

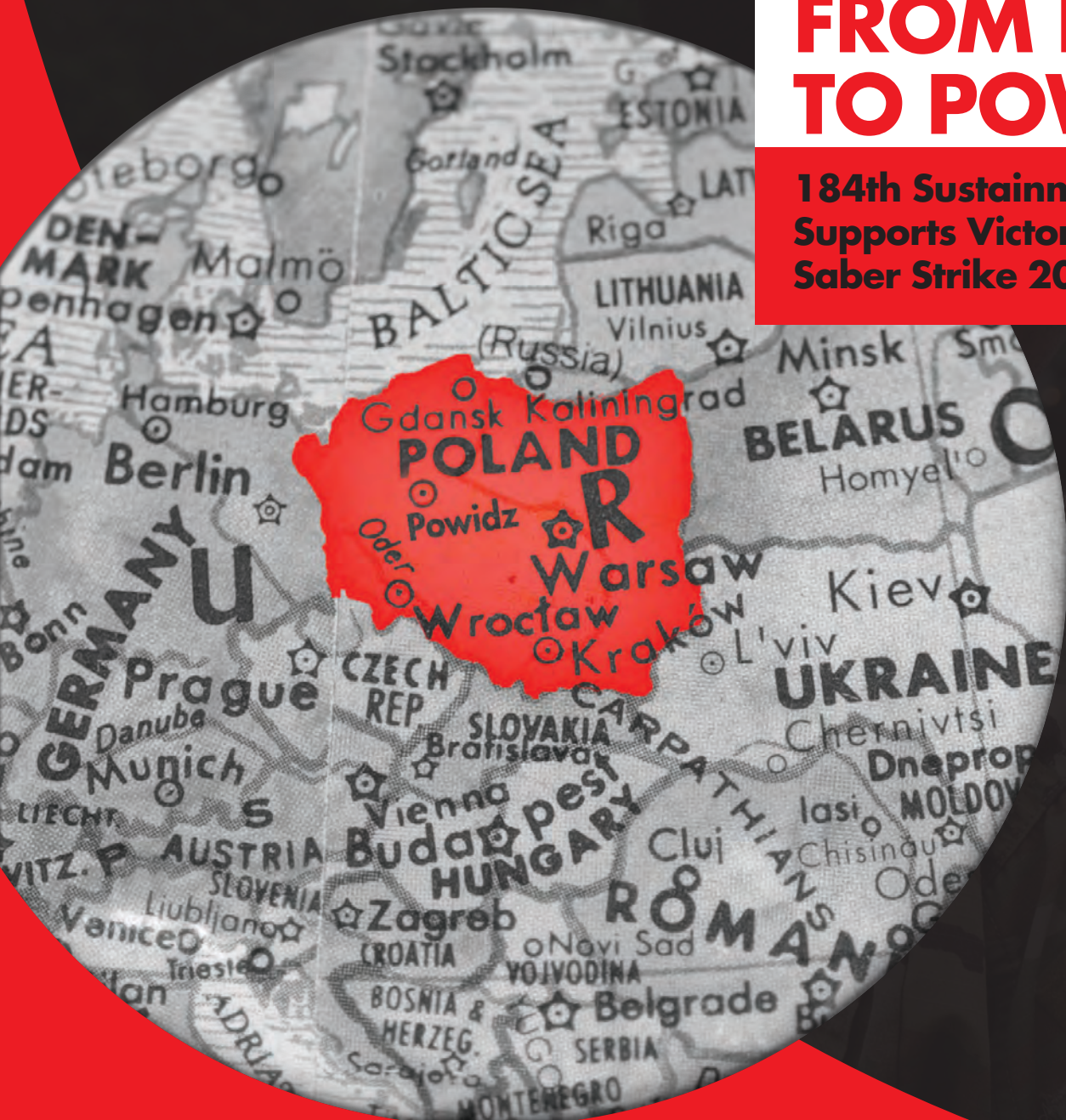
SUMMER 2018

# GUARD DETAIL

A CHRONICLE OF THE MISSISSIPPI ARMY AND AIR NATIONAL GUARD

## FROM LAUREL TO POWIDZ

184th Sustainment Command Supports Victory During Saber Strike 2018 **10**





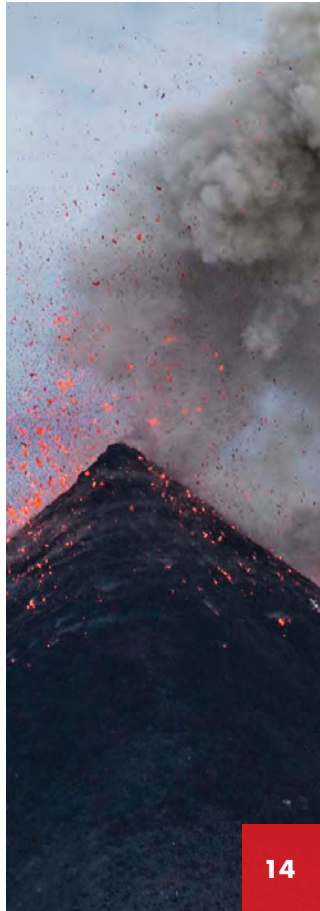
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The Guard Detail is the official magazine of the Mississippi National Guard. It is published three times a year with a circulation of 12,300 copies and is distributed online via the Mississippi National Guard web and Facebook pages. Opinions expressed 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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# Letter From THE EDITOR

## OPERATION ★ DONATE WITH HONOR



I had the opportunity to join Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood and the new executive director of the Mississippi State Veterans Affairs Board and Mississippi National Guardsman, Stacey Pickering for the launch of "Operation Donate With Honor," July, 19.

It was the beginning of a partnership between the AG, Secretary of State, and MSVAB to employ the Federal Trade Commission's education initiative designed to combat fraudulent charitable solicitations claiming to help veterans and the military. The occasion was a strong display of interagency teamwork to ensure charitable contributions actually go to real charities, which work to help service members and veterans in need.

I like to call the number 601-313-6271 as one of the "Gateways to the Mississippi National Guard." It leads to the MSNG Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs Office in Jackson and directs hundreds of callers to specific areas within our organization each year. Many of those phoning in seek recruiting information or are employers trying to verify employment, but several callers want to know how to help current and former Soldiers and Airmen. They ask "how can I donate

to our veterans and service members?" or "what's an address that I can use to send care packages to our deployed MSNG troops?"

Since the September 11 attacks, thousands of Americans have served to preserve freedom across the globe. Stories of valor and sacrifice prompted millions to contribute to service member and veteran charities, but they also attracted many to craft fraudulent efforts to steal money from supporters of America's fighting men and women. These thieves target potential donors online, via telemarketing, direct mail, door-to-door contacts, and in retail stores. They promise to help homeless and disabled veterans, provide veterans with employment counseling, mental health counseling or other assistance, and to send care packages to deployed service members.

"Operation Donate With Honor" alleviates this problem and it couldn't come at a better time for the MSNG. A large portion of our citizen Soldier and Airmen force is serving stateside and forward well into the next year. This initiative allows us to direct supporters to legitimate, registered charities that will use their contributions to assist millions of veterans and those currently serving in uniform.

As you and others consider donating to military-related charities, visit <http://www.sos.ms.gov/charities> to see whether they are registered on the Mississippi Secretary of State's website. In addition, follow and share the tips in the QR code below to prevent thieves from scamming millions and stealing from patriots in need.

We hope that you enjoy this issue!

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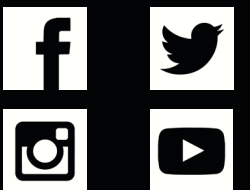
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VISIT US AT

[ms.ng.mil/](http://ms.ng.mil/)  
or the following Social  
Network sites under  
Mississippi National Guard







The Navy Flight Demonstration Squadron, the Blue Angels, performs a right echelon pass over Biloxi Beach during the Blues Over Biloxi Air Show, July 21. Gulfport's Combat Readiness Training Center - Battlefield Airmen Center hosted the elite flight team for the event. A family day for service members and their families was held July 20 with photo opportunities with the planes. (U.S. Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Chad V. Pritt)



Scan the QR code to view  
Blue Angels video.







Chief Warrant Officer 4

## Thomas W. Smith

It is an honor and privilege to address you in this format. This is a great opportunity to share a little about me and some of my thoughts on leadership and how the Warrant Officer provides it. During my Warrant Officer career I have served in the Joint Forces Headquarters, 1108th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group (deployed), 66th Troop Command, and recently Recruiting & Retention Battalion. During these assignments in various units, I have learned a lot about leadership and witnessed how effective it can be to an organization when applied correctly. In my current role as the Command Chief Warrant Officer for Mississippi, I serve as the senior-ranking ARNG Warrant Officer in the state military command and responsible to the Adjutant General for a variety of matters primarily pertaining to policies and actions affecting the Warrant Officer Cohort. More specifically, and in line with the Adjutant General's lines of effort, my number one priority is recruiting and retaining qualified Warrant Officers to provide MSARNG commanders with a ready and future force. My secondary priorities are assisting and promoting our resiliency and partnership programs with state, national, and international entities. I have found that one of the most fulfilling attributes as the CCWO thus far is that of coaching, counseling, mentoring and helping others. Now, on to the subject at hand, and that is leadership and how our cohort fits the bill in providing it.

The role of the Warrant Officer in the Army is ever changing and evolving. We are unique and often serve as influential agents of change in

our respective fields. We are technical officers who provide quality leadership to teams, sections, and crews.

Being a Warrant Officer has been one of the greatest experiences and rewards of my life. I would not be doing my due diligence without making a plea to all leaders out there in identifying someone you may know that would make a great Warrant Officer. Though our primary audience for recruiting Warrant Officers is the Army noncommissioned officer, we do get some from other sources as well. Civilian acquired skills is weighed heavily in qualifying.

I am grateful for this opportunity to serve in this capacity and to address the great Soldiers and Airmen of the Mississippi National Guard. I look forward to meeting and getting to know many of you better as we serve our great State and Nation.

Thomas W. Smith  
Chief Warrant Officer 4  
Command Chief Warrant Officer  
Mississippi Army National Guard

Command Chief Master Sergeant

## C. "Lynn" Rushing-Cole

Senior leaders, whether an officer or enlisted, must "walk the walk." General Patton once stated, "You are always on parade. As a senior leader you must understand, and accept, that example is everything in leadership." In short, there is no faster way to lose those you lead than by being labeled a "do as I say, not as I do" leader.

Set the example and talk with your team about the importance of setting the example. As you explain the significance, make sure you convey that you will take responsibility for your actions. Next, point out why the priorities and goals are more than just the tasks for execution. Once your teammates feel you will teach them "what good looks like," you will have the credibility to hold them accountable to the same standard you set. The American businessperson Max de Pree sums up the importance of leading by example, "The first responsibility of a leader is to define reality." When you define your team's reality and consistently lead "from the front," you will position your unit to achieve favorable results while maintaining and enhancing your credibility.

Another "must have" for senior leaders is the aforementioned credibility. It is the only thing given to you by others and lost by your actions or inactions. Credible leaders do not use information as power, doing so demonstrates you lack morals and principles. One must be honest to the degree that is reasonable. This takes into consideration you may not be in a position to reveal everything to everyone. However, your position does not give you the right to tell people "what they want to

hear" either. If you fall into this trap, you are demonstrating that you fear accountability. To put it succinctly, maintaining your credibility as a senior leader requires others to believe and trust you, both in what you say and in what you do.

Leaders must not only set the example and have credibility, but also ensure their team understands priorities and goals. How? By merely conveying the How and the Why "before, during, and after" the What. "This requires effective communication. Individually, leaders must develop flexible communication styles that cross generational differences. This fosters a common understanding, and thus, different generations will be able to communicate effectively. As Dr. Leonard Wong points out in a monograph on generational differences, not addressing communication differences between junior and senior leaders will lead to a crisis. To avoid this, leaders must contemplate the potential implications of not communicating effectively with those you serve. Remember, most of your teammates are life-long media consumers and multitaskers. Bottom line is creative thinking and reflection is necessary before, during, and after you communicate with your team. As the ancient Chinese military theorist Sun Tzu once stated, "Engage people with what they expect and treat your people as you would your own beloved children. They will follow you into the deepest."

C. "Lynn" Rushing-Cole  
Command Chief Master Sergeant  
Mississippi Air National Guard





# ETHIOPIA

## Honored Mississippi Aviation Pioneer

Story by Capt. Sabrina Dalton  
186th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

Six degrees of separation, a small world, or fate. However it's defined, it's unmistakable that perhaps the "most forgotten" aviation pioneer in American history left an indelible mark on a pilot and commander at the 186th Air Refueling Wing.

Col. Edward Evans, Jr., commander of the 186th ARW and pilot, received the opportunity of a lifetime when he was chosen by the Mississippi National Guard to represent the state and speak at a wreath-laying ceremony, June 2-7 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The event was to honor the legacy of Col. John Robinson and was also in conjunction with the delivery of a C-130 Hercules aircraft from the U.S. to Ethiopia.

To better understand the significance and relationship between Evans and Robinson, you have to first get a glimpse of the historical context between the two. Robinson was an African American pilot from Gulfport, Mississippi, as is Evans. Their families knew each other from being from the same neighborhood. In fact, had Evans been 60 years older, they would have lived across the street from one another.

Robinson earned his pilot license in the 1920s and was a Tuskegee Institute graduate. During that time, there was not an aviation program there. He pursued his dreams and not only became a pilot, but also founded an aviation program at his alma mater. Robinson is touted as the "Father of the Tuskegee Airmen."

During the 1930's and prior to World War II, Italy wanted to colonize the independent Ethiopia and began attacking them. Robinson volunteered to lead their air force and became an aviation hero. During his time in Ethiopia, Robinson took on Italian planes. He delivered messages, moved soldiers, was shot and still survived. Robinson earned the moniker "Brown Condor" for his success in Ethiopia.

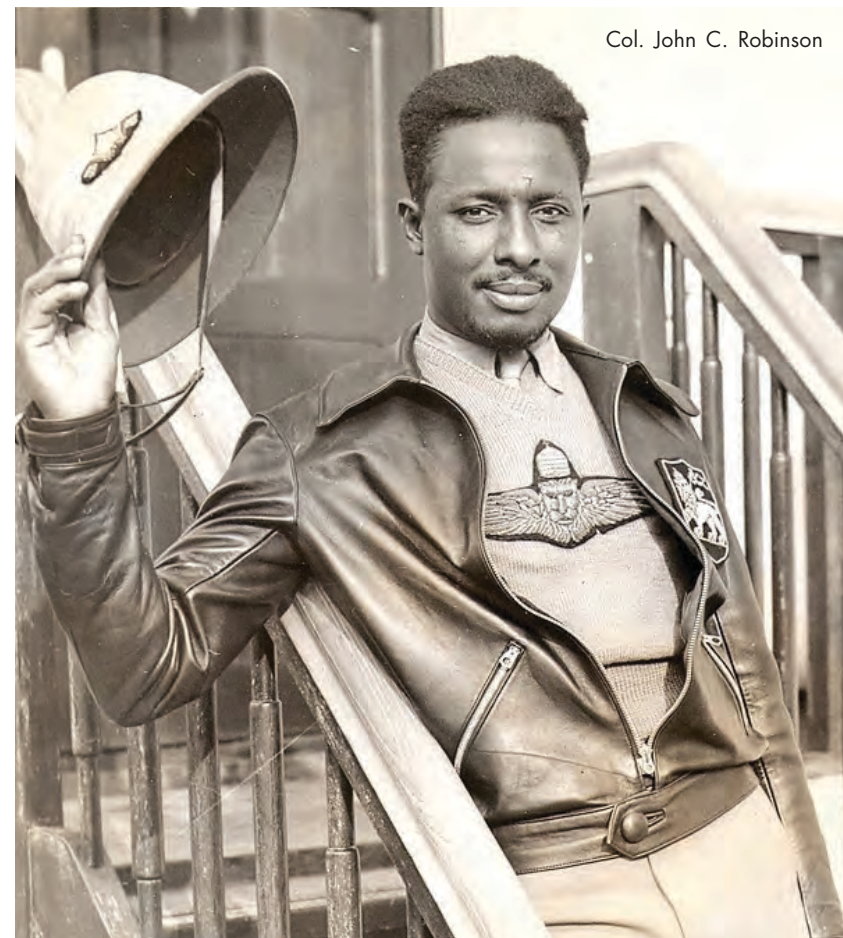
After World War II, Robinson was responsible for the Tuskegee Airmen helping train the Ethiopian air force. Robinson came back to America and started the John Robinson Airlines in

Chicago.

"That's what attracted the Ethiopian government - a black American who knew about aircraft. He was a mechanic and could fly," Evans said. "In all his efforts there, it gave more credibility to blacks in aviation. After the war, he came back to the U.S. and received the opportunity to go to Tuskegee."

After learning of Robinson, Evans began reading books about Robinson's history. In his research, Evans found that his great grandfather, John Hall, was mentioned in one of the books.

During that time in our country, communities were segregated. Evans' great grandfather



Col. John C. Robinson



Local Ethiopians, Ethiopian airport members, U.S. Embassy diplomats, U.S. Air Force representatives from the United States Africa Command, and others attended a Foreign Military Sales event to deliver a C-130 to the Ethiopian Air Force. Col. Edward H. Evans, Jr., also attended as part of his visit. (Courtesy photo)

owned a business across the street from Robinson's home.

"I'd like to think that my grandfather contributed to the entrepreneurial spirit that Col. Robinson developed," said Evans. "Not only was he a pilot, but he had the desire to go into business and start an airline in Ethiopia. I've benefited from Col. Robinson's work, his sacrifices, and his legacy."

Robinson's ambition to fly directly affected Evans' family because his grandfather, retired Master Sgt. Sidney Evans, became a Tuskegee Airman with more than 33 years of military service. His father, retired Tech. Sgt. Edward Evans, Sr., and uncle, retired Col. Sidney Evans, Jr., were both U.S. Air Force members. Evans followed in his grandfather's footsteps and also joined the Air Force.

"There's a part in a book that talks about him flying from Tuskegee back to Mississippi," Evans said. "He stopped over in Meridian and was received by over 4,000 black Americans who

came to see him fly in and welcome him. It's just a heartwarming story to hear that he's been where I've been and that I've walked in his same footsteps."

Earlier this year, the MSNG received an invitation from the Defense Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, for a Mississippi representative to speak at the wreath-laying service at the Col. John C. Robinson Library.

While in Addis Ababa, Evans also attended a Foreign Military Sales event to deliver a C-130 to the Ethiopian Air Force. Local Ethiopians, Ethiopian airport members, U.S. Embassy diplomats, U.S. Air Force representatives from the United States Africa Command, and others also attended the events.

"I was honored to be invited and have the opportunity to represent Mississippi," said Evans. "To have the chance to promote his legacy was indeed an honor for me. My family and I stand on the shoulders of Col. John Robinson's sacrifices, service and accomplishments."

Robinson died in a plane crash in 1954 in Ethiopia while bringing an injured boy from rural Ethiopia to Addis Adaba, the capitol. He died as he lived, with a total commitment to Ethiopia and its people. He was given a state funeral and is buried in Gulele Cemetery, according to the U.S. Embassy.



Col. Edward H. Evans, Jr., commander of the 186th Air Refueling Wing in Meridian, Miss., delivers a speech in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, June 5. Evans spoke at a wreath-laying ceremony that honored the legacy of Col. John C. Robinson, a Mississippian who led the Ethiopian Air Force in the 1930s and later became known as the "Father of the Tuskegee Airmen." (Courtesy photo)





# Sustainment Feeds The Muscle

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Veronica McNabb  
184th Sustainment Command Public Affairs

Today's battlefield requires a fast moving and mobile force that can operate on all cylinders. The 184th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) deployed approximately 220 Soldiers to Powidz, Poland, in support of the Saber Strike 18 exercise that encompassed four countries. As a sustainment command, the unit had the job of tracking and providing ways and means of getting the warfighter essential life support for over 18,000 troops.

It was a joint mission for the Mississippi National Guard. The Mississippi Air National Guard's 172d AirLift Wing, based in Flowood, Miss., transported the 184th SC to Poland, May 13 and returned the unit to Mississippi, June 22.

The 184th SC provided forward mission command support for the 16th Sustainment Brigade and 30th Medical Company. The group reported to the 21st Sustainment Command (Theater). Their partners in Saber Strike 18 were the Defense Logistical Agency and the 10th Logistics Brigade.

"For us, they are the reach back to the industrial base, and they have a worldwide organization. They're able to help us find solutions to material problems that we have to

speed things to the battlefield to help our maneuver commanders on the battlefield," said Brig. Gen. Clint Walker, 184th SC commander.

The unit provided logistical support for theater sustainment and had a persistent presence during Saber Strike 18 alongside NATO allies supporting it. The 184th SC was successful in overseeing logistics and movements to ensure units' freedom of movement, endurance, and operational reach. The primary focus of the command was to help further strengthen the U.S. alliance with NATO partners against deterring Russian aggression, he said.

**"Our ability to work with our strategic partners - with our allies and partner nations here on the ground, and to work on the interoperability of all of our processes - that is going to benefit us for a long time."**

**- Brig. Gen. Clint Walker**

The unit was the first sustainment command to par-



Maj. Tamiko Wright, Lt. Col. Laketter Cannon and Master Sgt. Eric Deitrick of the 184th Sustainment Command, check accountability of the 184th SC Soldiers that arrived in Poland, May 20.



10th Polish Logistics Brigade, Soldiers practice rifle drills during the Saber Strike 18 exercise in Powidz, Poland, June 7.



The 226th Composite Supply Company and 125th Transportation Company operate a mobile fuel point supporting the 2d Cavalry Regiment, June 2 in Powidz, Poland.

ticipate in Saber Strike that was responsible for enabling readiness and providing sustainment support across the entire U.S. European Command during the training, he said.

The Soldiers had a vital job to provide consistent logistical support to warfighters in the field. The massive training event included long-range convoys by the 2d Cavalry Regiment, headquartered in Vilseck, Germany, using multiple routes and mobile supply points across several countries to participate in key exercises. The planning and complexity of fulfilling the logistics and basic life support needs for the event was one of the largest challenges 184th SC faced in recent years, Walker said.

The 184th tracked and coordinated movement for units that equated to thousands of parts and equipment throughout the European theater during the exercise, according to Sgt. 1st Class Charles Connell. The unit used the Movement and Funding Automated Support Tool to link stakeholders to a single collection point with a chronological approval process. It supported units in navigating the unique movement requirements within the 51 countries in the U.S. Army Europe Command footprint. The MFAST application provided commanders and staff visibility of movement request statuses to enable them to manage complex movements. The unit tracked 130 MFAST requests during the exercise.

In addition, the 184th SC's munitions section tracked and provided distribution points to issue ammunition throughout the theater, said Master Sgt. Joel Carpenter. The group's mission was to track what was on hand, what was down range, and what was prepared to help push the rounds out to ammunition supply points for units in critical times of need with the help of partners. There were approximately six million individual rounds of various munitions tracked throughout the Baltic region during Saber Strike 18 and other exercises.

When it comes to basic life support, the supply and services of the 184th feed the muscle to ensure the warfighters are at maximum combat strength for any battle ahead.

The S&S tracked and coordinated over 312,000 meals for the Soldiers moving through Europe. They also provided coordination of bulk water issued, which was approximately 3.5 million gallons of bulk fuel, 3.1 million gallons of water along with 198,953 bottles of water to keep the Soldiers hydrated, according to Staff Sgt. David Nelson.

Equipment is needed for the units to move towards the fight and the 184th Support Operations Mobilization section helped plan and successfully execute more than 300 convoys and line hauls of equipment. Three sea vessels also transported vital equipment for Saber Strike 18, according to Lt. Col. Rodney Hodge.

On a grand scale of logistics and planning, regardless of what supplies were being moved, 184th SC ensured equipment, food, fuel and ammunition was transported to keep the warfighter moving.





# BIOLOGISTS COMBAT

## DEER DISEASE

Story by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

The Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center recently completed a program to improve its ecosystem and mitigate the danger of a spread of Chronic Wasting Disease among its white-tail deer population.

A deer identified with CWD in Arkansas in 2015 was the first reported case of the disease in a neighboring state and raised concerns about its spread into Mississippi. In January 2018, a deer carcass was identified with CWD in Issaquena County.

"It prompted me to take a harder look at it," said Bryan Fedrick, wildlife biologist at Camp Shelby. "If something were to happen, we were sitting on a powder keg."

Biologists and Soldiers alike have known for years the post hosted an unhealthy number of deer. However, other than occasionally causing minor training delays it was not considered a high priority to reduce their numbers.

Prompted by the Arkansas find, Fedrick conducted a camera study in 2016 and determined Camp Shelby hosted approximately one deer for every seven acres of land. Ideally, experts place a healthy population at one deer per 20-25 acres.

"So we knew we had a real high density deer herd," he said. "We had to do something. During this process, we set out to get ahead of the disease."

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks agreed. They also determined how to get the most benefit from the depredation program. Each animal was tested for CWD.

Since Oct. 1, 2017, MDWFP has sampled more than 1,800 white-tailed deer across Mississippi with no additional cases of CWD reported, according to MDWFP.

"We helped the state monitor that for south Mississippi," Fedrick said.

In a partnership with Camp Shelby, the Mississippi Wildlife Federation paid to have each animal processed as part of its Hunters Harvest Program, which provides meat to feed the homeless. In all, 3,191.4 pounds of meat were provided to homeless shelters.

"We were accomplishing our mission of lowering the deer herd to a healthier level, monitoring for disease as well as providing meat for less fortunate individuals," Fedrick said.

A total of 172 deer were harvested during the year-long program. The total was short of the 200 animal goal, but Fedrick said an evaluation of the program indicated they had made enough of an impact that a second year of the program was not necessary.

According to the Chronic Wasting Disease Alliance, CWD

affects only cervids, such as deer, elk, and moose. Infected animals begin to lose weight, lose their appetite, and develop an insatiable thirst. They tend to stay away from herds, walk in patterns, carry their head low, salivate, and grind their teeth. It is 100 percent fatal to an afflicted deer. There are no documented cases of it affecting people, but experts advise against consuming an animal afflicted with the disease.

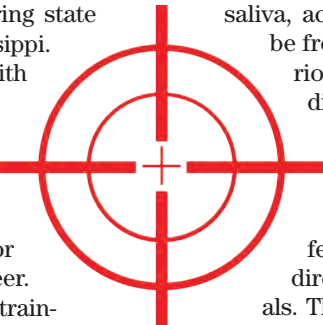
The infectious agent may be passed in feces, urine or saliva, according to MDWFP. Transmission is thought to be from animal to animal. The minimal incubation period between infection and development of clinical disease appears to be approximately 16 months.

Because CWD infectious agents are extremely resistant in the environment, transmission may be both direct and indirect. Concentrating deer and elk in captivity or by artificial feeding probably increases the likelihood of both direct and indirect transmission between individuals. The movement of live animals is one of the greatest risk factors in spreading the disease into new areas.

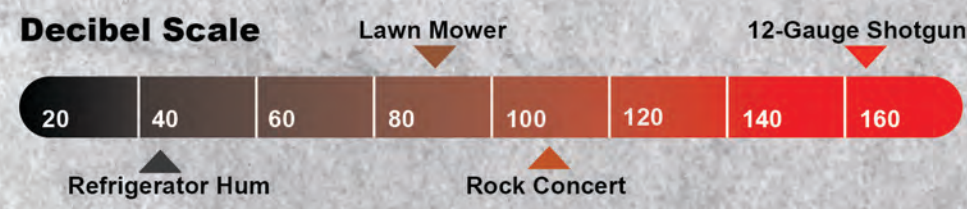
"What makes this so dangerous," Fedrick said, "is the more deer that are in an area, the more contact they have with others and it becomes more likely and faster for the disease the spread."

Biologists are also evaluating how the program will boost efforts to save the endangered gopher tortoise by eliminating some of the competition for valuable resources.

The Mississippi National Guard leadership and biologists are still determining the best ways to maintain a healthier deer population for Camp Shelby for the future and are considering long-term management options.



"Soldiers and Airmen **should always wear hearing protection** if the noise or sound level exceeds 85 decibels (dBA). **Hearing protection** reduces the noise exposure level and the risk of permanent hearing loss." - Lt. Col. Lourie N. Formby III, State Safety Manager



**MISSISSIPPI NATIONAL GUARD**





# 172d Airlift Wing

## Provides Fuego Volcano Relief

(Top) A joint medical team from the Mississippi Air National Guard's 183d Air Evacuation Squadron and Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, assists members of the Guatemalan government with loading critically injured patients on a 172d Airlift Wing C-17 Globemaster III aircraft at Guatemala City, June 6, 2018.

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Ed Staton  
172d Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The 172d Airlift Wing's air evacuation mission gained international recognition following their transporting of six critically burned children from volcano-struck Guatemala, June 6. The children ranged in ages from one to 16 years old and were injured by volcanic ash when the Fuego Volcano erupted June 3 and claimed more than 159 lives.

"This isn't something we always get to do as far as working with civilians from babies to teenagers," said Maj. Jennifer Harless, a flight nurse with the 172d AW. "In the past, we have typically worked with adult trauma cases. We have trained for these types of scenarios

in the past and we were able to put our training to full use."

With a fleet of nine C-17 Globemaster III aircraft, the Mississippi Air National Guard unit has a storied tradition of flying wartime patient air evacuation missions and responding to natural disasters by flying in desperately needed relief supplies. Typically, the wing's pilots and flight crew fly separate missions from the wing's medical teams. However, the desperate call for help from the Guatemalan embassy required an immediate response. Within two hours, the wing had assembled a crew.

"I believe this ranks right up there with the most important missions flown by the 172 AW," said Capt. David Hutchins, Guatemala relief flight com-

mander. "Providing humanitarian relief and being able to use our aircraft and the air evacuation squadron that we have enabled us to rescue the victims in a timely manner."

The rescue mission, directed by U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM), originated from Jackson and included a stop in south Texas to pick up an Air Force burn team and critical care team from San Antonio Military Medical Center. A direct flight to Guatemala City followed with the plane's arrival greeted by the country's First Lady Patricia Marroquin Argueta de Morales.

Once in Guatemala, the rescue teams had to drive to area hospitals so they could properly transition the burn victims for their flight on the C-17. The team worked for more than 24 hours straight before delivering the heavily bandaged injured children and their guardians to Galveston, Texas, where they were transported to Shriners Hospital for Children.

"This shows the length that the Air Force will go to save life, limb or eyesight," said Lt. Col. Teri Dawn Neely, a medical crew director with the 183d Air Evacuation Squadron. "Not just for their military members, but civilians as well. They took great lengths to help save these children and bring them to higher echelons of care."



Airmen with the 183d Air Evacuation Squadron, Mississippi Air National Guard, offload a patient in Galveston, Texas, June 7, 2018. They worked with a joint medical team from Joint Base San Antonio, Texas, to provide en route medical treatment for six injured children during the U.S. Air Force humanitarian airlift aeromedical evacuation mission from Guatemala after the recent Fuego Volcano eruption.

"I believe this ranks right up there with the most important missions flown by the 172d Airlift Wing."

- Capt. David Hutchins



**45** yrs  
since a volcanic eruption this severe

**12** mile  
radius of volcanic ash spread

## Guatemala Fuego Volcano



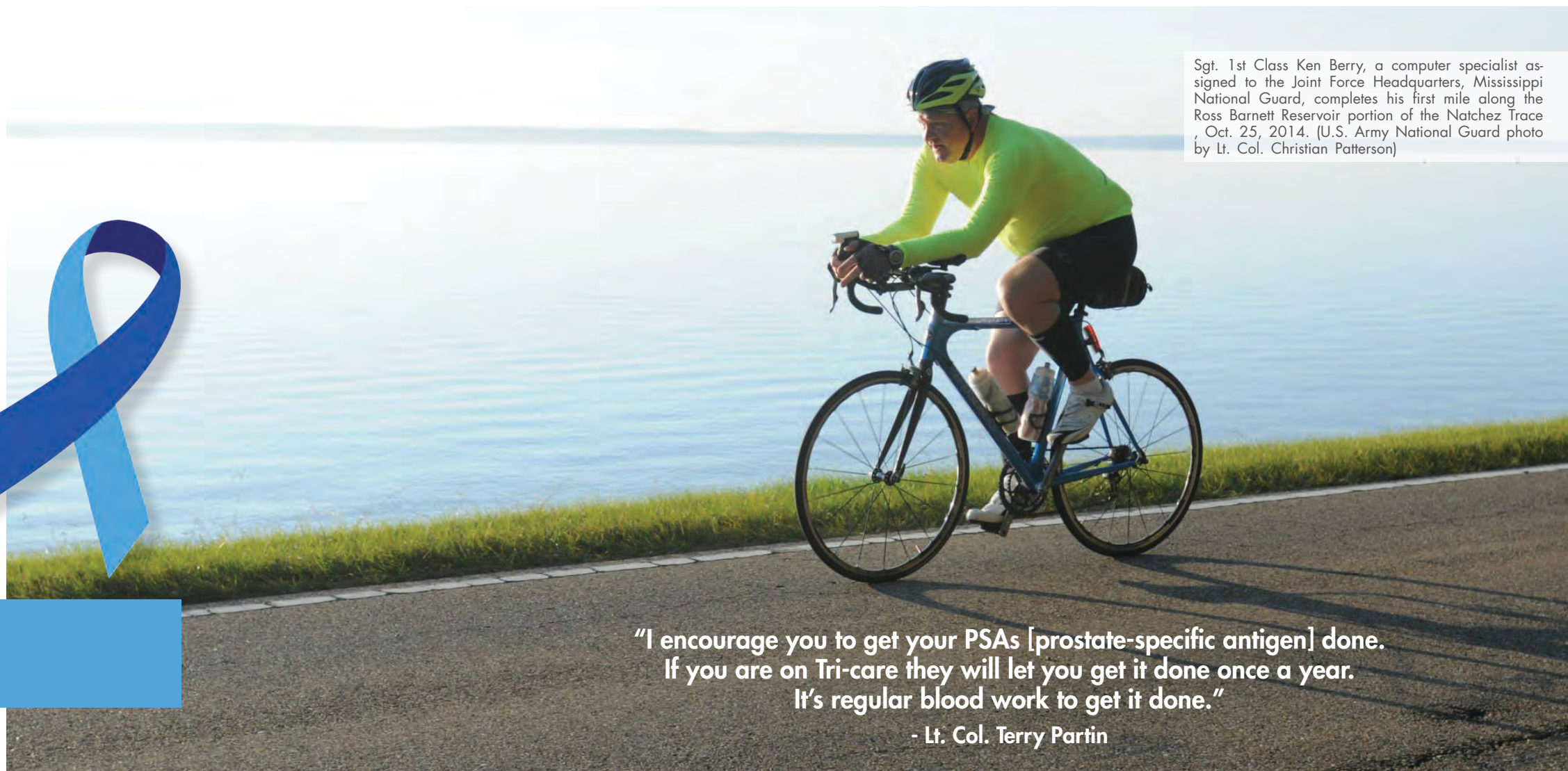
**1.7** M  
people affected

**3,100**  
evacuations made





Courtesy photo



Sgt. 1st Class Ken Berry, a computer specialist assigned to the Joint Force Headquarters, Mississippi National Guard, completes his first mile along the Ross Barnett Reservoir portion of the Natchez Trace, Oct. 25, 2014. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Lt. Col. Christian Patterson)

# Knowledge is My Saving Grace

**"I encourage you to get your PSAs [prostate-specific antigen] done. If you are on Tri-care they will let you get it done once a year. It's regular blood work to get it done."**

- Lt. Col. Terry Partin

**Story by Spc. Christopher Shannon  
102d Public Affairs Detachment**

A Mississippi Army National Guard Soldier credits an offhand conversation with saving his life from an enemy lying in wait within his own body.

Sgt. 1st Class Kennett Berry, a computer helpdesk technician at Jackson's Joint Force Headquarters, was excited and preparing for his first deployment with Laurel's 184th Sustainment Command when unexplained fatigue encouraged him to seek a few easy medical tests.

"I was very lucky, very blessed, to be having a conversation with my neighbor. I was turning 51 (years old) at the time, and we talked about how I felt low in energy," he said.

He and his neighbor talked about how it may be time for him to try testosterone shots like his neighbor who is already taking the supplement to help him with the

same issue.

"Had I not had that conversation with my neighbor, I would have never known a thing," said Berry. "I had no other symptoms at all. I just had low energy from time to time and I was just going 'dang this sucks.'"

He went to Baptist Medical Center in Jackson for an urologist to run the test to identify if he had low testosterone and the test came back positive, said Berry. Once the test confirmed what his neighbor suggested, the urologist started him on testosterone shots and as a result they wanted to keep an eye on his prostate-specific antigen number. The results revealed something was not right and a biopsy of his prostate was needed. A few days later the results were in that he had prostate cancer.

Without that key piece of knowledge he received at just the right time, the cancer would have kept progressing while on

deployment and after until it started to spread to his bones, said Berry.

Before his diagnosis, he sat down with his family to talk with them about him going overseas and the dangers that came along with it. Now, however, he told them about a new enemy he must focus on – cancer.

"That was tough. I was probably more prepared for him to go to be deployed than I was for cancer," said his wife, Missy Berry.

Although cancer wasn't what she was expecting, she said, she dug her heels in and started researching and praying through the entire thing from diagnosis to the present.

The treatment was to remove the tumor completely, which came with a lengthy four-week rest period.

However, full recovery takes a little longer than he expected. He is an avid cyclist who would usually ride eight miles

to work and back home, but when he got the OK from the doctor to ride again he just didn't have enough energy to do it, said Berry. He eventually worked his way back up to his previous capabilities, but it took time.

Berry is not the only Mississippi National Guardsman to battle prostate cancer and struggle with physical tasks like they once did, said Lt. Col. James Bennett, base operations supervisor at the Camp McCain Training Center and fellow survivor in the Mississippi Army National Guard.

"Recovery is slow. It took me about six weeks just to get back where I could sit at a desk for eight hours," said Bennett. After three months, he still can't get enough energy or endurance to run like he did before his surgery, said Bennett.

Now, as recovering survivors, Berry and Bennett have taken up informing others on the dangers that could be hiding behind ordinary symptoms.

"Most men are thinking about their colonoscopy when they get 50 (years old), but I never really ever heard about prostate screening," said Berry. "Seven thousand Soldiers went through the periodic health assessment ... for the upcoming deployment and a handful of those soldiers could be like me and not even know about it."

Prostate cancer is the most common cancer in men (not counting skin cancer). It is also one of the leading causes of cancer death among men, according to the American Cancer Society.

Prostate cancer can often be found early in a simple blood test by testing for prostate-specific antigen (PSA) levels in a man's blood, such as Berry's case. Another way to find prostate cancer early is the digital rectal exam, in which the doctor puts a gloved, lubricated finger into the rectum to feel the prostate gland.

If the results of either one of these tests are abnormal, further testing is of-

ten done. If prostate cancer is found as a result of screening, it will probably be at an earlier, more treatable stage, according to the ACS.

Lt. Col. Terry Partin, a state support chaplain and fellow prostate cancer survivor, said most insurances will cover the test.

"I encourage you to get your PSAs done," said Partin. "If you are on Tri-care they will let you get it done once a year. It's regular blood work to get it done."

With cancer now behind him, Berry said he is nowhere close to hanging up his boots. With four years in the Marines before his 30 years in the Mississippi Army National Guard, he is approaching his mandatory retire date, but he is not done fighting and serving this state and country just yet, said Berry.

"My goal is to make it to 40 years," said Berry.



# RATTLESNAKE

## Expands Striking Range

Story by Danielle Thomas  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office (Gulfport Bureau)

The precise bombing and destruction of military value targets in the opening stages of Operation Desert Storm had a direct and immediate impact on the success of the war. That precision was not achieved without a substantial amount of pre-war training. Gulfport's Combat Readiness Training Center – Battlefield Airman Center assists with the training of today's pilots for the next war and is evolving to meet the needs of the future battlefield.

The CRTC-BAC's expansion initiative at its Air-to-Ground Range is part of a larger goal to develop it as a premier training ground for the Air National Guard's elite warriors. "The country's four Combat Readiness Training Centers and the Air National Guard as a whole are going through a transformation," said Col. Joe Reid, Gulfport CRTC commander. "Back in 2012, the Gulfport CRTC lost its primary mission, which was to host unit exercises for Operational Readiness Inspections (ORI), when the Air Force inspection system changed."

In 2016, the ANG re-focused the mission of Mississippi's CRTC to include facilitating advanced skills training for ANG Battlefield Airmen. Some Battlefield Airmen career fields include pararescue, combat rescue officers, combat control, special tactics officers, tactical air control party, and air liaison officers. These service members, who operate much differently than traditional air forces, must be capable of integrating with conventional air and ground forces, and Special Operations Forces.



A line of training bombs, filled with concrete, lie awaiting transport for reuse. Live ordnance is not used at Rattlesnake Range. (U.S. National Guard photo by A. Danielle Thomas)

To take on this new training role, the CRTC launched a strategy to modernize the Air-to-Ground Range it operates in Perry County. The leadership seeks to expand Range

202 East, also known as the "Rattlesnake Range," four-fold using two parcels of property owned by the Department of Defense. The expansion should not effect noise levels for the population of Perry County during exercises, said CRTC Operations Director Lt. Col. Jeff Kirby.

In the past, the Rattlesnake Range served to train aircrew in weapons of employment against target sets relevant to the Vietnam and Gulf Wars. Joint Terminal Attack Controller, or JTACs, also frequently use the area for close air support recurrent training.



The munitions used during these exercises, 20 millimeter and 30 millimeter guns and unguided inert bombs, have a small weapon danger zone footprint which is easily contained within the Rattlesnake Range's safety zone. However, with the evolution from dumb bombs to precision guided bombs, the safety zone for weapons employment, coupled with more varied launch profiles, have exceeded the current footprint.

"The safety fan is our Forest Service/Camp Shelby recognized area of operations," said Kirby. "The Weapons Danger Zone safety fan is a statistically recognized area within which the munition will hit the ground when released within the parameters we give the aircrew even if the munition malfunctions. The various parameters specified to the air crew allow them to choose different altitudes, dive angles, and speed options."

Leaders also envision adding an area known as DoD Block 30 to the Rattlesnake range to resolve the safety fan issue and better accommodate the training demands of fourth-and fifth-generation fighter aircraft. The plan is to upgrade targets, instrumentation and debriefing systems, communication systems, and threat replicators.

"One thing we hope to accomplish with continuation training is for Battlefield Airmen to be able to accomplish 50 to 60 percent of their mission essential task lists in a two week period," Reid said. "That will make the CRTC a prime venue for the Battlefield Airmen to do their training. Right now, they go to different areas around the country. We're trying to structure it so they can accomplish most of that at one location to minimize costs and travel expenses for the Air National Guard."

The extra range space would also further reduce the risk of employing munitions against targets in relative close proximity to oil and gas production sites or negatively affecting the public.

When the ANG designed the CRTC as the Battlefield Airmen Center, the Rattlesnake Range offered no urban training space and only one approved precision guid-



Rattlesnake Range encompasses 3,100 acres in Perry County. It will increase in size substantially with the addition of two additional parcels of property owned by the Department of Defense. (Courtesy photo)



The urban village provides for a training area for military members to practice search, capture, and rescue missions at the Rattlesnake Range in Perry County, Miss. (U.S. National Guard photo by A. Danielle Thomas)



Capt. Cory Mozey, a Joint Terminal Attack Controller with the 238th Air Support Operation Squadron, participates in a training exercise at the Rattlesnake Range in Perry County, Miss. (U.S. National Guard photo by A. Danielle Thomas)

ed munition target. Another proposed expansion area, known as DoD Block 35, will be the setting for multiple target sets and add urban villages. Battlefield Airmen will be able to maneuver, clear buildings, conduct search and rescue, do kill/capture scenarios, and conduct close air support missions. The exercises will more closely mimic the types of engagements Battlefield Airmen face in the Global War on Terror.

"We are all figuring it out as the advanced aircraft needs evolve but, in short, these aircraft will deliver more advanced weapons which require broader parameters than our current training audience needs," Kirby said.

The United States Forestry Service completed an environmental impact study and signed off on proceeding with the expansion. However, new roads must be built before any major construction can proceed.

The National Guard Bureau and United States Special

Operations Command recently agreed to fund for new targets in the current Rattlesnake Range and the CRTC has submitted requests for targets in the new expansion area. In fiscal year 2017, the CRTC-BAC trained 10,322 ANG personnel and 18,735 total personnel at its Gulfport and Perry County locations in exercises like Southern Strike, PATRIOT South, and Trident. Training Battlefield Airmen remains the main mission, but it won't be the only focus.

"We're going to take a lesson from what we did in the past when we had one primary mission and diversify ourselves with unit training, the new ORI system, the Joint (National Training Capabilities) exercises as well as the Battlefield Airmen training," Reid said. "That way if the Air Force changes its mind on how it wants to operate, we have a diverse amount of capabilities that we offer to in order to stay viable. We reduce the costs of training Airmen across the Air National Guard."





# NOT IN KANSAS ANYMORE

Lt. Col. John Sherrill instructs a student at the 3rd Noncommissioned Academy of the 154th Regional Training Institute in individual tactics. He is now the commander of the 2nd Infantry Battalion, 154th RTI, at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. A Kansas native, Sherrill is one of the first Soldiers to take advantage of a unique partnership between the Mississippi and Kansas Army National Guards to enhance readiness in both states. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Needham)

Story by Staff Sgt. Michael Needham  
Camp Shelby Public Affairs

The Mississippi and Kansas Army National Guards have been working to better develop noncommissioned officers and commissioned officers through an exchange program.

The initiative allows the two states to fill certain vacancies to improve readiness in both states, especially since the KSARNG's 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, is part of the MSARNG's 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team.

"This exchange program was started when Brig. Gen. Jeffery Van was selected as a general officer for the 35th Division and the 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, became the third battalion of the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team," said Col. Amos Parker, Mississippi National Guard chief of staff. "This provides career management and opportunities for development of not just officers but noncommissioned officers as well."

The 2-137th IR makes up 20 percent of the KSARNG, said Lt. Col. John Sherrill.

Sherrill recently took advantage of the new initiative to become the commander of the 2nd Infantry Battalion, 154th Infantry Regiment at Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center when Mississippi had to look beyond its own borders to fill the vacancy. The unit comprises some of the training cadre for the 154th Regional Training Institute, which provides advanced military career training

and hosts the 3rd Noncommissioned Officer Academy.

"This is great way for us to learn our role within the Kansas Army National Guard and the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team," he said.

The exchange program makes it possible for the Soldier to transfer to either Mississippi or Kansas for 18 to 21 months to fill a need for that particular state. Once the Soldier completes their command time, which is important for an officer's upward mobility within the ranks, they will return back to their home state. This allows members of the 2-137th IR and the 155th ABCCT time to work on staffs and develop working relationships that will be instrumental for success during future missions.

**"This broadening experience allows me to bring knowledge back to the Kansas Army National Guard,"**

**- Lt. Col. John Sherrill**

"This is a great cross-pollination between Kansas Army National Guard tactics, techniques and procedures and the Mississippi Army National Guard tactics, techniques and procedures," said Sherrill.

The program accommodates both states and the leadership. Working as part of a larger organization helps to grow officers and NCOs while they gain a wealth of experience.

"When you see the flow of battle at the division level, it helps you under-

stand it more on the brigade and battalion level," said Sherrill.

For Mississippi, the program means a wider range of qualified officers to draw from when positions become available, but Kansas benefits from also gaining another path for career progression.

"We anticipate as an option for us that someone from Kansas could eventually command the 155th brigade here in Mississippi through this exchange program," Parker said. "It would start by people coming to work on the staff through their careers."

According to Parker, to get someone with the experience that is needed to command at the next level, preparations need to start at a lower level. The program provides a means to do that which benefits both states.

"This is the culmination of every officer's career to become a battalion commander. This is a professional and personal honor to be in this position of service," Sherrill said.

Sherrill said with his command time limited to 18 to 21 months, he has only a short time to make an impact an impression on the Soldiers at the RTI that will benefit them throughout their careers.

"I hope the troops who go through this schoolhouse talk about the great training and atmosphere that can only be found here at the 154th Regional Training Institute," said Sherrill. Soldiers interested in opportunities in Kansas should notify their chain of command.

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# Camp Down Range

Story by Amanda Kibble  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

C.J. Stewart has a fervor for conquering life's challenges. He seems unafraid to ask the most difficult questions and help others realize they can never accept failure as an option.

This was his own decision soon after he was deployed to Afghanistan as an U.S. Army medic with the 101st Airborne Division. "Rendezvous with Destiny" is the motto of the Screaming Eagles. Stewart chose to make his destiny inspirational.

Stewart was almost hit by a rocket-propelled grenade in June 2010 that hit the wall next to him. He was fortunate, but his arm and leg were both damaged severely from the blast. Recovery



All photos courtesy of C.J. Stewart foundation.

time took 18 months and 41 surgeries.

During that time, Stewart began thinking about the importance of learning to overcome difficult moments in life. He wanted to create a place where people could speak their truths and be physically and mentally challenged.

The result was Camp Down Range, which opened in 2012 in Clinton, Mississippi. At the facility, he asks people from all backgrounds and come together as a team.

"C.J. took what he is doing in Clinton with the camp and did that for Guard kids. He said that you think you can only do this much, but you can do so much more than what you think you can do," said Kristina Frazier, the State Family Programs manager at Joint Force Headquarters in Jackson, Mississippi.

Camp Down Range has consistently strengthened the bonds between parents and their children. Stewart offers guidance to building solid foundations through military values.

"It's not about self. It's not about him, or his story. It's about putting (the determination) into the people that he's working with, the military kids that he's working with," added Frazier.

"My daughter and I went out there with other service members' families and it taught us how to become one. He taught us how to deal with things that come about in our lives. It's a really good thing to have in our society today," said Joyce Robinson, a retired Mississippi Air National Guard master sergeant and a volunteer for the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve.

Resiliency is a core element of Stewart's teachings.

"You might not ever get blown up in life and if you have I hope it never happens again," he said. "Life will knock you

down. The reality is we're all going to get blown up. We're all going to get knocked down. We're all going to have to ask ourselves, 'now what?'"

Stewart asks that question to groups of people, young and older, every year. The same question he asked himself after each surgery he had to save his right arm and leg.

Camp Down Range takes the same foundation that the military uses in training and applies that to everyday life.

"We like to challenge people physically. We like to do treks, where it's a 25-mile hike out at camp carrying rucksacks of sandbags. And it's grueling and brutal and it's a team event. Then we start (comparing) that with life. Twenty-five miles - that takes us 9 to 10 hours, maybe, with a group. I say, 'Guys, what are you going to do when a kid gets sick with cancer or a spouse gets sick? Or you want to be married for 25 years. It's going to be a lot longer than that 25 miles. If you want to quit after 25 miles, what are you going to do when that happens?'"

For a lot of individuals, these are tough questions.

Learning to cope and overcome

can be daunting. Stewart's own experiences with facing the unknown give him the platform to speak to kids and adults who need guidance. Especially National Guard kids, whose parents may deploy and return with a life-altering physical or mental change.

"We take truth that keeps you alive on the battlefield and we apply it to everyday life," he said.

In the past year, Stewart has worked with 65 Guard children during a father-son weekend and a summer camp. He also spoke with approximately 200 students at Kids AT.

Stewart makes it a point to talk to these young adults with their parents about how to maneuver through the challenges to come. Parents who have experienced the military know what those skills can offer their children.

Stewart is offering the opportunity to build personal strength for those moments when the question, "now what?" becomes unavoidable.

Family Programs offers information about the C.J. Stewart Foundation through their Facebook page or their Outreach Services app.



"The reality is we're all going to get knocked down. We're all going to have to ask ourselves, 'Now what?' Someone is going to die. Somebody is going to get sick. Cancer is going to come back. Your business is going to fail. Something is going to happen. The question is what are you going to do with that?"

- C.J. Stewart





# COWBELLS RING FOR THE GUARD PARTNERSHIP OFFERS FREE TUITION

Story by Amanda Kibble  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

The Mississippi National Guard and Mississippi State University have reached an agreement to allow the state's Soldiers and Airmen to receive free tuition.

Major General Janson D. Boyles, the adjutant general of Mississippi, and Dr. Mark E. Keenum, MSU president, signed a memorandum of understanding for the Bulldog Free Tuition Program, Aug. 7 at the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery Center for America's Veterans at Nusz Hall in Starkville.

The initiative builds on current National Guard education benefits to create a unique opportunity for eligible Mississippi Air and Army National Guard service members. To be eligible, Soldiers and Airmen must be full-time undergraduate students, in good standing with their units, and not be within one year of the end of their term of service. The program is expected to help the MSNG maintain readiness and boost recruiting efforts throughout the state and beyond.

"Readiness is our force's top priority and this tuition program will help to attract personnel who will staff our future state and federal missions," said Boyles. "The students receiving this tuition benefit will contribute tremendously towards our preparedness and be among those ready to answer the call during state emergencies and overseas contingency operations."

Approximately 30 Army and Air National Guard recruiters were present for the MOU-signing ceremony. The consensus among them all was that the new program will be a valuable tool to educate current students and to attract more candidates to the joint team in the future.

"Student loan debt is a major obstacle for high school seniors and others planning to attend college," said Master Sergeant Keither Dennis, marketing noncommissioned officer in charge, Recruiting and Retention Battalion. "Mississippi State's program offers our recruiters a powerful tool to attract more college educated Guardsmen to the force with no tuition debt to have to be addressed after graduation."

Mississippi State's support through the BFTP designates the school as the only state university where MSNG service members can attend college without paying tuition. The institution has a long legacy of caring for those in service to the Magnolia State and the Nation.

"We have a long, proud history as one of the nation's most military-friendly college campuses," Keenum said. "Among our alumni are the late U.S. Sen. John C. Stennis, father of the modern nuclear Navy, and the late U.S. Rep. G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery, author of the modern G.I. Bill. This innovative tuition program we launch today with the Mississippi National Guard continues MSU's pro-soldier legacy and directly invests in those brave, bright men and women who serve and protect our great nation."

For guidance regarding participation in the BFTP, contact Capt. Marcus Parker, education services officer, at 601-313-6183. Additional information is also provided on page 31 in the Burning Questions portion of the Guard Detail.



Courtesy photo



## 172d Contingency Response Flight Flies to the Final Frontier

Story and photos by Master Sgt. Betsy J. Winstead  
172d Airlift Wing

The 172d Contingency Response Flight deployed to Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska, with more than 100 172d Airlift Wing personnel for annual training, July 13, 2018.

"Our mission is to provide expert airbase operating capabilities to support domestic contingency and OCONUS operations," said Lt. Col. Joelee Sessions, unit commander.

Specifically, the CRF's mission is to establish command and control elements and an airfield whenever called to deploy worldwide. Although they are still a relatively new unit, they hope to add support air force specialty codes like Security Forces and Aerialport in the future. They have already deployed in support of three hurricanes and other assignments.

Training in Alaska allows the unit to focus on the readiness tasks without civilian jobs, military additional duties, or family issues interfering with mental focus. Sessions said it was a time to leave all of those distractions behind for a little while to concentrate on the equipment, how to use it, the deployment mindset, and how to operate in the deployed environment.

"The primary goal for this AT was two-fold: to accomplish all of our integrated defense training for the year," said Superintendent Senior Master Sgt. John W. Huffman.



The 172d Contingency Response Flight practices combat casualty carries, July 10, 2018 at Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson, Alaska.

Additionally, the goal was to pack all their equipment, deploy the equipment, and use the equipment in a simulated deployed location under austere conditions. That will enable the troops to feel more comfortable with the equipment and operations, build experience and re-enforce classroom theory with practical hands-on use, he said.

Another benefit to training at JBER is the base infrastructure. The Army ranges on JBER offer access to classroom instruction, gyms for combat martial arts, building-clearing structures, and mock locations to establish airfield operations. The unit was also able to use blank ammunition, smoke grenades, and various props to give the training more authenticity. Huffman said he wanted his people to "train like you fight and fight like you train." The more an Airman practices with the equipment and various scenarios, the better they can retain the classroom information and build proficiency. Some Airmen on this team are also able to contribute their civilian knowledge to enhance training with real-life experiences.

Team building is an added benefit to the training. The Airmen foster closer relationships and discover each other's strengths and weaknesses, while learning to depend on and trust each other, Huffman said. He firmly believes that closer relationships on the team will make them a better, cohesive team.

"When you leave your civilian family at home, this kind of training grows that 'other [Air Guard] family,'" he said.

Although the training is demanding with extensive instruction courses, annual training, family sacrifices, exercises, and high deployment tempos, Huffman maintains that right now it's necessary "to make us the best CRF in the Air Force."

"Any deficiencies will be noted, and we will continue to work to improve them," Huffman said. "As a lead unit, deployed locations do not provide the amenities and resources that they're used to having at home station. Airmen have to learn to adapt and problem solve with the equipment and resources that they deployed with."

While training at JBER's outdoor Army ranges, Airmen can't help but notice the beautiful environment around them and the opportunities for adventure. Towering snow-capped mountains, crystal-clear stream and an abundance of wildlife enticed Airmen when off-duty to explore the Alaskan frontier. Many hiked mountains, caught salmon on fishing trips, sighted stellar seals, sea otters, mountain goats, and humpback whales; and enjoyed the tastes of Alaskan food.

With so much to offer Airmen for training and recreation, it was hard to leave Alaska ... the final frontier.



# ARMY EVOLVES PT PROGRAM

Story and photos by Sgt. Brittany Johnson  
JFH-MS Public Affairs Office

The U.S. Army is undergoing what is arguably the largest shift in readiness in 30 years to prepare its Soldiers for the challenges faced on the battlefields of the future.

In the last 30 years, the Berlin Wall came crashing down, the United States and its allies have fought in Iraq (twice) and Afghanistan following the tragic September 11 attacks on the World Trade Center. In addition, the U.S. elected its first black president and Hurricane Katrina devastated the Gulf Coast. Throughout that time, the U.S. Army maintained the same physical fitness standards for its Soldiers.

However, the history of the Army Physical Fitness Test will soon draw to a close. The U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command announced in July that the force is transitioning to the Army Combat Fitness Test by 2020.

The character of war is evolving and so are the physical needs of combat. The assumptions that fostered the transition from the Advanced Physical Fitness Test in 1973 to the APFT in 1980 have changed as military operations become



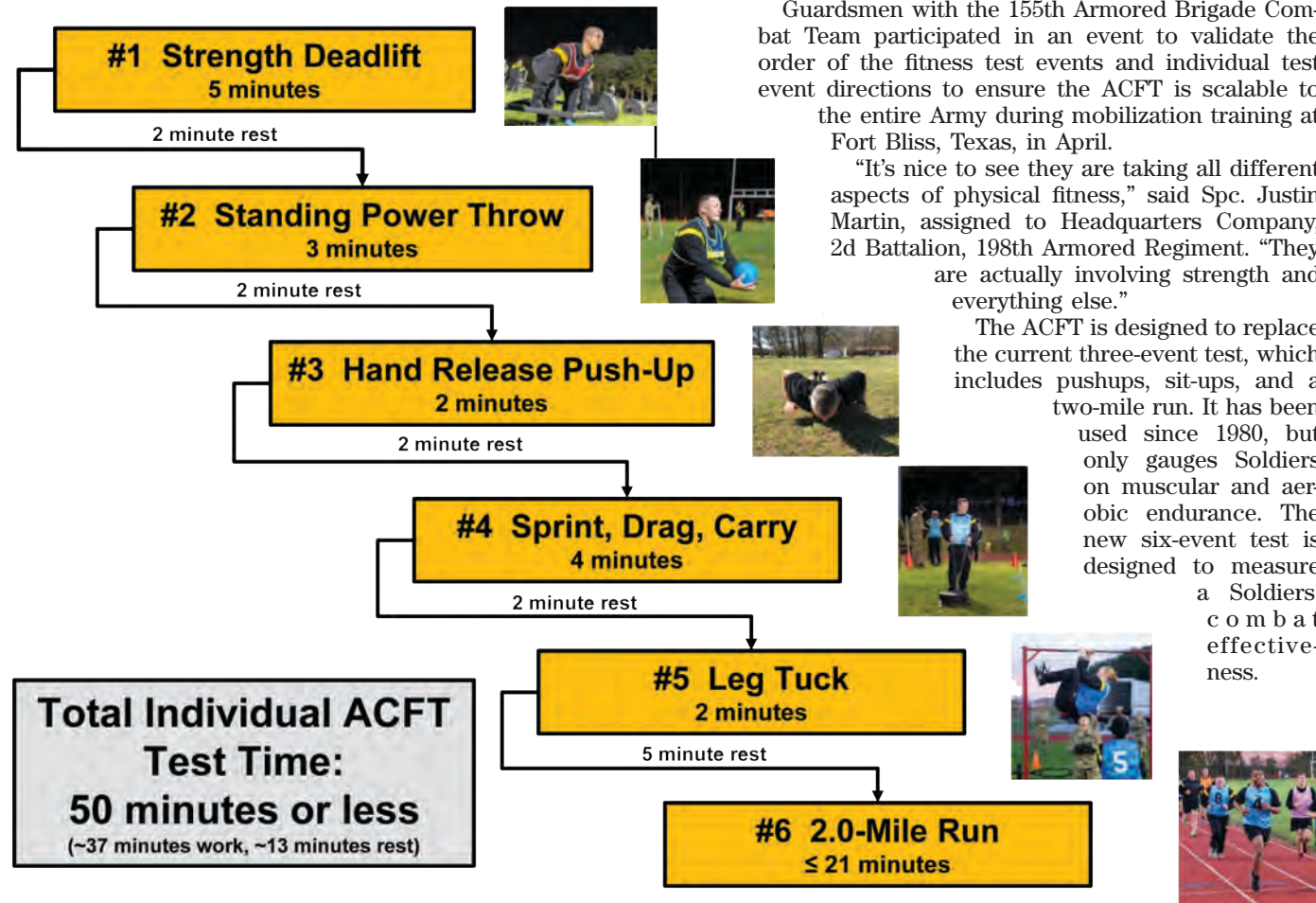
Spc. Briceton Lowrie, with 2d Battalion, 198th Armored Regiment, conducts a deadlift during a pilot program at Fort Bliss, Texas.

more complex, according to the U.S. Army Center for Military Training, which is overseeing the transition to the ACFT. The ACFT will improve Soldier physical readiness, change the Army fitness culture, reduce preventable injuries, better inform commanders of unit readiness and enhance mental toughness and stamina.

Guardsmen with the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team participated in an event to validate the order of the fitness test events and individual test event directions to ensure the ACFT is scalable to the entire Army during mobilization training at Fort Bliss, Texas, in April.

"It's nice to see they are taking all different aspects of physical fitness," said Spc. Justin Martin, assigned to Headquarters Company, 2d Battalion, 198th Armored Regiment. "They are actually involving strength and everything else."

The ACFT is designed to replace the current three-event test, which includes pushups, sit-ups, and a two-mile run. It has been used since 1980, but only gauges Soldiers on muscular and aerobic endurance. The new six-event test is designed to measure a Soldier's combat effectiveness.



Spc. Shelbi Constancio, assigned to Headquarters Company, 150th Engineer Battalion, completes a backwards power throw.



Spc. Jacob Nathan, with 1st Battalion, 155th Infantry Regiment, performs a backwards power throw.



Chief Warrant Officer 2 James Sanders, with Headquarters Company, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, conducts a deadlift.

The new test will include a variety of events that will gauge Soldiers' muscular strength and endurance, power, speed, agility, aerobic endurance, balance, flexibility, coordination, and reaction time.

Army senior leaders have been researching the test for the last six years and starting this past year they began allowing Soldiers from different components and states to be beta testers, like the 155th ABCT.

The ACFT will be a requirement for all Soldiers beginning October 2020. This new test will provide a broader range of physical fitness and increase combat effectiveness across the board.

## EVENTS

**STRENGTH DEADLIFT:** This will require Soldiers to perform a three-repetition maximum deadlift using a hex bar, with a proposed weight range of 120 to 420 pounds. This will assess lower-body strength and imitates Soldiers picking up other Soldiers or supplies.

**STANDING POWER THROW:** This event will require Soldiers to toss a ten-pound medicine ball backwards as far as possible.

**HAND-RELEASE PUSHUPS:** Soldiers will start in the prone position and do a traditional pushup, in the down position their hands and arms must come off the ground. They then reset to do another pushup.

**SPRINT/DRAW/CARRY:** Soldiers must dash 25 meters five times up and down a lane including sprints, a 90-pound sled drag, and two 40-pound kettlebell carries.

**LEG TUCK:** Soldiers start from a straight-arm hang from a pullup bar, they must flex their arms as they raise their legs to touch their knees or thighs to their elbows and lower back to a straight-arm hang for one repetition.

**TWO-MILE RUN:** Same event as the APFT.

The grading system for the test has yet to be determined, but will be gender and age neutral. Decisions on scoring will be determined once field-testing is complete.

**"These events are going to help us to establish better training programs and assessments that will allow Soldiers to be successful in their mission and come home safe."**

- Dr. Whitfield East  
Resource Physiologist at the  
Center for Initial Military Training

#COMBATREADY  
ARE YOU PREPARED?







U.S. Air National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Marvin Moore



## Nabors Takes Command

### Hill Retires

Brigadier General Billy “Mike” Nabors assumed command of the Mississippi Air National Guard during a change of command ceremony, Aug. 4, 2018 at the Joint Force Headquarters in Jackson. He replaces Maj. Gen. William O. Hill, who retires with 30 years of service. Nabors, 57, currently serves as the Mississippi National Guard’s full-time assistant adjutant general - Air and is a former commander of Meridian’s 186th Air Refueling Wing. Hill, 53, is a former commander of Flowood’s 172d Airlift Wing and serves as the Global Process Automation Technology Leader of the Dow Chemical Company in Plaquemine, La.

Maj. Gen. (Ret.) William O. Hill receives award from Maj. Gen. Janson D. Boyles, the adjutant general of Mississippi, for outstanding service during his retirement ceremony, Aug. 4, 2018 at the Joint Force Headquarters in Jackson. Highlights of Hill’s career include amassing 4,900 flight hours in the C-17 Globemaster III and C-141 Starlifter aircraft. The Operations Desert Shield/Storm and Iraqi Freedom veteran completed numerous overseas and stateside transport missions to deliver personnel and cargo in support of global military requirements.



## 155th ABCT

### Assumes Authority in Kuwait

U.S. Army Col. Robert Ferguson, commander of the 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, Mississippi Army National Guard, and Command Sgt. Maj. John Beasley, the command sergeant major of the 155th ABCT, unfurl the unit colors as they assume authority of Operation

Spartan Shield operations from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Armored Division, at Camp Buehring, Kuwait, July 15, 2018. Ferguson stated the 155th ABCT was capable and ready to answer any mission assigned to the unit. (U.S. Army photo by Spc. Adam Parent)

#ESSAYONS



The Mississippi National Guard is proud to congratulate our Brig. Gen. Trent Kelly! He was awarded the prestigious Gold Order of the de Fleury medal during the U.S. Army Engineer Regiment’s annual Engineer Castle Ball in Crystal City, Va., Aug. 3, 2018! The medal is named in honor of François de Fleury, a French Engineer in the Continental Army. It is the highest honor given by the regiment and recognizes individuals who exemplify boldness, courage, and commitment to a strong national defense. (Courtesy photo by U.S. Army Engineer Association)

## Dragon Boat Regatta

### MSANG Takes Second



U.S. Air National Guard photos by Master Sgt. Marvin Moore

The 172d Airlift Wing received second place among 40 teams in the 10th Annual Dragon Boat Regatta, May 19 at the Ross Barnett Reservoir.

The strong finish may have been a surprise to some, considering the wing’s participation in the 2018 event marked the first time that the 172 AW had competed.

The 20-team crew included wing members Catrina Wilson, Micah Taylor, Lisa Tompkins Ponder, Eddie Davenport, Evan Dailey, Chuck Harrison, Kiara Spann, Julie Marley, Teri Dawn Neely and Hartley Welk-

er. Dragon Boat Racing is regarded as one of the world’s fastest growing water sports and has 2,000 years of tradition.

The Mississippi Air National Guard team credited great teamwork for their stellar performance.

“We had a couple of great practices leading up to the event,” said the 172 AW’s Maj Micah Taylor. “The drum cadence that we used to synchronize our paddling strokes reminded us all of being in step through our experience in marching.”



## Gold Star Families

### Memorial Monument

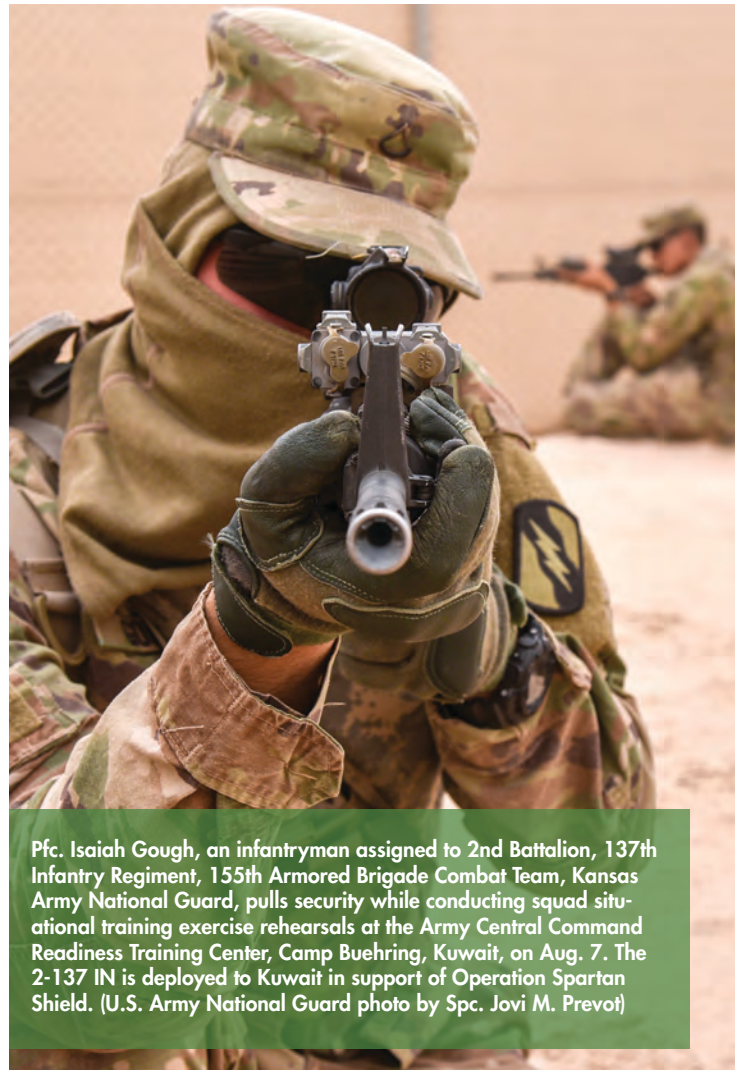
Over 450 people gathered May 16 with Mississippi Gov. Phil Bryant, Maj. Gen. Janson D. Boyles, the adjutant general of Mississippi, Medal of Honor recipient Mr. Woody Williams, and Gold Star Family members at the Mississippi Armed Forces Museum to unveil the Gold Star Families Memorial Monument

at the Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center. Gold Star Families are those who lost relatives or other loved ones in military service. This monument is the first Gold Star Families Memorial Monument to be placed in Mississippi. (U.S. National Guard photo by A. Danielle Thomas)



# DIXIE THUNDER

155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, Tupelo, Mississippi



The wavy bend refers to the Mississippi River.

Yellow and green are colors used for armored units.

The lightning bolt symbolizes the striking power and shock action of the unit.

Pfc. Isaiah Gough, an infantryman assigned to 2nd Battalion, 137th Infantry Regiment, 155th Armored Brigade Combat Team, Kansas Army National Guard, pulls security while conducting squad situational training exercise rehearsals at the Army Central Command Readiness Training Center, Camp Buehring, Kuwait, on Aug. 7. The 2-137 IN is deployed to Kuwait in support of Operation Spartan Shield. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Jovi M. Prevot)

**“The 155th is the first armored brigade combat team from the National Guard to take the (Operations Spartan Shield) mission. That says a lot about us and puts a lot of pressure on us as well. So, we are ready to do what we need to do to increase our credibility, enhance our mission, and answer whatever mission is given to us.”**

- Col. Doug Ferguson, 155th ABCT commander

## BURNING QUESTIONS

### Cowbells Ring

#### for the Guard

**Capt. Marcus D. Parker**  
Education Services Officer

**Is the Bulldog Free Tuition Program available for graduate level education?**

Currently, the program is only available for full-time resident and online undergraduate students that are in good standing within the Mississippi National Guard. A full-time student is defined as one who is enrolled for 12 credit hours or more. Army and Air National Guard dependents and retirees are not eligible to participate in the Bulldog Free Tuition Program.

**Will the other public universities in Mississippi offer free tuition programs in the future?**

Mississippi State University is the only public institute of higher learning offering free tuition for Mississippi National Guardsmen at this time. If other schools decide to employ similar programs, we'll be sure to update the force in regards to any new free college tuition programs that become available.



**Are there additional benefits available to assist Mississippi National Guard Soldiers and Airmen with expenses such as room and board?**

The Mississippi National Guard Joint Force Headquarters Education Office encourages service members to complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and State Aid applications. In addition, our Soldiers and Airman can use available Montgomery G.I. Bill benefits to help cover these expenses.



**For more information, please contact our office at 601-313-6183.**



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Dr. Mark Esper signs his flag of the secretary of the United States Army with Maj. Gen. Janson D. Boyles, the adjutant general of Mississippi, during a visit to Camp Shelby Joint Forces Training Center Aug. 2. The flag is planned for a display at the post's Mississippi Armed Forces Museum. Esper's visit included senior-level military and civilian engagements, a town hall meeting with Soldiers, and UH-60 Blackhawk gunnery training with the Alabama Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 131st Aviation Regiment, which conducted annual training at the post. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Scott Tynes)

