

GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard



Fight to be the best

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Competition gets off the
ground at Camp SLO**

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Leadership Corner

Cyber: The newest battlefield

Major General David S. Baldwin



In the 21st century, our nation faces threats unlike any we've previously seen. In addition to enemies with land-, sea- and air-based capabilities, we now contend with space- and cyberspace-based challenges as well.

Cyber technology is the arms race of today and of the future. Every time we improve our defenses, the enemy devises a new tactic to identify weaknesses and exploit our vulnerabilities. In short, any time a service member logs onto a computer, he or she is entering a cyber battlefield.

The California National Guard's network includes more than 6,000 computers and 2,000 handheld devices, which are continuously bombarded with attacks from criminals, terrorist organizations and foreign intelligence agencies trying to extract sensitive information. In a typical day, the CNG Directorate of Information Management monitors more than 10,000 threats that could compromise the CNG network.

The most significant threat to any network, however, is the internal threat, whether resulting from an intentional security breach or a negligent disregard of procedure. No amount of security can defend fully against the internal threat, which is why every Guard member and employee must remain vigilant. Our people are our first line of cyber defense, and efforts to thwart attacks must be a primary focus every day — not just once a year to fulfill a

training requirement.

Safeguarding government-issued devices, Common Access Cards and information is of vital importance. These items should not be treated like any other computer, phone or identification card that can be left unattended where it might be stolen or lost. Your nation is depending on you to keep those items secure.

You also must be mindful of the actions you take while using government devices. Computer viruses can enter a network in a wide variety of ways, enabling them to corrupt the system, alter files or steal data.

Emails, tweets and online ads often include links that can introduce a virus to your computer, so don't take a chance: If an email looks suspicious, delete it. If a link is not from a trusted source, do not click on it.

Personally owned electronic devices also may carry viruses, even if you haven't noticed any effects. That is why you must not connect any of your devices to government equipment, as this could contaminate the network.

Civilian and military personnel who knowingly, willfully or negligently compromise a Department of Defense network can face administrative or judicial punishment. If found personally liable, the individual also could be

charged \$5,000 by the Defense Information Systems Agency to clean up information spillage.

In the California National Guard, we are taking a proactive approach to cyber security that goes beyond the walls of our armories and bases. Working with Speaker of the State Assembly John A. Pérez, we have established full-time CNG Cyber Network Defense Teams that travel throughout California to shore up state agencies' cyber security and prepare the agencies for cyber contingencies.

Separately we are working with our federal partners to establish a Cyber Protection Team in California that would assist U.S. Cyber Command in maintaining network security. We also are laying the foundation to create a Cyber Center of Excellence that would train military members and state workers in this rapidly evolving field and take advantage of our state's intellectual capital.

In a network such as ours, every user is key to cyber defense. The security of the Armed Forces' information and your own depends on each of us following proper procedures. Be sure you know your role in protecting this information, and never let your guard down.

Cyber threats are constant, but with vigilance, our vulnerabilities can be addressed and malicious acts can be countered. As a team, we can keep our network secure.

Prepare yourself for joint operations

Command Sergeant Major William Clark Jr.



Joint professional military education (JPME) improves the ability of enlisted personnel to operate as part of a multi-service force and supervise members of multiple branches. I have listed 10 courses below that will assist service members with joint endeavors. All the courses are distance-learning-focused and come at no cost to you or the nation, with the exception of the Keystone course. The courses do not require any prerequisite learning requirements.

The courses are offered through Joint Knowledge Online, the Defense Acquisition University or the Joint Forces Staff College. All three are accessible online with a Common Access Card. I encourage all enlisted members to pursue these offerings for personal and professional development.

I am confident the experiences will enable you to better serve leaders and decision makers. You also will gain an appreciation for the capabilities, doctrines and cultures of your fellow services. These are all benefits that will create a depth of understanding that any noncommissioned officer can use as part of a joint team to lead from within.

Joint Knowledge Online Courses

Joint Task Force Fundamentals 101, The Operational Environment presents information on the operational environment in which a joint task force conducts operations.

Joint Task Force Fundamentals Course 101, Joint Intelli-

gence examines joint intelligence roles and responsibilities, preparation of the operational environment and the intelligence process architecture used in planning and operations.

Introduction to NATO School Logistics and Movement Operational Planning explains asymmetric conflicts confronted by NATO forces and discusses three key principles of joint operations: focus, synchronization and synergy.

Understand Legal Authorities and Limitations Required in Support of Joint Force Headquarters-Joint Task Force State Operations enables graduates to understand the intent of a joint commander. The course is focused on the operational level of war and is directed toward officers selected to attend joint staff training and perform duties as a joint task force, combatant or component staff planner.

Joint Planning and Execution System Overview emphasizes the importance of security cooperation and underscores how strategic and operational level guidance from the secretary of defense and the secretary of state impacts the combatant command's theater campaign plan. It also highlights the relationship between the U.S. embassy's country operations plans and the theater campaign plan.

Defense Acquisition University Courses

Introduction to the Joint Capabilities Integration & Development System focuses on the system's terms, defini-

tions, concepts, processes, roles and responsibilities as well as its interaction with the Defense Acquisition System and planning, programming, budgeting and execution.

Planning, Programming, Budgeting and Execution (PPBE) focuses on the relationship of each PPBE phase to the systems acquisition process.

Joint Forces Staff College Courses

Homeland Security Planner's Course has an interagency focus and enrolls roughly equal numbers of military and interagency participants. The 40-hour, certificate-granting course focuses on the military perspective of homeland security.

Senior Enlisted Joint Professional Military Education prepares senior enlisted leaders to successfully support activities and supervise members of multiple services.

Keystone Course is designed for command senior enlisted leaders who serve or are scheduled to serve in general- or flag-officer-level joint headquarters or service headquarters assignments. Keystone will parallel the Capstone Course for newly selected general and flag officers and will visit combatant commands, joint task forces and senior leadership in the Washington, D.C., area to explore the relationships and challenges of operating in a joint environment.

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Submissions

Articles:

- ★ Articles range from 350 to 2,000 words. All articles should be accompanied by multiple high-resolution images.
- ★ Include first names, last names and military ranks. Always verify spelling.
- ★ Spell out acronyms, abbreviations and full unit designations on first reference.
- ★ Only submit articles that have been approved by your unit's public affairs officer.

Photographs:

- ★ Highest resolution possible: MB files, not KB.
- ★ No retouched photos, no special effects.
- ★ Include the photographer's name and rank, and a caption: what is happening in the photo, who is pictured and the date and location.

E-mail submissions and feedback to:
brandon.honig@us.army.mil

Cover Shot



Photo by
Spc. James Wilton

Spc. Giovanni Guzman of the 235th Engineering Company runs through the obstacle course event of the CNG Best Warrior Competition on Sept. 11 at Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif.

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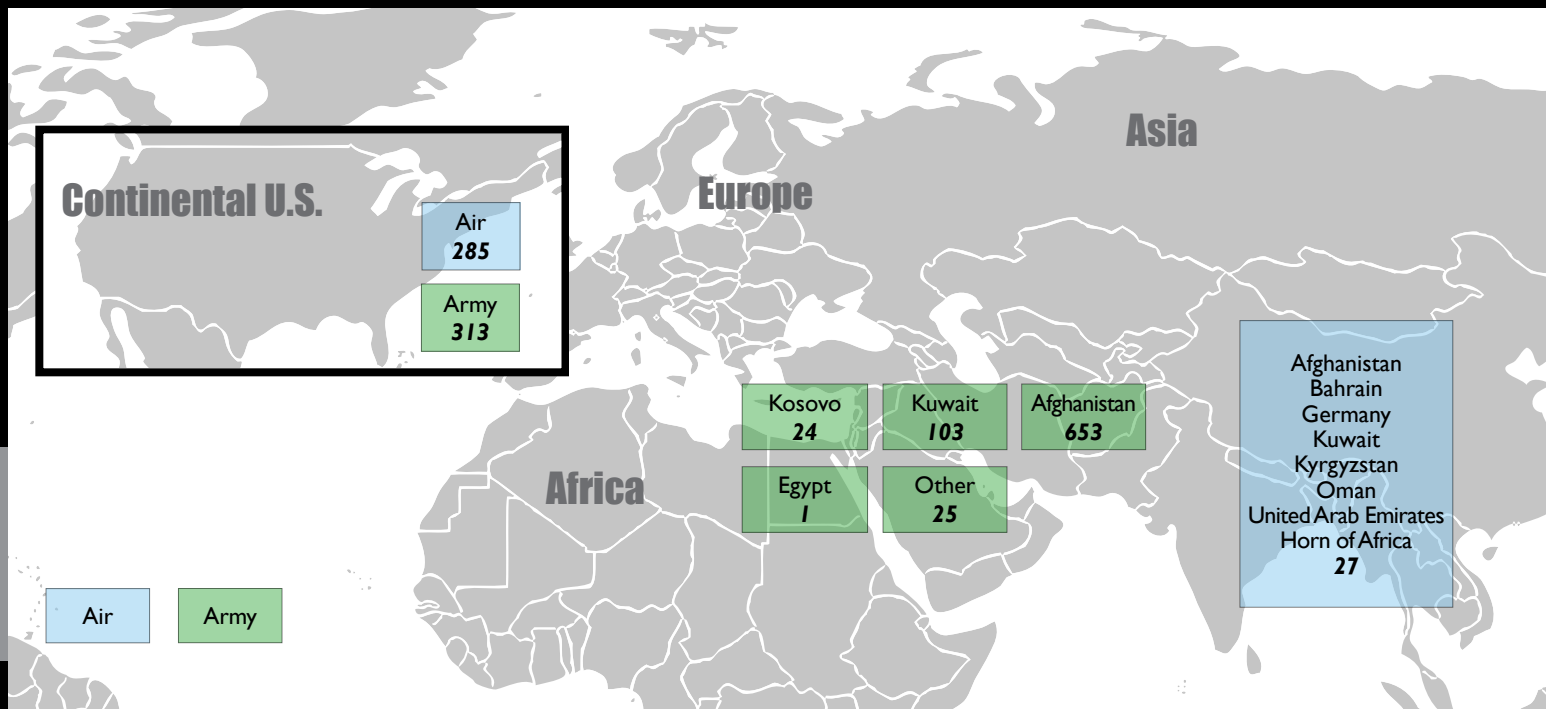
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California National Guard mobilizations as of October 2013



CNG, CHP member earns state's highest honor

Staff Sgt. Dane Norem suffered severe injuries saving the life of a suicidal man on a highway overpass

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

Citizen-Airmen not only lead while on duty in the Air National Guard but also in their communities. On Oct. 25, 2012, just before 10 p.m., Staff Sgt. Dane Norem of the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing performed an act of heroism while risking his own safety to save another's life.

Norem, a crew chief for MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft at the 163rd, is also a full-time California Highway Patrol officer in Riverside. On Oct. 25 he responded to a dispatch call regarding an individual hanging from an overpass.

Upon arriving at State Route 91 near La Sierra Avenue, Norem saw an individual crying at the bottom of the exit. Norem ran to the man just as he straddled one leg over a chain link fence that protects pedestrians from falling off the overpass.

Norem grabbed the man's belt to pull him off the fence, but the man was able to pull a knife, which he swung at the CHP officer trying to help him.

"He hit me twice in the face," Norem said. "He was stabbing at me trying to get me loose from him."



Photo by 1st Lt. Jason Sweeney

Staff Sgt. Dane Norem of the CNG's 163rd Reconnaissance Wing receives the California Medal of Valor from Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. and Attorney General Kamala Harris at the state Capitol on Sept. 26. Norem, who also serves in the California Highway Patrol, was honored for saving the life of a suicidal man who fought Norem on a highway overpass and stabbed him nine times.

Norem held onto the ankle of the man's pant leg, while the suicidal individual stabbed Norem nine times, including a blow that punctured Norem's eye. Despite his injuries, Norem continued to hold onto the man's leg until help arrived to take him into custody.

"[Norem's actions] make us proud of his courage and dedication to public service and to ensuring the safety of the citizens of Southern California," said Capt. Amanda Snowden, Norem's CHP commander. "We fully support the members of our department who are reserve members of our

Armed Forces. Service is service. Those of us in law enforcement and in the Armed Forces share the same commitment to protecting the citizens of the United States."

Norem received the Medal of Valor from Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. at the state Capitol on Sept. 26 along with 13 other deserving awardees. The medal is the highest honor California bestows on its public servants. In his remarks at the ceremony, Brown said Norem and the other medal recipients are public servants who are "heroic, unselfish, who have a deep sense of virtue and act on it."

"It makes me a very, very proud wife," Amanda Norem said of Dane's actions. "You know when you send him out every day that it's dangerous, but you don't realize how dangerous it really is until something happens. ... I know what kind of character he has and that he wants to serve."

Norem has had reconstructive surgery on his eye and will have two more surgeries to implant a new lens and artificial iris.

"This whole experience has been very humbling, although I feel like anyone in my shoes would have done what I did," Norem said.

Soldier: 'My daughter showed me true strength'

Combatives instructor 1st Sgt. Daniel Perry's infirm infant daughter inspired him to take a new career path

By **SPC. JAMES WILTON**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

Two warriors square off on a mat surrounded by a noisy crowd eagerly anticipating the action. That is the normal atmosphere of an Army combatives competition — a place where some feel at home, but few more so than 1st Sgt. Daniel Perry.

Perry is the combatives instructor and company first sergeant for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 223rd Infantry Regiment Regional Training Institute. A former Marine who has worked for the 223rd since 2001, Perry has been involved in mixed martial arts since a young age, including wrestling and kickboxing as a teenager and working as a close combat trainer in the Marine Corps.

Combatives is a big part of Perry's life, but with the birth of his daughter in 2001, a change began to take shape in him. Isabella was born with a genetic abnormality and a need for constant medical care. The rough-and-tumble former Marine found himself faced with a fragile daughter who changed his life, teaching him a new kind of strength.

"The resiliency and the wiliness to overcome any obstacle in order to live — my daughter showed me true strength," Perry said. "She humbled me, she truly humbled me."

Beyond the lessons he learned from Isabella, Perry also found inspiration from watching her interact with medical professionals.

"Being in the hospital so many times, I got to see the professionalism and compassion of those in the medical field," Perry said. "It was very inspiring not only for me but for my family as well. The care that they gave to my daughter and the way they showed me to care for her inspired me to start moving into a new avenue in life."

Perry began studying medicine, and when he heard about a physician's assistant program at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, he applied. This year Perry was accepted to fill one of 12

slots allocated for Guard members nationwide. The two-year school means he will be required to spend time away from his family, but the experience and knowledge he will gain is well-worth the sacrifice, he said.

Even at this turning point in Perry's life, he is mindful of where he has been, and his passion for combatives still sings out when he talks about the subject.

"The defining characteristic of a warrior is the willingness to close with an enemy. And how do I evaluate that, how

do I test that?" Perry said. "Well, one way is to get on this mat, knowing that the other person on the other side of the mat is coming to take them out."

Perry shows that same passion as the first sergeant of Task Force Warrior, a training element that prepares Guard units from around the country for overseas deployments.

"He's an amazing person. I'm learning a lot just working with him," said Spc. Jasmine Singleton of TF Warrior. "He really cares about the Soldiers and looking out for them."



Photo by SPC. James Wilton

1st Sgt. Daniel Perry officiates a combatives match during the California Army National Guard's Best Warrior Competition at Camp San Luis Obispo in September. A long-time combatives instructor for the Guard, Perry was recently accepted into a physician's assistant program at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, a career path that was inspired by Perry's daughter Isabella.

Saving equipment, saving lives

The 349th Quartermaster Company's new method of removing equipment from Afghanistan keeps Soldiers out of harm's way

By **SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
Guam National Guard

They're trash talkers and garbage collectors, but unlike the workers who collect your refuse, the members of the Cal Guard's 349th Quartermaster Company are saving lives through their innovative approach to moving U.S. equipment out of Afghanistan.

The 349th arrived at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, in August and immediately jump-started a new method of "retrograde operations." The 349th, which is a component of the 749th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, dispersed 130 Guardsmen to six sites in Afghanistan, where they are working to reduce the amount of equipment that needs to be transported throughout the country. Details of the new technique are not available for release.

"This is a completely new method. There's no Army doctrine on this type of mission," said 1st Lt. Norman Hayes, commander of the 349th. "It's a historic change to the way the military retrogrades out of theatre. This is not just going to save time but save money and lives."

Sending teams of 349th Soldiers to locations throughout the country to categorize equipment and supplies eliminates the need to transport that equipment to Kandahar, he explained.

"This process [reduces] the amount of time it takes to load ... containers, and it keeps our Soldiers off roads," Hayes said. "We save the government money by determining [what equipment is] useable and savable. We go out and aggressively find excess materials and either disposition it, destroy the equipment, send them to Kuwait or return them to the U.S. ... We can really save lives by eliminating the garbage that gets hauled around."

At Kandahar the 349th operates in two large yards equivalent to a square mile in total area. Thousands of 20-foot-long shipping containers pass through each month, carrying supplies ranging from office equipment to lumber and clothes. Everything, including pens and paper, are sorted and categorized.

Hundreds of civilians assist the 349th in their operation. Some have been in country for so long, the 349th depends highly on them to identify certain items.

"They're our team. We consider them part of the 349th," Hayes said. "When we first got here, we had to revise some things, but we set up an operation that runs smoothly and safely for everyone in the yard."

Once the 349th relieved the 289th Quartermaster Company from Fort Hood, Texas, teams of Soldiers sectioned off areas for trucks to make deliveries, for Soldiers to load containers and for troops to sort items into sensitive and non-sensitive categories.

"It's the Soldiers who made this happen," said 1st Lt. Adam Chapa, executive officer for the 349th. "We're writing the Army doctrine right now on how to retrograde out of the country."

The 349th troops regularly collaborate with logistics groups from Australia, Italy and Poland, to name a few, as well as members of the local Afghan population. First Sergeant Terran Jesse, who fills the role of first sergeant for the 349th, commended his troops for cooperating and working well with service members from many nations.

"We constantly hear how phenomenal our Soldiers are doing," Jesse said.

Each day, 349th members come across broken printers, computers, tables, chairs and hordes of other non-sensitive items. They are destroyed on the spot or sent to an incinerator or other site for destruction. This, in the 349th's language, is excess material — unuseable, non-retainable items that are just plain garbage.

"There are some things I've never seen in my Army career," said Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Talbert, noncommissioned officer in charge of the 349th's main yard on Kandahar. "It makes you realize how large the Army is as a whole."

The efforts of the 349th are part of the overall plan to withdraw U.S. forces from Afghanistan by the end of next year. According to a Sept. 13 report by Reuters, about 24,000 vehicles and 20,000 shipping containers full of gear will be sent out of Afghanistan, costing up to \$7 billion.

Chief Warrant Officer 2 Pedro Alvarado of the 349th said his unit has processed roughly 11,000 pieces of equipment since their arrival in Afghanistan, amounting to close to \$500 million worth of supplies scheduled to be sent to the United States.

"It's not as easy as it seems to get things transported," Hayes said. "So much is drawing down, the roads aren't as nice as Iraq, and you just can't drive anywhere you want in this country."

"We just have to stay flexible," he added. "We're learning as we go and making adjustments as we see fit."



Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Talbert, left, and Sgt. Dwayne Hardy of the 349th Quartermaster Company examine an air compressor to determine if it is worth salvaging or if it should be destroyed Oct. 17 on Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan.



Photo by Master Sgt. David J. Loeffler

Tech. Sgt. Johnny Gonzalez of the 144th Fighter Wing Civil Engineering Squadron works to build a storage facility at a NATO school in Oberammergau, Germany, in August. The squadron deployed 40 Airmen to Oberammergau for 15 days in August to complete a series of projects at the school.

144th builds structures, bonds in Germany

By **MASTER SGT. DAVID J. LOEFFLER**
144th Fighter Wing

Forty Airmen from the 144th Fighter Wing Civil Engineering Squadron traveled high in the Bavarian Alps in August to take part in valuable training, beef up force protection for a NATO school and renovate the historic school's campus in Oberammergau, Germany.

The squadron's first objective during its 15-day deployment was to build a force protection wall that also serves as a sound barrier for a neighborhood near the school. The Airmen also built a large awning on a logistics squadron structure at the school to provide additional storage space, and they improved foot patrol paths for NATO security officers.

The Civil Engineering Squadron includes a broad spectrum of different workers, which enabled a great deal of cross-training in Oberammergau.

"We have engineers, electricians, structures people and heavy equipment operators. It's a mix of the entire engineering career field," said Senior Master Sgt. Art Galindo, the squadron's engineering superintendent. "We also brought three firefighters to serve as our [emergency medical technicians], who have been a big help on the job sites."

The team worked with local architects and contractors to ensure the construction work met German standards. Often the teams had to adapt to a change in workflow and perform tasks outside of their normal career fields.

"I am with fire protection, and we came here as EMTs, but I've been able to work on the wall project and the awning project," said Airman Brianna Carden of the 144th Fighter Wing Fire Department, who was on the first deployment of her National Guard career.

It wasn't always blue skies and sunshine during the deployment, but when faced with heavy downpours of rain and sticky mud, the Airmen adapted, overcame and got to work. The teams also had the opportunity to work with German military members and create lasting bonds.

"Roofs are going up, walls are being built. The change that it leaves when these airmen depart will be dramatic and will dramatically affect our ability to conduct operations here," said U.S. Navy Capt. Scott Butler, commandant of the school. "I couldn't be happier about the work the 144th has done here. They epitomize excellence, professionalism and camaraderie, and I look forward to welcoming them back as often as I can."

CNG warriors reach for the pinnacle

15 Soldiers compete to be Soldier of the Year or NCO of the Year at the California Guard's annual Best Warrior Competition

By **SPC. JAMES WILTON**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

There are many ways for Soldiers to display their mettle away from the battlefield, whether through marksmanship events, physical fitness tests or even appearance boards. Take those tests, add a few more and mix in the stress of long days, unit pride and fierce competition between Soldiers, and you've got the Best Warrior Competition (BWC).



For more, scan this QR code or visit [Flickr.com](https://www.flickr.com/photos/69thpawd/)

"The Best Warrior competition simulates the stresses of combat [through] the long hours of preparation and the long hours of training, as well as pushing them both physically and mentally through all the events," said Command Sgt. Maj. Harold London, the top enlisted Soldier in the California Army National Guard. "When they walk away from this, it [should feel] like they came right out of combat."

The BWC, which was held Sept. 10-13 at Camp San Luis Obispo (SLO), Calif., means more than just bragging rights to the Soldiers; it's a training tool that showcases a Soldier's full potential, said Sgt. 1st Class Jeffrey Winch of the CNG's 223rd Regional Training Site-Maintenance.

"If you have a competitor that does well,

you can take that back to the unit to motivate other Soldiers to keep on [training in] their common basic Soldier skills and even to push themselves farther, to what they might not think they're capable of," he said. "That's our job as leaders, to identify the potential that Soldiers have and push them to the next level."

Six troops in the ranks of private first class through specialist competed in September for the title of CNG Soldier of the Year, while nine more in the ranks of sergeant through sergeant first class competed to be named Noncommissioned Officer (NCO) of the Year.

DAY 1

The competitors woke up bright and early to take an Army Physical Fitness Test on Day 1 of the contest. The rest of the day consisted of an appearance board, a media engagement event and a written test. While the written test rated the Soldiers' Army knowledge, the board and the media engagement tested their bearing and ability to speak clearly in front of a scrutinizing audience.

"I enjoy the physical challenge but I also feel that being tested on my military knowledge helps me to put perspective on what I need to work on and where I stand," said Pfc. Ian Peacock, an infantryman with 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.



TOP: Sgt. Loren McMahon of the 250th Military Intelligence Battalion works his way through the obstacle course event of the California National Guard's four-day Best Warrior Competition on Sept. 11 at Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif. **ABOVE:** Spc. Cameron Sumaya of the 1106th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group, right, and Pfc. Ian Peacock of 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, square off during the Sept. 13 combatives event. Sumaya, 38, was the lone female Soldier in the competition.



Photos by SPC. James Wilton

Many of the junior Soldiers hadn't experienced situations like these before and turned to their "sponsor" for guidance. Each competitor was accompanied for the week by a sponsor — a Soldier from their unit who served as both mentor and guide through the rigors of the competition.

"When I found out that he was going to be a competitor, I immediately volunteered to be his sponsor," said Sgt. 1st Class Seann Lindstrom, a medic with the 297th Area Support Medical Company, 115th Regional Support Group, who supported medic Spc. Ryan Sealey through the BWC. "I thought it was important as his first-line supervisor to be there when he was competing and to provide him with whatever guidance I had, especially since I had done the Top Medic Competition."

Sponsors are involved in preparing their competitor as well as selecting the competitor from their unit. Choosing the best representative is based on many factors, not just physical fitness.

"Overall preparation for the mental toughness [required to win the competition] was one of the things that we prepared [him for]," sponsor Sgt. 1st Class Garrick Whitley of the 95th Civil Support Team said of competitor Sgt. Alex Zonio, "but it's also something that we made sure he already had."

DAY 2

The second day kicked off with a 5.9-mile road march, with the distance of the event kept secret from the competitors until they crossed the finish line. Partway through the march, the competitors were required to stop and fire their M4 rifle and M9 pistol at the qualification ranges and complete the Fight To Your Rifle marksmanship course, which includes various rifle and pistol targets set in boxes along a range that the Soldiers were required to run through.

That was all before lunch, but these warriors didn't come unprepared.

"I feel like my training has paid off, and that hard work really does pay off," said Winch, 43, after the Fight to Your Rifle event. "I want to keep fighting and I want to stay competitive and represent the old guys and teach these young guys what it should be like when they get to my age."

The next challenge for the competitors was the Military Operations on Urban Terrain event, in which competitors demonstrated a variety of skills needed during combat, such as tossing grenades and firing grenade launchers. The competitors also fired rubber bullets at various targets and assisted a simulated casualty.

The final hurdle of the day was an obstacle course that included jumping over walls, dragging a weighted bag under barbed wire, climbing a rope and pulling a 175-pound dummy on a litter. The troops were exhausted, but they pushed through the end of the day's events.

"I am in pain, my legs are tired, and I am tired," said Spc. Giovanni Guzman, a combat engineer with the 235th Engineer Company, 49th Military Police Brigade. "Today and tomorrow are meant to be physically [challenging], but I came with a game plan: to achieve every goal. If I win or if I don't, I am still taking something away from this competition."

DAY 3

The longest day of the competition, Day 3 began at 5 a.m. with a 3.5-mile run. Like the earlier road march, the distance was not revealed until the competitors finished. The run ended at a gas chamber, where the competitors demonstrated their proficiency and confidence with protective masks. They were then required to provide a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear spot report — a skill that would be crucial in a real-life combat situation if they were subjected to a chemical attack.

The competition then moved to the roll-

ing hills of Camp SLO, where the warriors completed a land navigation course, followed by the “Mystery Event,” a challenge kept secret from the competitors to test how they react to the unknown. While waiting to start the event, the competitors braced themselves for the challenge to come.

As the sounds of simulated gunfire and explosions rang out from the training area, the Soldiers began to speculate about what they were soon to face.

“It sounds like we are going to be under fire, so I think the event is a react-to-fire and assess-a-casualty under fire sort of event,” said Sgt. 1st Class Francisco Serrato, a supply sergeant with the 1106th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group (TASMG).

After starting the challenge in a simulated Humvee roll-over, the competitors were subjected to a simulated attack, resulting in a casualty. Each troop was required to rescue the casualty while engaging various targets with paintballs. After evacuating the casualty to safety, the competitors assessed and treated the injuries and called for a medical evacuation.

The next challenge was to disassemble and reassemble a .50-caliber M2 machine gun and an M249 light machine gun. For many Soldiers, the last time they had seen a .50-cal was at basic training, but they tried their best and took it as a growth experience.

“You learn something new every day,” said Spc. Cameron Sumaya, an automated logistical specialist with the 1106th TASMG. “I was not familiar with that weapon system, but now I am, and I can take that [knowledge] back to the other Soldiers in my unit.”

After a short break to refit their gear and clean their weapons, the group met up after dark for a night land navigation course.

DAY 4
The last day of the competition was reserved for a combatives tournament. Hand-to-hand combat is a crucial skill on the battlefield, as a Soldier may run out of ammunition, experience a weapon malfunction or need to restrain a person using non-lethal force. To see who would be “master of the mat,” the competitors met in the Fight House on Camp SLO.

“My greatest accomplishment [during the BWC] is competing in the combatives competition,” Sumaya said. “I have played around with [combatives] but I have never gone full-fledged like this. It was difficult but it was worth it. It was worth the challenge.”

The end of the combatives challenge brought this year’s Best Warrior Competition to a close. The competitors packed up and headed home with a feeling of accomplishment and one question on their mind: Who won? The answer to that question will be announced at a joint Best Warrior Competition/Outstanding Airmen of the Year banquet in January.



Photo by Spc. James Wilton
Spc. Roman Orlov, a human intelligence collector for the 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, drags a simulated casualty to safety Sept. 11 during the California National Guard Best Warrior Competition at Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif.

Combat vet shows his skills

By SGT. IAN M. KUMMER
California Military Department Public Affairs

The stomach-wrenching adrenaline rush and mental exhaustion of combat cannot be replicated in a training environment, but the California National Guard Best Warrior Competition comes as close as possible.

The competition, which took place Sept. 10-13 at Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif., pushed the participants to the limits of their physical and psychological readiness. The days typically started with events like marches and combat drills that exhausted the competitors before throwing them into complex situations that require level-headed decision making, like trying to save a simulated casualty.

In the thick of the action, Spc. Roman Orlov moved from event to event, drill after drill, methodically demonstrating the combat skills he knows best and improvising when confronted by unfamiliar situations. A human intelligence collector for Company B, 223rd Military Intelligence Battalion, 100th Troop Command, Orlov performed with the confidence befitting a proficient warfighter.

“My strongest point was I was ready for anything that they were going to throw at me, especially when it comes to first aid in a combat environment, as I had just recently deployed and we trained on it heavily,” Orlov said. “[The Humvee rollover] trainer wasn’t my strongest event, but I did it in combat, so it was kind of easy. I was ready for that.”

Orlov, who works as a general contractor in his civilian occupation, showed many strengths at the Best Warrior Competition, but he also identified areas in which he needs improvement.

“My weak point was disassembling and reassembling weapons,” said the San Francisco resident who was born in Ukraine. “As a [military intelligence] Soldier, I don’t deal with the weapons a lot.”

Even so, Orlov stressed the importance of knowing the basic skills needed in a warzone.

“I think it’s a priority for any Soldier in the Army to get to know your weapon,” he said. “Not just your M16, but any weapon. You could end up replacing anybody in a combat zone.”



ABOVE LEFT: Spc. Ryan Sealey of the 297th Area Support Medical Company runs to the final set of targets in the Fight to Your Rifle event Sept. 11 at Camp San Luis Obispo. He is trailed closely by Best Warrior Competition judges. ABOVE RIGHT: Pfc. Ian Peacock of 1st Battalion, 184th Infantry Regiment, left, and Staff Sgt. Ryan Williams of the 49th Military Police Brigade congratulate each other after completing the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear equipment confidence event Sept. 11.

Photos by Spc. James Wilton

79th IBCT leaving lasting impression in Afghanistan

By **MAJ. CHRISTOPHER ELSON**
79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team

After two years of anticipation and preparation, 74 Soldiers of the Cal Guard's 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (IBCT) deployed to Afghanistan this spring.

The service members, who either serve on Combined Team Uruzgan (CTU) or the 184th Police Headquarters Security Force Advisory Team, are part of a historic undertaking as one of the last groups of advisers to mentor Afghan National Security Forces and Afghan police before U.S. troops return home from the engagement that began in 2001. They are also working to transition Multinational Base Tarin Kot in Uruzgan province to the sole control of the Afghan gov-

ernment, marking the largest transition of an Afghan forward operating base to date.

Eighteen Soldiers from the San Diego-based IBCT are serving as advisers to Afghan police, while the remainder serve on the Australian-led CTU.

"The Afghans are already taking more responsibility for security and governance in Uruzgan province," Lt. Col. Anthony Noll, deputy commander of the CTU, said in April before the 79th troops deployed to Camp Shelby, Miss., for pre-deployment training. "We are setting the final stage for them to hopefully progress and go forward on their own to do great things. The war in Afghanistan is winding down, and we will be leaving the lasting impression."

The 79th Soldiers started training on active duty April 1, when they deployed to Camp Shelby, and later traveled to Fort Polk, La., for additional training. Some CTU officers and noncommissioned officers also traveled to Australia to train with their CTU partners.

"This is our last opportunity as a military, at least at this scale, to influence the way they do business," Lt. Col. Jon



Lt. Col. Jon Siepmann of the 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team speaks with members of the Afghan Uniformed Police in Mirabad, Afghanistan, on Sept. 26.

Siepmann of the 79th said in April. "That means every day we have is precious. Every opportunity we have to teach them something or enable them through equipment or training, we've got to take it."

3-time Afghanistan vet reflects on progress, losses

By **SGT. JESSI MCCORMICK**
102nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Nestled in a valley in the northwest corner of Uruzgan province, a new Afghan National Police checkpoint provides the first line of defense for a district with a troubled history as a Taliban safe haven.

Shahid-e Hassas was one of the last districts in Uruzgan to be stabilized, but this checkpoint manned by Afghan police is now pushing the insurgency further into the rugged mountains and away from the population.

Shahid-e Hassas has long been a Taliban passageway in and out of Helmand province's restive Baghran district. By controlling Shahid-e Hassas, the Afghan National Security Forces effectively plug one of the main sources of instability in Uruzgan.

When Chief Warrant Officer 4 Caleb Long of the CNG's 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team first arrived in Afghanistan in March 2004, the Afghan National Army was in its infancy, having only been raised the year before. It took several more years for an Afghan brigade to deploy to Uruzgan.

"When I arrived in [Uruzgan capital] Tarin Kot, there was a bunch of Marines living in holes dug into the ground about 100 yards from where we are now, and a whole lot of triple-strand concertina wire surrounding them," the 55-year-old three-time Afghani- stan veteran said. "That was it."

The province had a coalition presence before then, but it was mostly Special Forces who left a light footprint. The Marines' mission in 2004 was to clear the remnants of the Taliban from the province so Afghan society could be re-established and the economy could grow again.

Sitting at Poppies, a well-appointed Australian recreation center on Multinational Base Tarin Kot, Long recalled Soldiers and Marines lining up to take their weekly showers with a bucket of water from the local river, and he remembered giant Afghan hounds stalking troops by night. It was an austere life, far different from what he enjoys in Tarin Kot today.

"By Christmas we had tents up for people



Photo by OR-6 Mark Doran

Chief Warrant Officer 4 Caleb Long of the CNG's 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team points out the name of a fallen comrade on a memorial at Multinational Base Tarin Kot, Afghanistan.

to live in," said Long, who served in 2004 with the Cal Guard's Battery F, 1st Battalion, 144th Field Artillery Regiment, which performed counter-mortar operations. "I remember standing outside of my tent on Christmas night, nine months after we got here, and thinking that this is probably not far off what the first Christmas looked like. There was not a single light in town. Just black."

What Long didn't know when he left Uruzgan in April 2005 was that the situation in Afghanistan was about to slide backwards, and the development plans for Uruzgan would be obstructed by an emboldened Taliban that was gaining ground across the country.

"When we left it was very quiet," he said, "although there were signs of what was to come."

RECLAIMING LOST GROUND

By the time Long returned to Afghanistan for his second tour in January 2007, the insurgency had gained momentum, and fighting had broken out across the southern and eastern parts of the country.

"A day after I arrived, we engaged close to 100 Haqqani fighters coming across the Pakistan border just to our south," said

Long, who this time deployed to Khowst province with the 82nd Airborne Division. "From then on there was fighting every day for the rest of the year."

Several districts in Kandahar and Helmand provinces were similarly descending into lawless chaos. The insurgency swelled, and sympathizers who had returned to rural life in 2002 reactivated their dormant networks, isolating many villages from their lifelines in the larger towns.

In Uruzgan, American, Dutch and an increasing number of Australian Soldiers were working to bring peace to the mountainous areas that served as facilitation routes for the intense fighting in neighboring provinces. The plan was to steadily expand the International Security Assistance Force's influence by establishing a network of forward operating bases and combat outposts throughout the far reaches of the province. Over the next few years — the toughest in the Afghan campaign — the ISAF and Afghan partners fought from these bases to secure ground and encourage governance and development.

The notoriously fractious Uruzgan society demands a deep understanding of how it functions to ensure Soldiers' engagements remain on track.

"Tribal leaders are important because they are the people who really influence the population at the village level. If you don't have their support, the insurgents are free to roam," said Fred Smith, an Australian diplomat on the Tarin Kot base. "Our first engagements were furtive. They did not know whether to trust us. They were taking a risk just to engage with us."

"We offered them something in the way of development, which the Taliban cannot provide," he continued. "The Taliban can intimidate them, but they cannot offer them anything positive."

In August of this year, as Australian Army Col. Simon Stuart relinquished command of the coalition forces in Uruzgan, he reflected on the great progress made in the province in recent years.

"Compared to what was, the people here are able to get on with their lives secured by an independent Afghan Army and police, connected to [Afghan capital] Kabul by a functioning provincial government, and increasingly able to access essential services such as health and education," Stuart said. "I want everyone who has contributed to the mission here in Uruzgan to know they have made a real difference; to know the people here are grateful; and to know the Afghans have what it takes to continue the job."

"But it is also important to know we are not there yet," he said. "Our job will not be finished until the last Soldier leaves."

Long walked down from Poppies to a memorial on the base and pointed to the third name on a list of more than 100 service members who have been killed in action in the province. The memorial, true to its rugged surroundings, consists of three concrete blast walls pushed together, with names etched into their sides.

"Staff Sergeant Hobbs was killed in an [improvised explosive device] strike in the Tangi Valley during my time here in 2004," Long said. "I have had his memorial bracelet with me ever since then. I have it here with me now, and when I return home, when we hand this base over to the Afghans, I will take it to his folks back home and say we finished the job."

CNG medevac crew shines light on heroism

Helmet camera footage reveals Medal of Honor-worthy actions during battlefield rescue

By **1ST LT. JASON SWEENEY**
California Military Department Public Affairs

On Sept. 8, 2009, Capt. William Swenson of the active duty U.S. Army was on patrol near the town of Ganjgal in Northeast Afghanistan. Swenson and 12 other U.S. Soldiers who formed an embedded training team were joined by about 80 Afghan Soldiers and police officers on the patrol.



For more on Swenson, scan this QR code

As they approached Ganjgal, the group was ambushed by 100 to 150 Taliban fighters. The Americans and their Afghan allies were surrounded and taking heavy fire, and members of the group sustained severe injuries. A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter from the California National Guard's Company C, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, was then called to medevac the wounded out of the valley.

"We knew what we were getting into because we had been listening to the radio for the past 20 minutes," said Staff Sgt. Kevin Duerst of Charlie Company, 1-168th.

When the Charlie Company helicopter reached the valley, small arms fire, rocket-propelled grenades and mortars were raining down on the American position. Swenson was engaged in a fire fight and was directing OH-58 Kiowa Warrior scout helicopters toward enemy positions.

"On the first pass, we didn't see [Swenson], and we started taking fire," Duerst said. "We flew right into the middle of the valley. We could see the muzzle flashes on the ground. There were too many and we

knew we had to leave."

The second time around, Swenson was easy to spot.

"He was lying on the ground with [an] orange panel marker on him," Duerst said, describing a bright splash of color that is used to stand out to friendly forces, but also attracts enemy fire.

The Black Hawk landed, and Swenson ran to it while assisting Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Westbrook, who had been shot and was in critical condition. Swenson and the crew loaded Westbrook onto the helicopter. The crew then flew him to a forward surgical team in Asadabad, Afghanistan.

The 1-168th crew returned to the battlefield three more times and medevacked five additional wounded Soldiers to Jalalabad, Afghanistan. When the battle was over, four Americans and eight Afghan allies were dead.

Westbrook died of complications related to his wounds a month later at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Maryland.

Three years later, Staff Sgt. Emmett Spraktes of Charlie Company learned that Duerst and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jason Penrod had recorded video that day using cameras mounted on their helmets. Penrod, who is a member of the Nevada National Guard, was a pilot on the 1-168th helicopter that rescued Westbrook and the other wounded service members Sept. 8.

Spraktes was not a member of that crew Sept. 8, but he had served in Afghanistan with Company C and had worked with the



Photo by Staff Sgt. Bernardo Fuller



Photos courtesy of Staff Sgt. Kevin Duerst

TOP: President Barack Obama presents the Medal of Honor to Capt. William Swenson, a retired member of the active duty Army, in honor of his heroic actions Sept. 8, 2009, in Ganjgal, Afghanistan, during a ceremony at the White House on Oct. 15. **ABOVE LEFT AND RIGHT:** Swenson helps wounded Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Westbrook to a California National Guard medevac helicopter in Ganjgal, then kisses him on the forehead before the helicopter takes off, as captured by a CNG member's helmet camera.

crew members who participated in the Battle of Ganjgal. Spraktes was writing a book about Cal Guard flight medics, "Silent Prayer," and he asked to view the video as part of his research.

As he watched the footage, Spraktes saw Swenson and Westbrook run toward the helicopter, then Swenson helped Westbrook aboard and leaned over and gave the badly wounded Soldier a kiss on the forehead.

"That kiss on the forehead captured the compassion that he had and that we all have for one another," Spraktes said.

Spraktes contacted Swenson and offered to send him the video if he would present it to Westbrook's wife as a gift honoring her late husband. Swenson was happy to oblige.

Earlier this year Swenson traveled from his home in Seattle to Sacramento to meet Spraktes and the Black Hawk crew that medevacked Westbrook out of the valley.

"[Swenson] told them how much he appreciated them being able to take Westbrook out of there," Spraktes said.

Since then Spraktes, Swenson and the Black Hawk crew have stayed in touch.

"Captain Swenson is a quiet and very humble man," Spraktes said. "He is very ethical and honorable and very loyal to people."

This month, Swenson's heroism was recognized at the White House, as President Barack Obama hung the Medal of Honor around Swenson's neck to rounds of applause and flashes of cameras.

Swenson invited Spraktes and the Black Hawk crew to the White House for the Oct. 16 ceremony, and Duerst, Spraktes and Capt. Marco Acevedo were able to attend. Along with Penrod, Acevedo was a pilot on the Black Hawk that day in Ganjgal.

"We saw what he did and how he kept going back in and tried to pull more people out without concern for himself," Duerst said of Swenson after he received the Medal of Honor. "The award is truly well-deserved."

Medal of Honor

Highest U.S. honor for valor in combat

3,400 awarded since medal's creation in 1861

4 medals awarded for valor in Iraq

9 medals awarded for valor in Afghanistan



Photo courtesy of Staff Sgt. Kevin Duerst

Staff Sgt. Emmett Spraktes, left, and Staff Sgt. Kevin Duerst serve in Afghanistan with Company C, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, during the medevac unit's 2008-9 tour. Duerst witnessed Capt. William Swenson's heroic actions of Sept. 8, 2009, which earned Swenson the Medal of Honor, and Spraktes helped bring Swenson's actions to light using footage taken from Duerst's helmet camera.



RIGHT: Two of the 144th Fighter Wing's newly acquired F-15C Eagles taxi Oct. 16 for their first official flight from Fresno Air National Guard Base. The 144th received its first F-15C in June, and the wing's remaining 20 aircraft began arriving from the Montana National Guard in October, replacing the F-16C Fighting Falcon. **Photo by Tech. Sgt. Charles Vaughn** **ABOVE:** Senior Airman Michael Ekstrom helps Maj. Tyrone Cofield strap into an F-15 for an Oct. 16 training mission. **Photo by Tech. Sgt. Charles Vaughn** **TOP RIGHT:** Lt. Col. Teresa Starks, left, and Col. Brenda Hendricksen of the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing join Cynthia Breunig, president of Girl Scouts of San Geronio, and two scouts for an Aug. 9 visit to see veterans at Patton State Hospital in Highland, Calif. **Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey** **TOP LEFT:** Staff Sgt. Miguel Munguia-Tovar of the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing works on an MQ-9 Reaper remotely piloted aircraft Aug. 27 at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. **Photo by Senior Airman Jackie Sanders**



At a Glance



LEFT: Senior Airman Mario Lopez-Casas, far left, Senior Airman Betsaida Castellanos, Senior Airman Ellis Garcia and Staff Sgt. Jeff Toyne of the 146th Airlift Wing Civil Engineering Squadron compete in a tire-flipping race Aug. 3 as part of the unit's physical fitness training. **Photo by Master Sgt. Dave Buttner** CENTER: Nearly 100 members of the Long Beach-based 216th Mobility Augmentation Company stand in formation at Forward Operating Base Ghazni, Afghanistan. The 216th engineers deployed in June for a yearlong tour. **Photo by U.S. Army** TOP: Staff Sgt. Emmett Spraktes, left, and Spc. Trevor McCrea of Company C, 1-168th General Support Aviation Battalion, enjoy the picturesque Northern California scenery during a July 11 training flight aboard a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter. **Photo by Brandon Honig** ABOVE: Senior Airman Joshua Calabrese of the 146th Airlift Wing resets a circuit breaker in a Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System on a C-130J cargo plane Aug. 30 at Channel Islands Air National Guard Station. The aircraft was being used to fight wildfires in Northern California. **Photo by Senior Airman Nicholas Carzis**

Boat sightings result in drug seizures, arrests

CNG counterdrug personnel and interagency partners thwart Southern California marijuana smugglers

By MAJ. KIMBERLY HOLMAN
CNG Counterdrug Task Force

CNG members spotted a small panga boat coming ashore near Santa Barbara on Sept. 13 and reported people were offloading suspected bails of narcotics. The coordinated response resulted in a large drug seizure and multiple arrests, adding to the CNG's recent record of counterdrug success, which includes multiple incidents on Aug. 20.

In a true multi-agency effort, the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office responded to the Sept. 13 call along with personnel from Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Homeland Security Investigations, the California Highway Patrol, the Ventura County Sheriff's Department and the Coast Guard. As officers arrived at the location, suspects took off running in different directions but were found hiding in bushes nearby.

The collaborative effort resulted in the arrest of 14 suspects at the scene and the seizure of more than 2,000 pounds of marijuana. Later in the day, another four suspects were found and arrested nearby.

Also later in the day, a truck suspected of being associated with the panga crew was stopped by Homeland Security Investigations agents in Camarillo, Calif. Again the suspects fled on foot, and marijuana bales and other evidence linked to the panga were found in the vehicle.

"The success we experienced is a testament to the continuing combined efforts and cooperation between our local, state and federal agencies in combating these multi-jurisdictional/multi-national criminal enterprises," said Lt. Craig Bonner of the Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office Special Investigations Bureau.

David Wales of Homeland Security Investigations added that the day's activities should send a strong message to criminal organizations in Mexico.

"This interdiction clearly shows our joint efforts to target this type of smuggling activity are having an impact," he said. "We've got them in our crosshairs."



Photo courtesy of Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office

The Santa Barbara County Sheriff's Office displays packages of marijuana seized Sept. 13 after California Guard members spotted suspected smugglers unloading the narcotics from a boat. The operation netted 18 arrests and more than a ton of drugs.

The panga spotted Sept. 13 was just one of many recently seen off the coast of Southern California, including six suspected drug-smuggling boats spotted in offshore waters Aug. 20. Those sightings led to interagency efforts that seized more than two tons of marijuana and four suspected smugglers.

California National Guard members and aerial assets contributed to the successful August day, which Coast Guard Rear Admiral Karl Schultz said required a significant amount of concurrent planning and response.

"The superior coordination and teamwork evident during the events throughout the day are a testament to the hard work [the agencies] have all done to ensure we work closely with our interagency partners," he said.

In addition to marijuana valued at more than \$3.7 million, the operations seized two pangas and disrupted an additional estimated 3,000 pounds of contraband, Schultz said.

One of the boats that was not seized was able to reach Mexican waters before being apprehended. Along the way, however, its crew dumped 2,900 pounds of marijuana into the ocean, where it was recovered by the Coast Guard. Additionally the chase led to the sighting of another panga in international waters.

While the Coast Guard C-130 air crew chased the boat that was headed toward Mexico, a California Air National Guard C-130 crew was called upon to locate the second boat and direct teams to the vessel, which was eventually detained along with its two passengers.

Later in the day, a California National Guard team reported a panga loitering near San Nicolas Island, resulting in an in-depth aerial search by the Coast Guard and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office. Other partners involved in drug interdiction that day included Customs and Border Protection, the San Luis Obispo County Sheriff's Office and Mexican maritime authorities.

PRISTINE cleans up drug traffickers' mess

By IST LT. KARA SIEPMANN
CNG Counterdrug Task Force

The CNG and its federal, state and local partners wrapped up Operation PRISTINE in September, concluding a marijuana-eradication and land-reclamation mission that removed 17,400 pounds of trash from public forests.

A combined effort of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the U.S. Forest Service, several local law enforcement agencies and the CNG's Joint Task Force Domestic Support-Counterdrug, PRISTINE aimed to identify, eliminate and clean up the most polluted illegal marijuana grow sites in Fresno, Kern, Madera, Santa Clara, San Mateo and Tulare counties. The name of the mission, which ran from Aug. 5 through Sept. 12, stands for Protecting Resources Involving Specialized Teams In Narcotic Enforcement.

"Law enforcement statewide faces the problem by collaborating across departments to most effectively eliminate the growth and clean up the forestland," said Capt. Sabino Martinez, and operations officer for the CNG's Counterdrug Task Force.

PRISTINE began in the far Northern stretches of California and moved south as the summer progressed. The 387 bags of trash removed from California forests through the operation included 133,500 feet of irrigation line, 7,000 pounds of fertilizer, 193 propane containers, 193 batteries and a myriad of pesticides and rodenticides.

"We built upon the historic success of past multi-agency

Operation PRISTINE

Removed from public forests:

8.7 tons of trash

133,500 feet of drip line

193 propane containers

187 ounces of pesticide

missions and incorporated an emphasis on affecting the environmental impact of these marijuana grow sites," Martinez said.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of marijuana plants are grown on public land, guarded by sometimes-armed individuals who will use violence to protect their crop. The CNG's Counterdrug Task Force and other law enforcement agencies are also in action every year, and PRISTINE marked a new evolution in the joint efforts to combat illegal marijuana operations.

"In addition to the air/ground tactical effort, the Department of Fish and Wildlife incorporated a biologist and environmentalist from within their department to capture the environmental impact of illegal marijuana production," a Fish and Wildlife spokesperson said. "Specialists are ... studying the environmental impact on wildlife, water sources and public land."



Photo by CNG Counterdrug Task Force

A CNG helicopter carries a load of trash out of a California forest this summer during Operation PRISTINE.

40th ID Soldiers prepare for Gitmo tour

Yearlong deployment will support detention of enemy combatants at U.S. Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba

By **SGT. 1ST CLASS BENJAMIN M. COSSEL**
Los Angeles Regional Public Affairs

On a typically beautiful Southern California morning, families, friends and loved ones of Soldiers with the California Army National Guard's Detachment A, Headquarters Support Company, 40th Infantry Division, gathered to bid their citizen-Soldiers farewell.

Following the Oct. 19 ceremony, more than 60 Soldiers of the detachment traveled to Fort Bliss, Texas, where they will complete pre-mobilization training. Upon certification of their training, they will depart for a nine-month deployment to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, where the detachment's wide-ranging skill set will support command-and-control operations for Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay.

Established in January 2002, JTF Guantanamo Bay is responsible for the safe, transparent, legal and humane treatment of people who have been designated enemy combatants by the U.S. government. As of June 2013, there were 164 detainees at the detention facility on Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, including Khalid Sheik Mohammed, the alleged mastermind of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

"These brave men and women now join that great tradition of citizen-Soldiers serving their nation," said Sen. Lou Correa of California's 34th District, one of several distinguished guests at the ceremony.

Correa said it is important to honor Guardsmen as they prepare to leave their homes and families, but even more attention should be paid when service members return home.

"We didn't do such a good job for our returning vets from Vietnam," he said. "But today we've got it straight, as we make sure these returning veterans get the help they need when they come home."

One such veteran is Staff Sgt. Tara Reppert, who previously served in the active duty Army. With two deployments already beneath her boots, Reppert said preparing



for her pending mobilization has proven to be the most challenging.

"Active duty pretty much takes care of everything for the Soldier," she said. "It's been a lot more work — bills, taking care of my home, car, stuff like that — deploying with the National Guard."

Reppert will assume duty as the airfield noncommissioned officer in charge for JTF Guantanamo Bay. Having already made contact with her forward-deployed counterparts, Reppert said she has a pretty good idea of what to expect.

"It's definitely a hostile environment over there," she said, "but not like combat. ... Besides, the Marines have our back while we're there."

The deploying force is bringing many seasoned veterans like Reppert who have deployed multiple times, but it also includes dedicated troops like Warrant Officer 1 Remar Yabes, who is looking forward to his first deployment. Holding his 1-year old son, Marcus, Yabes said he has always been ready to deploy.

"This is what we do; this is our job," said Yabes, who will serve as the task force's property book officer. "I did nearly 15 years of service on active duty. I'm glad to finally get the opportunity to serve my country. ... Me, my family, we've been ready."



TOP LEFT: More than 60 Soldiers with the California Army National Guard's Detachment A, Headquarters Support Company, 40th Infantry Division, stand in formation during a deployment ceremony Oct. 19 in Los Alamitos, Calif. The troops' nine month tour at Naval Station Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, will support command-and control operations for Joint Task Force Guantanamo Bay. **ABOVE RIGHT:** Warrant Officer Yabes Remar, a property book officer from Riverside, Calif., holds his 1-year old son, Marcus, following the Oct. 19 ceremony.

Save the Air Guard money, earn yourself some

163rd Reconnaissance Wing members find the Air Guard Suggestion Program gives credit where it is due

By **MASTER SGT. JULIE AVEY**
San Diego Regional Public Affairs

Where do good ideas come from — or rather, whom do they come from? Good ideas can come from anywhere — or anyone — and the Air National Guard wants to make sure your good ideas don't go to waste.

Case in point: Tech Sgt. Michael Astolfo, Tech Sgt. Dennis Brown and Tech Sgt. Erika Serrano of the CNG's 163rd Reconnaissance Wing Maintenance Group recently received \$3,000 each because they shared their ideas through the Air National Guard Suggestion Program.

Brown and Serrano repair and maintain MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft. In their field, Airmen follow technical orders that describe step-by-step how to fix the aircraft. Airmen are not permitted to deviate from the order.

The two maintainers were working on a Predator for the 163rd when they realized they needed to purchase a new scale to accomplish a particular step in the technical order. The pair thought, however — and the Air National Guard later agreed — that

the job could be accomplished more efficiently using a different type of scale than was specified in the order.

"Working in the field, you know firsthand what you need and what you don't need, and can submit suggestions for the technical order data to be revised," Serrano said. "The checklists are important not only to ensure you don't miss a step but also because it gives you a chance to review the procedures."

Separately, Astolfo was recognized for his contribution to a technical order regarding maintenance of the Predator engine. Astolfo wrote troubleshooting procedures that did not previously exist — instead, maintainers had been required to send the entire engine to a depot, where it would be checked for engine-compression failure.

"We [were] tired of replacing a motor every time, when we could troubleshoot something minor rather than send the whole motor back," said Astolfo, a 163rd crew chief and quality assurance inspector. "It is still a fairly new aircraft, and with new territory there are bound to be needed corrections. I am just glad I was afforded the opportunity to make a difference for others."



Tech. Sgt. Erika Serrano and Senior Airman Leonard Enciso of the 163rd Reconnaissance Wing Maintenance Group perform structural maintenance on an MQ-1 Predator remotely piloted aircraft Nov. 4 on March Air Reserve Base in Riverside, Calif.

To qualify for a financial award, a suggestion must be presented with a description of its expected benefits, including potential savings on money and man-hours. For more information on the Suggestion

Program, see Air National Guard Instruction 38-401.

"It is a great feeling to know you took part in making a difference in something everyone will benefit from amongst your peers," Serrano said.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin M. Cossel

Photo by Master Sgt. Julie Avey

FIT to FIGHT

with MAJ. JONATHAN SHIROMA

When Brandon Honig, the editor of The Grizzly, asked me if I would be interested in submitting a monthly column about health and fitness, I was a bit reluctant because I know the audience that reads this award-winning publication includes many physical training (PT) studs and studentes. Many of you master your service branch's physical fitness test twice a year, and who am I, just your average Soldier, to discuss being fit or staying fit?



Well, that premise is really why I decided to take on this task. I am your average Soldier who, like everyone else in the California Military Department, needs to stay in shape not only to pass my fitness test but, more importantly, to live a long and healthy life.

In this column, my goal is provide a practical view on health and fitness. In other words, I will not try to take the place of Joe Weider, Bill Phillips, Dr. Oz or any contemporary health experts. Instead, as a part-time fitness coach, I will attempt to provide you some tips that I have learned along the way.

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

Face it, many of us work extremely hard to maintain our fitness goals. We hit the gym, the pavement or the trail for our morning or afternoon jog, or we rush to our Crossfit/Tacfit/P90X or boot camp sessions. Yet, as I can attest to, that's not the hard part. It's the 23 hours a day that we are away from the gym that can be the most challenging.

You face all types of temptations out there as soon as you leave the gym or workout. Right next to one of the gyms where I teach, for example, there is a burger joint that practically calls out to me as I get into my car to drive away. Or when I get to work, I'll find that some well-intentioned soul has brought a big pink box of pastries to start the day and, dang, another 300 calories enters my body

in seconds. Before you know it, you have devoured hundreds if not thousands of calories that will, in time, add dreaded inches around the waist. It's not hard to do.

That's why it is so important to log what you eat. You'd be surprised at what you may discover. This is probably the most critical element you need to have in your fitness regimen because you could burn 3,000 calories in a day, but that won't mean anything if you take in 3,500 calories.

So, what is the best way to do this? Well, there are many options. There is always the pen and paper method of jotting down everything you eat in a journal. Or, in this day and age, I suggest finding an online option such as www.myfitnesspal.com. All you need for the service is an email address. It's free, so get ready for all the ads for products they want to sell you, but for the most part, it provides an easy way to log on and input what you ate. Then at the end of the day, it provides a calorie total that you can use to assess your dietary trends. Like exercising, food journaling requires a commitment, and you must take the time to get it done for best results.

EDITOR'S NOTE: Maj. Jonathan Shiroma of the 40th Infantry Division is a group fitness instructor certified through the Aerobics and Fitness Association of America. He also is seeking certifications through the National Council on Strength and Fitness and the National Academy of Sports Medicine.

Calorie Log

- Spam musubi
- Almonds
- Whatever Will slide from Brandon's desk
- Coffee 3 cups
- More almonds
- Shared ice
- Kashi
- Protein shake
- Hawaiian pizza, no pineapple

Making a list of everything you eat will help you keep the weight off and avoid wasting your workouts. You can do it the traditional way — on paper — or try an online tracking service like www.myfitnesspal.com. "This is probably the most critical element you need to have in your fitness regimen because you could burn 3,000 calories in a day, but that won't mean anything if you take in 3,500 calories," Maj. Jonathan Shiroma says.



Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Harris

New California Army National Guard enlistees board a UH-60 Black Hawk at Stockton Army Aviation Support Facility for an orientation flight in August.

New warriors 'will never quit'

The California Army National Guard Recruit Sustainment Program prepares Soldiers for the road ahead and motivates them to perform

By LT. COL. (CA) RICK LALOR
CNG Recruiting and Retention Battalion

For every new enlistee in the California Army National Guard, the Recruit Sustainment Program is their first step toward earning the title of Soldier and building a military career. It is an initiation into the military brotherhood as the new warriors learn the information and skills necessary to succeed in Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training.

For the Recruiting and Retention Battalion administering the program, the mission is a critical responsibility, as those young, untested men and women are the future of the California Army National Guard.

As of Aug. 1, the CNG had 1,462 warriors in its training pipeline, including those in the Recruit Sustainment Program, Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training. While much of the training curriculum is presented in a traditional armory setting, the Recruit Sustainment Program cadre also seek opportunities to motivate their young charges, expose them to new experiences in real-world military environments, and physically and mentally challenge them.

First Sgt. Kimber Smith of Company A, Recruiting and Retention Battalion, therefore brought 110 fledgling warriors to Camp San Luis Obispo, Calif., this summer for a weekend of physical training on the obstacle course and instruction in land navigation.

"Our goal was to bring our warriors to an area where real Soldiers train," said Smith, whose company will hand off 300 new Soldiers to their first Guard units this year. "You train like you fight, and we want to build their confidence and teach them to trust their leaders, trust their equipment and trust their own abilities."

Smith also arranged for newly minted Basic Combat Training and Advanced Individual Training graduates to work with the recruits. Those graduates had recently overcome the same fears and concerns the recruits were experiencing.

"They share experiences and relate well to our warriors by helping to set them up for success," she said. "It's all about setting realistic goals and keeping them from being

overwhelmed by events."

"Our motto is 'I will never quit,'" she continued. "We assign each warrior a battle buddy and teach them the importance of working together and always looking out for each other, which is the beauty of the military. ... They learn that they will never have to do anything alone again."

During the obstacle course training, one warrior found himself frozen in place high off the ground. A member of the Recruit Sustainment Program cadre joined him atop the obstacle and talked him through his fears, and in the end the young Soldier completed the task and received a huge boost in self-confidence.

"We're teaching our warriors that if you want something bad enough, you can achieve anything," Smith said. "[A warrior will] go to any length to achieve your objective, and that's the kind of Soldier that I want on my team."

Capt. Jim Mendoza, commander of the Recruiting and Retention Battalion's Company B, took his warriors to Mather Army Aviation Support Facility in August to expose them to the operations of the 3-140th Security and Support Aviation Battalion. The program included a safety brief and aircraft orientation, and it was highlighted by a flight around the Sacramento Valley in a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter.

Mendoza used the occasion to deliver an important lesson to his future Soldiers: He emphasized their duty to maintain all of the equipment entrusted to them by the Guard so that it will always function properly and safely when needed. He then instructed them to board the Black Hawk, trusting that the 3-140th Soldiers had maintained their aircraft properly and would provide a safe flight.

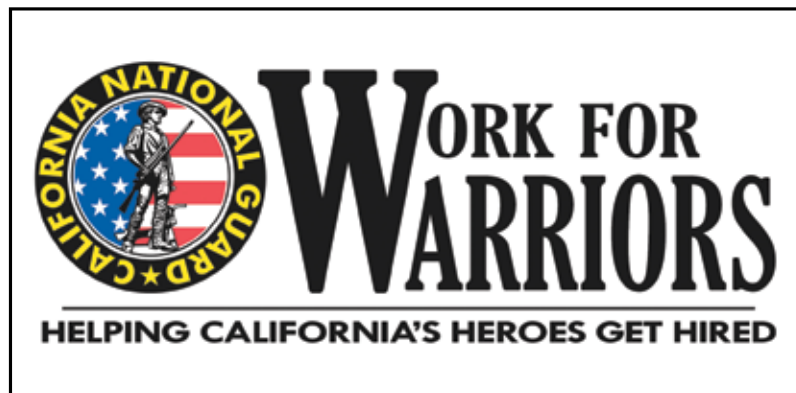
"The value of these flights can't be overstated," said Maj. Dan Anderson, CNG aviation operations officer. "They show our Recruit Sustainment Program warriors that our organization is committed to their training and their future by opening up their eyes to opportunities within the National Guard. We're also sending them a strong message that they are part of a premier fighting force."

WFW: 1,500 jobs found

By **1ST LT. JEFFREY CHAIX**
Work for Warriors

Are you unemployed or under-employed? According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the average search time for a job is 16 to 26 weeks. If you are in this category, the California National Guard may have a solution to your problem.

Since its founding in March 2012, the Cal Guard's Work for Warriors (WFW) program has found jobs for more than 1,500 Cal Guard members. To take advantage of the free services WFW has to offer, register at www.calguard.ca.gov/WFW and



submit your resume. WFW's expert services are listed below.

- **Resume support:** WFW will help format your resume and assist with modifications and corrections.

- **Job placement:** WFW has developed relationships with nearly 160 employers, including Fortune 500 companies and small businesses throughout the state. When WFW finds a worthy candidate for a job opening at one of those companies, WFW sends their resume directly to a WFW partner in that business.

- **Interview preparation:** WFW will coach you as you prepare for your

interview, including providing practice questions, discussing what to wear and suggesting questions to ask the interviewer.

- **Follow-up:** After the interview, WFW will contact the employer to gain feedback and pass information to the Guard member. WFW also will answer employers' questions and highlight the candidate's strengths to increase the chance of a second interview or job offer.

For more info, call 916-854-4426 or visit www.calguard.ca.gov/WFW. WFW also can be found on Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn.

Security guard certification quick, free through WFW

By **1ST LT. ANTHONY HORTON**
Work for Warriors

The California National Guard's Work for Warriors (WFW) program offers a streamlined process for obtaining the certification necessary to work as a security guard in California.

The one-day training module provided by WFW can save a CNG member up to \$400 in training expenses and background checks as well as more than 30 hours of class time.

The most recent WFW class was held Sept. 12 and included 31 students. It was the fifth class given by WFW.

As an added bonus, the students were able to conduct employment interviews at the classroom site with private security companies that have partnered with WFW, including Allied Barton, Cal Security Agency, Security Industry Specialists and Universal Protection Service.

For more info or to sign up for an upcoming class, call 916-854-4426 or visit www.calguard.ca.gov/WFW.

Free money advice tailored for military members

By **KRISTY TUBBS**
Personal Financial Counselor, Northern California

Driving to a recent appointment, I received a frantic phone call. The voice on the other end of the line was a military spouse who had just been informed of a mistake in the writing her husband's orders. Due to the error, his paycheck would not be deposited for two more weeks. Her fear, sorrow and rage were spewing through the phone, but as I listened through her tears, I was able to reassure her that hope was on the way.

No one has a magic wand that will make a stressful financial situation go away, but there are steps every military member and family can take. California National Guard members can find out about those steps by consulting one of three accredited financial counselors who provide free services to CNG Soldiers and Airmen.

Our team members truly care for military personnel and have military backgrounds. We can teach you how to take stock of your current financial situation and wisely manage your money in today's trying economic times. We'll show you ways to save, plan for the future and utilize all the resources available to military members.

"I pay my bills on time every month, but as soon as the paycheck gets deposited, the checking account is almost empty," Sue, a military wife, once told me. "I feel as if I am living in a constant state of waiting-until-the-15th. Is there anything I can do to get out of this financial rut?"

Through a one-hour meeting with a personal financial counselor, Sue found the help she needed. A month later, a letter arrived from Sue: "Who would have thought that the budget we worked on would remove so much stress from my life! The way you called the credit card

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Southern California: Hong Tran, CA-JFSAP3@MFLC.Zeiders.com or 512-773-9937



Kristy Tubbs
Personal Financial Counselor
Northern California

companies and created a payment cycle that was more feasible to our paychecks was nothing short of exciting. Our plan was to try to save \$50 by the end of the month. We have saved over \$200 and we have not even tried — we just stuck to the plan!"

The economic turmoil of the past several years has impacted virtually everyone. Many have lost the balance of their retirement accounts; home values have plummeted out of control; and the pain of being laid off work or having hours cut back strongly impacts people's emotions.

"I filed for divorce today to try to make our money matters better, because all we ever do is fight about money," a military wife named Jan wrote to her family's financial counselor. "[My husband] left for deployment to take care of our money issues, and all we have done since his return is argue. I don't want a divorce, but I don't want to live like this anymore."

Two months later, Jan was writing words with a completely different sound: "The budget is working marvelously. We are having fun together as a couple and as a family trying to find fun ways to not spend money so we can be out of debt. Thank you for your time, knowledge and, mostly, for really understanding our military lifestyle."

There is no one-size-fits-all budgeting program, and the financial hardships that military members experience are different from those in other segments of the population. Civilian resources and personnel often are not equipped to handle military needs or they do not often

understand military situations. Military deployments, orders, terminology and lifestyles scream out the need for dedicated military financial counselors.

"I probably should have come to see you sooner. However, I lead men and women into battle, and it has been very difficult to handle the fact that I am not able to do the simplest task of keeping my financial life in order," a service member named John wrote. "It isn't that I am dumb, or even that I am wasteful. I just lost my job and have not been able to find another one. I hope you can help."

A single captain, John was living the high life until he returned from deployment to find his employer had shut down and his job was no longer available. He lived off of his savings while searching for another job, but none was to be found. John was at the end of his unemployment checks, out of money and unable to pay his rent or utility bills when he contacted me. Now he is happily back to commanding his troops and preparing for his future.

"Thank you" does not seem to be enough," John wrote. "I had no idea you would connect me with [the CNG's] Work for Warriors [program] and that I had access to job placement help. I now have a job, I am following your budget and all of my late bills are paid in full. This budget concept is amazing. Thanks for your insight, help and care."

Take the leap from financial frustration to financial freedom today. Use the free resources that have been provided for you and learn to live without the stress of worrying about your finances!

Sexual assault victims deserve trust, support

By **JENNIFER LUCERO**
CNG Sexual Assault Response Coordinator

When someone reports a sexual assault to you, what will your reaction be? Your reaction makes a difference.

There is no shame when a loved one dies, a car is stolen or someone is diagnosed with a disease. Friends and loved ones gather around to offer love and support. They don't blame you for "bringing it on yourself."

It should be the same for sexual violence. Unfortunately, when a victim musters up enough courage to tell someone, the victim is often blamed for the assault or their story is simply not believed.

In the military, victims may report an assault to their leadership, expecting guidance and support. A negative response at that time can worsen the victim's trauma and give a victory to the perpetrator.

Military leadership's response to such an incident will influence whether a climate of trust exists within the unit. The response will either encourage other victims to come forward or it will inhibit the reporting of sexual crimes. Far too often, victims feel deterred from coming forward after witnessing the treatment others have received.

If someone confides in you that he or she was sexually assaulted, your first words should be supportive. "I'm sorry this happened to you. What can I do to help? ... I believe you. I'm here to support you."

It takes a lot of courage for a victim to come forward; in fact, you may be the first person the victim has told, which is why your response is so critical. But it doesn't stop there. There are many steps a victim must take on the road to justice and healing.

The victim may need to undergo an invasive examination by a forensics nurse, be



interrogated by a police officer or district attorney and have to describe the painful details of the attack. The victim then may have to explain to their supervisor why regular time off is required to visit a counselor.

Each step of the healing process is a link in the chain of support, and one negative response by anyone in the chain can mean the weakening and destruction of that chain.

If the chain falls apart, the victim may fall apart as well, resulting in a victory for the perpetrator.

If a perpetrator is not held accountable, he or she will attack again. We must not let this happen. Stop the cycle, lead by example and teach our Soldiers, Airmen and civilians to start by believing!

Learn more at www.startbybelieving.org.

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C-23 Sherpa flies off into sunset

By **SGT. IAN M. KUMMER**
California Military Department Public Affairs

The Army lives by the principle of the “quiet professional.” Soldiers work not for show or glamour, but to get the job done. If any one military aircraft represents this concept of utility over looks, it is the C-23 Sherpa — not much to look at, but a highly versatile aircraft used in a wide variety of Army missions around the world.

Sadly, all good things must come to an end, and the Sherpa’s career is no different. The California Army National Guard officially retired the Sherpa at a Sept. 27 ceremony at Mather Airfield near Sacramento.

“The Sherpa is not glamorous, but it’s really useful,” said Staff Sgt. Michael Meza, a flight engineer with 1st Battalion, 185th Aviation Regiment. “It’s a basic workhorse of the National Guard.”

The California National Guard has used the Sherpa, which can be configured to transport passengers or cargo, for both domestic and overseas missions throughout

the global war on terrorism.

“It’s a great airplane; it’s got a lot of capability, especially for a state as big as California,” said Col. Louis Carmona, the CNG’s Army aviation officer.

The Army is continuously adapting to new challenges, and the Sherpa likewise has seen radical improvements in the past decade, increasing its capabilities and the safety of its crew members.

“A lot of the survivability equipment it has now didn’t exist at the beginning of the war,” Carmona said.

The Army’s entire Sherpa fleet has been moved into storage at Fort Sill, Okla., in an effort to cut costs. The Sherpa’s ultimate fate, however, remains uncertain as budget battles rage in Congress.

“The aircraft is in limbo right now,” Carmona said. “We might be welcoming it back a month from now.”

Though the California Guard is prepared



Photo by Sgt. Ian M. Kummer

A C-23 Sherpa lands at Mather Airfield near Sacramento on Sept. 27, the day of its official retirement from the California Army National Guard.

to continue its mission without the Sherpa, the aircraft will be sorely missed by the Soldiers who have worked with it.

“There’s nothing wrong with the Sherpa; it’s a good aircraft,” Carmona said. “It’s [retirement is] really sad.”

Hispanic Guard members embrace opportunities, inspire communities

By **AIRMAN 1ST CLASS ROSALIE CAMMARATA**
California Military Department Public Affairs

Most people hear the word “California” and an image of endless sunshine and enchanting seascapes is painted across their minds. Although our beautiful state has numerous beaches and a wide range of delightful climates, there is still something more enticing. It is acceptance. It is a new beginning for families who have immigrated from countries all over the world.

For Senior Master Sgt. Sandra Sainz and Spc. Esther Garcia, this holds especially true. Both women, whose families have roots in Mexico, have become inspirations for their families and their communities. Their stories share a common theme: As

CNG members, they have earned opportunities once only dreamed of by their families, and they have risen to the occasion.

Sainz, born and raised in Fresno, exemplifies a senior noncommissioned officer. Since her enlistment in 1991 with the 144th Fighter Wing in Fresno, Sainz has been on deployments to Germany, Panama, Saudi Arabia and Spain. Her greatest career accomplishments have been earning the rank of senior master sergeant and becoming the human resources adviser at the 144th.

“As a human resources adviser, I can make sure airmen reach their highest potential,” Sainz said. “I’m in a place where I can give back and contribute to our coming force.”

After 22 years in the Guard, Sainz has shifted her focus to mentoring other Airmen, but she also makes time to give back to her family. Through her success in the military, Sainz has become a role model for her relatives. She encourages nieces, nephews and cousins to work hard and set goals, and two of her siblings have followed in her footsteps and joined the military.

Sainz’s father, a Vietnam War veteran, was impressed when Sainz earned the rank of senior master sergeant, and he reminded her that it’s not an achievement many Hispanic women can boast. In the CNG, however, any position is open to a woman of Hispanic background, Sainz said, as the organization welcomes people of all backgrounds and bases promotions on hard work and merit.

“The Cal Guard is a community-based organization that reflects the population of this state,” CNG Public Affairs Officer Lt. Col. Tom Keegan said. “Service members of Hispanic descent fill a wide variety of roles, from the junior enlisted ranks up to Brigadier General Sylvia Crockett, who

in 2012 became the first Hispanic female in the National Guard to achieve the rank of general in any state. Hispanic-American Guard members’ exceptional contributions to the security of this state and this nation cannot be overstated.”

Keegan added that the Guard planned a series of events across the state to celebrate National Hispanic-American Heritage Month, which is observed each year from Sept. 15 through Oct. 15.

Only 200 miles south of Sainz’s base in Fresno, Spc. Esther Garcia has had a similar impact on her family. The first member of her family to be born in America, Garcia grew up in the San Fernando Valley and was raised by her mother, a single parent who spoke only Spanish.

“In second grade I had to take a bus to a school so I could learn English,” Garcia said.

Yearning to travel and see the world outside of her hometown, Garcia enlisted in the California Army National Guard in 2010. As a human resources specialist for Fresno-based Company C, 640th Aviation Support Battalion, Garcia is motivated to advance and take every opportunity to improve herself. After starting her military career at the rank of private, or E-1, she has already moved up to specialist, or E-4, in less than three years.

“[The Cal Guard] has taught me to go above and beyond standards and requirements,” she said.

That is an attitude she has adopted and passed on to her younger siblings. But her family was not always supportive of her choice to enlist. Garcia’s mother disagreed with her daughter’s decision, fearing what a military life might hold for her. Three years later, though, Garcia’s mother



Photo by Airman 1st Class Rosalie Cammarata

A 22-year member of the Cal Guard, Senior Master Sgt. Sandra Sainz is the human resources adviser for the 144th Fighter Wing.

brags about her daughter the Soldier and displays multiple pictures of Garcia in uniform around her house. And she isn’t the only family member beaming with pride.

“My grandpa tells everyone that his granddaughter is in the Army,” Garcia said. “They don’t believe him, so he pulls out my [basic training] picture.”

Garcia is driven for success and doesn’t plan on slowing down. She works full-time as a human resources assistant for the 223rd Regional Training Institute in San Luis Obispo, Calif., and plans on shifting into communications in the near future. Her goal is to serve for at least 20 years and participate in multiple deployments.

Like so many Hispanic-American Soldiers and Airmen in the California Guard, Sainz and Garcia’s drive and determination have inspired their families, young Hispanic-Americans in their communities and other members of the Guard. Their contributions are lauded and appreciated by the Guard during Hispanic-American Heritage Month and every other day of the year.



Photo by Spc. Esther Garcia

Esther Garcia, now a specialist for the 640th Aviation Support Battalion, spends a day at the shooting range in 2010.

'Brain center' coordinates JFTB Security Forces response

By **PFC. (CA) AL ROCCA**
California State Military Reserve

A car accident on base? A suspicious person walking the perimeter? Who do you call?

Whenever an emergency occurs on Joint Forces Training Base (JFTB), Los Alamitos — whether an aviation mishap, building fire or injury to military or civilian personnel — the Security Forces (SecFor) Dispatch Center is immediately notified. The center coordinates a response with the JFTB Fire Department and other military first responders and establishes contact with civilian agencies as needed.

The Dispatch Center is staffed by dedicated California National Guard and California State Military Reserve members who also operate the switchboard, stand guard at the main gate, patrol the base and its airfield, and respond to emergencies themselves when needed.

Dispatchers do more than simply instruct units to respond to emergencies; they provide critical information by relaying an operational snapshot of the incident. They also have basic medical training and can offer direction regarding treatment while medical responders are en route. And perhaps most importantly, they provide a calm voice to de-escalate tense situations.

Multi-tiered emergency response can be compared to a complicated orchestral piece, with the dispatcher in the role of maestro. During a recent incident, for example, security personnel working the main gate encountered a person committing a felony-level weapons violation. They immediately notified the Dispatch Center, which ordered additional patrol units to the main gate and re-

quested local law enforcement support. The information relayed by the center to the responding police units provided a vital link in the base's overall response, and the suspect was taken into custody without incident in a carefully coordinated effort.

SecFor assumed dispatch responsibility from the JFTB Fire Department earlier this year. Having received additional training for the job, the JFTB Soldiers are well-versed in many areas of emergency response.

"Dispatch is the brain center of the Joint Forces Training Base security operation," said Sgt. (CA) Marco Chavez. "All base emergencies go through those Soldiers."



Second Lieutenant (CA) Michael Medina mans the Security Forces Dispatch Center at Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos.

Photo by Pfc. (CA) Dave Zaslov

Marksman aims to share skills, knowledge

By **SGT. IAN M. KUMMER**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

A Soldier may spend his entire career mastering his trade and honing his skills. But his job is not truly finished until he has completed one last task: passing his accumulated knowledge and expertise to his fellow Soldiers.

For one California Army National Guard recipient of the Distinguished Pistol Badge, that job is not yet over. Sgt. 1st Class Brian Bullock, a platoon sergeant in the 870th Military Police (MP) Company, has spent his career improving his marksmanship and teaching it to others. But for him, this isn't a chore; it's a joy and a way of life.

"I love teaching marksmanship and seeing the look in

people's eyes when they get it and realize they can shoot better," Bullock said.

The Bingham, N.Y., native grew up in Denmark before returning to the U.S. and joining the Marine Corps in 1989. Eventually becoming a marksmanship instructor, Bullock was in a position to help his fellow Marines improve their combat readiness. But Bullock himself had much more to learn before he could become the shooter he is today.

Bullock left the Corps in 2003 and joined the California Guard in 2007. His devotion to shooting skills quickly drew him to the Team Rifle contingent of Task Force Warrior, a pre-deployment training assistance element stationed at Camp Roberts, Calif.

"It wasn't until I got with Team Rifle that my skill level increased," Bullock said. "I attribute that to everyone there sharing their knowledge with each other."

The former Marine shot competitively in the Guard for the first time at the California Combat Match in 2009, establishing himself as one of the best pistol shooters in the competition. For that match he earned four "leg points" — one must accumulate 30 points to earn a distinguished shooting badge for the pistol or rifle.

Bullock, however, deployed to Iraq later in 2009, putting any ambitions for shooting recognition on hold. When he returned to California in 2010, Bullock participated in three more matches, earning the remaining 26 points he needed.

Bullock said he doesn't participate in the state's marksmanship program for personal glory; the training value that is inherent in the competitions for young Soldiers is what draws him.

"He's a great shot and excellent instructor," said Spc. West Boyer of the 49th MP Brigade Homeland Response Force. "He's taken Soldiers who can't qualify and gotten them to a passing level on the same day."



Sgt. 1st Class Brian Bullock of the 870th Military Police Company instructs a member of the 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team at Camp Roberts, Calif., on March 25.

Photo by Sgt. Ian M. Kummer

40th ID Korean War vets reunite one last time

By **CHIEF WARRANT OFFICER 2 RICK DE LA TORRE**
California State Military Reserve

It was billed as one last gathering for veterans of the California National Guard's 40th Infantry Division who deployed in support of the conflict sometimes described as the "forgotten war." But for the 100 or so vets who came together to commemorate their service and reconnect with their brothers-in-arms in August, it was easy to remember what it was like serving in the Korean War six decades ago.

"Oh, yeah," said a reflective Rudy Kollar, 85, of Washington state, as he slowly looked over exhibits of Korean War-era weapons, equipment and uniforms at the CNG's Joint Forces Training Base in Los Alamitos. "Something like this starts bringing back the memories — some of it sad."

Kollar, who served in the 140th Tank Battalion of the 40th ID, was among those who attended a tear-touched memorial service Aug. 30 in Los Alamitos. It was the third day in a four-day string of events sponsored by the Department of Defense 60th Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee in partnership with veterans groups and the California National Guard.

From 1950 to 1953, the Soldiers of the 40th ID participated in legendary battles such as the Battle of Heartbreak Ridge and the Battle of the Punchbowl, and they led a pioneering community outreach effort that established a school for youths in Gapyeong, South Korea, not far from the front lines, in 1952.

The memorial service at Los Alamitos included representatives from what is now Gapyeong High School as well as current and former 40th ID commanders. Yeon-sung Shin, the consul general of South Korea in Los Angeles, offered heartfelt praise to the 40th ID during the ceremony and said the division has contributed to South Korea becoming closely intertwined with the U.S.

"The 40th [ID] has given us fiber and strength," he said. "I thank you from the bottom of my heart for sharing your friendship with the Korean people."



Sgt. (CA) Ronald Macwillie of the California State Military Reserve (CSMR) Center for Military History shows Korean War-era equipment to veterans of the CNG's 40th Infantry Division during the final reunion of the 40th ID Korean War Veterans Association on Aug. 30 in Los Alamitos, Calif. CSMR-coordinated exhibits throughout the four-day reunion featured authentic period weaponry and uniforms as well as the 40th ID's Korean War-era newspaper, The Fire Ball.

Photo by Staff Sgt. (CA) Gene Arias



Senior Airman Crystal Cuyan of the 146th Airlift Wing, left, is greeted by her three sisters Sept. 12 at Los Angeles International Airport after Crystal's five-month deployment to Afghanistan. Two of Crystal's sisters, Senior Airman Viana Cuyan, second from right, and 2nd Lt. Arelis Cuyan-Villanueva, center, are also members of the 146th. Vianey Cuyan, in blue, is considering enlistment. Photo by Senior Airman Eduardo Villanueva

Nominate your employer for an ESGR Freedom Award

The Defense Department agency Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is seeking nominations for the 2014 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The award is the Defense Department's highest honor for civilian employers that show exceptional support of their Guard and Reserve employees. Guard members, Reservists and family members can submit nominations through Jan. 20 at www.FreedomAward.mil.

"Whether on routine duty, responding to natural disasters or serving in a deployed location, employers who encourage military service make it easier to serve," said Paul Mock, ESGR national chair. "By submitting a Freedom Award nomination, a member of the National Guard or Reserve can acknowledge and thank their employer for the critical role they play in our nation's defense."

Each year, up to 15 deserving employers are selected as Freedom Award recipients and honored at a ceremony in Washington, D.C. For information on the Freedom Award, call 571-372-0705 or email OSD.ESGR-PA@mail.mil.

GuardYour Health website launched

The Army National Guard launched a new website, www.guardyourhealth.com, as a central location for Army National Guard Soldiers and family members to find information and resources on health topics and medical readiness specifically tailored for citizen-Soldiers. Visitors to the website can access information on nutrition, exercise, stress, sleep, dental health, readiness, family resilience, benefits for Guard families and available treatment and support resources.

Avey is DVIDS journalist of the month

The Defense Video and Imagery Distribution System, or DVIDS, named California Air National Guard Master Sgt. Julie Avey its journalist of the month for August. Avey's print, photographic and video coverage of the Rim Fire, which burned more than 257,000 acres and threatened Yosemite National Park, brought the crisis into the homes of people across the nation and the world. Avey's videos aired more than 400 times in August, resulting in more media impressions than any other military journalist, according to DVIDS. The media also ran Avey's photos more than any other military journalist, according to DVIDS, and her images were viewed on the DVIDS site, www.dvidshub.net, 2,230 times and downloaded more than 380 times. Avey's photos appeared in numerous print and online publications, including the Huffington Post, San Francisco Chronicle and USA Today, and her videos were featured on TV stations around the U.S. as well as in France and Germany and on Al Jazeera International.

"Master Sergeant Avey brings to her work both technical and interpersonal skills, as well as military professionalism, that sets her apart from her peers," said Capt. Will Martin, chief of media relations for the California Military Department. "Her willingness to travel across the state, often on a moment's notice, and collect unparalleled imagery is critical to promoting the Guard's role in responding to domestic emergencies across California."

Bakos takes command of 146th AW

Col. David M. Bakos has been named commander of the 146th Airlift Wing, effective Nov. 2, succeeding Col. Paul Hargrove. Bakos has served in the California Air National Guard since 1986, most recently as 146th Airlift Wing Operations Group commander.

"Colonel Bakos is a proven, energetic senior officer and well-prepared to lead the wing forward," said Brig. Gen. Jon Kelk, commander of the California Air National Guard.

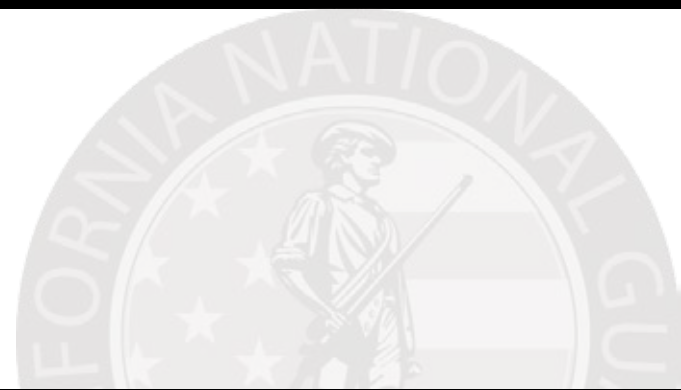
DO YOU KNOW...

the command's responsibilities upon initiating a suspension of favorable personnel actions, or flag?

In accordance with Army Regulation 600-8-2, the effective date of any flag will be the date that the circumstance requiring the flag occurred, not the date the suspension was initiated. The flagging authority, unit commander or first-line supervisor must counsel all Soldiers on active duty, in writing, within two working days of any suspension unless notification would compromise an ongoing investigation. Soldiers who are not on active duty must be counseled prior to the conclusion of the first training period after the flag date. Counseling must include the reason for the flag, the actions prohibited by the flag and the criteria required for removing the flag.

A flag must be removed within three working days after the Soldier's status changes from unfavorable to favorable. The Soldier should be provided a copy of Department of the Army Form 268 when the flag is initiated and when it is removed. Flags are reviewed monthly by the unit commander, and a report must be signed by the battalion commander if it contains a flag more than six months old. Units maintain the DA Form 268 for initiation and removal as well as supporting documentation for one year after a flag is closed.

Air Force Instruction 36-2907 details proper management of the Unfavorable Information File (UIF) Program, but that program is not applicable to the Air National Guard. The National Guard Bureau is considering implementing a UFI program in the future. Currently it is the commander's responsibility to ensure Airmen are notified concerning any failure to meet Air Force standards. For further details, contact your personnel office or force support squadron personnel.



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Sgt. Jeffrey Nelan of the California Army National Guard's 79th Infantry Brigade Combat Team greets a group of Afghan children Sept. 25 at the Afghan Uniformed Police headquarters in Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan. Photo by Cpl. Harold Flynn

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