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Members of the Maryland National Guard Honor Guard hold the U.S. flag that was on the casket of retired Lt. Gen. (MD) James F. Fretard, during his interment at Blooming Cemetery, Smithville, Md., Dec. 2, 2016.

(Photo by Spc. Elizabeth Scott, Maryland National Guard Public Affairs Office)

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To the members of the Maryland Military Department, past and present:

I am pleased to present the first edition of FY 2017 of the *Maryland Line* our quarterly departmental publication. The magazine covers the events that have occurred in October, November and December. The intent is to keep you better informed and illustrate the department's activities.

We lost a venerable leader in Lt. Gen. (MD) James F. Fretterd, the 25th Adjutant General of Maryland, who passed away on 26 Nov., after a long illness. His 52 years of service to the Maryland National Guard was an inspiration to Soldiers and Airmen who served with him. The department saw the deployment of the 104th Fighter Squadron of the Maryland Air National Guard, which is supporting the retaking of the Iraqi city of Mosul by coalition forces. Members of the Maryland Army National Guard who are assigned to elements of the 29th Infantry Division, were mobilized and deployed for overseas missions in Southeast Asia.

We will face many new challenges in 2017. We are currently operating under a continuing resolution for federal funds. The state is facing a major budget shortfall. We must remain good stewards of the taxpayers' dollars. In 2017 we will continue to deploy Soldiers and Airmen for overseas contingency operations. It is important for us to continue to be flexible and adapt to the new administration. We must always remain a relevant and ready force for our state and federal missions.

As we head into the winter months, we will hone our skills in preparation for the expected severe winter storms that plague the eastern seaboard during this time of year. We are also gearing up for missions in support of the Presidential Inauguration on 20 Jan.



Respectfully,

LINDA L. SINGH
Major General, MDARNG
The Adjutant General



29th Infantry Division Soldiers train with First Army at Fort Hood for deployment

Story and photo by Staff Sgt. Ian M. Kummer, *First Army Public Affairs*

The 29th Infantry Division Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion completed a one-week Mission Rehearsal Exercise with First Army at Fort Hood Dec. 2, 2016.

More than 400 Maryland and Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers

participated in the MRX. They were supported by approximately 650 Soldiers from First Army and U.S. Army Central.

"This exercise is unprecedented in both the size of the exercise and the scope of the training," said Col. Jason Joose, the MRX operations, plans and training director from First Army

Headquarters in Rock Island, Illinois. "You have active-duty and National Guard Soldiers training together that will later be fighting together as a total force. This is an Army total force exercise from top to bottom."

The 29th Inf. Div., headquartered in Fort Belvoir, Virginia, will fill a new

Staff Sgt. Anthony Denton, a multiband hub section chief, and Pfc. Melanie Tobias, a satellite communications system operator-maintainer with the 29th Infantry Division's Signal Intelligence Sustainment Company, inspect a Warfighter Information Network-Tactical system during a Mission Rehearsal Exercise with First Army's Division West at Fort Hood, Tx.

requirement in the ARCENT area of responsibility in the Middle East.

"There are more missions than the active-duty component can handle," said Brig. Gen. Blake Ortner, 29th Inf. Div. commanding general. "There isn't an active-duty division to put in; they're all committed. This mission really does show the seamless integration of National Guard and active-duty units."

At any given time, approximately 5,000 Army Reserve and National Guard Soldiers are deployed with ARCENT. The 29th Inf. Div. will be responsible for both active- and reserve-component Soldiers.

"This is probably a perfect example of a total force," Ortner said. "There aren't three armies, there's one Army."

Previously, brigades operating in the region have reported directly to ARCENT, a strategic-level headquarters. Inserting the 29th Inf. Div. to take direct command of these brigades would significantly improve ARCENT's command and control structure, Ortner said.

"I think this is a unique opportunity to have the 29th come in and fill this role," said Maj. Gen. William Hickman, ARCENT's deputy commanding general of operations. "There's one Army once you deploy. We couldn't do our job without the Army Reserve and National Guard doing their part."

The 29th Inf. Div. will deploy with citizen Soldiers from a variety of

backgrounds, including law enforcement, school teachers and engineers.

"That wide range of expertise is the biggest advantage we bring to the table as National Guard," Ortner said.

The 29th Inf. Div.'s MRX kicked off 88 days after the unit received notification of the upcoming deployment.

"Given the magnitude of the exercise and the extraordinary timeline, this was amazing," said Lt. Col. Brian Gerber, commander of First Army's 3rd Battalion, 393rd Infantry Regiment, 120th Infantry Brigade, Division West. "We first found out about this in July. For National Guard (units), that's only three drill weekends."

Gerber credited the excellent work of his noncommissioned officers in bringing the event together.

"NCOs did what NCOs do and stepped up," Gerber said. "I'm really proud of the team and the training environment they put up for the 29th."

The MRX consisted of a division-level combat exercise using WARSIM, a system that allows command staff to calculate the full consequences of any decision made on a simulated battlefield, including battle damage assessments, supplies consumed and medical requirements.

There was just one problem: the 29th Inf. Div.'s designated training

area in North Fort Hood lacked the required technical infrastructure for a WARSIM exercise.

"That capability did not previously exist a month ago," Joose said. "We built it up from scratch."

While WARSIM aided training capabilities, the core of the MRX's value was the relationship between 29th Inf. Div. Soldiers and First Army observer coach/trainers. OCTs provided continuous mentorship and assistance to the 29th Inf. Div. staff as they worked through the decision-making and problem-solving process.

"This is a good test of where we need to be in theater," said Maj. Dean Grundei, a 29th Inf. Div. logistics staff officer. "We have a logbook of all the feedback we're getting from the OCTs. They're not here to make us look bad, they're here to help us."

First Army personnel also learned from their experiences in this MRX, enabling them to provide improved training for National Guard divisions deploying in the 29th Inf. Div.'s footsteps.

"Our setup in the MRX mirrors the 29th ID," Gerber said. "We've learned a lot ourselves, day to day, and it's pretty exciting to watch."

Command Sgt. Maj. Jeffrey Dillingham, First Army Division West's senior enlisted leader, believes training exercises are an opportunity to give new leaders responsibilities beyond their range of experiences and normal scope.

"This isn't just about training for combat, this is about training leaders for the future," Dillingham said. "Everyone in the Army has an expiration date. Let the people below us be prepared to take our positions."

With the MRX completed, Soldiers of the 29th Inf. Div. are staged to begin a precedent-making deployment overseas.

“There's one Army once you deploy. We couldn't do our job without the Army Reserve and National Guard doing their part.”

- Maj. Gen. William Hickman
ARCENT's deputy commanding general of operations.



Army/National Guard communication tool suite syncs disaster response

Story by Amy Walker, PEO C3T Public Affairs

Photos by Maj. Adrian Smith, PM WIN-T

When homeland disasters strike, such as hurricanes, wildfires, or even terrorist attacks, or during civil support for such events as the presidential inauguration, signal units from the National Guard provide critical interagency communications services to improve both speed and effectiveness of response.

To significantly enhance communications support capability, the Army is preparing to field the Disaster Incident Response Emergency Communications Terminal tool suite to the Army National Guard. DIRECT links first responders and emergency managers with state and federal authorities, during natural disasters, emergency and civil support operations.

“Interagency interoperability is vital to avoid situations like you had in 9/11, where all the different agencies with their different communication devices were not able to talk to each other,” said Sgt. Jose Gonzales, transmission team squad leader for the Maryland ARNG 2nd Platoon, 629th Network Support Company. “Response may have happened a lot faster if they could talk to each other – the fire department communicating with the police department and with National Guard units nearby etc. With the DIRECT equipment, everyone is able to communicate [simultaneously]; it makes everyone’s job a lot easier and it lessens needless problems and dangers.”

Without compromising the security of the military network, DIRECT leverages the Army’s organic Warfighter Information Network-Tactical tactical communications network to provide commercial 4G and Wi-Fi, commercial phone and internet access, and the ability to connect all the different types of radios that various responders bring to an incident site. The system also enables interconnection between cell phones, internet telephones, military and first responder radios for seamless collaboration.

“WIN-T is a very robust network that enables joint and coalition forces to communicate all around the world, and the DIRECT system leverages that advanced military technology and infrastructure to enable Guardsmen to provide reliable communications to first responders and other agencies in the most critical domestic situations,” said Lt. Col. Mark Henderson, product manager for WIN-T Increment 1, which manages the DIRECT program for the Army and the ARNG.

In November, the Army conducted a DIRECT pilot in Towson and Reisterstown, Maryland, supported by MD ARNG Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment and the 629th Network Support Company. The primary purpose of the pilot was to provide training on the DIRECT equipment and allow Soldiers to operate the equipment

and provide feedback to the WIN-T INC 1 program office ahead of future fielding.

The Army is scheduled to begin fielding the DIRECT tool suite in fiscal year 2017 to all states and territories with a National Guard presence. The system will be fielded in correlation with the WIN-T Increment 1 technical refresh upgrades already scheduled, taking advantage of facilities and resources that are already being used for added efficiencies and to minimize unit disruption.

The MD ARNG is the second Guard unit to participate in an Army pilot for DIRECT, following a pilot in August with the Delaware ARNG.

“Events like these help us to identify gaps and align resources early, enabling us to field the best possible capability to the Guard and to develop mitigation strategies that can be implemented in the event that we need to respond to a real-world situation,” said Maj. Adrian Smith, DIRECT product lead for PM WIN-T INC 1.

During the pilot, Soldiers successfully operated all of the equipment, and they were able to integrate and provide communication services to both the Baltimore County Police Department and one of the state emergency operation centers.

“In the past we have not had this [level of] communication between agencies, which caused breakdowns in commands

coming from the top down, impacting whatever situation or process we were dealing with,” said Alex Arthur, Police Officer, 1st Class, of the Baltimore County Police Department in Md. “This will speed things up for all of the agencies involved; they can all communicate together at the same level.”

Not only does DIRECT provide interagency communications throughout the incident site, but the robust WIN-T network also enables reach back capabilities so first responders can benefit from the knowledge and leadership of subject matter experts located anywhere in the world.

“We learned how to conduct video and voice conferences with the phones and radios,” said Pfc. Stephanie Byers, radio manager for the Maryland ARNG 58th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade. “My instructor was just saying that a medical team was able to watch a live surgery through this technology. At a disaster site they could link to a hospital and know exactly what to do.”

DIRECT will replace the legacy Army National Guard Joint Incident Site Communication Capability. Although JISCC aided first responder communications, it did not enable the military and first responders to directly communicate over the Army’s extensive WIN-T satellite-based network, which

enables mission command and voice, video and data communications anywhere in the world without need of static infrastructure.

“Robustness is probably the biggest improvement over JISCC,” said Maj. William Petry, SC/G6 (CIO) for the MD ARNG and deputy J6 for the Maryland NG. “DIRECT” also comes with a sustainment tail so it is supported by big Army. It already has a pre-established infrastructure, it is quicker to set up, less hassle and is more durable and it has a lot more features with less moving parts. It also seems like it is easily scalable, not as difficult to add new people in and to make things happen quicker.”

Both Soldiers and first responders at the DIRECT pilot in Maryland agreed that this technology could help alleviate the miscommunication experienced in the past during disaster response incidents like Hurricane Katrina and 9/11.

“DIRECT will definitely alleviate manpower and logistics, and help band us together with the other agencies,” said Spc. Cameron Harrison from 629th NSC transmission team. “When the Guard gets called up for support, now we can crossband between the cell phones and radios on both the military and civilian sides. What needs to be done, and where it needs to be done, will be more universally communicated.”





Test^{of the} Best

Soldiers competing for Soldier of the Year

Story and photos by Sgt. Devon Bistarkey, 58th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade

White engineer tape marked the finish of a seven-mile ruck march for soldiers competing in the Best Warrior Competition at Gunpowder Military Reservation, Nov 5, 2016. However, completing the rigorous ruck was not the end of the day-long competition. One more obstacle stood in the way of distinguishing each soldier as a competitor, and only one as the best. The final challenge - a live-fire stress shoot.

In total, 12 soldiers from the 58th Expeditionary Military Intelligence Brigade and the 58th Troop Command, a part of the combined competition, were tasked with firing an M4 assault rifle where pressure and fatigue contributed to the intent of the range - stress.

As the final station in a series of warrior tasks, soldiers dropped

their 35 pound rucks, executed ten push-ups and were given ten seconds to engage pop-up targets while identifying friendly from enemy silhouettes.

"Anyone that accepted this challenge has gone above and beyond," said Master Sgt. Adam Erickson, 58th EMIB operations sergeant and noncommissioned officer in-charge for the competition.

In order to compete, soldiers were selected at the company level, and then representatives were chosen at the battalion leading up to the day's test competing at the brigade level. Eligibility and pre-qualification necessary to vie for the title of best included successful completion of the combat life saver course, Army level-one combatives as well as qualifying as sharp-shooter on an M16 rifle and completion of a

board exam. Soldiers competed for Soldier, noncommissioned officer and company grade officer of the year.

Training alongside the best elevates skills, and respective of military occupational specialty, in the Army being a soldier comes first.

"Everything tested during the competition is a basic soldier skill - but we took it to the next level," said Sgt. Maj. William Hartman, 58th TC operations. "For example, at the weapons station we took three weapons a part, put them in a box and said go!"

In total, the soldiers completed six warrior tasks in addition to reporting to a board, and the culminating ruck march and stress shoot. Warrior task test stations included: preparing an Advanced System Improvement Program, or ASIP, radio for operation; search an individual in a tactical



environment, weapons assembly and functions check on a M16 assault rifle, M9 pistol and M249 light machine gun; protect themselves from chemical injury and contamination with a Joint-Service, Lightweight, Integrated Suit Technology, or JSLIST; complete a written map reading and land navigation test; and send a nine-line MEDEVAC request.

“The competition represents an opportunity to expand individual skills and sets and example for others to follow,” said Erikson. “Each soldier will benefit from this experience and enhance the readiness of the Maryland National Guard.”

For many competitors the tested warrior skills are something they do not get to touch every month and preparation for the competition was critical.

To prepare, noncommissioned officer competitor Staff Sgt. James Hawley, a military technician for towed and small arms repair assigned to the 110th Information Operations Battalion, reached out to his fellow soldiers as his greatest resource.

Using the expertise of his fellow soldiers across a variety of military backgrounds in communications, medical or infantry, his resourcefulness proved successful, earning him the title of best noncommissioned officer.

When asked what it means to be the best, Hawley’s answer was simple - the best warrior competes against himself.

Enlisted soldier of the year was awarded to Spc. Samuel Cosentino, 58th EMIB, and Officer of the year to First Lt. Chris Hunckler, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion.

Winners and first alternates in each category will receive further training on tasks during the January and February time frame and go on to represent the 58th EMIB at the 2017 Maryland Army National Guard officer, NCO and Soldier Best Warrior Competition; 16-19 March 2017.

“Each soldier will benefit from this experience and enhance the readiness of the Maryland National Guard.”

- Master Sgt. Adam Erickson

58th EMIB operations sergeant and nco in-charge for the competition.

Guardisman hopes to prepare the past for the future

Story and photos by Tech. Sgt. David Speicher, 175th Wing Public Affairs

A Maryland Air Guardsman was looking to volunteer and get his hands dirty in his spare time. During the summer of 2014, he found it across the runway from the 175th Wing in the Glenn L. Martin Maryland Aviation Museum at Martin State Airport.

Staff Sgt. Dave Ranlet, 175th Logistic Readiness Squadron supply technician, now spends most Saturdays restoring engines from planes that are part of local history.

"It is easy to get addicted to," said Ranlet who typically spends eight hours every Saturday volunteering at the museum. With the exception of the one weekend a month of National Guard training, he and his son, Jake, work with other volunteers at the museum that focuses on Maryland and Baltimore aviation history.

The museum has a lot local history due to the Glenn L. Martin Company in Middle River built about 11,000 airplanes here, especially during World War II.

"I went looking for a volunteer project. When I told them I am prior maintenance on C-130s, they were enthusiastic about me joining," said Ranlet.

"Dave is someone unique because of his association with the Air Guard and his previous experience with engines," said Ted Cooper, director of operations for the museum. He said Ranlet has been working on airplanes for a long time whereas most of volunteers show up with no

knowledge of airplanes. "He helps us understand how they work."

"I missed getting my hands dirty and engines were always my thing. I love the heavy metal hardware. I am a big World War II buff," said Ranlet, who previously worked in the engine shop when the Maryland Air National Guard had C-130J cargo planes.

Ranlet has found his first project in restoring one of the six engines at the museum. He and another engine shop volunteer, John W. Steele, are working in the basement of what is now called Middle River Aircraft Systems. They are tearing down and rebuilding the engines that we originally built in Middle River. Their current project is restoring a R-2800 Pratt & Whitney engine, that was used in more than 30 aircraft from the World War II era.

In the cavernous basement, Ranlet and Steele are explorers finding lost treasure.

"It's like your grandfather's basement, we are always finding bits and pieces," said Steele, who with Ranlet find pleasure in coming across odd parts that have sat gathering dust.

Because most volunteers don't have the aircraft maintenance background, Ranlet brings important safety skills to museum.

"He is a valued asset and a personal friend. He has the smarts to bring the engine shop to life in a safe and current way," said Steele.

Just like working on current Air Force aircraft, they follow manuals





during their work. The museum wants to display an engine model that is as close to running as possible said Steele.

"It needs to look really cool to get people motivated," said Ranlet.

Ranlet recalled working on a plane when there were young visitors were watching. He remembers removing an engine from an old Navy fighter and three or four kids saying that he was fixing the airplane as if it was going to fly again. He stopped for a second and thought about it. It made him feel like a kid again.

"Because kids don't believe they can't. They see these planes and they don't see that they are not going to fly. All they see is a beautiful airplane," said Ranlet. "They enjoy it for what it is, not what it isn't."

"We need young volunteers that could fall in love with the place," said Ranlet.

Because most of the current volunteers are well over age 50. Ranlet thinks the Airmen of the Maryland Air National Guard might be a potential pool of aviation enthusiasts who would volunteer at the museum.

The next project will be putting back together a Martin AM-1 Mauler. The museum has the parts of two airplanes. "We'll at least make one out of two. It's going to require a lot of work," said Ranlet.

Fifty years from now Steele can picture children looking at A-10s and C-130s like they look at the museum pieces of today.

"We get tons of kids in when we do open houses. You find a kid or two or three that their eyes really light up when they sit in a cockpit," said Steele. "Those are the pilots; the mechanics of the future."



Base services now includes singer services

Story and photo by SrA Enjoli Saunders,
175th Wing Public Affairs

Master Sgt. Angela P. Keys, base services manager at the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard, receives frequent requests to sing at events held at Warfield Air National Guard Base, Middle River, Md.

Keys did not always perform for the MDANG, but has been singing all her life. She now has the opportunity to combine a lifelong hobby with her everyday job. She began her current journey with the MDANG as a senior airman in 2007.

"I spent eight years in the Mississippi Air National Guard, then two years in the Hawaii Air National Guard," said Keys. "I had no intentions on re-enlisting after a 21 year break in service. However, after a conversation with an MDANG recruiter I found myself as the newest member of the 175th Wing."

While an Airman, Keys remembers her first family day at the wing. She remembers seeing the services superintendent scurrying around in a frenzy because the musicians scheduled to perform the

National Anthem cancelled at the last minute. Keys, a senior airman at the time, volunteered to sing it. This action displayed one of the Air Force's core value of service before self.

"Needless to say the superintendent was nervous; he had never heard me sing or even knew if I could sing," said Keys. "He told me that services plays an integral role in this event and I was going to be representing them so I needed to be sure I was ready."

That Family Day marked Keys first performance at an MDANG event. Since then, she has performed at numerous events that range from Airman of the Year Ceremonies to community support for Armed Forces Day and Veterans Day representing the wing.

The 175th Wing is Maryland's only Air National Guard unit. The wing has a dual mission, a flying mission, offering air support with the A-10C Thunderbolt II and a cyber mission. Both missions provide unique access and opportunities to its members.

"During my time here I've had the privilege to receive a short tour at the Pentagon as well as serve in the command office with Brig. Gen. Scott L. Kelly," said Keys. "The opportunities this base provided me did not just help me but my family also."

"Master Sgt. Keys has been a great asset while working in the command office with me," said Master Sgt. Michele Cook, wing command support staff. "I would call her the protocol expert. I am sure she will have the same commitment in her new position as the base services manager."

Keys now understands why that first impression of family day was so important.

"I love my job as the services manager because we impact and interact with every member on base," said Keys. Her career has led her back to the beginning, from her initial national anthem performance representing services to becoming the services manager.

Life's Precious Moments

Story by Staff Sgt. Michael Smith,
374th Airlift Wing

Bzzt Bzzzt! Bzzt Bzzzt! Sitting in a hand-me-down chair, feet inches from the floor, a red-haired soldier searches for her vibrating phone under piles of paperwork. Discovering the phone under a few Starbucks napkins, her piercing blue eyes widen as she recognized a familiar name.

Upon answering the call her alluring smile quickly fades into a solemn grimace. Without saying a word, she inexpressively makes her way for the exit, drawing attention from her inquisitive coworkers.

In complete disregard to the speed limit the then specialist now Sgt. Aubrey Mitsch, a health care specialist in the 104th Area Support Medical Company, drove 135 miles to do what she does best – putting others before herself.

“My mom told me that my Aunt Sue had two strokes and a seizure,” said Mitsch shakily before pausing to hold back tears. “They found her unconscious laying in her own vomit and rushed her to the emergency room.”

According to Mitsch, she is the black sheep of the family and looks to her Aunt as a second mother who plays the role of her cheerleader when life gets her down.

“I found her in the hospital and it was so hard to see her like that,” said Mitsch blinking profusely to stop herself from crying. “She looked like a lost frail old lady and the life was just gone from her.”

Pulling her phone from her pocket, Mitsch displayed photos from her trip and mentioned that the only clothes she took during the hospital visit was the uniform she had on.

“I hadn’t eaten all day, I felt pretty crappy,” said Mitsch. “But it wasn’t about me, it was about her.”



According to Mitsch, during the initial six-hour emergency room stay, she was eventually able to bring her aunts spirits up and get her back to her light-hearted self.

“She [Aunt Sue] started to hit on the doctors,” said Mitsch while cracking a smile. “She then started telling me I needed to get married and to start having babies soon before time runs out.”

Being the only family member in the area, Mitsch stepped up and became the point of contact for the hospital staff; relaying updates and briefing her aunts medical history to doctors.

“It was pretty hard dealing with all of it alone,” said Mitsch as she fiddled with her watch. “Sometimes you just want a hug or someone to tell you it’s ok.”

The next day, after being moved to the stroke unit, Aunt Sue’s mental state took a turn for the worse.

“She looked to me and said ‘I just want to die,’” said Mitsch while looking out the window, wiping tears from her face. “I never felt more sad in my life knowing that there was nothing I could do for her.”

Moving from New Hampshire to Maryland in 2010 without her family, Mitsch mentioned that she often feels alone; but that it helps knowing that her aunt was close enough to visit and console her.

“I told her it was ok for her to die, even though I wanted her to stay with me,” said Mitsch, tears streamed down

her freckled cheeks. “But, I just wanted her to be happy. So I called everyone in my family so they could say their goodbyes.”

With tears steadily flowing from her now blood shot eyes, Mitsch’s mood suddenly shifted, as if a jolt of electricity ran through her body.

“After talking and praying with the chaplain she fell asleep, so I went to grab some lunch,” said Mitsch, slowly beginning to smirk. “When I came back she had done a complete 180. She said she had a dream that she had died and now she wanted to live. I was just dumbfounded. How does someone go from declining medical attention to not wanting to die? It was so emotionally draining.”

According to Mitsch, after Aunt Sue’s epiphany, her warm friendly aura quickly returned. Back to her normal self, but still lacking full mobility, she was moved from the stroke unit to rehabilitation wing.

“It was great being able to see her smile and laugh again,” said Mitsch with a gleaming face free of tears. “I wanted to spend more time with her, but she kept telling me to go have fun and enjoy my life.”

After five days of providing around the clock medical care and sleeping in a chair next to her aunt’s bed, Mitsch, obeying the speed limit, drove back the same 135 miles to her guard duties in Maryland; continuing to put the needs of others first.

Bettis, right, demonstrates to U.S. Army Inspector General Lt. Gen. David E. Quantock how to use the IG Locator.



New Soldier-conceived apps offer access to Army reference materials, worldwide Inspector General database

Story and photo by Dustin Perry, USA/IGA

Two new mobile applications developed by a Soldier will give users quick and easy access to more than 500 Army reference materials and a worldwide database for the Army's Inspector General offices.

The IG Locator and DAIG Bookshelf apps, both of which are now available for free download on the iTunes App Store, was the idea of Maj. Brian Bettis, an inspector general with the Department of the Army Inspector General Agency.

The IG Locator app is a digital directory that contains phone numbers and street addresses for Army IG offices both in the U.S. and overseas. The DAIG Bookshelf is searchable database that offers users quick access to more than 500 publicly available Army materials – regulations and other documents – that are often referenced by inspectors general as part of their duties.

The genesis for the apps first came when Bettis was on temporary duty in Chicago in October 2015 to attend the Defense Entrepreneurs Forum, an event that brings together “defense and national security leaders who strive to solve national security problems ... by exposing [them] to the techniques and experiences of civilian innovators and social entrepreneurs,” according to the DEF website.

Prior to the event, Bettis said he was having difficulty finding the correct phone number for an IG contact. Bettis

concluded that if he, an inspector general, was having trouble getting in touch with a fellow inspector general, then the average customer would likely encounter the same problem.

“After I got back [from the conference] and I was stewing on this for six months, I reached out to a guy I met at the DEF forum and asked, ‘How do I build an app?’” said Bettis. “He says, ‘Give me a day and I’ll get back to you.’”

Bettis’ contact put him in touch with people at the Army Research Laboratory, an Army organization that conducts research and analysis to develop communications, vehicle and weapons technology for the Army, and often works with private-sector partners.

Bettis submitted to ARL a PowerPoint slide he made that outlined his concept for the apps. He initially envisioned creating a mobile “techchannel” – a secure, up-to-date digital phone and email roster for IGs worldwide to make it easier for them to contact each other.

The Locator app could also be “crowdsourced,” as Bettis described it, meaning that if registered users found an error, they could submit the correct email address, phone number or street address for their respective IG location, and it would be immediately updated in the database.

“If a Soldier is out in South Dakota and is looking for the IG office, and the app has the wrong address and he finds it, he can

correct it,” said Bettis. “Hopefully this helps Soldiers get to their IG office faster than having to wait on a phone call back from the Pentagon.”

The concept of the Bookshelf app came from Bettis wanting to give IGs and Soldiers quick and searchable access to Army regulations, pamphlets and other official documents. More than 500 documents are available in Bookshelf and are searchable with a keyword “find” function, and additional features are planned for the app in the near future, said Bettis.

“My hope is that it [the Bookshelf app] will lessen the amount of work that some IGs get based off of complaints that could be easily solved by taking just a couple of minutes to look it up yourself,” said Bettis. “Anyone who has the app can do the research right on their phone.”

Though Bettis said his initial concept was rough – “they were caveman drawings,” he joked – ARL realized the potential of the idea and agreed to fund the project. His apps were added to an existing contract ARL had with TransApps, a DOD mobile apps program that began in 2010 and provides Soldiers with a number of secure mobile applications that offer users a broad range of geospatial, tactical and analytic capabilities.

“There is this push for innovation in the military, and we’re connected with another couple of entities through ARL in the government, like the National Security Technology Accelerator/MD5 and the Defense Innovation Unit Experimental, that are driving this innovation push,” said Chad Vanderslice, the principle investigator in the project. “Brian is a prime example of one of those [innovators] – we call them ‘intrepreneurs’ because they’re inside their organizations trying to make progress.”

A team of TransApps developers began working on the apps shortly after that. Lou Perna, a software development engineer with the veteran-owned development company GXM Consulting, was asked to lead the project.

On the +LINE

Maryland Air National Guard deployed in Middle East

U.S. Air Force Master Sgt. Joseph Lamb (front), 447th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron (EAMXS) aircraft structures superintendent, and Tech. Sgt. Douglas Duncan, 447th EAMXS aircraft structures technician, work to repair the engine well for an A-10 Thunderbolt II Oct. 21, 2016, at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. Airmen from the 447th EAMXS aircraft structures shop inspected the A-10 Thunderbolt.



Members of the 104th Fighter Squadron take a break during flight operations in the Middle East to wish everyone back home a Merry Christmas and home a Happy New Year.



U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Edgar Castellano, 447th Expeditionary Aircraft Maintenance Squadron phase maintenance, relays information from the cockpit of an A-10 Thunderbolt II during a scheduled phase inspection Oct. 20, 2016, at Incirlik Air Base, Turkey. The A-10 Thunderbolt II received an inspection to ensure it remained fully operational.



29th Infantry Division Mobilizes

More than 450 Maryland and Virginia Army National Guard Soldiers assigned to the 29th Infantry Division say goodbye to family and friends after their departure ceremony at Fort Belvoir, Va., Oct 30, 2016. The 29th ID is being mobilized to provide mission command in the Middle East in support of Operation Spartan Shield for more than 18,000 Soldiers in U.S. Central Command's area of responsibility. This will be the largest number of troops the 29th ID has led since World War II. If needed, the 29th ID is prepared to conduct contingency operations and command forces to respond to any threats in the CENTCOM area of responsibility.



110th Information Operations Battalion Mobilizes

Maryland National Guard Soldiers from the 110th Information Operations Battalion mobilize on Oct. 30, 2016 for an upcoming deployment to the Horn of Africa to support United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM). This represents the 8th deployment in support of AFRICOM and the 15th Field Support Team deployed from the Maryland National Guard since the IO Battalion was formed in 2008.



MDARNG officially opens Brig. Gen. William Smallwood Readiness Center

The Maryland Army National Guard officially opens the Brigadier General William Smallwood Readiness Center in LaPlata, Md., during a ribbon cutting ceremony on Oct. 16, 2016. The 28,626 square-foot Readiness Center replaces the previous facility, built in 1952. The new readiness center will house the 253rd Engineer Company. This new facility will allow the unit to prepare for its state and federal missions.



MDARNG and HART members support relief and rescue efforts from hurricane Matthew

Members of the Maryland Army National Guard and the Maryland Helicopter Aquatic Rescue Team deploy to South Carolina to provide aid and support due to hurricane Matthew from Oct. 7-11, 2016. The UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter departs with a crew of four Maryland Guard soldiers and two rescue swimmers/swift water technicians from Baltimore County Fire Department. The HART crew members flew 10.7 hours for search and rescue missions and a total of 19.2 hours. They conducted one hoist infill and one landing to determine isolated civilian status. The team conducted area and route reconnaissance for boat and high clearance vehicles, downed power lines, boundaries of the flood damage, and location of isolated civilians. They also relayed communications among civil authorities.



29th (Expeditionary) Military Intelligence Battalion activation

Brig. Gen. Timothy E. Gowen, commander of the Maryland Army National Guard hosts 629th (Expeditionary) Military Intelligence Battalion as they conducted their activation and assumption of command ceremony at Fort Meade, Md., Oct. 23, 2016.

Gowen was the keynote speaker for the ceremony as Lt. Col. Colette R. Topfer took command of the newly formed battalion and uncased the guidons for her units.

The new battalion consists of three companies, Headquarters, Alpha and Bravo. Headquarters Detachment provides mission command, lifecycle support, and logistics for the battalion. Alpha Company conducts counterintelligence and human intelligence in support of Corps, Division and Brigade Combat Teams. Bravo Company conducts multidiscipline intelligence operations through the use of signals intelligence, full motion video, linguist support, and all sources intelligence in support of echelons Corps and below unified land operations.



“It is always better to be activating units and bring more capability to our state. This is a great area to have this type of unit with all the other similar government agencies in the area.”

- Brig. Gen. Timothy E. Gowen
Commander of the Maryland Army National Guard





Freestate Challenge Academy members complete obstacle course and are interviewed for news story

Members of the Freestate Challenge Academy had the opportunity to run through the obstacle course under the watchful eye of Special Forces Soldiers at the Gunpowder Military Reservation. They were also interviewed by Sarah Caldwell a reporter with WBAL TV for a story that aired on Nov. 3, 2016 because the Baltimore Ravens honored the members of the Academy for their volunteer work. They attended the Baltimore Ravens' game on Nov. 6, 2016.



Freestate Challenge Academy class #46 graduates

The Maryland Freestate Challenge Academy holds their course completion ceremony for the 22 week residency phase for 104 cadets of class #47 at Havre de Grace High School, Havre de Grace, Md., Dec. 10, 2016.

Retired Air Force Gen. Larry O. Spencer, who served as the Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Air Force, spoke to the cadets as the keynote speaker.





Veterans Day Parade

Citizens celebrate and honor current veterans and those who made the ultimate sacrifice at Baltimore City's Veterans Day Parade on Nov. 11, 2016.



Ravens pre-game flag ceremony

Members of the Maryland National Guard participate in a pre-game flag ceremony before the Baltimore Ravens' Thursday night game in honor of Veteran's Day at M&T Bank Stadium in Baltimore, Md., Nov. 10, 2016.

Maryland Fleet Week and Air Show

Martin State Airport hosts an open house on Oct. 15, 2016 during Maryland Fleet Week and Air Show featuring the Blue Angels. The airport was open to the public where visitors could tour static displays of military aircraft as well as observe aircraft takeoffs and landings.



"Dandy Fifth" Pass in Review 2016

The Maryland Army National Guard's 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry Regiment "The Dandy Fifth" conducts their annual Pass in Review at the Fifth Regiment Armory in Baltimore, Md., Dec. 3, 2016. Current and former members of the 175th, also known as Baltimore's "Dandy Fifth" Regiment, attended the event, paying their respects to the unit's historic legacy. The Fifth traces its roots back to the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.



Joint E-9 Professional Development Dinner

The Maryland National Guard hosts the Joint E-9 Professional Development Dinner at Warfield Air National Guard Base in Middle River, Md., Oct. 1, 2016.

The guest speaker, Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell Brush, senior enlisted advisor for The National Guard Bureau, spoke about accountability within the Guard family, leaders staying connected to Soldier and Airmen, and not ignoring the signs that may point to suicide or sexual assault.

“It’s time to be a leader. They [prospective service members] come to our organization for an opportunity to be led. We have to model it for them.”

- Chief Master Sgt. Mitchell Brush

Senior enlisted advisor for The National Guard Bureau



Veteran's Day on “BMore Lifestyle”

Tech. Sgt. Jessica Hiatt represents the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard on WTUB's "BMore Lifestyle" Veteran's Day recognition program, Nov. 11, 2016.





Airmen Recognition Ceremony

The Maryland Air National Guard holds the annual Airmen Recognition Ceremony at Warfield Air National Guard Base, Middle River, Md., Dec. 4, 2016.



En Co Soldiers compete for Soldier and NCO of the Year

SSG Jacoby of the 253d En Co and SPC Brightwell of the 244th En Co represents the 581st TC at the Brigade Soldier and NCO of the Year Competition on Nov. 6, 2016. The soldiers competed in Warrior Tasks, stress shooting, a ruck march, written tests, and a board evaluation. Jacoby won NCO of the Year and advanced to the state competition.





Sergeants Major Association Dining

The Maryland Army National Guard Sergeants Major Association hosts its 23rd Dining In on Nov. 11, 2016, at the 5th Regiment Armory in Baltimore, Md. Retired Sergeant Major of the Army Jack L. Tilley spoke during the event. Tilley became the 12th SMA in on June 23, 2000, and was the last Vietnam veteran to hold the position.



National Guard Birthday celebration

Lt. Col. Dave Dement cuts the cake during the National Guard Birthday celebration at the Green Turtle in Aberdeen, Md., Dec. 13, 2016. Dement was also the keynote speaker for the celebration.

On Dec. 13, 1636, the first militia regiments in North America were organized in Massachusetts. Based upon an order of the Massachusetts Bay Colony's General Court, the colony's militia was organized into three permanent regiments to better defend the colony. This marks the beginning of the organized militia, and the birth of today's National Guard.

The celebration at the Green Turtle was sponsored by Association of the United States Army and Army Aviation Association.



New A-10 static display at Warfield Air National Guard Base

Members of the 127th Wing, Michigan Air National Guard along with members of the 175th Wing, Maryland Air National Guard move and place a new A-10 static display at the main gate of Warfield Air National Guard Base, Middle River, Md., Nov. 4, 2016.



Maryland warrant officer school graduates class 16-001

Army National Guard Soldiers from Maryland, Delaware and the United States Army Reserve graduates from the Maryland Army National Guard Warrant Officer Candidate School Class 16-001 on Oct 23, 2016. The WOCS Company, 1st Battalion of the 70th Regional Training Institute relocated to Aberdeen Proving Grounds from Camp Fretterd Military Reservation in 2014. This is the seconds WOCS class to graduate from APG.





"Trunk or Treat"

Maryland National Guard Soldiers joins the Baltimore Police Department and the Baltimore City Fire Department and other public officials at Mondawmin Mall for "Trunk or Treat," Oct. 22, 2016.

Customer service department dresses up for Halloween celebration

Members of the 175th Wing customer service department wear costumes for one duty day for a Halloween celebration on Oct. 28, 2016.





Thanksgiving lunch during drill

Chief master sergeants and senior master sergeants serve Thanksgiving lunch during drill Nov. 5, 2016 at Warfield Air National Guard Base, Middle River, Md.



Karsonya Wise Whitehead speaks at holiday breakfast

U.S. Air Force Brig. Gen. Randolph Staudenraus, 175th Wing commander, speaks to Dr. Karsonya Wise Whitehead, associate professor at Loyola University Maryland, and her sons during the holiday breakfast at Warfield Air National Guard Base, Middle River, Md., Dec. 4, 2016.

Whitehead gave the keynote address "Integrity First, Service Before Self, Excellence in Everything We Do" to the 175th Wing during the breakfast.

Final Frame

Lt. Gen. (MD) James F. Fretterd

Nov. 2, 1930 - Nov. 26, 2016



Retired Lt. Gen. (MD) James F. Fretterd of Federalsburg, Md, died peacefully early Saturday, Nov. 26, 2016, at his home surrounded by his family. He was born in Staten Island, New York, Nov., 2, 1930, he was 86 years old.

"General Fretterd served the State of Maryland and our nation with great honor and distinction," said Governor Larry Hogan. "He leaves a legacy of achievement that will forever stand as an example of selfless service and commitment for Maryland's Citizen Soldiers and Airmen."

Fretterd served 52 years in the Maryland National Guard, he joined in 1951 until his retirement in January 2003. He served as Adjutant General of Maryland from February 1987 to January, 2003. His assignments were varied and challenging. He served as a company commander and later S3 of the 2nd Battalion, 115th Infantry. He later served as commander of the 115th Military Police Battalion. He became the chief of staff of the Headquarters Detachment of the Maryland Army National Guard in December 1976. He became the assistant adjutant general of the Maryland

Army National Guard in October 1981 and was appointed as adjutant general in February 1987.

Fretterd received a direct appointment as a 2nd Lieutenant in July 1956. He earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Sociology for the University of the State of New York. He also was a graduate of the Army Command and Staff College and graduated from the Senior Reserve Commander's course for the Army War College.

Among his many military decorations are the Distinguished Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, and the Distinguished Service Cross, state of Maryland.

Fretterd was preceded by his wife Ellen in 2010 and is survived by two daughters, Linda Earls (Chris) of Greensboro, Md and Laura Patrick (Bruce) of Harrington, De; and four grandchildren: Amber Patrick (18), Ryan Patrick (16), Ryan Earls (24), and Morgan Earls (11).

The funeral services were held on Dec. 2, 2016 at the Fretterd Community Center in Denton, Md. The interment was at the Bloomery Cemetery in Smithville, Md.