. Throughout his life they hunted together whenever he was home and spent much of their lives in the woods. Mize filmed their hunting trips from the age of 13.

“I was away for a year on (JTF New Horizons). Upon returning home, we got to hunt in November and December and then he died that January,” Mize said.

Four days later, Mize deployed to Belize to continue his participation in JTF New Horizons. He became an instructor at the NCO Academy and deployed again, this time to Afghanistan, before becoming a recruiter in Monroe.

During that time, Mize said hunting had lost its appeal without Daniel’s companionship and he rarely ventured into the woods. Then, in 2003, he began to feel his pulse quicken to the quack of a duck again. Without his brother, though, it didn’t feel right. So, Mize took the shared experience they had of watching Robertson’s hunting shows and showed up unannounced at the Robertson home.

Despite his surprise arrival, over the next year the two became friends and hunted together often. He even grew the trademark long beard, which he had to shave before the reenlistment ceremony. Mize said Robertson shared the gospel with him many times on those trips and on May 2, 2006, baptized him in the Ouachita River.

"We just kind of adopted him," Kay Robertson said. "He's family."

Mize worked for the "Duck Dynasty" family by setting up Phil Robertson's appointments, traveling with him during speaking engagements, mingling with celebrities, building duck blinds, conducting hunts, working in the warehouse and "whatever else needed to get done," he said.

In May 2009, Mize's father died. Robertson conducted the funeral.

"Phil changed my life," Mize said. "I'm a lot stronger of a Christian, husband and Soldier this time coming back into the military. He

taught me to move forward and not get hung up on the past - to seek redemption, if necessary - and to try to impact everyone you meet in a positive way. That's really what life is all about."

"I've had my Army boot camp, but this was more important to me," Mize said. "This was my spiritual boot camp. I learned integrity and character here."

That healing process left Mize open to the suggestions of Sgt. 1st Class Obie Simms, a friend from their recruiting days in Monroe, to reenlist and finish his career. Simms had since moved to Mississippi and transferred to the MSARNG. Those suggestions were reinforced when Command Sgt. Maj. Edward Jenkins, Jr. joined them for a frog hunt. Jenkins is the senior NCO of Mississippi's Recruiting and Retention Office.

"I realized it was something I was missing," Mize said.

Mize is currently on temporary active duty orders in the Natchez



Robertson and Mize make gravy for the mashed potatoes to feed the Soldiers attending his reenlistment.

area and has returned to recruiting.

"It's not the fame or the money that makes the person. It's the character," Mize said. "Between television and this, I'd choose this in a minute. I missed the military. That's why I'm right back where I am."

MISSION ROLL-UP

Lt. Col. Rodney Bowman, 2nd Battalion, 114th Field Artillery Regiment incoming commander, receives the unit's guidon from Col. Jeffrey Van, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team commander during a change of command ceremony held at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center Feb. 21. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams, JFH-MS Public Affairs)



Maj. Gen. Allen E. Brewer, the Army assistant adjutant general - Army of Mississippi and Col. Jeffrey Van, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team commander, congratulate Staff Sgt. Michael Robinson on his reenlistment during a Recruiting and Retention Luncheon at the Camp Shelby All Ranks Club Jan. 23. More than 130 service members gathered to listen to recruiters and Mississippi National Guard key leaders. (Mississippi National Guard photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Williams, Camp Shelby Public Affairs)

BURNING QUESTIONS

for Command Sgt. Maj. John Raines



You have questions? They have the answers!

Do you have questions about upcoming changes that will affect our armed forces? Each issue will feature a Question & Answer section with Mississippi National Guard leadership, both Army and Air, to answer questions from the force.

This issue we met with Command Sgt. Maj. John T. Raines, senior enlisted advisor for the Mississippi Army National Guard. Raines has a lengthy service record that includes over 25 years of service, senior leadership positions at U.S. Pacific Command, in the Alabama National Guard's counterdrug program, The Mississippi National Guard's 47th Civil Support Team and 154th Regional Training Institute, and deployments in support of Operations Desert Shield, Desert Storm, and Iraqi Freedom.

His goal is to improve the MSARNG Non-Commissioned Officer corps and ensure its Soldiers have qualified leaders to mentor them. He was happy to answer questions pertaining to recent changes within the MSNG.

Q Is the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team preparing for an upcoming deployment?

A Right now we are not slated for a deployment, but that could change. The 155 could very well get tagged for a deployment after their NTC rotation. We do not have a (Notice of Sourcing) right now in the 155. We will know the answer in the next year – A NOS from (National Guard Bureau) drives deployments and until you get one, it's just a rumor. Usually we get notice anywhere from 12 to 18 months in advance of a deployment.

Q Does the Mississippi National Guard plan to increase the amount of Multiple Unit Training Assemblies (MUTAs) units perform each year?

A No. A unit that does not have a NOS is going to get 48 MUTAs and they're going to get 15 AT days. That's still the plan. We have all heard of the Army Force Generation cycle, but now we're going to the Sustainable Readiness Model. They are working now to define the SRM for the Guard. Once it's published, we will have a more predictable cycle of when will we have to be required to drill more and have longer ATs. It will be predictable for not only Soldiers and their families but for employers. Until they define the SRM, we are still following the ARFORGEN cycle.

When we hit certain years we're going to be given more MUTAs and more AT days. The 155 received more MUTAs because they have a (National Training Center) rotation coming up. So, they're going to get 55 MUTAs and they're going to get three weeks for AT days.

Q Is there a plan to diversify the enlisted force and move enlisted Soldiers the same way officers are moved?

A Yes, we are going to mirror the officer side. In fact you should see the first published list of AGR moves at the senior (Non-Commissioned Officer) level, E-8 and E-9, probably May 1. Anybody who has been in their assignment for over five years, they're going to be looked at to move. Some will retire and some will move. We have written in the policy that once we identify all the E-8s and E-9s that have been in their jobs for over five years, we'll open it up to (Major Subordinate Commands) CSMs and ask them if they've got any E-6s or E-7s that have just been in their job for too long. So you could see some E-6s and E-7s moved during this same time period.

It could be Permanent Change of Station for Active Guard and Reserve, but we're looking at traditional and technicians as well. This is not going to be just an AGR board. These moves will open up opportunities for promotion.

If you have questions you want answered, please contact us at ng.ms.msarng.list.public-affairs@mail.mil.



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Jackson, MS 39296-5027

Parting Shots

Soldiers assigned to the Laurel-based Headquarters Company, 184th Sustainment Command of the Mississippi Army National Guard and volunteer firemen from Florence conduct joint high water rescue operations March 12 in Pearl River County. More than 80 Soldiers of the MSARNG were activated in March to assist local authorities with rescues, damage assessment and other services after days of hard rain caused massive flooding throughout the state. (Mississippi National Guard photo by Spc. Dharon Collins, 102d Public Affairs Detachment)

