

EVERGREEN



**M1s roar
in desert
training**

Summer/August, 1992, Washington Army and Air National Guard

Pages 11-14

Soldier survives 'plane ride from hell'

By Capt. Terry Thompson

I'm Terry Thompson, AG, PA, and would-be TC (not to mention my NBA and PGA fantasies). This past May I found myself headed to the Transportation Corps Officer Advanced Course. There's a story in that.

Having been an AG officer my whole career, I was a little apprehensive. What the heck did I know about trucks and boats and Army trains? Not much, quite frankly.

What I did know was that I had a flight from SeaTac to Chicago to Fort Eustis, Va. My plan was to kick back on the plane, hopefully sit next to someone interesting, do my thing at Fort Eustis for two weeks and come home. Little did I know, it was going to be "the plane ride from hell!"

Taking off was just fine. We leveled off at 30,000 feet and the captain (the guy whom you've entrusted your life with — but you never meet, let alone see) turned off the seat-belt sign. Lots of the small bladder people then headed for the bathroom. Since I was sitting in the last row, I got to see them all upclose and personal.

Fortunately everyone looked fine. With the exception of one five-year-old kid, these folks didn't bother me. The kid was OK too, until he asked one too many questions.

Since I'm sitting right next to the bathroom, and he's bored waiting in line, it's only natural for a little kid to start the quiz. First he asked me how old I was. Then he asked my name. These questions were fine.

Then he asked me when did I think I had to go to the bathroom. That's when I told him he better concentrate on standing in line or he was going to have an accident.

Chicago here we come?

As we got closer to Chicago, I knew something was wrong. I could tell we were going in circles. I don't know about you, but generally I like to go straight to the airport. Going in circles is not part of my agenda.

I got up from my seat, bypassed the small bladder crowd, and sought out a flight attendant. (Call them stewardess and they'll spill a drink on you.) I asked the young lady if indeed we were going in circles. She confirmed this, explaining that Chicago was fogged in and we were waiting for a break in the weather. She also

said we were getting low on fuel so a decision would have to be made soon. Good idea, I thought.

A few minutes later the guy I've entrusted my life with, the captain, cues up the microphone. "Ladies and gentlemen, we're now headed to Detroit. Chicago is fogged in so we've been diverted. We'll stop in Detroit. Then head to Virginia."

Detroit. I could live with that. Being a Detroit Lions fan I figured I'd get off the plane, run to the gift shop and buy a Lions' hat. Of course considering airport prices I'd pay about \$2,000 for the hat, but what the heck, I'd have my hat. Little did I know by the end of this trip I'd never want anything that said Detroit on it for the rest of my life.

We landed in Detroit about 4 o'clock, in a plane packed with hundreds of people. Old ladies, people that couldn't speak English, kids that ask you when you're going to go to the bathroom, the whole gamut. Everybody on earth was on this plane.

The captain blasted over the intercom, "We've got to wait here on the runway until a gate opens up. It shouldn't be long."

No problemo I'm thinking. We didn't run out of fuel, we landed safely, I'm alive and well.

"This is Capt. Pinocchio"

The flight attendant came around about 15 minutes later and asked me if I needed a headset. Now why would I need a headset. We're on the runway. I can see the airport. Let's just move out and park this thing. I've got a hat to buy. I don't really need a headset at this time.

About 5 o'clock the captain comes back on and apologizes for the delay. He says it shouldn't be much longer. I'm thinking if this guy was Pinocchio, his nose would be stubbing up against the windshield of his cockpit.

In the meantime, it's snowing outside. How handy. We don't have a gate, the price of my hat was just marked up to \$3,000, and there's snow everywhere.

At 6 o'clock Pinocchio says, "Ladies and gentlemen, it shouldn't be much longer. We've got a few planes in front of us. Then we should get a gate." Right, buddy, why don't we just slide down your nose to the runway and walk to the gate!

About 7:30 — three and a half hours after we landed — I was surrounded by smokers. Real fidgety people. A lot of them had their cigs out, unlit, in their mouths.

A few had them behind their ears. "No problem," one said to another, "it should be only a few more minutes." Not quite.

By this time the snow was everywhere. It was cold in the plane. And tempers were starting to heat up. The guy in front of me started chanting, "FREE DRINKS, FREE DRINKS." Pretty soon half the coach class had chimed in — "FREE DRINKS, FREE DRINKS."

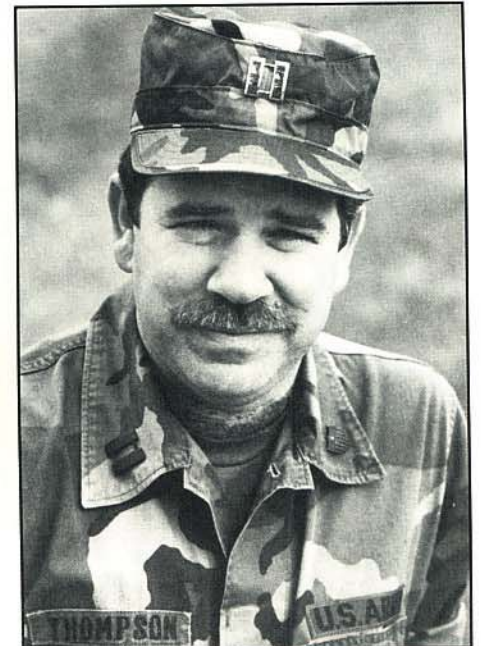
The drinks flow

The flight attendants got the message. The headphones just weren't cuttin' it. They got behind their carts and started to give out wine, beer and champagne. Most people were too angry to drink. The guy in front of me made up for those people. He got schlossed. He was a happy guy.

As I said, most people weren't. One guy demanded that they let him off right now. "Open up the emergency slide," he shouted. Another lady, about 250 pounds, demanded that she get fed. Babies were crying. The bathroom, right next to me, stunk. The smokers' minds had snapped.

The flight attendants were frazzled. And the guy in front of me was on his lips. He tells the best-looking flight attendant that he is in the NBA. Now this guy looks like John Candy and is about 5-foot-5-inches tall. The flight attendant says, "Oh, that must be the National Billiards Association," and moves on. When the next flight

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Capt. Terry Thompson



Cover photo: 803rd Armor crews take control of the Guard's new IPM1 Abrams tank, 60-plus tons of advanced firepower. (Photo by Sgt. Bill Gregersen-Morash)

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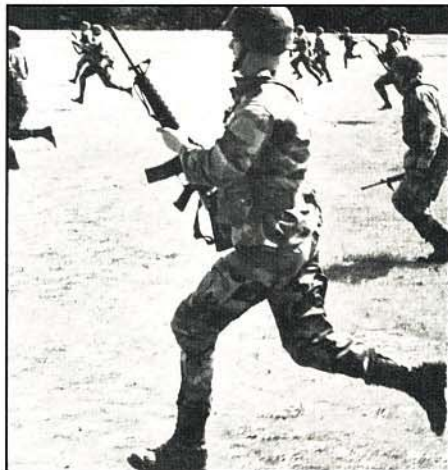
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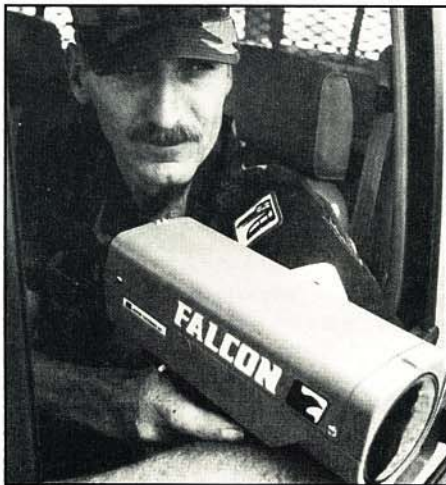
Marksmanship meant moving out to engage distant targets at the state championships.

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506th Transportation Company reps interview a Job Fair attendant.

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Scanning the desert roads, Staff Sgt. Donald Mayfield works to enforce speed limits at YTC.

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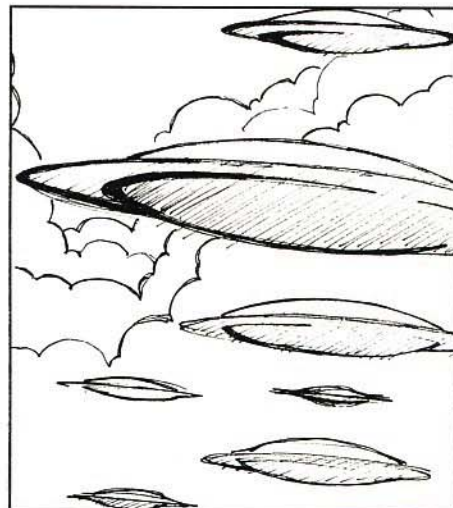
Combat weary 286th 'sappers' regroup for their next assault.

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An 803rd soldier ground guides a fellow tanker off the firing line at the MPRC.

20-21



Guard aircraft are enlisted for close encounters with the UFOs of 1947.

Shooters target nationals after state trials

Story and photos

by Staff Sgt. Raylund Lee Pryor

FORT LEWIS, Wash. — The early morning stillness was broken by the rat-a-tat-tat of .60-cal. machine guns. Downrange lead perforated and chewed up the targets.

Nearby, soldiers charged their targets at full out, then expelled clips of ammunition from their M-16A1 rifles. At yet another range, soldiers took careful aim at clay pigeons with their .45 cal. M-1911A1 pistols, destroying them in seconds.

More than 100 Washington Army and Air National Guard members from all over the state recently spent a weekend at North Fort Lewis competing in the Washington State Combat Championships — a marksmanship competition.

Soldiers and airmen represented their units as they competed as teams — each team competing in one of three disciplines; rifle, pistol or M-60 light machine gun.

“One reason we hold this competition is to promote a quality marksmanship program in Guard units,” said Sgt. 1st Class Donald A. Manning, operations sergeant, small arms readiness training branch, STARC. “It allows unit trainers an opportunity to get not only extra training, but a higher level of training for Guard soldiers.”

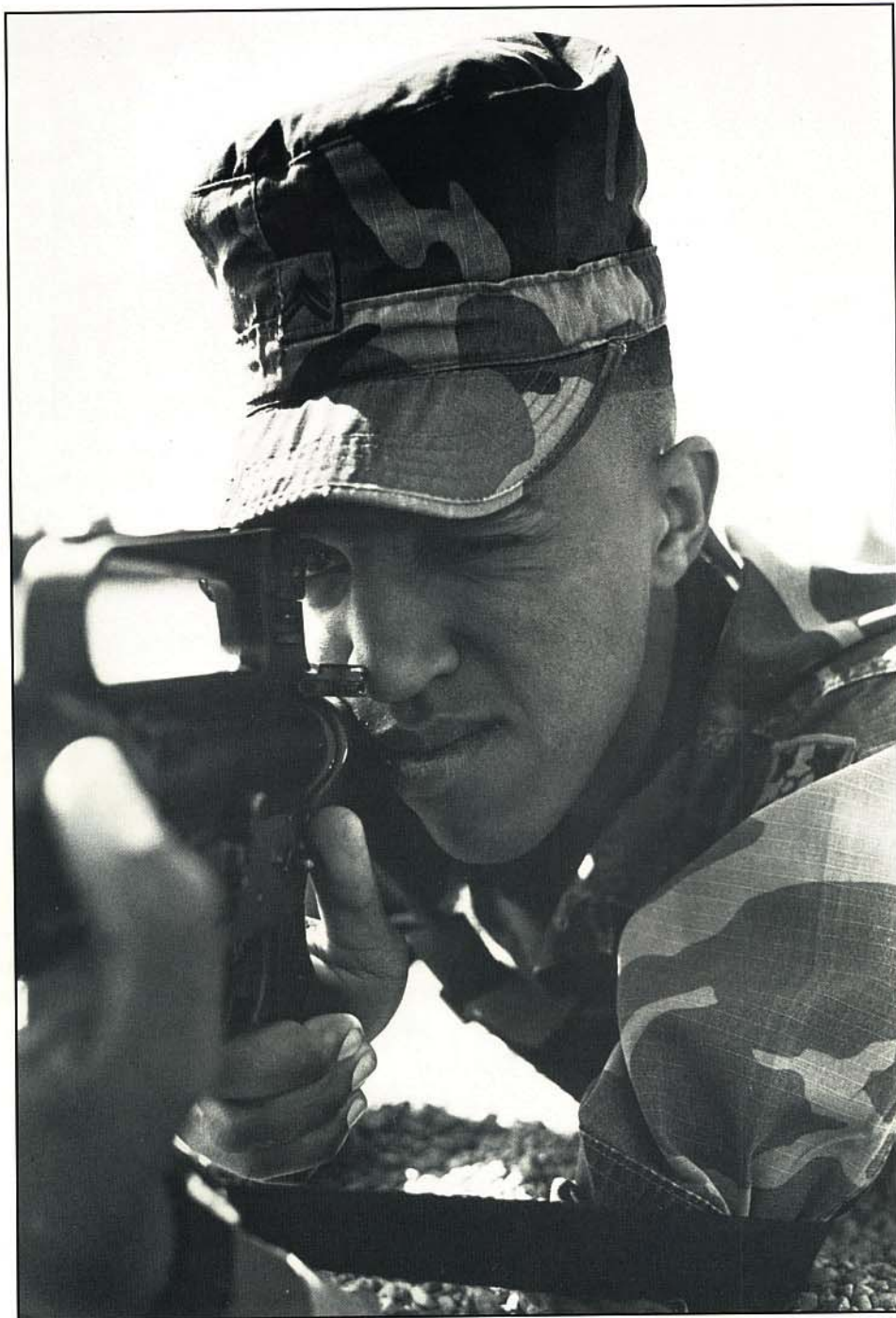
Another reason is to select teams which go forward to represent Washington's Guard at the Winston P. Wilson Matches (national competition) in Little Rock, Ark. in October.

Manning explained that during normal marksmanship training, there is zero feedback. “All the shooter knows is whether its a hit or miss,” Manning said. “This type of competition builds and tests skills based on where you hit the target.”

Pistol and rifle teams are comprised of four shooters and a team captain and coach. The M-60 teams are just two-man teams.

Pistol competition

During the pistol competition, the Guard soldiers shoot at silhouette targets which are scored by shot placement. The shooters have four targets and a certain sequence in which to shoot them. The sequence often dictates a certain number of shots to the head, followed by a certain number of shots to the body. This is all done on a timed basis. The shooters fire individually, and scores are totaled for team results.



Cpl. Tarrol W. Peterson sights in on the target during state M-16 marksmanship competition at a Fort Lewis range.

During this year's competition, a different event was added. “For fun and training we had the teams run 50 meters to a table where their weapons were, then they had 10 clay pigeons downrange to hit. Each shooter had a set number of rounds. The goal was to shoot all the targets in the quickest amount of time with the fewest

rounds expelled,” said Manning.

M-16 and M-60 competition

The M-16 competition had a variety of phases with lots of running. One phase had the shooters run from the 300-yard firing point to the 200-yard firing point, and then fire at a sequence of pop-up tar-



Staff Sgt. Aubrey B. Shirley reassembles his M-60 machine gun for the blindfolded portion of the competition.



Members of HHC, 81st Infantry Bde (M) look on as Staff Sgt. Brian Connors scores hits on clay pigeons in the pistol competition.

gets. Then they ran again to the 100- and 50-yard points respectively.

The M-60 shooters also had some running in their competition. The two-man teams had to run two miles to the range, then set up and shoot. They also had a phase in which each shooter had to break down and reassemble the M-60 while blindfolded, and then fire a sequence of targets for time.

According to Manning the match went well. "We had a good match," he said. "There were some real good shooters this year. The results of the team shooting has affected our composite team this year."

Each year, the state also puts together a composite team for national competition. But team shooters shoot with their team, not the composite team.

"This is one of the advantages — paybacks," said Manning. "Our composite team shooters work with their unit teams and develop better marksmanship skills there. Then they put together some very good unit teams, and we have to choose

another composite team."

Manning explained that the composite team is then selected by looking at individual scores from the match.

The marksmanship competition is held each year, said Manning. Every unit is eligible to field teams.

"It takes some planning," he said. "But it is worth the effort, because what you get is better training and better soldiers and airmen."

Individual winners in the M-16 competition were 1st place, Capt. Eric Stephenson, 1-161st Infantry; 2nd place, Staff Sgt. Roderick Lindert, 1-161st Infantry; 3rd place, Sgt. Dwight Hand, Company B, 1-303rd Armor.

The team winner in the M-16 competition was 1-161st Infantry, whose members were Capt. Eric Stephenson, 1st Lt. Donald Manning, Staff Sgt. Roderick Lindert and Cpl. Tarrol Peterson.

Second place went to the 141st Air Refueling Wing, whose members were Master Sgt. Dennis Schmauch, Sgt. Warren Mathwig, Tech. Sgt. Edward Kennedy and

Tech. Sgt. Char Cinq-Mars.

Individual winners in the pistol match were 1st place, Staff Sgt. Thomas Epperson, HHC, 81st Infantry Bde; 2nd place, Sgt. Timothy Lafleur, 1-803rd Armor; 3rd place, Staff Sgt. Donald Mayfield, HHC, 81st Infantry Bde.

The pistol team winner was HHC, 81st Infantry Bde, whose members were Staff Sgts. Thomas Epperson and Donald Mayfield, Sgt. Roger Knight and Sgt. 1st Class Douglas Silver.

The 144th Transportation Bn second place winners were Sgts. John Fromm, Douglas Disana, and Tommie Fitch and Staff Sgt. Todd Duffrin.

Third Place in the team pistol match went to 1-803rd Armor, whose members were Sgt. Timothy Lafleur, Staff. Sgt. Laurence Finrow, Sgt. Robert Pilgrim and Spc. Christopher Thomas.

The M-60 competition placements were 1st place, HHC, 81st Infantry Bde; 2nd Place, 1-303rd Armor; and 3rd Place, 2-146th Field Artillery. 🏆

Sappers: Ruck-humping 286th Engineers make like Rangers at Fort Leonard Wood

Story and photos

by Sgt. Michael Kirchmann

FORT LEONARD J. WOOD, Mo. — They had the look of men pushed one step beyond the limits of their endurance. Faces set in stone.

They had the look. Camouflaged faces encrusted with the salt of dried sweat, each haggard line etched in dust dampened with a trail of perspiration.

Thirty bush-weary soldiers of the Washington Army National Guard's 286th Engineer Company were beginning to believe they had the devil to pay for this year's annual training.

Wearily they broke their travel formation, circling slowly, dropping one pair of soldiers after the other to form the defensive perimeter. They set about camouflaging positions, preparing fields of fire and attending to personal needs. Slowly the base camp took shape, strengthened, blending into the underbrush.

They were midway through a condensed version of the U.S. Army Engineer Component School's Sapper Leaders Course.

The Anacortes and Bellingham, Washington-based engineers had begun the course with the healthy machismo of men-at-arms, expectant, eager. Pride sustained them when the training, a "mini-Ranger" course of engineering tasks tied into realistic combat missions, demanded more than the usual annual pound of flesh.

Several days of pushing through the thicketed forests of the Ozark Mountains, eating little and sleeping less, had left the Guard soldiers tired, hungry and sore. Ticks and chiggers proved a constant source of irritation. Through it all they forced themselves to remain alert.

Under the watchful eyes of Sapper Course cadre, the base camp served as a classroom. Here, the Guard soldiers would spend the next few hours planning the next mission.

Within the perimeter a large patch was cleared on the leaf-covered, rocky ground. Maps were closely checked; routes, checkpoints and alternates selected. Painstakingly, miniature terrain models depicting the mission were created.

There were details to assign; demolitions, fire support, and search teams to appoint. Equipment was checked and weapons cleaned; first machine guns, then



Details, details.... Using a carefully constructed terrain model, sapper course students discuss an upcoming combat operation.

the rifles.

The high heat and humidity of southern Missouri's Fort Leonard J. Wood taxed the soldiers' strength as much as the 65-pound loads pressing into their sweat-soaked backs. Few of them had experienced such intense training.

The program was developed to challenge the mettle and skills of the active component's toughest engineer units.

The Guard soldiers were required to function on par with active component units whose soldiers benefit from considerably more annual training time.

Just a hair short of the real thing, the Sapper Course was proving to be as unforgiving as the harshest of combat environ-

ments.

A warning order was given, alerting all to the basics of the impending mission. While security was maintained on the perimeter, the core of the base camp hummed with activity. Leaders and key personnel were selected at random by the school's patrolling cadre. Sappers all — captain to specialist, regardless of rank — each student in turn was to bear the burden of leadership.

There was little time to waste, less to relax, none to sleep. Carefully the patrolling mission was developed and relayed in minute detail to each and every soldier. Using the terrain models, every action and alternative was questioned, determined

and rehearsed.

The patrol rose, unwinding slowly from the day's preparatory circle, grunting in resignation under the weight of their combat loads. Pulled forward from the point, the patrol dissolved into the brush like an awkwardly segmented snake seeking its prey.

"If you're gonna talk the talk, you gotta walk the walk." So claims the patrolling cadre, whose motto is written over the door of their office on post. In the field, it's written between the lines of every operation order.

Designed to train an engineer company's leadership collectively — from team leaders to the company commander — the Sapper Leaders Course, compacted to fit the Guard's two-week annual training, tests a unique blend of tactical and technical capabilities.

While fostering leadership skills, the course emphasizes infantry tactics in tandem with specialized engineering techniques. The physical demands of the course are brutal.

Capt. Michael Healey, commander of the 286th, observing the effect of the Sapper course on his men, noted, "Unno-



Checking his map and terrain model, a 286th engineer plans his raid on an enemy missile site.

ticed soldiers have revealed hidden talents for leadership here. A course of this type lays bare all the facades and reveals the true strengths and weaknesses of a unit."

Healey spoke of a "cleansing process," an evolution that was occurring in the 286th.

"We'll lose some of the couch potatoes," he said. "We have to focus more on the physical demands of soldiering. I'm not talking about the physical fitness test. I'm talking rucksacks on road marches, mine sweeps, that sort of thing."

"It's a lot of ruckin'," agreed Staff Sgt.
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Bursting through a cloud of smoke, engineers sweep across the enemy objective.



Loaded with 60- to 70-pound rucksacks, engineers hump weapons, ammunition and explosives to their next base camp.

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William Thomas, a Sapper Course cadre augmentee from Fort Bragg, N.C. "There's a need to be physically prepared for this course. It's not something you can just jump into. The grading here is tougher than it is in Ranger School. You need all your strength to concentrate on the mis-


sion. It's intense."

A poacher's moon, full and bright, rose on a cloudless sky, casting spooky shadows through the trees to the forest floor below. The light, gusty breeze kissed the top of the oaken forest, shook branches, rustled leaves, frustrated ears keened for the sound of enemy movement.

The leaders' reconnaissance done, the attacking force had moved into place near the objective. Machine-gun support teams made their way to the flanks to set up and await the signal to open fire.

As the final moment approached, adrenaline began coursing through the dog-tired sappers. Anxieties rose with the uncertainty of the final seconds. Ears were alert for the first crack of combat; bodies tensed tightly, preparing to spring into battle.

The night exploded. Machine-gun fire raked the enemy, its deafening drone followed by steady bursts. As the guns lifted fire, the assault team swept across the objective and beyond, securing the area. Special teams scurried, attending to the wounded, to prisoners, and to their demolitions tasks.

Suddenly, enemy artillery crashed down on the sappers (artillery simulators tossed by Sapper Course cadre). Too long on the objective. The engineers would have to replay the raid. It was to be another long night of dancing with the devil in the Missouri woods. The Guard soldiers would learn much this night. 

Ozark marauder disrupts sapper training

By Sgt. Michael Kirchmann

FORT LEONARD J. WOOD, Missouri — The question became: Who was the sapper and who was the "sappee"?

It wasn't OPFOR (opposing forces) probing that disturbed night training for Guard soldiers deployed to Fort Leonard J. Wood. It was an OPFOUR-legged, ruck-robbing infiltrator, with skills a Ranger would envy.

The Washington Army National Guard's 286th Engineer contingent attending the Sapper Leaders Course, this June, were given lessons in woodland tactics by a pesky raccoon.

It started innocently enough. Trash bags brought up from the engineers' base camp were left to be loaded on the truck, and hauled in the morning to the rear.

The school cadre, leaving the students to their own devices to prepare for the next patrol, had encamped nearby.

When a noise like someone wallowing in a sea of dried leaves sounded at the edge of the road, it called for immediate action.

"What the... hey, there it is, see... a raccoon," declared the investigating soldier, training the beam of his flashlight on the masked infiltrator.

The fur-ball backed off and skittered into the shadows.

Trash bags were quickly tossed into the truck and things quieted down again. Staff Sgt. Megaruck, the only cadre member remaining after the patrol departed, and I settled in to await their return.

Soon enough, a heat tab was slapping fire under a wanna-be cup of coffee, and Megaruck and I were munching on field rations.

"Hear that?," he asked, chin-pointing towards the brush behind me.

Ordinarily, woody things don't bother me much. But this was bad snake country, so I managed a slight "Exorcist"-style headspin in reply.

A shadow moved less than six feet away, then the raccoon strutted out into the moonlight.

"Yo. Move out!," Megaruck barked, tossing a rock.

The raccoon ambled back into the shadows.

For the next hour or so the persistent pest harassed us. In and out of the shadows it skipped, probing this point and that, dodging tossed stones and curses. We were two "treed" soldiers guarding half a dozen rucks and water cans.

Then, it sort of just disappeared.

Minutes later the silent night erupted with shouts and shots from the engineers' camp.

Someone was probing their perimeter.

Megaruck and I trip-scrampered over the 150 yards between camps to investigate the noise. The base camp had snapped into its "spooked" mode. It was alert city. And silence. Nothing.

At the edge of the perimeter Megaruck swore, "Damned raccoons... look, here... tracks, and..." he paused, looking beyond the camp towards our own.

We beat feet to our gear. There, brightly lit under the full moon, was a grey-haired bandit tugging on a ruck. It fled under a hail of rocks.

A call from the patrol for simulated artillery fire put the coon issue behind us, and seconds later Megaruck tossed a simulator down the road to our rear.


The explosive popped, hissed and began to scream. Then it rose from the ground and came flying back. We hit the dirt.

When the smoke cleared it revealed one smoldering ruck and one missing MRE (that's Meal, Raccoon Ejected).

By the time the patrol returned I had retired to my hammock. I heard them arrive.

"How'd it go?," Megaruck asked.

"Hooruh," a voice replied. "Hey, what happened to my ruck?!"

"Enemy sapper," Megaruck said. 

248th inactivation

Job Fair helps soldiers find new units

By Sgt. Rich Bartell

MONTESANO, Wash. — What began as the brainchild of a creative and aggressive retention NCO, blossomed into a unique program for dealing with the Washington Army National Guard's first casualties in the service-wide force reductions.

On June 7, from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m., the Montesano Armory drill floor was a scene of what looked like a recruiting war complete with elaborately decorated booths and static displays and infantrymen in camouflage and full battle dress. It was a job fair and the atmosphere was light, yet very businesslike.

The 58 soldiers and officers of Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD), 248th Transportation Battalion perused the booths for assignments with representatives of many western Washington Army National Guard units.

Sgt. 1st Class Maria Sabala, a regional retention NCO with the Washington Army National Guard, had an idea when she heard that many of the soldiers from the 248th may be leaving the Guard — and not by choice. She couldn't bear the idea of losing good soldiers. So, she brainstormed and came up with the notion of having a job fair



Sgt. 1st Class Maria Sabala

for the unit.

"We worked as a team to ensure that these soldiers wouldn't be left without a home. There were rumors going around out there that they'd have to find another unit on their own," said Sabala.

"The main thing is that we didn't abandon them — they're still in the Guard," said Sabala.

According to Lt. Col. Donna Hubbert, 248th Transportation Battalion commander, the job fair concept is a new approach to dealing with the loss of slots due to inactivation of a unit.

"This is the first time that this has been tried. And of course it is the first unit in the state. What we hope to do is establish a process that will allow us to reliably connect people with new duty assignments without making them feel shoved around," said Hubbert.

The unit is scheduled for inactivation Sept. 1, and Guard officials have worked hard to retain good soldiers.

The customer is always right

"This is the most important part of the inactivation process, taking care of the soldiers," said Lt. Col. Vern Lindgren, Troop Command.

According to Sabala, the Montesano job fair will be used as a model for other Army Guard units which are facing inactivation in the future.

"This setting allows us to treat our soldiers as customers. They have an opportunity to get into any unit if they meet the minimum qualifications or are willing to work towards becoming qualified," said Maj. Michael Lobdell, directorate of personnel (DCSPER) team chief.

"We're providing our customers with a service at the job fair by putting the ball in their court and helping them decide their fate. Our main job is to act as a quality control conduit, making sure that the unit and soldier make a correct fit. If they can't find a job by the end of this job fair, then the Guard must assume the responsibility of finding them a new home," said Lobdell.

Success seeking new homes

During the course of the job fair most of the 248th's troops found new homes.

For Spc. Jamie Nagel finding a new job wasn't a difficult ordeal. Nagel picked up a slot in the 164th Mobile Army Surgical Hospital (MASH) working as a hospital admissions specialist.



Spc. Jamie Nagel

"I was looking for a hospital unit because I'd served in one when I lived in South Carolina," said Nagel, who wears a 251st Evacuation Hospital patch on her right shoulder. After a four-year tour in the Navy, Nagel joined the National Guard. She has completed two Army MOS certification schools, and one Navy school.

Being assigned to the 164th MASH has some career implications for Nagel that go beyond just a part-time job.

"My long-term goal is to return to school, complete my nursing degree and become an officer in the Army National Guard," said Nagel.

On the road again

For many of the 248th troops, weekend training will mean a longer commute. Staff Sgt. Eldon Garner, who is a manufacturing engineer in the civilian world, found a slot with the 506th Transportation Detachment.

"I'll be getting up a lot earlier on training weekends in order to be on time. I'll drive to Tacoma for training weekends now," said Garner.

He also feels that a job fair is one way

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Job Fair

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the Guard is coming in line with big business.

"The Guard is realizing that it has got to be run like a business. Just as many civilian companies recruit college graduates; or as some failing companies do — they put on job fairs," said Garner.

By the end of the job fair all but two officers and one senior enlisted soldier had found new "homes" in other units.

"We placed more than 95 percent of the soldiers in the 248th," said Sabala.

Ironically, two weeks after the 248th's annual training stint of hauling ammunition from the Umatilla Army Depot, Ore., to Sierra Army Depot near Susanville, Calif., the unit will go out of existence.

This is the first of several cuts which are slated to reduce the Washington Guard by more than 800 authorized personnel slots. 



As a candidate for relocation, the 248th's Staff Sgt. Dan Wulff shares a blood donation anecdote with Staff Sgt. Elke Zeerocah, 164th MASH rep.

TV technology brings college campus to students

WASHINGTON, D.C. — In today's uncertain military environment, a quality education is going to be a valuable, if not vital asset: The key to advancement through the ranks or success outside the service.

Now, the military community has a way for military men and women to make sure the demands of home or duty do not stand in the way of earning a college degree.

Credit courses and degree programs from major American universities are now being delivered by cable television and direct satellite broadcast to 19 million American homes by Mind Extension University (ME/U): The Education Network, a pioneer in distance education.

As a result of the affiliation with DANTES, (Defense Activity of Non-Traditional Education Support), service members are eligible for tuition assistance, as set by their services, for college-level courses completed via the ME/U network. ME/U and its affiliated institutions are part of the DANTES independent study program. To enroll, service members should visit their education center.

"No matter where you are, we make your home or office a classroom," said Glenn R. Jones, CEO of Jones Intercable, Inc., one of the largest cable television operators in the U.S. and founder of ME/U, one of the fastest growing basic cable

channels in the country. "Our goal is to make quality education equally available to everyone, regardless of where they live or what their situations are in life."

ME/U offers undergraduate and graduate degree instruction from a coalition of 20 colleges and universities. Students participate in lectures, complete the same course work as their on-campus counterparts and communicate with instructors by mail, telephone, fax and computer. Courses can be taken to fulfill degree requirements or to meet other academic or personal goals.

For example, at Malmstrom AFB in Great Falls, Mont., an average of six service members are enrolled in MBA classes each semester. "Thanks to ME/U, I'm working on an MBA degree from Colorado State University even though I'm stationed in the middle of Montana," said Air Force Lieutenant Steve Manley. "And no matter where I go next, ME/U and my course work will follow me. It's a portable education system."


Students can earn a bachelor's degree in management from the University of Maryland's University College or a master's of business administration from Colorado State University's American Assembly Collegiate Schools Business-accredited College of Business. ME/U also enables educators and trainers to earn a master of arts degree in education

and human development with an emphasis on education technology from George Washington University.

Available through cable television in nearly 6,500 U.S. communities and by satellite to virtually all of North America, ME/U classes air 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Those bases unable to receive the ME/U network through basic cable television at this time may receive the network through their base's Commander's Channel. For students overseas or where cable and satellite are not available, ME/U offers courses on videotape.

"We've erased the barriers to lifelong learning," said Jones. "If job or family keeps you from spending time on campus, we have a solution: we bring the campus to you."

ME/U the Education Network has six affiliate cable system locations in Washington state, at Everett, Kennewick, Pullman, Seattle, Vancouver and Yakima. Washington State University is one of the 20 colleges and universities offering courses.

Additional information about the educational opportunities available through ME/U is obtainable by calling 1-800-777-6463. Information about tuition assistance is available through local military education services offices. 

'NETT' result: Army's best M1 training

Story and illustration
by Staff Sgt. Bob Rosenburgh

The tankers of the Washington Army National Guard faced a daunting task as they prepared to study the gizmoids and gadgetrons of their new hi-tech M1s.

Enthusiasm was high, however, as they soon learned that their teachers were among the best in the Army: the New Equipment Training Team (NETT) of the 6-12th Cavalry from Fort Knox, Ky.

Besides running many of the schools at Fort Knox and maintaining an OPFOR battalion, this busy unit's unique mission is training all units in the Active Army, Army Reserve, Army National Guard and selected foreign units who receive the Abrams tank and Bradley fighting vehicle.

To accomplish that on a worldwide basis, a separate NETT team is sent for specific models of each vehicle. For example, the 1-303rd Armor now has the IPM1 tank, other units have the original M1, and still others get the M1 A1 or the M1 A2 with a 120-mm cannon. Thus, four teams are used, each staffed with expert tankers knowledgeable about one of the tank versions.

Each NETT team consists of four cells:

individual, collective, DTT and maintenance.

The individual cell instructs students in use of basic tank components, familiarizing them with mechanical, hydraulic and electronic systems.

In the collective cell, classes focus on fire control and weapons systems, plus new technologies for ammo handling and crew survival.

The DTT cell handles doctrine and tactics training; while maintenance, of course, shows the soldiers how to keep their metal monsters growling and spitting fire.

The tankers from 1-803rd cycled through NETT training in groups by company. Following cell training, the group's cadre were given an after-action report concerning their progress. The AARs were then consolidated in a battalion report upon completion. The end product is a full battalion of qualified 19K M1 tank crewmen ready and eager to take charge of their new Abrams tanks.

Being a NETT team member, however, has its ups and downs, according to Sgt. 1st Class Joe Hunkin, Jr., NCOIC of Team 3, individual cell. World travel, for example,


comes with the job; 6-12th Cav teams are currently in Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Colorado. Hunkin's team is scheduled for future trips to Fort Hood, Texas; Fort Drum, N.Y.; and Pennsylvania.

"I'll go home and be with my family for about six weeks," Hunkin said, "then we take off for Hood for 12 or 13 months."

He was impressed by the performance of 1-803rd soldiers working in the 105-degree Yakima heat. In fact, Hunkin's reaction to the Washington Guard came as a pleasant surprise to him.

"Working with the National Guard is a new experience for me. I came with the thought that these guys wouldn't care much about the training since they have a civilian job that's more important to them."

Hunkin was glad to be wrong.

"I'm telling you straight, these guys showed me a lot! They reminded me of active-duty soldiers because they were highly motivated and organized. When we'd break for chow, they'd stay with the tank to study it some more and test what they just learned. They were really interested in the equipment and the training, making my job so much easier!" 



'Awesome,' 'lethal,' 'incredible fire



This M1 tank bares its 'teeth' at prospective enemies.

By Sgt. Rich Bartell

YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER, Wash. — "This is one hot piece of machinery," beamed Spc. Mark Simonton of B Company, 1st Battalion, 803rd Armor.

He spoke in glowing terms of the Abrams IPM1 while his unit took part in the last phases of New Equipment Team Training (NETT) held here in June. Additional tankers from the 1-303rd Armor rounded out some of the crews.

The performance of the new tank wasn't the only thing that was hot. Mother Nature also added her own brand of "hot" by pouring on the coal and cooking up a record-breaking heat wave that catapulted the mercury beyond the century mark on the sun-scorched sands of the training center.

In spite of the heat that combined with the ever-present Yakima fog of silty airborne dust at the Multipurpose Range Complex (MPRC), there were surprisingly few complaints raised against the new tank.

"The M1 is a high-performance, high-mobility tank with a super-enhanced fire control system that is incredibly stable while firing on the run. It's got real cat's paws for mobility and dragon breath for

firepower. The M60 is a dinosaur compared to the M1," exulted Simonton.

Staff Sgt. Bryan Gerken echoed Simonton's praises.

"It is an awesomely offensive weapon, and when we go into the FTX (field training exercise), the infantry will be highly surprised; they won't hear us or see us — until it's too late," Gerken said.

According to Gerken, maintenance is one of the areas in which the M1 stands head and shoulders above its predecessor.

"If you pull the maintenance on this tank, you won't have to walk anywhere. And I'm here to tell you, it's easy to maintain, easy. Go through the dash-10 (maintenance manual), checks and services, and in 45 minutes you're done. Compare that with nine hours on the M60," joked Gerken.

"The most significant differences between the M1 and the M60 are superior speed, suspension and the gun turret drive system. You can travel at 55 mph and the retical doesn't move. If an M60 were to try to do the same thing, your gunner would be saying, 'Where's the target?'" explained Gerken a 12-year Guard tanker veteran.

The fielding of the IPM1 is such a leap

of technology from the M60 that the tankers of Bravo Company enjoyed making brash statements. These troopers are excited and proud to be wielding one of the battlefield's most lethal juggernauts — and it shows.

"I could defend Washington state with one of these tanks," kidded Gerken.

Staff Sgt. Glen Halttunen is 41 years old, and a 10-year Washington Army Guard veteran. He believes the M1 will help save lives and shorten the length of wars of the future.

"The M1 is designed to deploy rapidly with max firepower. It can accurately put a round downrange while traveling at high speed. Put that together with our ability to mobilize on short notice — you're not going to see long, drawn out wars. Because of equipment like the M1, these wars will be short and devastating like the Persian Gulf War," said the former leatherneck.

Sgt. Lance Jlugler, a M1 driver with three years of active duty tanker experience, touched on some internal improvements the M1 has over the M60.

"The fire sensors in the M1 are a big improvement over the M60. They're more



These soldiers load ammo into their M1 (Morash)

'repower': The M1 tanks are here!



Staff Sgt. Jasper Edwards engages the remote firing system to ensure the safe operation of the "new" tank.



Behemoth. (Photos by Sgt. Bill Gregersen-

sensitive and less prone to malfunctioning. I was a driver in the M60A3, and the sensors would burst when the heater would get too hot," said Jiugler, a two-year 803rd vet.

"Once a sensor breaks, you have to evacuate — Hylon gas is everywhere; you can't breath. It's great for putting out fires in a tank, but damn nasty on the lungs. You got to move out because all the oxygen is gone," said Jiugler.

Prep "new" used tanks

According to Staff Sgt. Jim Ferner, a NETT instructor from the Fort Knox Armor School, the Washington Guard's newest tanks came from the 24th Division after it received the M1A1 version. The tanks were then processed for storage and return to the system.

As a result, these weren't turn-key systems. Checking systems and components, cleaning, bore sighting, and putting the on-board computer on line all needed to be handled before the tanks were ready to crank up their 1,500-hp turbine engines and begin launching 105-mm rounds at targets more than 3,000

meters distant.

The crews of the 1-803rd accomplished all of the above in a three-week annual training period — no easy task.

Ferner, a regular Army tankerman and Gulf War veteran, manned the parallel training and main-gun screening section (roughly a zeroing range for tanks) at the MPRC.

"Once the 24th got their new M1 Heavies, they sent these IPs back into the system and that's how the Washington Guard got them," explained Ferner.

"These men are tankers. They are picking up the information very well for troops that don't work with M1s every day of the year," said Ferner.

Another instructor from the Armor Center training team echoed Ferner's estimation of the Guard's learning curve.

"On the whole, they pay attention well. Sure, they make small errors, but they always come up with the corrections," said Staff Sgt. Jasper Edwards.

"If they have the time to train-up and I can be part of the training team, I'd be

Continued on page 14



Staff Sgt. Glen Halttunen (Photos by Sgt. Bill Gregersen-Morash)

'Incredible firepower'

Continued from page 13

more than happy to go to war with these men," commented the instructor.

Of HEAT and sabot

Every one of the M1 tanks scootin' and shootin' at the MPRC fired a mixture of live ammunition. That old anti-armor standby, the HEAT (or high explosive anti-tank) round, saw a lot of action on the range.

Additionally, the sabot round kicked down range on several occasions. The sabot is a hybrid, high-velocity round that can pierce and shatter an armor opponent. Tankers also hurled two types of machine-gun ammo, .50 cal. and 7.62 mm, at track and personnel targets on the range.

"For their engagements on the main range, each tank took 20 rounds of sabot, eight rounds of HEAT, 200 .50 cal. and 300 7.62-mm rounds," said Sgt. Keith Maddox at the MPRC ammo supply point.

Some songs remain the same

For some, the M1 fielding hasn't changed business much. For Staff Sgt. Richard A. Bligh, a parts clerk with 1-803rd, his job has remained unchanged.

"My job has remained essentially the same. I find out what parts the mechanics need and then get them from stock or draw them from Class IX (repair parts). It's basically the same procedure," said



Staff Sgt. Jim Ferner, Armor Center instructor, spots rounds on the "zeroing range" near the MPRC at the YTC.

the 46-year-old Bligh.

Sgt. Tony Sumbler is a parts clerk for the 1-803rd and an industrial engineer for Boeing on the outside. Sumbler likes the change of venue when he dons his leafy suit and travels to Yakima.

"It's a good change from working at Boeing. I don't get to work with machinery there. I work with capital assets and budgets as a civilian," he said.

"I'm not so sure that I like the heat and dust here. And there are no trees," quipped Sumbler.

Then there's Staff Sgt. Joey M. Litton, a maintenance supervisor and transplanted Alabaman, who has attended two separate schools in preparation for the M1 fielding.


"I've had to attend two three-week courses taught by the Armor School on hull and wheel maintenance. It was high speed all the way; the instruction was slick," drawled Litton.

Many of the 1-803rd's troops are concerned that all of their training may be laid waste by a recent proposal from the Department of Army about inactivating the unit in 1993. However, they are hoping that Congress won't approve the cuts and that the 1-803rd will be spared from the inactivation chopping block.

"It will be an incredible waste of time, training and tax dollars if we all go away," said Sgt. Greg Bellamy, an 18-year Army Guard veteran.

"For the last six or seven years I've really been anticipating the M1. It's been

a big motivator for me. It would be a shame if it was all taken away by the inactivation that the 1-803rd is facing in the near future.

"I've put a lot of hard work into staying in the Guard — not because I have to, but because I want to," said Bellamy. 



Spc. Mark Simonton (Photo by Sgt. Rich Bartell)

Friends, family taste the Yakima experience

By Sgt. Cindy Loughran

YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER, Wash. — At 10:00 a.m. Saturday morning during AT '92, on a hill leading to Range 55, a cloud of dust rose up off the road, as over 50 civilian vehicles and busses made an 'assault' on the area, led by a Huey helicopter flying above the lead car.

The 'convoy' was made up of family, friends and employers of Guard soldiers from the 3rd Battalion, 161st Infantry, Kent, Wash. And the trip up the long dusty road was part of the effort to show their guests what it's like there in the desert for AT every year. They got the flavor of the trip, dust and all.

The 'Family and VIP Day' is held each year by the 3rd Battalion. But this was their biggest crowd — approximately 400 people, as opposed to 70-75 in past years.

Upon their arrival, the visitors were greeted by their hosts and briefed by Lt. Col. Ted Bradley, the battalion commander, on what was available to see and do for the day. Tours of the APCs (armored personnel carriers), equipment displays, helicopter rides, M-60 firing and more, entertained the guests. But mostly, the whole day's activities were geared to orienting them to what their Guard soldiers do in the field.

Heat is bad this year

"This is a really hot AT this year," said Sgt. Gabriel Guterrez, HHC mechanic, sitting in his APC out of the sun. "If the temperature outside is 95 degrees, here inside the APC it's at least 10 degrees hotter!"

"But in the early part of the day, the vehicle stays cool for a while after being closed overnight," added Spc. Clide Smelser, also a mechanic with HHC.

At least four of the women attending the event were overcome by the heat. But none were seriously injured.

"Showing families what they do when they go to the field develops a better understanding..."

The event was held on a weekend, so more guests could attend. In the past, it took place in the middle of the week, making it difficult for employers or family members who work, to attend. The change made possible the record number



A little cool water breaks the heat of the Yakima sun.



Youths enjoy playing soldier during family day activities. (Photos by Master Sgt. Doris Nelson)

ber of guests attending.

"Showing their families what they do when they go to the field develops a better understanding and appreciation of the Guard soldiers by their families and employers who attend," said Bradley. "They see the living conditions, the dust and dirt, the training; and they experience the heat at YTC."

Flavor of the field

Eating MREs was an experience for the guests. But the kids seem to get the best feel for them. "This tastes like the food we get in our grade school cafeteria," said Daniella Bradley, after sampling the contents of one of the pouches.

Still another young guest commented on the bus ride into Range 55: "It was just like our school bus rides" — to which his mother quickly replied, "I hope not!"

The fathers in the unit had a chance to visit with their children, who came with cards and hugs for Father's Day, a day early. And many families and friends of battalion members were able to meet for the first time at the 'Family and VIP Day.' 🏠

Soldiers combat Yakima heat

Story and photo by Master Sgt. Doris Nelson
YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER, Wash. — “How much water did you drink today?”

“Drink your water.”

Water, water, water, water... Need we say more?

Water became the watchword for annual training '92, as temperatures rose from 80 degrees, to 90 degrees, and then over 100 degrees at the Yakima Training Center.

Heat problems and dehydration were major health hazards. As the temperatures began to climb, soldiers were dropping from heat exhaustion, heat stroke and dehydration.

Pfc. Stacy Vig of B Company, 181st Support Battalion fell to the effects of heat as she was jogging one morning. “I blacked out. I fell,” said Vig. The next thing she was conscious of was the medics attaching an IV to her arm.

Vig was taken to the 181st NETT support medical facility in the contonement area of the YTC by Staff Sgt. Richard Babb and Sgt. Armando Castillo.

Extremely serious

The most serious incident of dehydration came when a soldier did not drink water for two days. He experienced severe numbness and muscle contraction. The medics put three IV's in his arms and medevaced him to Yakima's Memorial Hospital where he was in serious condition.

Dehydration is extremely serious; a person can die from the effects of it. It is not to be taken lightly.

Not only were medics available when a person needed help, but this year they were frequently advising commanders of the heat situation, keeping them informed as to the amount of rest needed by the soldiers and the amount of water they should be drinking each hour.

The medics use what they call “The



Staff Sgt. Richard Babb helps Pfc. Stacy Vig into the health clinic at the Yakima Training Center after she succumbed to the summer heat.

Wet Bulb Test.” They place a thermometer outside in the sunshine. The thermometer is wrapped in a wet sock over a sleeve that has a reservoir that drips water into the sleeve. This cools the thermometer. The amount of heat and humidity determines the reading.

The reading follows a chart developed by the Army that indicates heat condition and category, water intake advised, physical activity to rest ratio for acclimatized and nonacclimatized soldiers.

Heat rises


For example, on June 20 the reading of 87 degrees F put the YTC in Stage 3, requiring one quart of water per hour. Physical activity was 45 minutes work to 15 minute rest for acclimatized soldiers.

In two days the reading went up to Stage 4, requiring a 30/30 ratio and one and a half quarts of water per hour.

2nd Lt. Sean Dumas, treatment platoon leader and safety officer, C Company, 181st Support Battalion, said working with the commanders and NCOs really helped to control the situation.

“It has put a lid on it,” said Dumas. “They can still train,” he continued, “but leave out the strenuous activity — especially if the soldiers are not acclimatized.”

However, there were a lot of soldiers who succumbed to the heat.

Leaving the YTC for cooler pastures didn't seem likely, as the Northwest recorded record-breaking high temperatures throughout the state. 

MPs perform dual role at Yakima

By Sgt. Rich Bartell

YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER, Wash. — Fifteen minutes after arriving at the training center, members of our detachment were being warned, "Don't even think about speeding on range road. Those MPs even pulled over an M1."

According to 2nd Lt. Andrew Kallinen, 81st Infantry Brigade (M) military police (MP) platoon leader, his troops are more than traffic cops.

"We have a dual mission as MPs. One is to support the real world mission like the one you see out on range road. The other, and just as important, is being combat MPs supporting the brigade," explained Kallinen.

In their traffic role the MPs place a lot of emphasis on slowing the vehicles down. They also take part in traffic accident investigations.

"In an effort to keep speed down, we've issued a number of tickets. These are some big machines, and combine that with excess speed and you've got a potentially lethal situation," said Kallinen.

Primary responsibility

Sgt. 1st Class Douglas W. Silver, operations sergeant and 21-year veteran of the MP unit, explained that his unit augmented the small active-duty unit during AT.

"They have a very limited staff here. When we bring the brigade in, they have 3,000 to 4,000 more troops to monitor. We work side by side with the active," said Silver, who is a sergeant for the Spokane County sheriff's office.

"Our primary responsibility here is safety — that's the bottom line. We don't want to see anyone hurt. We stop folks who may be marginal violators to make them aware. This way they don't become a problem. We do a lot of stops and just warn.

"The number of tickets issued this year will be between 30 and 50. In the past we had more safety problems. A lot of the accidents 10 or so years ago were associated with alcohol. You just don't see those anymore," said Silver.

During the brigade's annual training the 81st MPs provided real world security to some convoys transporting a few of the heaviest-hitting missiles in the Army in-



Pfc. Jason Young moves out in a hostage rescue scenario staged by the MPs. (Photo by Sgt. Bill Gregersen-Morash)

ventory; the TOWS, Stingers, and Dragons. These beauties are mighty attractive to terrorist organizations that would love to have them in their inventory.

Wartime mission

"The Stinger is a very real target for terrorist theft. If those get in the wrong hands, then down come the jetliners. Everywhere the missiles go, armed MPs go with them, until they're expended. These live-ammo missions are real world," said Kallinen.

The MP platoon is a brigade direct support unit. As a result, their mission is not limited to directing traffic.

"One of our primary missions would be escorting the enemy prisoners of war from the front to the rear area. We would also be responsible for rear area security with particular attention being paid to field trains and their routes. We respond to refugees fleeing a combat zone too.

"Basically, my unit troubleshoots all the glitches that could cause the main war machine to grind to a halt. If there's any threat to rear area security, we would come in and take an infantry type role; that's why they call us combat MPs," said

Kallinen.

The inventive lieutenant spiced up the training for his troops by giving them fast-reaction exercises that would mirror real-life situations. One scenario featured a hostage situation with the perpetrator being a deserter.

"I'll do him, man," raved Kallinen, role playing a lunatic deserter. "I'm not going back to the front. Get me 20 gallons of diesel and a helicopter. I'll cap him, man. Get me that stuff or he's a dead man."

In the end, the deserter was killed and the hostage saved. An after-action review smoothed out some of the fine training points, and it was back to business as usual.

Pfc. Jason Young, a 20-year-old MP from Spokane, liked the hands-on training.

"This is a pretty high-speed AT compared to some in the past. Good missions, and it's been great working with the active component. They've learned a lot of tricks from working day-to-day in the field," said Young. 🏠

Cook's home is where she hangs her spatula

By Sgt. Cindy Loughran

YAKIMA TRAINING CENTER, Wash.— Some ladies have one kitchen to cook in, and one 'family' to cook for. But not Staff Sgt. Corliss S. Barnes, first cook with the HHC, 81st Infantry Brigade (M) mess. She has three!

One kitchen is of course located at home, where she cooks for her family; another is at the brigade mess, where she cooks for her 'second family' of 260-300 people; and the third is for her community of Bremerton, Wash., where she cooks in her own food booth during the annual Blueberry Festival.

Bringing up children as a single parent can be quite a project, according to Barnes, and an escape is welcomed once in a while, no matter where it takes you.

"Sometimes the field can be a peaceful place to be. Not so many people around, like in the cononement area. The same is true at home. When I'm at AT, that's my vacation away from home and the kids!"

Barnes joined the Guard in 1979 and trained as a mess cook in North Carolina and New Jersey. With two children at home, cooking was second nature for her. Even now, with her children grown, she still cooks a lot for them at home.

"I like cooking for the Guard. It's always a challenge for me. The different menus make the job interesting. Even the T-Rats, or Tray Pack meals, are a challenge to prepare.

"Preparation means time — it's an important factor when we're trying to feed large numbers of people," said Barnes.

Challenging work

In her years of cooking in the Guard, Barnes said the worse was in Korea, for exercise 'Team Spirit.' "The environment was so different. We found ourselves camped right in the middle of a rice paddy." The fact that they were also next to a Korean burial ground, didn't make any points with the local population, either.

The 81st's mess spends a lot of time in Yakima throughout the year, feeding the troops who train at YTC during weekend drills, in addition to AT.

"This past May, following the jury verdict in the Rodney King incident in Los Angeles, we were in the field at Yakima, putting up our mess, preparing for our troops to arrive for a training weekend. They never showed up!

"They had been alerted back in Seattle for possible trouble and demonstrations,"



Properly scheduling each phase of meal preparation is crucial to obtaining tasty results, according to Staff Sgt. Corliss Barnes, first cook, HHC, 81st Infantry Brigade (M). (Photo by Sgt. Cindy Loughran)

Barnes said. "So we had to tear it all down, pack up and go home. It was hard, because there were only four of us to do the whole job."

The days total out to 15-17 hours of work for the mess personnel. And eight hours after, they start all over again.

Early morning starts

A typical day in the life of a mess cook starts at 3:30 a.m., with the preparation of the morning meal for the troops. Immediately following breakfast, the 'fun' begins, as they prepare for the evening meal. (Lunch was handed out at breakfast, in the form of MREs.)

"Preparation means getting the salads, vegetables, potatoes, meats, beverages and desserts ready," said Barnes. "We don't have an electric peeler here, so all 120 pounds of potatoes are peeled by hand!"


Then comes the salad greens and vegetables — they all have to be washed, peeled, sliced, diced or torn apart, again all by hand. This generally takes until 10 a.m.

Preparing the meat takes another two hours; beverages have to be made, taking another half to three-quarters of an hour; followed by the desserts, which generally take two hours.

"The preparation time is very crucial," said Barnes. "If the slightest thing goes wrong to throw us off our time schedule, we're in big trouble. Each phase of the meal takes a set amount of time. You can't change the time the meat or vegetables take to cook, or the desserts to bake."

After the evening meal is finally served and the cleanup completed, it's 8:30-9 p.m.

Barnes comes from a military family. Her father was a Sgt. Major in the Illinois National Guard; she has three brothers in the regular Army and one in the Air Force. She also has a nephew in the Washington Guard, in Bremerton.

Where there's food to be cooked and hungry folks to be fed, in the Guard or in the community, you'll find Barnes — trusty spatula in hand, ready to cook. 



Retiree Day, Oct. 3

Retirees and former members of the Washington National Guard are invited to the Retiree Day, Oct. 3, at Camp Murray's building 34. Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. to unite the "new" Guard with old comrades-in-arms.

The planning committee is updating available records, and asks attendees to inform any other former Guard members who may have lost contact with their units, about the event.

Casual dress and walking shoes are recommended for the day's activities, and a small meal fee will be collected to offset food costs. Questionnaires and registration materials will be mailed out, but if you don't receive them in time to respond by the Aug. 15 deadline, or if you need further information, contact Lt. Col. Gerald E. Jensen at (206) 581-8243 or Lt. Col. John Coulthard at (206) 984-8621. 🏔️

Swimmers itch alert

Swimmer's itch, that highly irritating bane of summer has struck early and close to home this year.

Tests of the waters of American Lake, including the Washington National Guard's own Camp Murray Beach, have shown concentrations of the itch-creating larvae.

The "itch" is a catch-all term covering scores of similar waterborne parasites carried in the feces of aquatic birds.

Although the types of larvae spread in the Pacific Northwest are rarely a serious threat to health, they do create a rash that genuinely makes one miserable for a few days.

Murray Beach is being posted to warn users of the campground; however, the picnic, camping and playground facilities remain open.

American Lake will be monitored. But it may not yet be safe to go back in the water. 🏔️

Discounted tickets for Enchanted Village

ITT now has the Wild Waves/Enchanted Village combination tickets. Price is \$12.00 each; save \$5.50 from the gate price. Tickets are good through Sept. 7, 1992. Tickets may be picked up at Leisure Travel Center (Bldg. 2166) Community Recreation Division, Fort Lewis, Wash. 98433-5000. 🏔️



ORI preparations

(From left) Sgt. Tom Beler, Tech. Sgt. Larry Paske and Tech. Sgt. Ward Durham — telephone installers for the 143rd Combat communications Squadron in Seattle — check phone lines to be wed in all the different facilities set up during the pre-Operational Readiness Inspection training. (Photo by Master Sgt. Harvey S. Tatel)

Pierson named Selective Service state director

TACOMA, Wash. — Verne M. Pierson has been named state director of the Selective Service System for Washington. Gov. Booth Gardner recommended Pierson for the appointment which was signed in Washington by Selective Service System National Director Robert W. Gambino, acting on behalf of President Bush.

Pierson will provide liaison between the Selective Service System and the governor's office, and will represent the governor and the national director on Selective Service

matters in Washington.

A biology teacher in the Bethel School District, Pierson is a retired colonel in the Washington Army National Guard. He joined the National Guard in 1955 and was commissioned as an officer in 1960. He served 32 years in the Guard, including five years on active duty.

Although young men are required to register with Selective Service at age 18, there has been no military draft since 1973. 🏔️



Runners relay anti-drug message

Members of the Washington Air and Army National Guard run for a "Drug Free Washington" in a relay race from the Peace Arch in Blaine to the Whatcom-Skagit county line. The 262nd Combat Communications Squadron in Bellingham, along with Coca-Cola, Group Health Medical Corporation, and Whatcom County were sponsors. The 262nd CCS supplied radio communications, emergency service vehicles and refreshments for the military and community event. (Photo by Master Sgt. Harvey Tatel)

Washington National Guard fighters scan

Story and illustration
by Staff Sgt. Bob Rosenburgh

The whole thing started near Mount Rainier. Kenneth Arnold, a U.S. Forest Service pilot from Boise, Idaho, reported seeing nine shiny saucer-shaped disks zipping through Northwest skies at speeds exceeding 1,200 miles an hour. It was June 25, 1947.

"They were flat like a pie pan and as big as a DC-4 airliner," he explained to skeptical military authorities. "It seems impossible, but there it is!"

Next day, the *Tacoma News Tribune* ran a small story titled "Experts Skeptical on Huge Pie-Plate Missile." The *Spokesman Review* in Spokane buried a short piece inside the paper about "saucers flit-

ting in air." Little was mentioned for a couple days until others began reporting "disks."

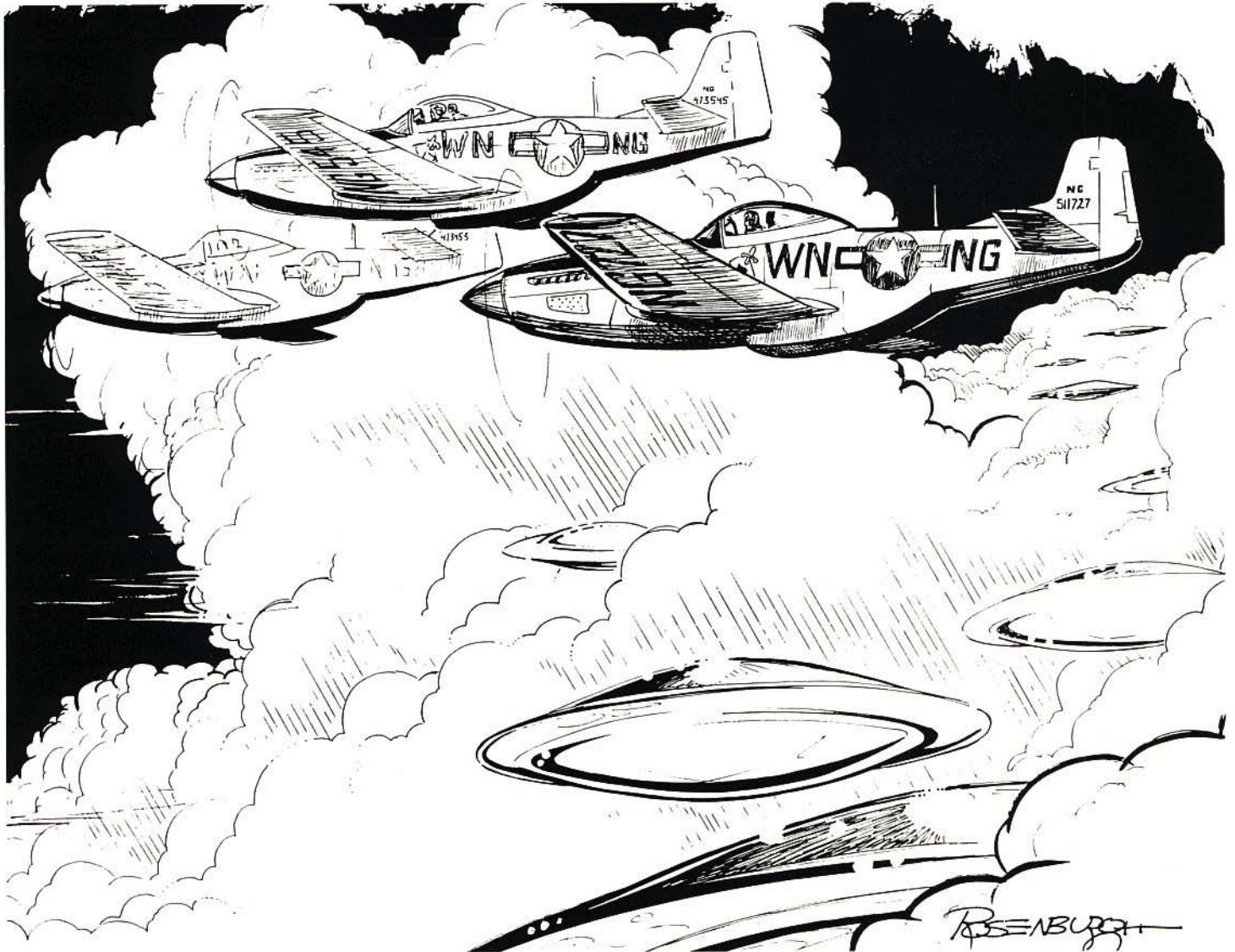
Elma Shingler, a Bremerton housewife, was doing the dishes when she spotted a flight of 10 "platterlike" objects flying out to sea at tremendous speed. Twice. Private pilots from nearby states reported them, too, flying faster than a rocket in formations at 10,000 feet.

Sightings came from as nearby as Astoria and Portland and as far away as Texas and Oklahoma when newswire services picked up the story. By the 4th of July weekend, hundreds of stories from 38 states, Canada and Mexico prompted the Air Material Command to launch an investigation with limited air searches in

areas with the most "disk" activities.

From the Washington National Guard, the 116th Fighter Interceptor Squadron was dispatched to Saint Maries, Idaho, a hotbed of supposed saucer sightings. A group of 10 people at a picnic swore they all saw a batch of eight "flying saucers" land on a mountainside. The Washington Guard had the nearest available search planes, so away they went to scan the Idaho skies.

The 116th, stationed at Felts Field in Spokane and commanded by Lt. Col. Frank W. Frost, had just converted from an observation unit to a fighter squadron in February of that year. Jet fighters were still rare back then, but the pilots of the 116th now had the P-51 Mustang, one of



The saucer-seeking Mustangs of the 116th FIS never did spot their quarry. And vice versa?

skies for 'flying saucers'

the highest performance piston-engine aircraft ever built. They were sure they could get close enough to the strange disks to take a picture. Or something.

Meanwhile, the nation became increasingly baffled by the flying disks. So-called experts began offering various explanations for the phenomenon. Some sober-minded officials attributed the visions to reflections from weather balloons or from the glint of sunlight from faraway aircraft.

Optical illusions, mirages and hallucinations caused by staring too long into the skies were answers offered. A professor at the California Institute of Technology insisted that these saucers must be the result of experiments in transmutation of atomic energy. Dr. Harold Urey, nuclear physicist at the University of Chicago, insisted that that theory was "gibberish."

By July 7, a weird "saucer-mania" had gripped the country. "Mystery at Fever Pitch," shouted page one of the *Tacoma News Tribune*, while the *Spokesman Review* headlined "Saucer Reports Increase as Sky is Searched in Vain."

Air units like the 116th FIS had scrambled to check every report in their vicinity, spending long days searching the empty skies. The search aircraft stayed in constant radio contact and each carried photo equipment. Without result.

Capt. E. J. Smith of United Airlines

seemed to have better luck, as did Seattle Coast Guard Yeoman Frank Ryman. Smith and his entire crew spotted disks flying overhead just after takeoff from Boise. Ryman took a picture of one that appeared as a white dot in his photo.

Finally, as time went by without hard evidence turning up, sarcasm and cynicism set in. The media, through a process of repetition, had locked on "flying saucers" as the standard buzzword for the disks. Taking the moniker as his cue for deadpan humor, Ralph Dinsmore of Port Costa, California, soberly reported a formation of flying saucers near Mount Diablo.

"The middle object seemed to have a shape on it like a cup of coffee," he quipped glibly to reporters. "Behind it was another with a sign that said five cents a cup. As I watched the five turned into a 10 and the amount of coffee, cream and sugar grew smaller as the price grew larger."

"They were flat like a pie pan and as big as a DC-4 airliner."

It went downhill from there.

Authorities distanced themselves from ridicule by taking the "Missouri" position. Show me. Professor F. S. Cotton, physiologist at the University of Sydney, Aus-

tralia, was widely quoted when he explained how red corpuscles floating through the retina of the eye often appear as "disks." Other explanations were just plain bizarre. Charles Odom, who was a B-17 navigator in WW II, said the Nazis had sent magnetic crystal balls into bomber formations to report speed, altitude and position. These were them [sic], he claimed.

The *Tacoma News Tribune*, by July 8, reflected the public mood with a staged photo on the front page of a swim-suited beauty tossing a handful of paper plates frisbee-style. On the ninth, the paper began a series by columnist Hal Boyle, describing in detail his abduction by the crew of a Mars flying saucer.

A trickle of reports were sprinkled through the papers by the 10th as interest waned, then fell off altogether. The last news story was on the 14th, about a teenage flying saucer hoax done as a gag.

By then, the 116th Fighter Interceptor Squadron was back home in Spokane, having seen no flying saucers. The adventure wasn't a total waste of time, though. They'd had a real problem finding people to join the unit before the "saucer season" began. By the end of July, 25 volunteers had signed up with them.

The Air Force would later open its top secret "Project Blue Book" to study Unidentified Flying Objects," making UFOs and flying saucers a permanent part of Americana. It all began in 1947. Near Mount Rainier. 🏔️

Museum to memorialize Guard history

By Capt. Michael A. Nichols

Throughout the years, from the Revolutionary war to Desert Storm, servicemen and women from every state and territory have contributed their time and effort in building the National Guard's reputation.

Endeavors are now under way to memorialize the long history of colorful accomplishments by the National Guard. The Historical Society of the Militia and National Guard, a non-profit organization established in 1975, is raising funds to build a new National Guard Memorial Building in Washington, D.C.

Plans call for "The Museum of the National Guard" to be housed in the National Guard Memorial Building. The museum will be a place for the Guard family to honor the contributions of individuals who have served their states and nation.

The museum will be open to the public free of charge and will incorporate an Heritage Gallery, an archival and reference library, the Medal of Honor Alcove, the Hall of the States and an endowment to support academic research and the development of state National Guard history programs.

An endowment is also planned in connection with the museum. The endowment will establish scholarships, internships and a faculty chair for the study of American militia history at a leading university.

In January 1990, former President Ronald Reagan stated, "In this world of rapidly changing political, economic and military realities, we must ensure that the National Guard is understood, appreciated and maintained."

You can be a part of this effort and help

increase public understanding of the National Guard through your contributions to The Museum of the National Guard. With your help, our nation's capital will soon have a museum dedicated to recognizing the hard work and unselfish service of this nation's citizen-soldiers.

In addition to the individual contributors, corporations are jumping on the bandwagon to help sponsor this endeavor. Just a few of the businesses pledging major contributions include the Boeing Company, Chrysler Corporation, Ford Motor Company and General Dynamics.

All contributions are voluntary, but if you would like to contribute to this worthwhile project, you can send your tax deductible contribution to: The Museum of the National Guard, Minuteman Fund committee of Washington, Post Office Box 92055, Tillicum, Washington 98492. 🏔️



Capt. Benjamin E. Zerface

Navigator honored

CAMP MURRAY, Wash. — Capt. Benjamin E. Zerface, fighter duty officer of the 111th Air Support Operations Center, Washington Air National Guard, was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, for action while on active duty for Desert Storm.

Zerface was assigned to the 1708th Bombardment Wing (Provisional) during the Gulf War. The DFC read in part:

"Capt. Zerface distinguished himself by heroism while participating in aerial flight as a B-52G radar navigator in support of Operation Desert Storm at Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. He was lead radar navigator on a three-ship B-52G cell on an in-flight bomber target change mission directed by Headquarters Central Command to destroy the Iraqi Scud missile site which had fired on the city of Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

"Despite the heavy anti-aircraft artillery fire, multiple surface-to-air missile launches, degraded defensive armament, and mission retargeting complications, he destroyed the target, overcoming all obstacles. The outstanding heroism and selfless devotion to duty displayed by Capt. Zerface reflect great credit upon himself and the United States Air Force." 



Air Guard's top NCO visits

Chief Master Sgt. Richard A. Moon, the senior enlisted adviser to the Director, Air National Guard at the Pentagon, visited with units in Spokane and Camp Murray. "I'm very impressed with the missions of the 252nd Combat Communications Group and the 111th ASOC," he said.

Washington Air Guard's top NCO to switch caps

By Lt. Col. Dave Harris

TACOMA, Wash. — His farewell luncheon included a parting gift of a gleaming fishing rod. But retirement is out of the question for Chief Master Sgt. George Currier after his three-year tour as the Washington Air Guard's senior enlisted adviser.

Currier is doing what headquarters people often just talk about: he's taking his acquired "big picture" perspective as top NCO back to his old unit.

Currier has the rare qualities that have enabled him to earn the trust of both senior officers and subordinates.

"I've found a new respect for officers—the kind I've always had for NCOs," he says. "When I raised a high-power issue that needed attention, I noted the willingness of leadership to do the right thing to correct the situation. It awed me."

At the same time, he says it was most rewarding to find all grades of airmen bringing their concerns to him—the bad and the good.

"What I found remarkable is that in every single unit I visited, an NCO or airman would pull me aside and tell me why his or her outfit was the best of its kind."

Currier considers himself an activist, focusing on family support and equal opportunity, spearheading a statewide first sergeants' call and the Senior NCO Advisory Council.

His method—networking.

"I ran up a telephone bill of \$200 to \$300 a month," he says.

Lt. Col. John Coulthard, who served with him at Headquarters and at Spokane's 105th Tactical Control Squadron, says there's a lot more to Currier than meets the eye.

"You should have seen the files he brought in from home," Coulthard said, indicating that the chief is like the tip of an iceberg, doing Herculean behind-the-scenes coordination off



Chief Master Sgt. George Currier

duty.

"He's the enlisted man's enlisted man," says Coulthard, "not one for pomp, circumstance or fluff, just the kind of guy that digs deep and works hard all the time."


One of the chief's passions was to enhance cooperation between the traditional and technician members.

"We have one of the best technician forces in the United States," he boasts. He says he has enjoyed observing the kind of competence in which "an airman first class is telling the other ranks how to do it!"

Something bothers him, however. While he's swelling with pride about the education level, talent and skills airmen bring to their units, he worries about the occasional airman who gets "culled." Rather than getting rid of an airman who may not at first seem to fit in, he encourages leaders to "take time with these airmen."

"By doing so, we can often salvage an airman so that he or she equals or surpasses the standard. Sometimes we do wrong by throwing away the diamonds," Currier said.

Returning to his old unit, the 105th TCS, he has some senior enlisted advice for the up-and-comer, who would be well served to follow the activist chief's horizon-expanding example of how to create a better world:

"Seek more state and local involvement. Add value to your community." 

'Plane ride from hell'

Continued from page 2

attendant comes by, he says he's a goalie with the National Hockey League. She looks at him for a couple seconds and laughs hysterically.

At 9 o'clock the first officer gets on the intercom. I figure the captain is taking drugs by now. "We're heading for the gate right now, please buckle up." The plane erupts with a huge cheer. I can hardly believe it. I mean it's only been five hours on the runway.

Detroit here we come?

We pull up and they instruct us to hang around the boarding area. We should be leaving in about an hour. Right.

Immediately the vending machines are bombarded. All the restaurants are closed. The gift shop with my hat is closed. Almost everything in the state of Michigan is closed.

At around 10:30 p.m. an announcement is made on the Detroit airport intercom system. Flight 201, my flight, has been canceled. Unbelievable. Canceled. Too much snow on the ground. How handy.

We're told that the airline will pay for the hotel for the night; however, the line for vouchers is quite long. In fact, it's a two-hour wait. This, I must admit was a little much for me to handle. I yelled at the guy who made the announcement.

"Are you kidding me," I said. "I'm getting a hotel and sending you the receipt and your airline is paying for it. End of story." I went to the Holiday Inn. Feeling strong after berating this poor employee, I checked in for the night. You'd think this would be the end of the trip from hell. — It's not.

I called my airline from my room and told them I wanted a flight on another airline in the morning to Virginia. I had had my fill. The lady at the other end said I could catch another carrier at 8:40 a.m. There was a catch though. She said that first I'd have to stand in line for the flight that left at 8:30 a.m. She said that flight was sold out, so when I got to the agent, he would give me a FIM (Flight Inter-Option Manifest). I'll never forget that term. Take the FIM to the other carrier and I could get on their flight.

I got to the airport around 7 a.m. Plenty of time, right, an hour and 40 minutes before my plane was going to leave. I'd get my FIM, have a little breakfast, be on my way to Transportation School. Right.

The line at my original airline looked as if it were 18 miles long. I mean you needed binoculars to see the front of this thing. I'm absolutely stunned. But what am I going to do. I'll wait in line. We'll see what happens.

When you're in a long line, you get to know the people in front and back of you. When you're in an 18-mile-long line, you know their middle names, when they were born, everything except when they need to go to the bathroom.

As I am standing in line, I'm watching the clock. I need to be on the other carrier at 8:40 a.m. If there's such a thing as airplane phobia, I was getting it.

About 8:20 a.m. I decide to call my new carrier on the courtesy phone. The guy behind me, an insurance salesman named Jay Crawford Stokes (three kids and a slobbering lab), saves my spot. I tell the new carrier there's no way I'm going to be able to get the FIM, so could I just use my ticket and get on their 8:40 a.m. flight. "No problem," the agent says. "We understand, go to gate 38," which is two terminals away.

A race to the terminal

Two terminals away, I've got golf clubs, two suitcases and 15 minutes to catch the flight. I grab my stuff, say goodbye to all my good friends in line and cruise. All I can think about is getting that flight. Getting the hell out of Detroit.

I go through the security gate and the guy tells me I can't carry on all that luggage. Don't worry about it, buddy, the people at the gate are going to square me away. I'm the wrong guy to hassle right now.

I had gotten through one terminal and was into my final terminal. I pretended I was on a road march and had some drill sergeant yelling at me, "Get to that flight, Thompson. Move it, move it!" The little game I played with myself worked. I get to the gate at 8:38 a.m. The doors were still open.

I pulled out my ticket and gave it to the gate agent. "I'm sorry, sir," she said. "you need a FIM."

What would you have done? Shoot her? Possibly use a little hand-to-hand combat? How 'bout setting off a bomb and blowing up all the FIMs in the airport.

I was so flabbergasted, so spent, I really didn't know what to say. I wondered how long it would take me to walk to

Virginia.

Losing my mind


I gathered my thoughts and tried to explain my story. As I was talking, the plane's doors shut. I was so numb I didn't care. The agent told me I would have to go back to my original airline and wait to get a FIM. At this point the numbness left me. My mind exploded on me.

I said there was no way I would get back in line, there was no way I would get a FIM, and I wanted to be on the next flight to Virginia. And, mind you, I wasn't moving from this spot until that happened.

A supervisor came over and took care of me. I got on one of those carts the old people ride on (I was feeling really old), got dropped off at my gate, and was flying to Virginia by 10:30 a.m.

Transportation School was a piece of cake. When I got back, I called SATO. I needed to go back to Virginia soon for the second phase of my training and I needed to make plans.

The woman on the phone said I had two choices. I could go through Detroit and then to Virginia or I could take a totally different airline through Pittsburgh and on to Virginia.

Which do you think I picked? (Hint: My hat won't be autographed by Barry Sanders.) 

FACTS IN A BOX

The only Air Force base named for an enlisted man?

Scott Air Force Base
(Belleville, Illinois)

Cpl. Frank S. Scott, the first enlisted man to die in an aircraft accident, killed Sept. 28, 1912, while hitching a ride in one of the Wright Type B Flyers at College Park, Maryland. The only National Guard officer to have an Army post named after him? None, yet. But after 'the plane ride from hell,' I think Fort Thompson sounds pretty good.

Everything I needed to know I learned in the Army

By former Sgt. 1st Class Joe Zambone

Operation Grassy Storm commenced just before sunset Saturday, 16 May 1992. It was them or me, pure and simple.

With extreme caution I planted a high-explosive device, set the mercury switch trigger and gingerly backed away.

Adrenalin surged through my veins. It wouldn't be a pretty sight if the mine went off prematurely, or the enemy showed up unexpectedly. More than a few GIs have gone to the moon while rigging such things.

But laying a mine field is just one of those things — like riding a motorcycle or trying to reason with a new lieutenant — which is simply laced with peril.

At 0645 Sunday an ear-splitting Ka-Whoom! shattered the stillness. A haze of smoke and dust shrouded the trees as I sprinted out to assess damage.

Gotcha!

One less mole, now vaporized, would use our back yard for an underground condo.

Once again, military training from decades past had paid off. If the nice man in the green suit at Fort Knox hadn't talked boobytraps with me, I'd be up to my ears in moles by the end of summer.

Instead, our fur-clad trees are the envy of the neighborhood.

It's odd, but many things learned in uniform still haunt my life, even though I no longer wear a leafy suit.

For example, I wasn't in OCS more'n a few days before I became ambidextrous. I'm right-handed, but since you gotta salute every one there within two kilometers, you either learn to function with your left hand or get to do pushups by the truck load.

What a boon this is, even better than learning to walk and chew gum simultaneously (another OCS training coup).

Now I can pilot the riding lawnmower with my right hand, and do all sorts of things with the left — scratch an itch, swat a skeeter, tie a shoelace, or drink a Coke.

I have to admit that many lessons fell on deaf ears back then. Trainees in the "old army" of 1966 had their buns run off so hard we slept whenever we weren't moving. Classes were viewed as a chance for shuteye.

Fortunately, at that time most GI instructors had to pass some sort of test for talking in a monotone. Rumor has it that many of them went on to start sleep clinics after Vietnam.

Despite nodding off whenever one of these rocket scientists launched into meaty topics like military justice, guard duty, where to sew patches on a uniform or the perils of consorting with local gals, some data must've filtered into our subconscious minds.

Not all this info has proven useful in civilian life, however. I looked in vain for a tank-driving job after leaving the Army. Nor was there much call for experts with a .45 caliber subgun — although Los Angeles SWAT may be hiring soon.

My year in a howitzer battery didn't translate well into civilian life either — except that when I hose down the lawn I'm constantly calculating the water's trajectory....

On the other hand, I still can't walk with someone else without staying in step. And I can't pass by a cigarette butt or gum wrapper without some inner urge forcing me to pick it up, a legacy of several zillion hours spent on "police call."

Map reading skills learned in the Army have allowed me to get lost in 47 states so far, which means I've seen a whole lot more of America than most folks. Grid square by grid square.

And I still wake up early, like in the

dark, which offers the chance to read until the sun comes up or some mole triggers a mine.

Since my name begins with "Z," it ain't hard to figure out where I stood in most military lines. In fact, the only time name order was reversed was if some nifty detail came up — maybe moving a small mountain from one place to another, or digging a latrine pit suitable for an elephant herd. In bedrock.

Patience became a virtue, owing to hours spent at the back of all "good" lines, or at the front of all "bad" lines. Thus in today's world, traffic jams are no big deal. Being in the bank line where the little old lady wants to turn 73 million pennies into folding money isn't as bad as it could be; without Army training I'd probably have belted several such old dears by now.


Most of all, though, I learned mental survival. Some pretty rough times have come down the pike, but I've weathered the storm because I was one of 54 survivors of my OCS class at Knox.

We were verbally abused, ridiculed, driven to exhaustion and treated as sub-humans for 26 terribly long weeks. And though many had urges to reach out and clobber a TAC officer, we survivors kept our cool and came out the other end much the better for the experience.

Now, as head of my own company, I'm able to deal with the occasional client who comes across like a loose cannon. I can also smile at rude people, refrain from gesturing to a jerk who cuts me off on the freeway, and even deal with a teen-age daughter who inhabits another planet periodically.

Ka-Boom!

Gotta go. Sounds like there's more fur decorating the trees.

Joe Zambone was an editor/columnist for the Evergreen from 1980 to 1990. 

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