

PRODUCED FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD

# MARYLAND MUSKET YEAR END PORTFOLIO

IN THIS ISSUE:

BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

JOINT SERVICE HAZMAT TRAINING

UH-72A LAKOTA HELICOPTERS

**ISSUE 12**

... AND MUCH MORE!



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## ON THE COVER:

Soldiers with C Company, 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment conducted a non-tactical jump, from a CH47 Chinook aircraft, over Bitner Drop Zone in Little Orleans, Md., June 14, 2014. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis Jr.)



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## 1-224TH ANNUAL TRAINING IN EDGEWOOD

VIDEO BY PFC. PATRICK ROONEY

SOLDIERS FROM MARYLAND ARMY NATIONAL GUARD'S 1ST SECURITY AND SUPPORT BATTALION, 224TH AVIATION REGIMENT, CONDUCT ANNUAL TRAINING AND HOST TROOPS FROM BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA ON AUGUST 23, 2014, IN EDGEWOOD, MD.

## BADGES FOR BASEBALL

VIDEO BY STAFF SGT. JOHN HIGGINS

AT RIPKEN STADIUM, IN ABERDEEN, MD., MEMBERS OF THE MARYLAND NATIONAL GUARD'S COUNTER DRUG TASK FORCE JOINED WITH LOCAL AND STATE POLICE IN A MISSION TO SECURE THE FUTURE OF AMERICA AND BASEBALL.



## CELEBRATE THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE STAR SPANGLED BANNER

VIDEO BY STAFF SGT. THADDEUS HARRINGTON

MARCH OF THE DEFENDERS: WITNESS THE HISTORIC 1ST BATTALION, 175TH INFANTRY REGIMENT AS THEY MARCH IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THOSE WHO DEFENDED BALTIMORE 200 YEARS AGO.





# 1-158<sup>TH</sup> CAV DOMINATES AT BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

The Maryland Army National Guard conducted its 2014 Best Warrior Competition at Camp Fretterd and Gunpowder Military Reservations – near Reisterstown and in Glen Arm, Md. – to determine this year’s best noncommissioned officer and Soldier, March 13-16.

**Story & Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, Jr.**

Sgt. Michael L. Firth from C Co., 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment, was named NCO of the Year, and Spc. Michael Robinson, from the same unit, was named Soldier of the Year.

Staff Sgt. Michael Casterline from 1100th Theater Aviation Sustainment Maintenance Group and Spc. Jesse Spencer from C Co., 1st Battalion, 169th General Support Aviation Battalion, were the runners-up.

The contest is held each spring to determine Maryland’s finest NCO and Soldier. Qualified ranks, private through specialist, compete for Soldier of the Year, while corporals through sergeants first class compete for NCO of the Year.

Soldiers tested their skills, strength and knowledge in a variety of events – from a written exam, the Army Physical Fitness Test, land navigation and individual

weapons qualification, to a road march and an appearance board. Each event contributed points to a Soldier’s combined score, with the winners, Firth and Robinson, having the highest overall scores.

This year, 10 competitors were chosen from various units to compete in the three-day event. The winners will now advance to the Region II Best Warrior Competition to represent the MDARNG.

“I wanted to represent my squadron; I wanted to represent my unit, Charlie 1-158 Cavalry,” said Robinson, when asked what drew him to the competition. “I wanted to represent them well, and that’s why I’m here.”

Robinson said he also feels extremely confident that he will continue to represent his unit well when he goes to regionals.

Firth, Robinson’s partner in the competition and a fellow infantryman, said he is also ready and that he has no time for breaks.

“Winning is a mixed blessing,” Firth said. “Obviously it’s really cool to be on top, it’s great to win, but the hard work starts again tomorrow. Tomorrow I’ve got to go out to run with my rucksack, study more, and get ready for the next level.”

Firth said this is his first time participating in a BWC and that it felt good to go head-to-head with some of the best in Maryland.

Another competitor, Sgt. April-Mae Ridenour with 32nd Civil Support Team, agreed.

“It’s a lot of fun,” Ridenour said. “You meet a lot of good people, so it’s a good camaraderie – it’s like a morale booster.”

While Ridenour is no stranger to the BWC, having previously competed in 2012, other Soldiers, such as Sgt. Christopher Butler and Spc. Ryan Stotler were the new kids on the block.

Butler and Stotler, of Detachment 1, Headquarters Support Company, 29th Infantry Division, were both







first-time competitors and first-time representatives for their units. Normally, 29th Division Soldiers compete in Virginia's BWC.

Butler and Stotler both said they were excited to compete, but participating in the BWC meant they had to balance life events along with their normal National Guard duties while getting physically and mentally ready for the event.

**"For a Soldier coming up through the ranks, participating here and doing well is really good for their career."**

**- Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Beyard  
Maryland Army National Guard  
Command Sergeant Major**



"A lot of it was studying the Army Study Guide," said Butler. "As M-Day Soldiers [who drill] one weekend out of the month and two weeks out of the year, trying to find time during drill weekends, on our own time after work, [or by] meeting up and talking with one another to study – you spend a lot of time trying to prepare for it."

The other contestants were Sgt. 1st Class Harold Murdock, an Honor Guard member representing the Maryland Military Department; Sgt. Charles Tucker, 224th Area Support Medical Company; and Spc. Ariel Grissinger, 29th Military Police Company.

After the competition concluded, Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Beyard, the Maryland Army National Guard command sergeant major, commended all participants on a job well done and encouraged other MDARNG Soldiers to aim for next year's BWC.

"The most important thing leaders can do is try to look in their formations and find our future competitors," Beyard said. "Some Soldiers you have to actually go to speak with and encourage them to participate, but I would say that for a Soldier coming up through the ranks, participating here and doing well is really good for their career."

**Check out the video online  
by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis.**



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# 231<sup>st</sup> Chemical Co. conducts rotary-wing training



**Soldiers of the 231st Chemical Company linked up with the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade to conduct rotary-wing chemical reconnaissance and decontamination operations at Weide Army Helipport, Aberdeen Proving Ground-Edgewood Area, and Lauderick Creek Training Site from April 4-6.**

**Story & Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, Jr.**

The purpose of the event was to provide realistic training to the 231st and the 29th CAB, developing a positive relationship between the two units and building Soldier morale. The training was also aimed at familiarizing Soldiers with the non-standard decontamination procedures, which included demonstrating the capabilities, as well as cross-training.

“Today our focus was to be carried out in a helicopter to where the enemy chemical attack happened,” said

Staff Sgt. Shayla Honablew, a RECON squad leader in the 231st Chem. Co.

“We had troops go out with their chemical equipment and locate any hazardous chemicals, or biological (hazards), or anything that can harm the civilians in the area; while there is a team in the rear that waits to DECON the troops when they come back to make sure that the troops didn’t run into any contaminants along with the aircraft.”

Honablew said the Soldiers used basic Army skills like giving a situation report, performing a 360-degree perimeter check for security, and communicating effectively using a single channel ground and airborne radio system (SINCGARS).

“It’s good to know tactically how to get in and out of an aircraft and do different movement techniques during a tactical operation,” said 1st Lt. Jeffrey Braden, operations officer with the 231st Chem. Co.

Some of the 231st Soldiers said they enjoyed the training and thought it went well.

“It went pretty smoothly, a lot smoother than what I expected,” said Spc. Christopher Wise, a chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) specialist with the 231st Chem. Co.

“This unit is a lot more versatile than what it once was,” Wise added. “We’ve managed to hit the ground



running this year, especially with our new chain of command.”

1st Lt. Kristofer Baumgartner, 231st Chem. Co. commander, expressed great enthusiasm toward providing training for his Soldiers.

“The unit is in the available year of the Army force generation cycle,” Baumgartner said.





Generally, when Army National Guard units come back from a deployment, they are given a certain amount of time to recuperate. After that time is over, those specific units fall back into a window or a year of being deployable, otherwise known as the Army force generation cycle.

“While we’re in this available year, our training focus is on our collective tasks, which utilizes the entire company in a way that they would perform during a deployment,” Baumgartner said. “This training

accomplishes that requirement and allows my Soldiers to get motivating training with aviation units that they would not normally receive.”

This is the first time the 231st Chem. Co. has worked with rotary-wing aircraft.

“We’re very grateful to the 29th CAB for their support and their willingness to help us train in this environment,” Baumgartner said.

The 231st Chem. Co. Soldiers said they appreciate the training they conducted.

**“It’s good to know tactically how to get in and out of an aircraft and do different movement techniques during a tactical operation.”**

**- 1st Lt. Jeffrey Braden  
Operations Officer  
231<sup>st</sup> Chem. Co.**



“I give a lot of credit to our new commander, because he’s stepping out and taking us outside the box of what we normally do to push us and make us utilize all that we have to complete our mission,” Honablew said. “It’s really been awesome, [and] morale has gone up. I mean how many people get to say that they got the chance to fly around in the helicopter to perform their mission? Usually you walk or you’re bused to your [training].”

Another aspect of the training that was beneficial to the Soldiers was that they were able to cross-train on proficiencies in their military occupational specialties.

“As a 74 delta (74D) you’re taught RECON and DECON, but when you get to your unit you’re broken up into solely DECON or RECON,” Honablew said. “This is cross-training for everyone, so that some days if we’re short DECON personnel we’re going to need RECON to help out.”

Honablew said it is important for the CBRN Soldiers to know their jobs as a whole and not just some of it.

“These are great learning points; this is real life,” said Braden. “We’re not just sitting around at home station simulating the training, but we’re out here actually doing it.”

**Check out the video online  
by Sgt. Regina Glott.**



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# MARYLAND ARMY GUARD GETS FIRST FEMALE, AFRICAN-AMERICAN COMMANDER

In a ceremony with more than 250 Soldiers attending, Brig. Gen. Linda L. Singh assumed command of the Maryland Army National Guard from Brig. Gen. Peter C. Hinz, at the Fifth Regiment Armory, Nov. 3.

**Story by Sgt. Crystal Hudson**

Hinz is retiring after more than 40 years of military service, and after three years as assistant adjutant general of Maryland-Army, the position that holds the responsibility of commanding all Maryland Army National Guard units.

“I am so humbled and so honored, especially [in] the past three years as commander of the Maryland Army National Guard, by the quality of the force and the great work that everyone has done,” said Hinz. “But I would like to challenge the members of the [Maryland] Army Guard to keep it up.”

Singh, the former director of the Maryland Army National Guard joint staff, becomes both the first woman and first African-American to command the Maryland Army National Guard.

She recognizes the significance of her achievement and the motivation she provides to women and people with diverse backgrounds.

“People are looking to see that they have role models that look like them at the top,” Singh said.

She began her military career in 1981, and spent 11 years as an enlisted Soldier. In 1991, she earned distinguished graduate of the Maryland Army National Guard Officer Candidate School.

Throughout her military career, she has served at levels of command ranging from company through regimental, as well as in various staff assignments.



Guard members from across the state gathered Nov. 3, 2013, as Brig. Gen. Linda L. Singh officially took command of the Maryland Army National Guard. She becomes the first female and the first African American to command the Maryland Army National Guard. Singh most recently served as director, Maryland National Guard joint staff, after returning from a deployment to Afghanistan with the 29th Infantry Division Headquarters. Singh replaced Brig. Gen. Peter C. Hinz, who has led the organization since June, 2010.

**Photo by Sgt. Regina Glott**





**“The nation today needs men and women that think in terms of service to their country and not in terms of their country’s debt to them.”**

**- Brig. Gen. Linda L. Singh  
Maryland Army National Guard Commander**

Singh has graduated from both the U.S. Army War College and the Army Command and General Staff College.

Her military awards include the Bronze Star Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal with two bronze oak leaf clusters, the Maryland Distinguished Service Cross, and the Maryland Meritorious Service Medal, among others.

As a civilian, Singh is the managing director in the public safety portfolio for a large consulting firm based in Arlington, Va. She holds master’s degrees in Strategic Studies and Business Administration, a bachelor’s degree in Business Administration, and a

Master Certificate in Six Sigma.

During the ceremony, Singh addressed the many Soldiers that are now under her command with words of encouragement.

“The nation today needs men and women that think in terms of service to their country and not in terms of their country’s debt to them,” Singh said.

She stressed the importance of each Soldier that makes up the Maryland Army National Guard.

“I would be remiss if I didn’t thank you,” said Singh, “the Soldiers that continue to give me the inspiration and the drive to do more and be better than I am today.”



## 29<sup>th</sup> MPAD Captures New York City

During the June 7-8, 2014, battle assembly, Soldiers of the 29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment linked up with a photography instructor to teach the basics to new members and broadcasters, expand on certain concepts, and to get creative.

Soldiers learned the proper white balance for night photography, bracketing exposures, low light, architecture, and street photography. Although the days were long, the images that the Soldiers created are visually interesting and show that a different approach to training can do wonders.







# MARYLAND GUARD ANSWERS STATE'S CALL FOR HELP

Approximately 500 Service members of the Maryland National Guard and Defense Force, were activated for to help with severe winter weather operations throughout the state on Feb. 13, 2014.

## Story & Photos by Sgt. Edwin Gray

Most of these troops were prepositioned at readiness centers throughout Maryland and then dispatched to support local first responders.

Many first response vehicles are not capable of traveling through deep snow. In response to this dilemma, the Maryland Guard has provided approximately 50 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles with troops to help get the first responders through the snow safely.

Gov. Martin O'Malley asked Marylanders to refrain from using the roads so emergency workers could do their jobs efficiently and more people stay safe.

"Our Maryland Guard has deployed roughly 500 people," said O'Malley. "They are helping in response to local calls for service."

The Maryland National Guard receives its missions through the Maryland Emergency Management Agency





**“Our Maryland Guard has deployed roughly 500 people – They are helping in response to local calls for service.”**

**- Gov. Martin O’Malley  
Maryland Governor**

(MEMA) when there is a need to assist state and local emergency response organizations.

MEMA is part of the Maryland Military Department and under the authority of the adjutant general. The agency is responsible for coordinating the state’s response in any major emergency or disaster.

“The way the Joint Task Force runs the system is very smooth. It allows us to keep accountability,” said Staff Sgt. Amanda Youngblood, supply sergeant with F Co., 128th Brigade Support Battalion. “The emergency response missions are being tracked with an online portal that allows state and local agencies to make requests for assistance.”

Each request is updated when it has been assigned to a unit. The requester will know how many personnel will arrive and what equipment is being provided.

Youngblood also added that her unit sent out multiple vehicles to various locations around the state to support local fire departments.

The Guard trains and equips its troops to be ready and efficient when called upon. Many Maryland

**“In an emergency situation, timing is critical. The training, skills and capabilities we use for our wartime missions are the same skills and capabilities that enable us to successfully respond to natural disasters.”**

**- Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins  
Adjutant General of Maryland**

Guard members have experienced working alongside first responders during past state emergencies like Superstorm Sandy in 2012 and “Snowmageddon” in 2010.

Service members have assisted stranded motorists, helped local law enforcement and firefighters with transportation and evacuation, aided in the distribution of supplies and provided support for search and rescue in previous state emergencies.

“Having the [state of emergency] declaration early is vital to our ability to respond,” said Maj. Gen. James A. Adkins, the adjutant general of Maryland. “This gives us the ability to preposition our personnel and equipment. In an emergency situation, timing is critical. The training, skills and capabilities we use for our wartime missions are the same skills and capabilities that enable us to successfully respond to natural disasters.”



**Check out the video online  
by Pfc. Patrick Rooney.**



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# FOUR MARYLAND GUARD UNITS MOVE UNDER NEW COMMAND UMBRELLA

**“How can we make our organization more efficient and provide our soldiers with a better support product?”**

**Story & Photos by Sgt. Margaret Taylor**

On account of this question, four units within the Maryland Army National Guard were moved under the umbrella of a new command, Feb. 1.

The Special Operations Detachment and the 291st Digital Liaison Detachment report to the 58th Troop Command headquarters element; the 29th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment report to the 1297th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion; and the 229th Army Band report to the 581st Troop Command. All these units were transferred from Joint Forces Headquarters.

The reason for this transfer boils down to the best use of resources.

“The purpose of JFHQ is to provide support for the adjutant general and major subordinate commands,” said Col. Adam Flasch, chief of staff, MDARNG. “JFHQ doesn’t have the full complement of personnel necessary to support separate units.”

By tucking the four units in question under JFHQ’s umbrella, the results were less than ideal.

This realization spurred months of research. Flasch and a team drawn from the state’s command staff and major subordinate commands reviewed input from

various command groups. They conducted independent research and then plugged their findings into a decision matrix. After they crunched the numbers, the overwhelming conclusion was that a transfer was in order.

“We moved each of these units out from under a headquarters structure that wasn’t designed to support them, to one that was,” added Flasch. “[This] was the 58th Troop Command.”

What sets the four units in question apart is that they all have designated AA-level unit identification codes (UICs). Every unit has a UIC. If it ends in ‘AA,’ it means that unit is a standalone. Standalones maintain a high level of operational autonomy, but given their small size, they must be assigned to a higher headquarters for administrative, training, and logistical support and sustainment. Of all the AA units in Maryland, these four were the only ones not already positioned under the 58th.

Once the decision was made to move these last four AA units, Flasch and his team ran a week of stress tests prior to the Feb. 1 changeover to iron out any hiccups that might remain in the affected support systems.



One of these systems is the Defense Travel System, the database that tracks Service members’ travel reimbursement requests. After the system’s move to the 58th, the process of submitting travel vouchers for each of the AA units will have fewer bottlenecks. While previous requests might have been routed through an individual, vouchers can now go through any one of a half-dozen or more people, which will increase the speed of a request’s approval.

“The same quality support will continue,” said Flasch. “If anything, things will move a little faster and more smoothly.”

Since the changes affect support and administrative processes, the average Soldier in the AA units won’t notice a difference. Only the command will.

1st Sgt. Walter Hirschmann, Sr., the 229th Band’s first sergeant and enlisted conductor, said his experiences working with the 58th have been good so far.

“They’re really reaching out to our people and trying to understand the way we operate,” Hirschmann said. “Even though there’s a learning curve, it’s been very positive.”

Hirschmann spoke about the potential to mingle more easily with the other first sergeants and commanders within the 58th and how it will provide its own wealth of opportunity.

While the band’s performance schedule has always been very robust, the restructuring brings with it a host of new ceremonial and morale-boosting venues.

“Ultimately, everything we do is so that every last soldier can know ‘that someone’s out there watching my six while I get my job done, and that [I’ll get] every opportunity to be successful,’” Flasch said. “That’s why we make any change: to improve the efficiency of the organization and improve the overall experience of our Soldiers as they serve our state and nation.”





# 231<sup>ST</sup> CHEM. CO. JOINS WITH AIR GUARD TO CONDUCT HAZMAT TRAINING

**“It’s an invaluable asset for us to be able to come out here and join our friends at the Air National Guard and understand how other units do things.”**

**- Army 1st Lt. Kristofer Baumgartner, 231<sup>st</sup> commander**

**Story & Photos by Staff Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington**

On a cold, overcast weekend, the Maryland National Guard’s 231st Chemical Company and 175th Civil Engineering Fire and Emergency Services Flight conducted joint HAZMAT training at Warfield Air National Guard Base in Middle River, Md., on Feb. 8-9.

“[This is] the first time that we’ve done any joint training with another branch,” said Air Force Master Sgt. Joel McCroy, assistant chief of training for the 175th Civil Engineering Fire and Emergency Services Flight and a former Army infantryman. “Most of our





(ABOVE) Army Staff Sgt. Aaron Edwards, platoon sergeant for DECON Platoon, explained to his group of Soldiers the extreme importance of decontaminating the aircraft's wheels and areas that the pilots may touch, to allow the aircraft to return to and stay in the fight.

members have deployed to joint bases and worked in a joint environment, so it just made sense to include joint training into what we do."

The 231st contacted the 175th fire department this past fall about training that could benefit both units. From the beginning, both organizations had to learn a little about each other—different acronyms, ranks and particular ways of doing things. Firefighters got firsthand experience working with the operations order supplied by 231st Chemical Company.

Each day of the weekend's training consisted of four stations: fixed-wing aircraft decontamination; Single Channel Ground and Airborne Radio System training; troop decontamination using Mission Oriented Protective Posture level 4; and familiarity with the Air Guard's equipment used to detect chemical, biological and radiological materials.

**"Most of our members have deployed to joint bases and worked in a joint environment, so it just made sense to include joint training into what we do."**

**- Air Force Master Sgt. Joel McCroy, assistant chief of training  
175<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineering Fire and Emergency Services Flight**

"The Air National Guard's fire department here has absolutely been fantastic in accommodating us and making sure that both the Army and the Air Guard get excellent training out of this," said Army 1st Lt. Kristofer Baumgartner, 231st commander. "This is something that the Soldiers are absolutely looking forward to. They hadn't had this kind of unique training before, and they're using this as an opportunity to learn new skills."

A retired A-10 Thunderbolt II aircraft with a brand new paint job, slotted to be used as a static display, gave the Soldiers a full-sized aircraft to work with. This allowed them to conduct realistic training without taking an aircraft out of operation, freeing it up to do flights and minimizing potential damage.

Although it was a display model, Soldiers still received a safety brief on approaching the aircraft and avoiding its danger zones. Army Staff Sgt. Aaron Edwards, platoon sergeant for DECON Platoon, explained to his group of Soldiers the extreme importance of decontaminating the aircraft's wheels and areas that the pilots may touch, to allow the aircraft to return to and stay in the fight.

This period of training was also drill weekend for the Maryland Air National Guard. The mechanics were repairing, pilots were flying, the support staff was hard at work, and Airmen, Soldiers, and even the Civil Air Patrol filled the dining facility.

"I hope we can do some more [training] in the future," said McCroy. "Maybe we can expand it to some other things; we already discussed the possibility of a field exercise in the future."

After the joint training proposal received the green light through the respective chains of command, the







two organizations moved forward to obtain training areas, schedule events, coordinate training with the 175th Emergency Management, and secure an aircraft from the 175th Maintenance Squadron.

Training in a joint environment allows Service members to build relationships, learn best practices, work with different equipment, and increase specific skills in an unfamiliar environment. When asked what he considered the best part of the training, Sgt. Jonny Kincaid, a 4th Platoon section leader in the 231st and member of the chemical strike team for the International Monetary Fund, said, “Seeing some of my colleagues and some of the [junior] enlisted Soldiers get into the suits (JSLIST) and go through everything.”

Team members don MOPP Level 4 or the Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology (JSLIST) to carry out their mission. The proper wear of this equipment is vital for completing the mission safely, so team members constantly monitor each other and correct malfunctions.

“I’m pretty knowledgeable in what I do, and [I’m] always into learning other techniques. I’m willing to learn each and every technique I can,” Kincaid added.

The 175th Civil Engineering Fire and Emergency Services Flight is considered a Prime BEEF civil engineer unit by the Air Force. Nothing to do with steaks, it means Prime Base Engineer Emergency Force, an organization that could be tasked with setting up a bare base.

“Next month we’ll be doing a field training exercise with an active duty unit at Aberdeen Proving Ground,” said Baumgartner. “The



following month we’ll be doing an aviation chemical reconnaissance and also a rotary-wing decontamination at the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground with the 29th Combat Aviation Brigade.”

The unit is scheduled to conduct annual training at Muscatatuck Urban Training Center in Indiana, where they will train on a wide range of chemical activities such as decontamination, reconnaissance and working on forward operating bases.

“Whenever we deploy to a combat zone, it’s never what you think it will be. We may be working with the Air Guard, Marine Corps, other units, [or] other countries even,” said Baumgartner. “So, it’s an invaluable asset for us to be able to come out here and join our friends at the Air National Guard and understand how other units do things.”

**Check out the video online  
by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis.**



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# NATIONAL GUARD'S TOP ENLISTED VISITS MARYLAND

Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell O. Brush, senior enlisted advisor, National Guard Bureau, visited the Maryland National Guard's Camp Fretterd Military Reservation to speak with enlisted Soldiers and Airmen about key issues, in a town hall style meeting, December 7, 2013.

**Story by Sgt. Regina Glott**

While touring the Guard facilities in Maryland, the SEA visited the Edgewood Area of Aberdeen Proving Ground and the Airmen at Warfield Air Base.

"My number one goal when I do a state visit is to talk to Soldiers and Airmen," said Brush.

Brush's position as the SEA is to advise Gen. Frank

J. Grass, Chief, National Guard Bureau, on all enlisted matters affecting training, utilization, and the health of the force. The town hall meeting was part of a three-day visit, which also included speaking engagements at the Maryland Guard's Joint Senior Enlisted Dinner and an Airmen recognition ceremony.



Photo by Sgt. Regina Glott

**"My number one goal when I do a state visit is to talk to Soldiers and Airmen."**

- Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell O. Brush  
Senior Enlisted Advisor  
National Guard Bureau

Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell Brush, the senior enlisted advisor at National Guard Bureau, stopped by to speak with Maryland National Guard Service members during a Dec. 6-8, visit. The SEA toured Maryland facilities, dined with senior enlisted leadership, and spoke with Service members during several town hall meetings throughout the state. The SEA advises the Chief, National Guard Bureau on all enlisted matters affecting training, effective utilization, health of the force, and enlisted professional development.

Photo by Sgt. Breeanna J. Pierce





Photo by Sgt. Breeanna J. Pierce

**“Prepare for your future by preparing for where you want to be one to five years from now and training those that are coming in behind you.”**

**- Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell O. Brush**

Key messages at the town hall meeting were suicide prevention and NCO development. Suicide prevention, a sensitive topic for some, stirred emotions between audience members and Brush. He spoke passionately, at some points teary-eyed, but the conviction in his message was clear – encouraging Soldiers and Airmen,

– encouraging Soldiers and Airmen,

“Do something about it!”

“It’s that personal relationship, that honest feedback. Looking somebody in the eye and asking them how they’re doing and then waiting and expecting a real answer,” said Brush. “We

don’t actually look at somebody and say, ‘How are you doing? I’ve noticed that you aren’t the same smiley person that you always are.’”

“You have to get that eye-to-eye communication, that person-to-person communication. That’s how you truly find out if somebody is doing okay or not,” he added.

Concerning NCO development, Brush broke things down into three parts: taking care of yourself, your family, and each other.

“Take care of yourself by doing something that makes you happy for at least 30 minutes a day,” said Brush. “Prepare for your future by preparing for where you want to be one to five years from now and training those that are coming in behind you.”

He emphasized the importance of family and making sure they feel appreciated, more than just once a year on a family day.

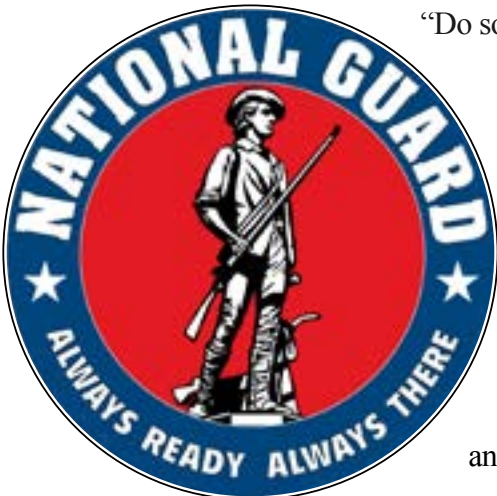
“I don’t think we do a good enough job telling our families how much we appreciate them and the things they do,” said Brush. “We are still part of an all-volunteer force. We get to choose to come into the National Guard, but our families don’t. They are drafted,” said Brush.

His message for taking care of each other also encompassed the need to show gratitude to other Service members, but also the value of giving honest feedback on performance. He also spoke about how honest feedback has helped him get to where he is today and attributes much of his success to his supervisor’s willingness to tell him the good with the bad and how to get better.

Brush added, “We don’t do a good job honestly telling people things they need to hear – meeting standards. Give people honest feedback. How did this person end up in that position, they’re not that good at it? Nobody along their line ever gave them honest feedback and said, ‘you know, you aren’t that good at this. Here’s how you get better.’”



Photo by Sgt. Breeanna J. Pierce





# ENLISTEES LEARN ABOUT SERVICE MEMBERS' SACRIFICES IN PAST WARS

**“I saw my own reflection in that wall, and I kind of realized that all those people are basically the same person that I am – we’re all Soldiers.”**

**- Pvt. Philip Litz, an infantryman in training**

## Story & Photos by Sgt. Margaret Taylor

When some of the Maryland Army National Guard’s newest Soldiers visited the war memorials in Washington, D.C., on April 12, they found more than they expected.

Sgt. 1st Class Kevin McCluskey, a MDARNG recruiter and the tour’s organizer, brought a group of approximately 30 Soldiers down from Camp Fretterd Military Reservation near Reisterstown, Md., in order to give them a change of scenery.

These Soldiers are in the Recruit Sustainment Program, which introduces new National Guard recruits to the fundamentals of soldiering and the traditions of

the Army. When enlistees graduate from RSP after completing their basic and military occupational specialty training, they join their units as fully qualified Soldiers.

“I don’t think they get enough military history early in their careers,” said McCluskey, a resident of Baltimore. “I figured we’d let them learn about the people [who] came before them.”

McCluskey and other RSP cadre gave short lectures on the facts and figures of the conflict memorialized by each monument. The Soldiers started at the Vietnam Veterans Memorial wall, stopped at the Vietnam





Women's Memorial, took a walk through the World War II and Korean War memorials, and then crossed the bridge over the Potomac River to see the U.S. Marine Corps Memorial statue at Arlington Cemetery.

One of the Soldiers, Pvt. Philip Litz, whose family lives in Blauvelt, N.Y., though he currently attends the University of Maryland at College Park, said he found the experience to be more than he'd expected.

"I was walking down the Vietnam memorial and reading all of the names," said Litz, an infantryman in training. "I saw my own reflection in that wall, and I kind of realized that all those people are basically the same person that I am – we're all Soldiers."

Those names on the wall stood out. The RSP Soldiers were taken aback to find that they stood out as well.

Because the visit occurred on a duty day, all the Soldiers came in their duty uniform, the Army combat

The RSP introduces new National Guard recruits to the fundamentals of Army tradition and discipline before they complete their basic and military occupational specialty training. The enlistees visited the Vietnam War, World War II, Korean War and Iwo Jima memorials to get a better sense of the heritage and tradition of which they are now a part.

**"THE HEROISM OF OUR OWN TROOPS WAS MATCHED BY THAT OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE NATIONS THAT FOUGH BY OUR SIDE . . . THEY ABSORBED THE BLOWS AND THEY SHARED TO THE FULL IN THE ULTIMATE DESTRUCTION OF THE ENEMY."**

**- President Harry S. Truman**

uniform or ACUs. Other visitors took notice of the RSP group as ACUs hardly blend well in a crowd. They frequently stopped to thank the new Soldiers for their service, to applaud, or even to have a photo taken with one of them.

On occasion, an older gentleman or two, in a wheelchair or leaning on a cane, would call out in passing 'I was in the 82nd,' or 'I served in Korea,' simply upon seeing the younger faces in uniform. In an instant, a camaraderie spanning half a century and several generations came into being.

Several of the Soldiers found the praise unnerving, however, especially since their time in service is just beginning.

"[This praise] is new, so you don't really know how to react," said Pvt. Evan Andrew, an infantryman and Baltimore native. "I didn't join to get attention."

He said he joined to serve, to help people, to do his part and gain purpose for his life – reasons many, many others have shared. That he and the other RSP Soldiers were praised for their service was something he said he found surprising, but welcome nonetheless.

"It makes you feel connected," Andrews said.

This sense of connection will hopefully encourage the newest generation of Maryland Guard Soldiers to continue the proud tradition of all those who've gone before them, and to lead those who come after.







# FEMALE SOLDIERS UNITE THROUGH NEW SORORITY



Several female troops united to create the Kappa Epsilon Psi Military Sorority, Inc., also known as KEΨ. The sorority is open to all female service members, regardless of branch, who are serving or have served honorably in the military.

**Story & Photos by Sgt. Edwin Gray**

The mission of KEΨ is to honor past female service members, unite current female service members, and mentor the future leadership of our armed forces. Many of the members say the organization is a unique asset to the military.

“There are so many challenges that come along with being a woman in uniform,” said Sharise Payne, an Army staff sergeant with Maryland’s 231st Chemical Company, also a member of KEΨ. “This is a great opportunity for military women to get out and help, as

well as mentor other women.”

The sorority was founded April 4, 2011, by YaShica Hill, who served as the first national president of the sorority, and by Moneka Smith-Dailey, who served as its first national vice president.

Many sorority members mention that they enjoy the opportunity to connect with others who have served in the military.

“It’s a new organization, but I’m excited to be a part of something that’s meaningful to fellow military women,” said Latasha Bell, who is a Navy petty officer 3rd Class electrician’s mate and a veteran. “I think it’s a great way to connect with other women who may have had similar experiences.”

KEΨ’s local chapters meet twice a month. Nationally, all chapters meet annually at the Reveille Retreat. This retreat is a reunion for all KEΨ sisters. It is also an opportunity for newer troops to get advice from a diverse group of more experienced service members.

“I wanted to be a part of a sisterhood,” said Belinda Mann, an Army staff sergeant with the headquarters element of Maryland’s 70th Regional Training Institute and among the first to join from the Maryland Guard. “It gives me the opportunity to go out into the community and mentor fellow female Service members.”

Candidates with less than two years of military service are teamed up a mentor who has more military or civilian experience. Several veteran service members have joined the sorority to advise and help new female troops while also helping the community.

Twenty women chartered the first chapter of KEΨ on May 25, 2013. The sorority is already working toward expanding the organization to have a chapter on every military installation. Since the first KEΨ chapter started, several other women have begun the process of bringing local chapters to their own communities.

Male service members have followed their female counterparts by creating a similar organization Kappa Lambda Chi Military Fraternity, Inc., also known as KAX, founded on July 4, 2013.

“Oftentimes, joining the military means not going to college full time like many other young adults,” said Kerry Campbell, a former Army Reserve and National Guard aoldier. Taking college courses is encouraged in today’s military, said Campbell, but joining a sorority is

not always an option for military members, since many cannot attend college full time. “Now it is.”

Some members view KEΨ as a college experience that they never had the chance to experience. The women of KEΨ have created bonds that could exist far beyond their military careers. Most say that joining feels equivalent to extending their family.

“Being a part of this organization is no different than it is with my family,” said Payne. “I love my sorority sisters as if we were relatives, and to be honest, you couldn’t tell me that we aren’t.”

KEΨ members actively participate in community service. The Virginia-District of Columbia chapter has provided many hours of community service local charities such as the D.C. Central Kitchen and the Interfaith Clothing Center.







# WASHINGTON CLAWS VICTORY AT MARYLAND GUARD SPONSORED **CRAB BOWL**

**Story & Photos by Staff Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington**

High school football players from across Maryland competed in the sixth annual Maryland Crab Bowl senior all-star game at McDaniel College, Gill Stadium, Dec. 21, 2013. The college was home to the Baltimore Ravens' summer training camp until the 2011 season.

The Maryland State High School Football All-Star Game, started the Maryland Crab Bowl in 2008. It features some of the state's most talented senior high

school players from public and private schools.

In 2012, the Maryland Army National Guard began to sponsor the event and is now the primary sponsor.

Players wore Maryland Army Guard-inspired jerseys. Each displayed one of the seven Army Values in place of a player's name, a jersey number done in the Universal Camouflage Pattern, a shoulder sleeve insignia from one of the major Maryland Army Guard





commands on one shoulder, and a U.S. flag on the other.

“We wanted to put a face and a personal connection with all of the teams and with the program statewide,” said Lt. Col. Amy Bennett, commander of the Recruiting and Retention Battalion. “We also started a values program with the Crab Bowl. Not only are the players wearing the values on the backs of the uniforms, [but] we also sponsor an Army Values award.”

The participants learned about the Army Values on the first day of practice. On the last night of practice, peers nominated the winners, those who embody these values the most. The coaches of each team voted on a player that epitomizes all of the Army Values: loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity, and personal courage. That selected person, on the winning team, receives the LDRSHIP Award.

“It’s an unbelievable partnership. We talk to the kids about the [Army] Values and about playing football,” said Sean O’Connor, director of business operations for the Mid Atlantic Football Foundation. “It’s such a natural fit for those kids, and it’s a natural partnership of the two groups – the best football people in the state and the best armed services in the world.”

The two teams that played came from Washington, D.C. and Baltimore – the Washington players from the southern and eastern parts of the state, and the Baltimore players from the northern and western areas of the state.

Football scouts often attend the event, and several Crab Bowl alumni have made it to the NFL, like Brandon Copeland who plays for the Baltimore Ravens and Terrance Garvin who plays for the Pittsburgh Steelers.

**Check out the video online  
by Pfc. Patrick Rooney.**

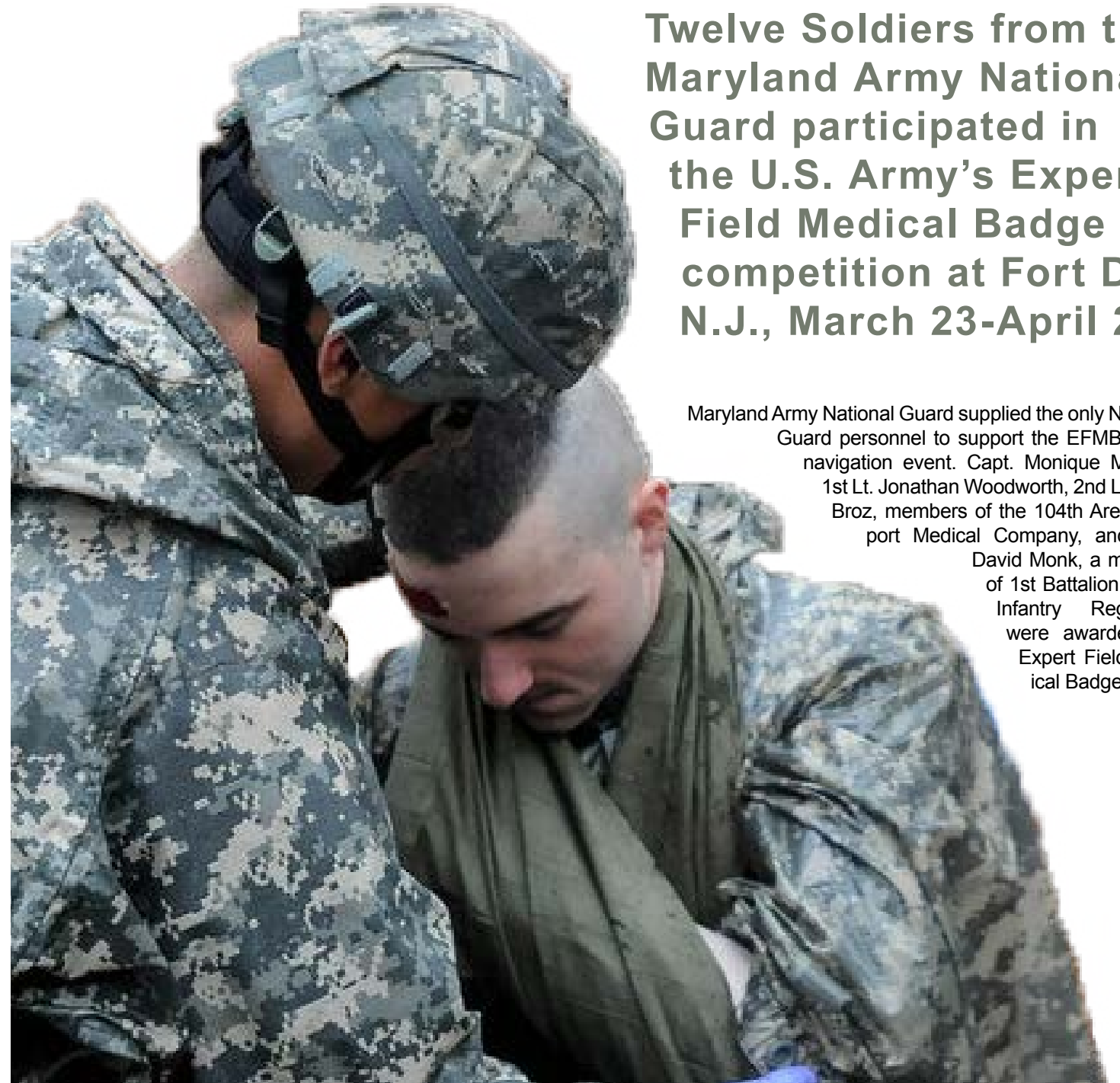


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# MEDICS AWARDED EXPERT FIELD MEDICAL BADGES

Twelve Soldiers from the Maryland Army National Guard participated in the U.S. Army’s Expert Field Medical Badge competition at Fort Dix, N.J., March 23-April 2.

Maryland Army National Guard supplied the only National Guard personnel to support the EFMB’s land navigation event. Capt. Monique Medina, 1st Lt. Jonathan Woodworth, 2nd Lt. Ellen Broz, members of the 104th Area Support Medical Company, and Spc. David Monk, a member of 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment, were awarded the Expert Field Medical Badge.







**“The Expert Field Medical Badge is one of the toughest competitions in the military. Your body and mind are pushed to the limit: only the strongest and the best [will] qualify for the EFMB.”**

**- Maj. Gen. Joseph Carvalho, commanding general of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command**

**Story & Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis, Jr.**

The EFMB is a military skill identifier, similar in prestige to the Air Assault or Expert Infantryman badges, that any Soldier in the Army’s medical branch may earn after successfully completing a strenuous set of tasks. Many medics entered the competition, but only few made it to the end. Of the 12 MDARNG Soldiers who took part, only four were awarded the prestigious badge of excellence.

U.S. Army Capt. Monique Medina, 1st Lt. Jonathan Woodworth, 2nd Lt. Ellen Broz, members of the 104th Area Support Medical Company, and Spc. David Monk, a member of the 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment,

successfully completed the EFMB’s rigorous series of qualification tests.

The U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command sponsored the EFMB. The competition consisted of a 60-question written test, a day-and-night land navigation course, three combat training lanes involving medical and casualty evacuation, tactical combat casualty care and warrior skills, and a 12-mile road march.

“I’ve been wanting this badge for about ten years now – ever since I joined the Army,” said Medina, a physician assistant with the 104th ASMC.

Medina said she never had the opportunity to compete for the EFMB before. When she learned about the competition, she didn’t hesitate to seize her chance.

In addition to the participants from Maryland, 165 Soldiers from other states and Army components also took the opportunity to compete in the event. Forty-five of these candidates were victorious including the four from the Maryland Guard.

Earning the EFMB is no walk in the park. Whether participants applied a tourniquet to a simulated casualty, carried a heavy rucksack for 12 miles, or searched for points in the woods in the pitch dark of night, they had to perform such skills and more under stress and in various extreme weather conditions.

Broz, a health service administrator with the 104th ASMC, found all of her points for the day and night land navigation course, but did so while being drenched in pouring rain.

“Night land navigation was pretty hard,” said Broz. “It was raining; it was like doing your pace-count in quick sand.”

The road march concluded the competition’s events. When some of the candidates crossed the finish line with just minutes left on the clock, tears of joy started flowing.

“This is the biggest accomplishment I think I’ve ever had in my whole life up to this point,” said Monk, a combat medic with the 1-175 Inf. Regt.

Many celebrated with their families afterward. Woodworth, despite feeling under the weather, was able to spend his day of victory with his infant daughter, who turned eight weeks old that same day. Woodworth is a nurse with the 104th ASMC.

“The Expert Field Medical Badge is one of the toughest competitions in the military,” said Maj. Gen. Joseph Carvalho, commanding general of the U.S. Army Medical Research and Materiel Command, and of Fort Detrick. “Your body and mind are pushed to the limit: only the strongest and the best [will] qualify for the EFMB.”





# UH-72A LAKOTA HELICOPTERS IN THE SKY OVER MARYLAND



**Pilots with the Maryland Army National Guard's Counterdrug Task Force hover at Weide Army Airfield on the Edgewood area of Aberdeen Proving Ground, Md., Jan. 8, 2014. The pilots flew one of the four UH-72A Lakota helicopters added to the Maryland National Guard's flying assets.**

Photo Story by Sgt. Crystal Hudson



The Lakota can be maintained and operated at half the cost of the older OH-58A Kiowa helicopter that it replaces. The Lakota will function as the premier aircraft for civil support, search and rescue, and homeland security missions. Compared to the Kiowa, which is a single-engine helicopter, the Lakota has twin engines; during hurricane season, this will allow Maryland Guard pilots to fly and take off in winds up to 50 knots – or about 60 mph.





(ABOVE) Maryland National Guard Counterdrug Task Force, Aviation Support pilot, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Scott Sauer, flies a training mission over the Chesapeake Bay area, Jan. 8, 2014. The task force uses the UH-72A Lakota helicopters to support state and federal drug enforcement and homeland security missions.

(RIGHT TOP) Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gregory Kulick with Maryland National Guard's Counterdrug Task Force, Aviation Support, performs pre-flight checks before a training mission in a UH-72A Lakota helicopter, Jan. 8, 2014. The task force utilizes the new UH-72A Lakota helicopters to perform civil support, search and rescue, and homeland security missions.



(RIGHT BOTTOM) Inside the aircraft, improvements include moving map and touch-screen displays and a video management system. Additional avionics and communications equipment aboard the aircraft includes radios that will allow Guard members to communicate with civilian law enforcement personnel and first responders.



Chief Warrant Officer 4 Gregory Kulick flies a training mission over the Chesapeake Bay. The UH-72A Lakota helicopter has improved the capabilities of the Counterdrug Task Force with infrared technology, which will allow for more accurate search and rescue by using heat signatures.



Maryland National Guard Counterdrug Task Force, Aviation Support pilots fly a training mission over Baltimore, Jan. 8, 2014. Compared to the Kiowa, which provided two hours of flying time, the Lakota has the capability to continuously fly up to three and a half hours.



The UH-72A Lakota helicopter's primary mission will be general air support, but the Lakota will also serve as a medevac helicopter and assist in search and rescue missions and drug intervention.

Maryland National Guard Counterdrug Task Force, Aviation Support pilots fly a training mission over the Chesapeake Bay Bridge, Jan. 8, 2014. The Maryland Army National Guard currently has a UH-72A Lakota helicopter supporting the Southwest border mission, a mission Maryland has successfully supported in the past.



# 244TH ENGINEERS HAMMER OUT REPAIRS



Photos by Staff Sgt. Nancy Spicer

Soldiers from 2nd platoon, 244th Engineer Company, Maryland Army National Guard, broke out the hammers and circular saws to repair the Leadership Reaction Course at Gunpowder Military Reservation in Glen Arm, Maryland, August 3-11.



## Story by Sgt. Margaret Taylor

Sgt. 1st Class Charles Brubaker, the platoon sergeant and a Baltimore resident, said work on the LRC allowed his soldiers to practice their carpentry and masonry skills.

“Many of my soldiers don’t have a lot of experience with this kind of work,” Brubaker said. “They do other



Renovating the LRC is one of several projects the 244th Engineers are working on right now. Others include repairing plumbing at the 5th Regiment Armory in Baltimore and installing acoustic paneling for the 229th Army Band in Parkville, Md.

stuff on the civilian side, and [training] weekends and [annual training] are really the only time they get to focus on this.”

The LRC is a course where soldiers work in teams to navigate physically and mentally challenging obstacles. The wooden course has seen a lot of wear and tear over the years, and 2nd platoon made sure their handiwork would serve future teams well.

They came up with new designs to break larger structural sections into smaller ones, Brubaker said. This relieves tension on the longer beams, prevents warping, and enables easier repair work in the future.





# 1-158<sup>TH</sup> SOLDIERS WIN RUNNER-UP IN REGION II BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

After winning the state's Best Warrior Competition in March, Sgt. Michael L. Firth, from C Company, 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment, and Spc. Michael A. Robinson, from the same unit, both advanced to the regionals to represent Maryland. Firth competed in the noncommissioned officer category and Robinson in the Soldier category; both were named runners-up.

**Story & Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael E. Davis, Jr.**

Two Maryland Army National Guard Soldiers competed in the Army National Guard Region II Best Warrior Competition at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pennsylvania, May 20-23, 2014.

After winning the state's Best Warrior Competition in March, Sgt. Michael L. Firth, from C Company, 1st

Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment, and Spc. Michael A. Robinson, from the same unit, both advanced to the regionals to represent Maryland.

Firth competed in the noncommissioned officer category and Robinson in the Soldier category; both were named runners-up.





**The ARNG Best Warrior Competition consists of a written test, an Army Physical Fitness Test, qualifications with various weapons, day and night land navigation, a 6-mile ruck march, and demonstrating various warrior tasks. After all this, the Soldiers were graded on their overall Army knowledge and the appearance of their Army Service Uniform while standing before a review board.**



“The runner-up is almost as important as being the winner of this competition,” said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Gundrum, Pennsylvania National Guard senior enlisted leader. “With the ability to go on to the National Guard competition, if for some reason the competitors that won this competition couldn’t make it, the runner-up would be selected to take their place.”

Soldiers from all over the Mid-Atlantic region, which includes West Virginia, Virginia, Washington D.C., Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania, tested their mettle at the competition.

The ARNG Best Warrior Competition consists of a written test, an Army Physical Fitness Test, qualifications with various weapons, day and night land navigation, a 6-mile ruck march, and demonstrating various warrior

tasks. After all this, the Soldiers were graded on their overall Army knowledge and the appearance of their Army Service Uniform while standing before a review board.

“It was different from the previous competition,” said Firth. “It was more dynamic, and I thought it was better done in that way because you weren’t thinking of a technical task, you were just reacting the way you were trained.”

Gundrum said he wanted to put a lot of stressors on the competitors to prepare them for the next level.

“We kept them very busy, a lot of physical activities and not so much sleep,” Gundrum said. “They had days starting as early as 0300 in the morning, and then they would go until 1800 (6 p.m.), 1900, [or] 2000 at night without a lot of breaks in between.”

Robinson agreed that the tempo was the source of a lot of stress during the competition.

“The challenging part of it was that the events were one after the other,” Robinson said. “Rather than having a ruck march one day and a PT test another day, they were all consecutive in one day. They definitely built up stress, but you had to push through.”

In the midst of all of the stressors, Firth and Robinson had their mentor, Staff Sgt. Eric Zubkus, training noncommissioned officer from their unit, Command Sgt. Major Thomas B. Beyard, the Maryland National Guard Command Sergeant Major, and other sergeants

major encouraging and supporting them.

Firth and Robinson said their support system boosted their morale even when they felt they didn’t do well in certain categories.

“They’re always there reminding us to focus on the next event, telling us to keep motivated and making sure we didn’t beat ourselves up but [kept] moving on,” Firth said.

Firth and Robinson didn’t win the competition but still performed very well while representing Maryland.

“When I’m representing my state I really think of all eyes on me from the entire state - all of the Soldiers, all of the senior enlisted, all of the junior enlisted, all of the officers - and I need to do the best I can to make the state look good,” Robinson said. “Win or lose, I got to make [it] look good in some type of way.”





# SEEDS OF A NATION

## *Remembering the 5<sup>th</sup> Maryland and the Battle of North Point*



Photos by Staff Sgt. Nancy Spicer  
& Staff Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington

### Story by Sgt. Margaret Taylor

As a nation, the United States of America wasn't born when the Declaration of Independence was signed July 4, 1776. It didn't spring from the ashes of the American Revolution in 1783. It wasn't quite there when George Washington was elected the first president in 1788.

Rather, the nation finally took form in the throes of another war fought throughout and along North America's east coast and on the Great Lakes nearly 30 years after the Revolution. The War of 1812 (1812-1814) pitted the Americans against their former countrymen – the soldiers and sailors of Great Britain – and the war

allowed the nascent country to achieve two lasting and profound victories.

First, the infant American Navy beat again and again the best in the world – the British Royal Navy – which finally gave the U.S. an inarguable place on the international stage. These Americans were legitimate: a force to be reckoned with.

Second, and for the first time ever, Americans began to draw together in a spirit of national pride. This was epitomized in a poem penned during the Battle of Baltimore in 1814; this poem, “The Star Spangled

Banner,” would later become the nation's anthem.

Winning the War of 1812 brought the seeds sown in 1776, 1783 and 1788 to fruition and made a unified nation of America.

But that victory almost never was.

As their war against Napoleon Bonaparte wound down in 1814, the British redoubled their efforts against the Americans. In August of that year, the British Army invaded in large numbers and overran Washington, D.C. After sacking the capital, they headed north into Maryland intent on burning Baltimore as well.

However, their advance met the first heavy resistance

at North Point about five miles from Baltimore, Sept. 12, 1814. There, members of the Maryland militia took a stand against the invaders.

Though the 5th Maryland Regiment (the North Point defenders) eventually made an organized retreat from the skirmish, their defense was key in halting the British advance. The commander of the British forces was killed there; his death demoralized the invading troops and stalled their advance until another, less able general took command.

The delay allowed Americans win the Battle of Baltimore, marking the beginning of the end of the war.





Members of the Maryland National Guard's 175th Infantry Regiment, Maryland Defense Force, and Service members from other units and branches march in the footsteps of those who defended Baltimore 200 years ago. During the March of the Defenders, in celebration of the bicentennial of the Star Spangled Banner, more than 400 Service members marched six miles from Patterson Park to North Point on Sept. 11, 2014. In the war of 1812, the Maryland Militia marched to slow the British advance, while the city of Baltimore prepared its defenses.

**Check out the video online  
by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis.**



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To commemorate the importance of the defense of North Point, over 400 members of the Maryland Army National Guard, Maryland Defense Force members, and members of other services marched in the 200th March of the Defenders in Baltimore, Sept. 12.

"It means a lot to know how passionate people are about what we have here [in America]," said Spc. Gareth J. Ainsworth, an infantryman in C Co., 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment. Ainsworth is from North Wales in Great Britain and had mixed feelings about things. "During the march, I tried to reflect on what it must have been like for the patriots marching down not knowing whether or not they would be coming back."

The march was part of the Star Spangled Spectacular (Sept. 10-16), Baltimore's celebration of the bicentennial anniversary of the writing of the national anthem.

Soldiers from the 5th Maryland, nowadays known as the 175th Infantry Regiment, participated in the march, which took them on a 6-mile trek from Patterson Park to Battle Acre Park along the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail.

**"We got to walk in the footsteps of the Soldiers who dug the trenches and fought the war, we walked with their spirits."**

**- Pvt. Clifton Shivers Jr., Infantryman  
Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 1-175th Inf. Regt.**

"I felt a sense of pride knowing that the people were supporting us for the meaning behind the march," said Pvt. Clifton Shivers Jr., an infantryman from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-175th Inf. Regt. "We got to walk in the footsteps of the Soldiers who dug the trenches and fought the war, we walked with their spirits."

The route, which took marchers in the footsteps of the North Point defenders of 1814, was lined with festive red, white and blue bunting and period flags.

The Maryland National Guard's 229th Army Band and the Maryland Defense Force Band performed during a ceremony at Patterson Park and the conclusion at Battle Acre. Band members even accompanied the 1-175th during the march. The Remembrance Ceremony at Battle Acre included a wreath-laying ceremony with

representatives from the British Embassy and the local Maryland government.

"We came over to see the marching troops and to pay our respect and honor to the Guard," said Mary Feigley, a Baltimore resident who first learned of the Battle of North Point as a young girl in grade school. She enjoys retelling the history that she was taught and sharing the new facts she learned to her twelve-year-old grandson.

Though the War of 1812 was bitter and bloody, the March of the Defenders and the other events of the Star Spangled Spectacular celebrated what the trials of that war meant. Because of the sacrifices of those like the Soldiers of the 5th Maryland at North Point, the U.S. became more than an independent country: its people came together as a unified nation.





# MARYLAND LRS CHUTES FROM THE SKIES



**Soldiers with C Co., 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment, Maryland Army National Guard, conducted a non-tactical jump from a CH-47 Chinook helicopter over Bitner Drop Zone in Little Orleans, Maryland, June 14.**

**Story by Staff Sgt. Michael E. Davis, Jr.**

The long-range surveillance (LRS) unit performed its quarterly routine airborne exercise and transitioned to a new parachute system, the MC-6.

“We’re an airborne company, and in order to be airborne, you have to maintain your proficiency,” said Staff Sgt. Eric Zubkus, C Company’s training noncommissioned officer.

Zubkus said they also wanted to try out the new parachute system during the quarterly exercise because



they plan to perform airborne missions with it during their annual training (AT) next month at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

“We don’t want the Soldiers to do their first combat equipment night jump with a chute they’re not familiar with,” Zubkus said. “So this is basically a familiarization jump and an airborne refresher so they can get familiar with their new chutes in order to successfully complete their mission at AT.”

Although the training mission was meant to introduce everyone to the new parachutes, not everyone got a chance to jump. The wind velocity increased during the second jump iteration, and then became too strong for the exercise to safely continue.



Sgt. John Ennis, a radio operator-maintainer with C Co., 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment, greets his son by giving him dap before performing a non-tactical jump. Ennis’ family came to support him and to watch him jump. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Michael Davis Jr.)





LEFT: Spc. Noah Zerance, an infantryman with C Company, 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment, waits his turn to perform a non-tactical jump.

However, Zubkus said he would try his best to make sure those Soldiers who didn't get a chance to jump have an opportunity to practice before their combat equipment night jumps.

Pfc. Mackenzie Keck, who recently transferred to the Maryland Guard, said he was looking forward to his first jump with the unit on Saturday. He said he'd

heard how 'high speed' the team was; their motivation and skill encouraged him to transfer.

Unfortunately, the weather got in the way, and Keck's first jump with his new teammates and the new parachute may not happen until AT at Fort Bragg.

Soldiers who have worked with the new MC-6, such as parachute rigger Staff Sgt. John Yarnall, say Keck and others who haven't experienced it yet have a good deal to look forward to.

"Personally, I like [the MC-6 parachutes] a lot better," said Yarnall, who played a major part in the training. "They fly a lot better, you can slow down better, you can pick a spot where you want to land and have a better chance [of landing there]. They also have a braking system in it so you can land a little bit softer."

Some of the other Soldiers like Spc. Joe Crist and Spc. Sam Mcquaid, who didn't get a chance to experience the finer flying, the smooth steering and the softer landing with the new parachutes, are looking forward to their training at Fort Bragg.

The main purpose of the jumps isn't just to break in the new gear: it's to craft a skillful airborne team capable of adapting to any situation.

"Every jump is different one way or another," said Spc. Joe Crist. "You can never treat it like, 'I've done a hundred jumps so I'm an expert.' We actually jump for proficiency; we actually get better at it."





# WELCOME HOME 1229TH TRANSPORTATION CO.



The Maryland National Guard hosted a Freedom Salute ceremony on Sept. 6, 2014, at the War Memorial Building in Baltimore, Md., to officially welcome home over 150 members of the 1229th Transportation Company from their nearly yearlong deployment to Afghanistan.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Nancy Spicer  
& Staff Sgt. Thaddeus Harrington



Former Baltimore Raven Ray Lewis delivered a heartfelt welcome home speech to the Soldiers during the ceremony.

The Baltimore based unit conducted operations at the Kandahar Trans-shipment Yard, providing sustainment and retrograde capabilities throughout the theater.

The 1229th has processed over 12,900 local national trucks and drivers. The unit conducted 55 sustainment and retrograde operations, hauling over 23,000 tons of rolling stock and supplies throughout the theater, totaling over 116,000 miles.

The 1229th was the first Maryland Guard transportation unit to deploy to Iraq and have assisted Marylanders during state emergency activations.

The Freedom Salute Campaign is one of the largest Army National Guard welcome home endeavors in history. It is an event designed to publicly recognize the sacrifice of our Citizen-Soldiers as well as those who've supported them during their deployment.





# Final Frame



Two Maryland Army National Guard Soldiers competed in the Army National Guard Region II Best Warrior Competition at Fort Indiantown Gap, Pa., May 20-23, 2014. After winning the state's Best Warrior Competition in March, Sgt. Michael L. Firth, from C Company, 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry Regiment, and Spc. Michael A. Robinson, from the same unit, both advanced to the regionals to represent Maryland. Firth competed in the noncommissioned officer category and Robinson in the Soldier category; both were named runners-up.

**PHOTOGRAPHY BY STAFF SGT. MICHAEL E. DAVIS JR.**