

GRIZZLY

Official Newsmagazine of the California National Guard

Cal Guard mobilizes for deadly Northern California wildfires

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40th Infantry Division deploys to Afghanistan on 100th anniversary of its founding



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Leadership Corner

Wildfires illustrate importance of your service

Major General David S. Baldwin



The Northern California wildfires struck Napa, Solano and Sonoma counties in October with incredible swiftness and fury—the most deadly and destructive wildfires in California history.

Hundreds of thousands of acres were scorched. More than 8,000 homes and structures were burned, and more than 100,000 people displaced, many of them finding temporary homes in evacuation centers. Hundreds were unaccounted for as the fires, driven by high winds, swept across hillsides and burned to the ground entire neighborhoods, most devastatingly in the city of Santa Rosa. Tragically, 43 people were killed.

Civilian first responders and the residents of our hard-hit communities needed our help. Following an emergency declaration by Gov. Jerry Brown, I activated the Cal Guard's Tier 1 forces on Oct. 9, under the command of Task Force 49.

At the height of the activation more than 2,500 California National Guardsmen were on duty in the affected areas in one of our largest and most dynamic mobilizations since 9/11.

Twenty-one of our aircraft were mobilized, including Black Hawk helicopters for water drops and medical evacuation, C-130J air tankers for retardant drops, and

two MQ-9 remotely piloted aircraft, which provided imagery and data collection for incident commanders.

Military police, combat engineers, and transportation Soldiers and Airmen mobilized to assist civilian emergency-response agencies by performing search and recovery, security, traffic control, and escorting evacuated residents back to their homes. We transported supplies and people in our vehicles. We even provided translators and cultural liaisons, military attorneys and chaplains to assist our non-English speaking populations impacted by the fires.

As I traveled through the affected areas, I saw how hard our Cal Guard Soldiers and Airmen were working under difficult conditions, putting in long hours before returning to sleep in cots on armory floors, warehouses and in open fields. I saw your professionalism and more importantly your compassion for those who were impacted by the devastation of the wildfires.

I also witnessed the incredible outpouring of support the affected communities showed toward us. Volunteers provided us with free meals and kept us hydrated with donated water and sports drinks. Signs on overpasses and bridges proclaimed thanks and support for your service. Chiropractors and masseuses even volunteered their services to ease Guardsmen's

aching bones and muscles after long shifts. We were called to duty and our state residents appreciated the fact that we were there in their time of need.

The Northern California wildfires will go down as one of the worst tragedies in California history. It is just for such tragedies that we exist—to support and assist our own communities and civil authorities during state emergencies. Our response to the recent fires is the heart of our state mission.

We live in and serve the communities that have been devastated by these fires. We train year-round to come to the aid of our neighbors when tragedy strikes. And the people of this great state appreciate our efforts. It's why we serve.

The year 2017 gave us no shortage of disasters—from the Oroville Dam crisis and winter floods, to hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, and the recent wildfires. For each of these emergencies, the Cal Guard answered the call.

I want to thank all of you for your service and your willingness to protect, defend and serve our great state and nation.

Stay ready. There's no telling when your services will be needed again.

Respect and professionalism are vital

Chief Master Sergeant Thomas L. James



For those of you who already understand commitment, discipline, and positive reinforcement behaviors to enable ready organizations; this submission will read all too familiar. However, we have some members of our force who are attempting to do their own thing at the cost our collective warfighting and domestic response potential. First Sergeants both Blue and Green; I ask that you make my remarks part of your message through the rest of the calendar year. As follows:

As professional while in uniform and out, I expect you to act and communicate appropriately. If using insults and epithets to degrade your "battles" or "wingmen" is your principle, then you are acting immorally and you need to stop! No matter how wonderful we think we are, there are no walking legends in our formations and certainly no individuals at our mission consoles. What we do requires teamwork, not division using unscrupulous words. Stop prattling over small differences and use your energy to train harder and fight better.

There is evidence of a rise in unwarranted personal contact occurring at our workplace. Some of you may not realize it, but your unscrupulous behavior is disruptive. I understand many of you embrace our units as if they are your own family but I remind you, on occasion, even families do not see eye-to-eye. Those that feel the need to hug others in uniform, Stop! This warning also goes out to those few service members that like to be "handsy" with fellow team members.

The key point is; others determine personal contact as being inappropriate while leaving many offenders seemingly surprised that a line was crossed. The fix for this potential misunderstanding is easy; unless there is a tactical or operational reason for personal contact in uniform, don't do it!

Finally, every leader in your chain of command has implored you not to get behind the wheel after drinking alcohol. I remind all of you enlisted members, you raised your hand during your enlistment oaths and proclaimed you would follow the orders of the officers appointed over you. As professionals, your commitment accompanied by these words, "drinking while driving is an expression of selfishness and recklessness that suggests an implication to do harm to others." Aside from the thousands of dollars in personal expense you waste on fines, alternative transportation, and lost work, you again jeopardize the operational effectiveness of your unit. Not to mention, you carelessly put the public you serve at risk. Designated drivers are always part of a good plan, while using Uber or Lyft can serve as a good back-up.

Work hard and enjoy your free time but DO NOT compromise your readiness potential or public safety. Your units need you and I need you.

It is my honor to serve you!

"Work hard and enjoy your free time but DO NOT compromise your readiness potential or public safety. Your units need you and I need you."

- Chief Master Sergeant Thomas L. James

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Submissions

Articles:

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

Photographs:

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

E-mail submissions and feedback to:

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Cover photo by
Capt. Jason Sweeney

Cal Guard Soldiers search for missing persons and personal effects in the rubble of the Estancia Apartment Homes in Santa Rosa Oct. 14.

Cover photo inset by
Spc. Amy Carle



A Cal Guardsman with the 40th Infantry Division steps out of line to share one final kiss before boarding a plane Sept. 18 at the Joint Force Training Base airfield in Los Alamitos, California.

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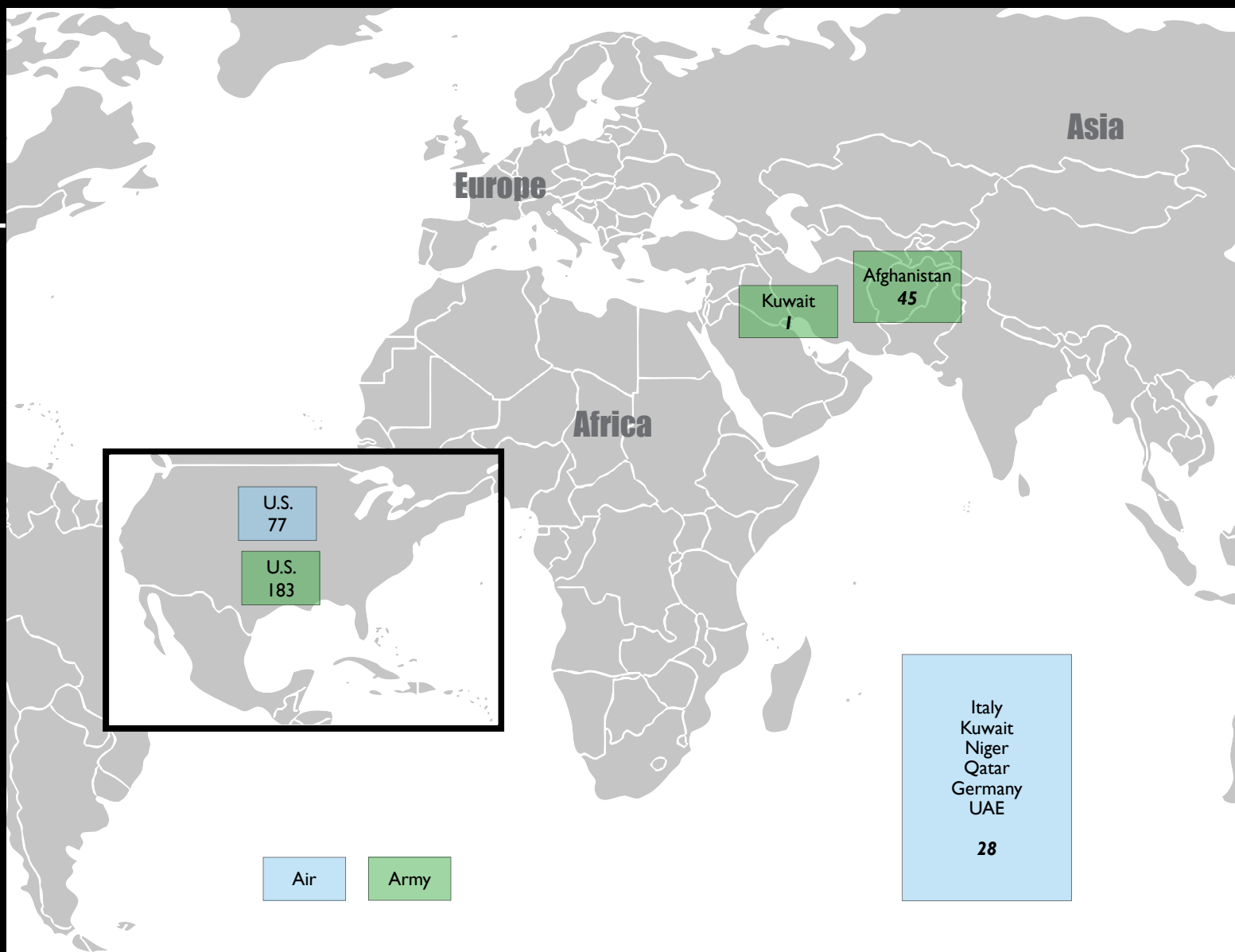
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California National Guard troops mobilized as of **October 2017**



579th Engineer Battalion at ground zero during historic wildfire disaster



TOP: Cal Guard Soldiers from the 40th Military Police Company, the 149th Chemical Company and the 235th Engineer Company (Sapper) search for missing persons and personal effects in the rubble of the Estancia Apartment Homes in Santa Rosa Oct. 14. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Lt. Col. David Hall and Capt. Kristi Carr, 870th Military Police Company commander, meet with MPs providing security at a shelter for hundreds of evacuees at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds in Santa Rosa on Oct. 15. **BOTTOM CENTER:** Maj. Donald Lipscomb, left, operations officer for the 579th Engineer Battalion, briefs Maj. Gen. David Baldwin, Adjutant General of the California National Guard, at the 579th headquarters building in Santa Rosa on Oct. 14. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** An NBC News crew films Soldiers from the 235th Engineer Company (Sappers) during a search and extraction mission in Santa Rosa on Oct. 16. **Photos by Capt. Jason Sweeney**

By CAPT. JASON SWEENEY
69th Public Affairs Detachment

It was like a scene from a war movie. Whole neighborhoods were flattened and turned to ash with only chimneys left standing. Cars were blackened and gutted in driveways. Soldiers wearing respirator masks moved through the ashes searching for casualties.

The scene wasn't of war but of the aftermath of the Tubbs Fire which decimated the city of Santa Rosa on Oct. 9.

Residents had little warning as high winds whipped the fire into an inferno that burned so fast and hot that aluminum melted from car engines and flowed down driveways.

The fire killed at least 19 Santa Rosa residents, caused the evacuation of tens of thousands and destroyed 3,000 of the the city's homes—5 percent of its housing stock.

The fire struck close to the headquarters armory of the Cal Guard's 579th Engineer Battalion, which at one point was nearly evacuated. The 579th armory was only a few min-

utes away from some of the worst affected neighborhoods.

The battalion, along with 2,500 Cal Guard Soldiers and Airmen, were mobilized Oct. 9 to support civilian authorities fighting the fires and assist in recovery efforts.

"This was the fastest spreading fire to hit this region in recent experience," said Lt. Col. Christopher Angle, 579th commander. "The rapidness of its progression necessitated an immediate response."

Task Force 579 was formed and immediately its Soldiers, most from the local area, swung into action in a variety of mission sets. Soldiers from the task force managed traffic control points for the Sonoma County Sheriff's Office and Santa Rosa Police Department; conducted search and extraction missions in some of the worst hit areas; and supported 11 shelters for evacuees with security, communications, logistics and general support as needed.

On Oct. 14, Soldiers from the task force's 40th Military Police Company, the 149th Chemical Company and the 235th Engineer Company (Sapper) searched through the rubble

and ash of the Estancia Apartment Homes for missing persons and personal effects. Sonoma County Sheriff's Office Det. Joey Horsman said the support provided by the California National Guard and was "huge". "If it was just us, we couldn't cover this kind of area," he said.

"We hate the fact that there's been so much destruction, but we're eager to get out here and help," said Staff Sgt. Sergio Soto, of the 40th Military Police Company, as he searched for missing persons in the ashes of homes that had been leveled by the fire.

The task force's recovery efforts continued for more than three weeks of long days and hard work assisting local first responders and residents of the community.

"Morale remains high," Angle said during the effort. "Sonoma County is home to the 579th and our Soldiers are happy to directly support our local first responders and neighbors. The support and goodwill from a community pulling together to help each other continues to inspire us daily and is a tremendous source of pride for what we are doing and what it means to serve in the National Guard."

Cal Guard's 49th MP Brigade responds to inferno with 1,900-plus troops

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

Never before has this battlefield been seen.

Even with the 49th Military Police Brigade's storied career – one of multiple successful overseas deployments and a current homeland security mission – this California Army National Guard unit has never witnessed a natural disaster so destructive as October's fire inferno in Northern California.

"From Jan. 1 to Oct. 8 of this year, we saw almost 234,000 acres burned," said CAL FIRE's (California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection) Scott McClain, public information officer. "But from Oct. 8 until (Oct. 22), we were looking at over 263,000 acres burned. This, by far, is the worst fire season California has ever been in."

This led the 49th's entire command into an emergency activation. At its peak, more than 1,500 troops responded, with hundreds more from other commands falling under the 49th task force that stretched into three North Bay counties northeast of San Francisco. The bulk of the Soldiers activated were military police, while others were comprised of drivers, mechanics, food services and more supporting members.

This marked the first time since the 1992 Los Angeles Riots that the 49th was activated entirely. Subordinate units have assisted in fire missions before, but hardly more than a company size.

"We got the call to deploy forces in support of local law enforcement in Sonoma County and the request quickly escalated," said Command Sgt. Maj. Richard S. Gibson, 49th operations command sergeant major. "The 49th has become the premiere unit for civil support on the ground during times of disaster or civil unrest. We are trained to quickly alert and mobilize for all hazard response as shown during the Oroville Dam crisis earlier this year. We have shown that we can quickly respond with a multitude of assets and attain results."

The 49th's Fairfield, California headquarters was the main operations site for three



Members of the California Army National Guard's 40th Military Police Company take notes and listen to instructions prior to a mission at the Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa, California, at the height of the 2017 Northern California wildfires that ravaged Napa, Solano and Sonoma counties in October. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

battalions that are based in Pittsburg, Lancaster and Santa Rosa. Nearly two dozen subordinate units were called up, some coming from Los Alamitos and National City in Southern California about 500 miles away. The mission was to supplement several thousand local and state police officers, and assist agencies under the California Office of Emergency Services (CAL OES) with security.

Hundreds of military policemen hit the streets, controlling traffic points and other areas of entry. Additional Soldiers performed assistance patrols along hard-hit areas in Napa and Santa Rosa. "We're sending Soldiers out in vehicles to show our presence," said 1st Sgt. Frank Camacho of the 330th Military Police Company. "It's to let the community know we're there if they need us. The local police is doing so many things, and we're here to help them and the community in any way we can."



Second Lt. Daniel Tsoi-A-Sue, left, and Staff Sgt. Sergio Soto of the California Army National Guard's 40th Military Police Company, 49th Military Police Brigade, connect with command staff on a mission at Coffey Park, one of the hardest hit areas in Santa Rosa, California, at the height of the 2017 Northern California wildfires. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

Gibson tracked more than 100 official tasks that were completed. In addition to controlling traffic points, troops were sent to help secure emergency shelters. They were sent to schools, colleges, local businesses, etc., to transport food, hygiene and medical supplies to other areas of need. Soldiers united with civilian volunteers to build up a donation site, while others were called to break down evacuation centers once residents were allowed to return to their homes. The task force also utilized its bilingual Soldiers to serve as interpreters at disaster centers where they assisted FEMA representatives helping non-English speaking victims.

"This was our chance to truly help our community and lend a hand wherever needed," Gibson said. "Our Soldiers performed traffic control, security and tent setup for evacuation centers, cleanup efforts at Sonoma County Developmental Center, decontamination of first responders during search and rescue operations and more."

Gibson continued, "We helped in the transportation of evacuees, cleanup of high schools, clearing debris from roads, and filled buckets with masks, gloves, and sifters to assist civilians searching for personal belongings left behind in the fires."

California Gov. Edmund G. Brown Jr. activated the Cal Guard in early October, declaring, "the circumstances of these fires by reason of their magnitude, are, or are likely to be beyond the control of the services ... of any single local government; the California National Guard shall mobilize ... to support disaster response and relief efforts ..."

In an official release, CAL FIRE announced that the Tubbs Fire, which killed at least 22 people in Santa Rosa, was the most destructive wildfire in California history. Three other North Bay

fires that swept through the region on the same morning – two of them in Sonoma County – rank in the state's Top 20 list: The Nuns Fire in Sonoma Valley is No. 6; the Atlas Fire in Napa Valley at No. 10; and the Redwood Valley in Mendocino County fire ranks 16th.

In these October blazes alone, more than 8,000 homes and structures burned; more than 100,000 people were displaced, many of them finding temporary homes in evacuation centers; more than 40 killed, and more than 500 were unaccounted for, per CAL FIRE statistics.

"That fire," says McClean, referring to the Tubbs Fire that decimated an area called Coffey Park in Santa Rosa, "was like a blowtorch laying on its side and blowing through whatever it came across."

Since the start of the fire on Oct. 8, CAL FIRE responded to 250 new wildfires. At the peak of the wildfires, roughly 11,000 firefighters were battling 21 major wildfires that consumed 245,000-plus acres. Cal Guard forces were assigned to areas that were affected by the Tubbs, Pocket, Atlas and Nuns fires, the most destructive wildfires in the wine counties.

"Out of the 20 most destructive wildfires in the state of California, Tubbs is now No. 1," said Santa Rosa Fire Chief Tony Gossner. "Nuns is No. 6, and we were dealing with both of those fires under this one incident management team, and they're complex."

This fire season marked one of the Cal Guard's most historic in terms of assets used. As the 49th dispersed its land troops, Cal Guard air assets continued the fight from above with helicopters and air tankers dropping millions of gallons of water and fire retardant. A force of 300 troops was training at the Cal Guard's Camp Roberts in preparation for ground support, where they follow fire lines and perform mop up operations.

Cal Guardsmen assist at fire evacuation center

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

The presence alone of the California Army National Guard was enough for Deborah L. Dalton to put things into perspective.

As thousands of people flee the Northern California fires — especially those in Sonoma County — hundreds quickly landed at Dalton's 12,000 square-foot facility in Petaluma that quickly became an evacuation site. Normally, Dalton's Cavanagh Recreation Center caters to at-risk youth, where caring adults mentor youngsters into becoming better people.

Dalton and her 12-member administrative staff had to shift gears on the fly. Teachers became hostesses, staffers became waiters and janitors. Bus after bus started trekking into the compound, unloading fire victims. Cots and sleeping essentials filled the Cavanagh facility beyond its required capacity.

"Oh Lord, it became so overwhelming," Dalton explained. "We've never done this before. We're not trained to be an evacuation center. I could have cried until you guys (the California Guard) rolled up in your Humvees."

Her years mentoring troubled youth kicked in. As evacuees settled in, the potential for disorder filled the center. Dalton noticed tension among the outsiders —



Staff Sgt. Timothy Barrera of the 270th Military Police Company discusses the daily schedule with Deborah L. Dalton, executive director of Cavanagh Recreation Center in Petaluma, California. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

young adults, in particular — and avoiding conflict was going to be left in her hands, along with her staff. "We're only women here," Dalton added.

Just outside, several California Guard vehicles pulled up. Local authorities were also on hand, but they're strapped supporting hundreds of other scenarios. So members of the California Guard's 270th and 870th Military Police companies stepped forward to give Dalton and crew a hand. For several days now, they've worked a system where order and peace overrule the fear and unknown.

Dalton said the MPs have been a big help. "Now we know where to route people. Now we have a better idea of what to do. I love you people, and I'm a fan."

The guardsmen work around the clock and not just providing security. They carry food and other items into the facility. They move, load and unload vehicles. They talk to the victims, and many of the guardsmen are bilingual. Some guardsmen, such as the 270th's Staff Sgt. Timothy Barrera, go as far as to play games with kids.

"We can't break our rules, but if there are things that we can help to get done, we do it," Barrera said. "There's a really good feeling here. People keep offering us stuff, but we keep telling them we're here to help you."

Raging fires in Northern California have killed more than 30 people, scorched hundreds of thousands of acres of land, and displaced several thousands, per the California Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE) website in late September and early October. Several of the California Guard's military police units were assigned to assist victims and supporters at various shelters, centers and churches in Northern California cities.

"You know what it is? I think it's just the fact that they're here gives us peace of mind," Dalton said about the California Guardsmen. "We just weren't prepared for something like this. This center has never seen anything like it. With them (the Guardsmen) here, now we can concentrate on what needs to be done."

Firestruck communities provide generous support to the California National Guard

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

Something should be said about the outpouring of support given to the California Army National Guard during their response to the Northern California wildfires.

From the point of view of many of the Guardsmen on the ground, there are not enough words to express thanks for the generosity received from local communities.

When Guardsmen go out on missions, benevolence rolls in behind them. Restaurants cater lunches for free. Organizations provide dinner — such as barbecued ribs and chicken — on their dime. There's no Soldier here who's in danger of dehydration. There's an abundance of water, juice and sports drinks, courtesy of community volunteers. Chiropractors and masseuses have even volunteered their services to ease Guardsmen's aching bones and muscles after long shifts.

"The community has been so supportive, we had to tell people to stop giving us stuff," said Maj. Andrew Hanson, executive officer, 185th Military Police Battalion. "We're so grateful to the community for their support, but we had to turn some things away. It was just too much."

No one has forgotten those in need: the evacuees, those directly hurt from the fires. Almost every day, Guardsmen are transporting non-perishable food, water and medical supplies to food centers and emergency sites. Other Guardsmen are guarding some of those locations, as well as monitoring traffic stops and entry points. Others, mostly military police, are doing whatever they can to assure law and order is maintained.

But volunteers are determined to help those who are helping those who need it most. Sindy Biederman, of American Canyon Troop Support (ACTS), is one. She leads ACTS and has aided military troops for more than a decade, having three sons who have worn, or continue to wear, a service uniform.

"You guys do so much more for us. Much, much more," said Biederman, who, with just four others, hosted a barbecue for more than 200 Guardsmen. "So how do we repay you for all you've done? This is our way of saying thank you."

When fire season subsides, Biederman has lined up ACTS for its annual holiday care package drive. They'll send gifts to troops overseas, and this holiday they'll include 3-foot Christmas trees, she said.

Napa, Solano and Sonoma counties — areas that absorbed the brunt of this firestorm — have been receptive to Cal Guardsmen, Hanson explained. People wave at troops guarding entry points. On highways, passengers in vehicles take photos of troops in their Army trucks. Some civilians go out of their way to shake hands and strike up conversations with Guardsmen, thanking them for their service.

"It's been tremendous; it's unbelievable," said Lt. Col. Eric Sharyer, 185th commander. "Especially in Napa. The people, the sheriff's office, the community — it's been unbelievable."

Sharyer recalled a woman who had lost her home in Santa Rosa, California. "She came up and thanked me for my service," he said. "She thanked me. She just lost her home, but she still thanked me. I didn't know what to say."



ABOVE: Members of American Canyon Troop Support (ACTS) host a meal for California Army National Guardsmen operating out of the Napa County Airport in Napa, California, during the 2017 Northern California wildfires. LEFT: Private businesses join volunteers and other organizations in providing meals to California Army National Guardsmen who are activated for the 2017 Northern California wildfires.. Photos by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza



Napa resident Michelle Marquez stressed her desire to support the Guardsmen comes simply from love, love for the sacrifices Soldiers do for the nation.

"I have so much appreciation for you guys," Marquez said after snapping a selfie with military policemen. "In times like this, when the chips are down, we're all here to help each other."

Marquez took her benevolence a little further by hugging almost every Soldier she

greeted.

"Yes, you do!" replied Marquez, when told grown men in green Army uniforms don't need hugs. "All of you guys need to be hugged by your mother."

Hugging, feeding and caring.

To the communities of Northern California, the members of the California Guard give you a tremendous, "Thank you for your service as well!"

A tree of hope: Tree becomes rally point for destroyed neighborhood

By **SGT. 1ST CLASS BENJAMIN COSSSEL**
40th Infantry Division Public Affairs

It seems appropriate that in the historical home of Luther Burbank, a luminary in California's agriculture and horticulture history, this story should center around a tree and that this tree would become a rallying point for a neighborhood destroyed by the recent Tubbs fire.

Setting up a traffic control point blocking entrance to the Coffey Park neighborhood, three Soldiers of the California Army National Guard's 270th Military Police Company knew their job ahead of them would be difficult. The traffic control points hadn't been erected immediately and some residents had already ventured back to their homes to access damage, take stock of anything left behind.

That's how Coffey Park resident Jessica Leduc knew the Muskogee Crepe Myrtle tree planted by herself and her husband, Manny, still stood. In fact, it was the only thing left of the home purchased just over a year ago after their marriage, and it was the first thing they planted when they moved in.

"When she first approached our traffic control point, Jessica explained she had discovered the tree and was making a daily trip to water it and ensure it survived," explained Rosville resident, 270th's Staff Sgt. Richard Mair.

With power lines still down and the whole area a toxic hazard, Mair and his team knew they couldn't let Jessica through.

"It was still too much of a safety risk to let people through," Mair explained. "But we also knew we couldn't just do nothing."

So Mair and his team of Spc. Thomas Cox and Spc. David Lemus made a promise to Jessica – twice a day, for as long as they could, they would go to the tree, check up on it, water it and ensure it was being taken care of.

"So now before the start of our shift, we fill up a five-gallon water jug, take it out there, water the tree and send Jessica a photo of how its doing," said Cox.

The team's response has caused an outpouring of support as Jessica posted the story to her Facebook page.

"Richard, from the National Guard. After working an excruciatingly long shift, took his own time to make my heart feel better. He told me that as long as they are posted in Coffey Park, he and his men are going to water our little tree before and after their shifts. They believe," part of her post read.

Having been denied access previously, in her post, Jessica noted her eyes welled up in



California Army National Guardsmen from the 270th Military Police Company, 49th Military Police Brigade, help nurture a tree that was left standing after the Tubbs Fire in Santa Rosa, Sonoma County. The house nearby burned to the ground, but residents begged the California Guardsmen who were controlling a nearby traffic point to care for the tree. Residents had not been allowed into the affected areas yet. **Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Benjamin Cossel**

disbelief as tears began streaming down her face as she reached out and gave Mair a huge hug.

"It's such a simple thing we can do," said Cox. "Take a couple minutes before and after our shift to help this community move forward. We can't do a whole lot, but the little things we can do make a huge difference."

As the story of the tree of hope has spread, more and more residents have approached the team at their checkpoint between San Miguel and Waltzer streets looking for information and taking solace in the fact that the same three Soldiers of the California National Guard are protecting what's left of their homes.

All residents of northern California, Cox noted the personal nature of serving in the California Guard and standing duty at a traffic control point.

"These are our homes," he said, "these are our families, this is the least we can do to help."

California Air National Guardsmen join Army Guard in providing security for fire victims

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

The California National Guard's two military components are operating as one in the aftermath of the Northern California fires.

Airmen from the California Air Guard have assumed operations that Soldiers from the Army Guard carried out at the peak of the destructive wildfires that ravaged Napa, Sonoma and Solano counties mid- to late-October. The arrival of the Airmen allows the majority of Army troops to return home after being activated several weeks ago.

"We still have missions. We're still supporting law enforcement but not at the scale we once were," said Maj. Donald L. Lipscomb, operations officer, 579th Engineer Battalion, 49th Military Police Brigade. "With the Air Guard here, they're giving us support so we can ease out the Army side. They're going to continue the mission of assisting law enforcement."

Four Air Guard security forces squadrons (SFS) from the 163rd Attack Wing (Riverside), 146th Airlift Wing (Channel Islands), 144th Fighter Wing (Fresno) and 129th Rescue Wing (Moffett Field, San Jose) – sent ele-



California Army and Air National Guardsmen assisted in recovery efforts for the Northern California wildfires. **Shown: 1st Sgt. Antonio M. Delgadillo, first sergeant, 149th CBRN Company; Senior Master Sgt. Johnny Gatlin, operations superintendent, 146th SFS; Capt. Charles B. Rogers, 129th SFS; and Tech Sgts. Phillip Jung and Michael Sepielli of the 163rd SFS. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza**

ments that share missions with the few remaining Soldiers from the Army Guard's 870th and 670th military police companies, along with nearly a dozen troops from the 149th CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological

and nuclear) Company. Airmen and MPs are still controlling traffic points and providing security at emergency centers, as the Cal Guard is still engaged in fire recovery efforts.

"This is a great opportunity for green (Army) and blue (Air Force) to work together," said Senior Master Sgt. Johnny Gatlin, operations superintendent. "Our mission is to perform TCPs (traffic control points), to direct civilian population, contractors, etc., making sure the ones making entry into the affected areas are permitted."

Gatlin, of the 146th, added, "We're also providing security at shelters where the Red Cross is operating to ensure that aid for personnel who are evacuated get the resources they need so they can get back on their feet."

Sonoma County residents are returning to their homes in some areas, but locations that are hardest hit, namely by the Tubbs Fire – California's most destructive fire in state history – remain isolated from the public, per Gatlin. So Cal Guard forces are still deterring the public from entry into those areas.

"This is an important mission. We want to assure the safety of these people," said Gatlin.

Military police protect neighborhoods after fires

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**

69th Public Affairs Detachment

A line of vehicles was building up when Airmen 1st Class Danelle Perey utilized the power of the hand.

That's where Perey, a member of the California Air National Guard's 146th Security Forces Squadron, holds up all of his fingers vertically and makes eye contact with each driver.

"Stop!" he says, emphatically. "Where are you heading to?"

People coming through Perey's station, as well as the dozens of checkpoints manned by the Cal Guard during the Northern California wildfires, give various reasons for wanting to pass. They're fire responders, such as environmentalists, utility workers, government employees, and, of course, returning residents. But everyone has to have the proper credentials, and it's these Cal Guardsmen who sort out

who is permitted to pass.

"We know we're the first line of defense in making sure everyone's safe," said Perey, at his Santa Rosa traffic control point (TCP). "It's a critical mission. We understand the people's situation, so we're really trying to help them. It's a humbling experience."

At the height of October's wine county fires, the Cal Guard controlled more than 50 traffic points, said Maj. Donald Lipscomb, operations officer, 579th Engineer Battalion, 49th Military Police Brigade. Each point featured three- or four-man teams operating on a 12-hour schedule, but manpower dwindled to two-man teams as the need for the Cal Guard lessened. Occupying these traffic points opened up local and state law enforcement to deal with other incidences, said Sonoma County Sheriff Rob Giordano.

"The California National Guard was invaluable in our response

during the fires," said Giordano. "They were professional and capable. This was the largest natural disaster our county has ever faced. We absolutely relied on National Guard troops and mutual aid to keep our community safe."

Giordano added, "We had over 600 National Guard troops help us secure evacuation areas to make sure community members stayed safe and their property remained secure. We could not have maintained that level of safety and security without them."

First Sgt. Antonio M. Delgadillo, first sergeant for the 149th CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear) Company, said one of the biggest factors for the TCPs was to divert looters. There are people taking advantage of local residents whom have lost their homes and possessions, so controlling traffic points helps minimize entry into affected areas. An Oct. 29 Los Angeles Times story reported how Santa Rosa police arrested two looting



Airmen 1st Class Danelle Perey of the 146th Security Forces Squadron, 146th Airlift Wing (Channel Islands), California Air National Guard, gives a Santa Rosa, California, resident instructions prior to entering a fire-damaged district Nov. 2 during a recovery stage of the Northern California wildfires. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

suspects, caught "amid the congestion of vehicles at a National Guard roadblock less than a mile away."

"There are people here who are victims of the fire. They come in here to check what's left of their lives," Delgadillo explained. "Yet there are people who aren't from here who are coming in and taking stuff. It's like getting victimized twice."

"If it wasn't for us being here (at TCPs), people will be taking what they want," added Senior Airman Jess Contreras, also of the 146th SFS. "We're trying to deter people from getting access to what's not theirs. We're glad to have this opportunity to do our part in helping the residents."

Occupying TCPs is not the most glamorous mission, Soldiers and Airmen explained. But everyone's aware it's critical, and they're taking it seriously.

"Sunlight," said an 870th Military Police Company specialist. "That's the only light we get. We don't need the limelight or spotlight. We do this strictly to help people and police officers. It's not for our fame and fortune."

"Everyone stays stern at the TCPs. There are some people who get irate, but the Soldiers and Airmen diffuse the situation with a lot of understanding," added Delgadillo. "We remember there are those who've lost everything. We feel for them."

'Forward Operating Ghilotti' supports Cal Guard during Nor Cal fires

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**

69th Public Affairs Detachment

When asked if he had ever associated with the California National Guard prior to October's Northern California wildfires, William "Willie" Ghilotti gave his answer.

"Nope, never," said the Ghilotti Construction Company businessman, shaking his head left to right.

"Never?" came the question again. "Not in any capacity in your life?"

"Never."

For almost 40 years of his young life, California's reserve component had nothing to do with Ghilotti's Santa Rosa-based family business that has been around since 1914. But that quickly changed. It started at the peak of the 2017 Northern California fires, when almost about 150 Cal Guardsmen showed up on his doorstep, prepared to run security missions. Days later, more Soldiers arrived. Even more came after that, and each unit brought massive tactical vehicles and equipment.

"They were in this other yard when I first met them. I was looking at some things, and then I started taking pictures of their Humvees and wreckers," said Ghilotti, standing beside several of his own tractors and heavy equipment. "I said if there's anything I can do to help, let me know. I can donate food. I can help get fuel for their trucks. At that time, a lot of gas stations were shut down. That's what I was thinking initially."

Ghilotti paused.

"I didn't think I was going to get a phone



Businessman William "Willie" Ghilotti displays an Army uniform presented in thankfulness to the incredible support he gave to the California Army National Guard and the 49th Military Police Brigade units in October during the Northern California wildfires. The uniform he received, but the fleece jacket, "I bought on Amazon," he said. Ghilotti helps run a family business and went out of his way to support Cal Guard as it assumed operations in Santa Rosa, California. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

call," he said. "But three hours later, I got a call."

Ghilotti coordinated with members of the Cal Guard's 270th Military Police Company. The unit needed an operations site. Ghilotti took them in, initially giving up a parking lot. The Soldiers needed a sleeping area. Ghilotti got his employees to clear out a warehouse for them. The troops needed showers. Ghilotti rented a state-of-the-art, portable shower unit, and provided all the water needed. It also came with a separate unit with toilets and sinks.

As more units emerged and the number of troops increased, Ghilotti gave the Cal Guard a 16-acre spot of land to accom-

modate them. There stood "Forward Operating Base Ghilotti," a temporary tent city set up with more than two-dozen military shelter systems. This came after Ghilotti already gave up another area of his compound for the Guard's numerous vehicles.

"His assistance allowed us to concentrate on operations rather than life support," said Capt. Brock J. Young, 270th commander. "By helping, he was allowing us to better help the Santa Rosa area."

The support continued. Ghilotti helped make sure every Soldier was fed every day. Meals were donated from various places and in various forms – bag lunches to hot dinners, with fruits and other perishables abundantly available.

"I knew the National Guard was here to help our people and rebuild our community," said Ghilotti. "It was just the right thing to do, to help people who are helping us."

This unusual support for the Cal Guard came with Ghilotti already supporting about 500 employees, some whom have had their lives dramatically changed by the fires. Almost a dozen of his workers lost their homes, he said. About 50 had to be evacuated or were displaced. The Tubbs Fire, the worst firestorm in California history, destroyed property his company had built. The Tubbs Fire came as close as five miles from the business compound.

So there was a lot to deal with aside from supporting the Cal Guard. But in the process, Ghilotti began learning how the military operates, he said. He began learning Cal Guard's organizational structure and started thinking how to bring that into his business. But what stood out the most, Ghilotti explained, was the camaraderie amongst the troops.

"That was it. That inspired me to do more," he said. "The teamwork from one another, the sense of brotherhood, just dealing with each other and the people here. I was able to go out and see how they do their missions. I learned a lot of strategies. I saw how we can organize our own structure."

The news of Ghilotti's benevolence spread through the Cal Guard. Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, the Cal Guard's adjutant general, paid a visit and presented Ghilotti with a coin.

"He went to such a great extent to help us. His generosity was incredible," said 1st Sgt. Antonio M. Delgadillo, 149th CBRN (chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear) Company first sergeant. "Three times a day he was out checking on us. He bent over backwards for us, allowing us to support the community."

Added Delgadillo, "We were comfortable. We would have been so uncomfortable if he had not done something about it."

As the fire mission winded down and the Cal Guard pulled its forces out of the Ghilotti compound, a Soldier presented Ghilotti with a uniform. He told a story about it, explaining the meaning of the shoulder patches. Ghilotti said he treasured the gift, replying, "I missed my calling," explaining that he had the opportunity to join the military years ago.

"You get what you give, that's one of the main things I learned in life. You do it out of the goodness of your heart and not for recognition," said Ghilotti. "When I take all of this in, I kind of miss having (the Cal Guard) around. They were like my family and friends. I'm sure I'll see them around sometime."

Cal Guardsmen pay respect to fallen firefighter

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

A volunteer firefighter who died in the Northern California wildfires was respectfully honored by the California Army National Guard.

An element from Cal Guard's 49th Military Police Brigade organized a last-minute formation at the Napa County Sheriff's Office for a Joint Remembrance Service, an act normally given to a service member. The quickly-organized gesture followed an earlier unexpected formation, when Soldiers lined a street and saluted the fallen firefighter as a police convoy escorted him into the compound.

"It didn't matter if he was a civilian or not. He's here like we are, fighting fires. We're all in this together," said Col. Robert Paoletti, 49th commander. "This is the least we can do for someone who gave up his life."

The brief ceremony was joined by workers from the California Office of Emergency Services, volunteers and Sheriff Office administrators. They united with 49th Chaplain (Capt.) David Evans as he recited a prayer for the departed. It was a military-led remembrance for a civilian on the front lines.

"That was really an honorable gesture by the California



California Army National Guardsmen from the 185th Military Police Battalion, 49th Military Police Brigade, salute as a vehicle carrying a deceased volunteer firefighter rolls into the Napa County Sheriff's Department in Napa, California, Oct. 16. The salute pays the utmost respect to the deceased, says Col. Robert Paoletti, 49th commander, who stood behind the formation. The volunteer hailed from Missouri and his cause of death is being investigated, per the Sheriff's Office. More than 40 people have died from the recent Northern California wildfires. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

Guard," said Napa County Sheriff John Robertson. "They went out of their way to organize this, and (the victim) isn't even one of them or us. This was very respectful on the

Guard's part."

The late ceremony was an idea by Spc. Kobi McGuire of the 330th Military Police Company. He was one of the Soldiers who saluted the passing convoy, and thought that wasn't enough for the victim.

"It felt like we had to do more. He just gave up his life. This (ceremony) was just the right thing to do," said McGuire, who approached his immediate leadership with the plan, and then they took it higher. "Everyone who serves this country should get the same respect."

The victim, who hails from Missouri, was driving a water truck, Robertson explained. Details of his death were not released.

"Everyone in the building wanted to come out and be a part of this, to feel this," said Kim Henderson, Napa Sheriff's Office administrator who was part of the ceremony. "It was something so honorable for the Soldiers to do."

More than 40 have died from the Northern California wildfires. More than 100,000 have been displaced, seeking temporary homes in shelters and evacuation sites as much as 75 miles away. More than a dozen simultaneous fires have scorched California's Napa, Sonoma and Solano counties.

Cal Guardsmen serve as interpreters at FEMA centers helping victims of Northern California fires

By **STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

The California Army National Guard continues stretching its reach toward helping recovery efforts in the aftermath of the Northern California wildfires.

Members of the 1040th Quartermaster Company, 340th Brigade Support Battalion, are serving a different role than their normal work duties. Bilingual Soldiers are now interpreters at Local Assistance Centers (LACs), where they're helping fire victims understand the process of applying for disaster assistance.

"Their help here is invaluable," said FEMA Region IX representative Eric Simmons, one of several administrators assisting victims. "It's hard to get people to understand what they're eligible to receive when we can't explain it to them. With the Guardsmen translating, this bridges the language barrier."

Guardsmen within the 340th — water purification specialists, drivers, supply specialists and more — are now utilizing their language talents. Many victims seeking aid are Spanish speaking, and the Cal Guard has an abundant of Spanish speakers as well. But the 340th has other "wind talkers" who speak everything from Punjabi, Tagalog (Filipino), Vietnamese, Korean and French.

"We're helping put people at ease," said the 1040th's Spc. Rafael Estrada. "Some of them are afraid to come in and get help, but we help explain what they can receive. It just makes it easier for everyone when they all understand each other."

The assistance centers consist of volunteer groups and agencies such as the Red Cross, PG&E, the Small Business Associa-



Spc. Alejandra Briseno, of the 1040th Quartermaster Company, 340th Brigade Support Battalion, #CalGuard, a water purification specialist and Bilingual Soldier, helps a FEMA representative translate the assistance process to a non-English speaking family, victims of the #NorCalFire Oct. 18 at the Local Assistance Center in Napa, California. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

tion, etc. Even Xfinity (Comcast) set up a platform to help. According to FEMA's website, many other agencies and businesses are there to answer questions about disaster assistance and low-interest disaster loans for homeowners, renters and businesses.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you," said FEMA Region IX team member Tom Hill to the Guardsmen. "You're making this process go much more smoother."

The Soldiers feel they're making a difference, says Spc. Gloria L. Macias, a supply specialist. They're interacting with people who have lost valuables, if not

their homes.

"It feels like we're making a difference, like we're making a change," she said. "We're helping people. That's the main thing."

"It just comes down to having a great group of Soldiers, Soldiers who work very hard," said Capt. Ednan Khera, 340th headquarters company commander. "This mission is a part of why we serve. We want to help the community, state and nation. Wherever we're needed, we'll be there to assist."

The interpreters show up dressed as civilians, leaving their Army uniforms and

excess gear at their Napa County Airport operations area.

"That's just to keep them from being afraid. It's less intimidating when we're out of uniform," Estrada explained.

The Northern California wildfires threatened Napa, Sonoma and Solano counties, leaving more than 100,000 displaced, destroying 7,700 homes and structures, and killing 42. The Tubbs Fire, which swept through Santa Rosa, broke the record as the most destructive wildfire in California's history, per the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE).



ABOVE: U.S. Sen. Kamala Harris surveys the damage in Santa Rosa, California, on Oct. 14 while on an air and ground survey of the Northern California fires with the California National Guard's Adjutant General Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, Gov. Jerry Brown and U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein. **Photo by Capt. Will Martin**



CENTER LEFT: Sgt. Daniel Acquilano, left, and 2nd Lt. Daniel Tsoi-A-Sue of the 40th Military Police Company survey damage from the Tubbs Fire at a site in Santa Rosa, California, Oct. 13. **CENTER:** California Army National Guardsmen from the 49th Military Police Brigade and 340th Brigade Sustainment Battalion, and members of the Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE), render one final tribute Oct. 18 to Garrett Paiz, a volunteer firefighter who died battling the Northern California wildfires. **CENTER RIGHT:** Spc. Guillermo Gutierrez and Pfc. Christian Sahagun of Bravo Co., 1-160th Inf. Reg., watch as a hill fire threatens a Napa vineyard during the Northern California wildfires Oct. 14. **Photos by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza**



LEFT: Capt. Estelle Hong, commander of the 235th Engineer Company (Sappers), is interviewed by an NBC News reporter about a search and extraction mission her troops were conducting on Oct. 16 in a Santa Rosa neighborhood that was devastated by the Tubbs Fire. **RIGHT:** Staff Sgt. Alberto Ruesga, right, of the 235th Engineer Company (Sappers) is interviewed by HBO Vice News reporter Cerise Castle on Oct. 17 in Santa Rosa about the hard work his Soldiers were doing during the Tubbs Fire recovery operation. **Photos by Capt. Jason Sweeney**

At a Glance



ABOVE LEFT: A boy welcomes home his father at the Sacramento International Jet Center on Sept. 30. His father returned to California after a yearlong deployment to the Middle East with the 649th Engineer Company.**ABOVE RIGHT:** About 160 Soldiers from the 649th Engineer Company arrive in Sacramento Sept. 30 after their yearlong deployment to the Middle East. **Photos by Capt. Will Martin**



CENTER LEFT: Top shooters from the California National Guard competed in the California Combat Match at Camp San Luis Obispo and Camp Roberts 12-19 September. Of the 45 who competed, 10 were selected to compete at the State, Regional and National event. **Photo by Maj. Beth Soelzer** **CENTER RIGHT:** Outgoing commander of the 115th Regional Support Group Col. Bruce C. Balzano, left, Maj. Gen. Lawrence A. Haskins, Commander, California National Guard, center, and Col. Jesse L. Miller, incoming commander of the 115th Regional Support Group, stand for the Color Guard display during a change of command ceremony Oct. 21 in Roseville, California. **Photo by Spc. Amy Carle**



Kim Malanka, wife of Brig. Gen. Mark G. Malanka, the 40th Infantry Division's commander, looks out over the hundreds of Soldiers from the 40th Infantry Division during a Change of Command ceremony, Sept. 16 at the Joint Force Training Base in Los Alamitos. Mrs. Malanka was presented flowers during the event, which was part of celebrations for the division's 100th anniversary. **Photo by Spc. Amy Carle**

Bishop of Santa Rosa thanks Cal Guardsmen for wildfire support in heartfelt sermon

By STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA
69th Public Affairs Detachment

As a show of support for the local community, California Army National Guardsmen prayed beside county residents during a special Sunday ceremony Oct. 15 in Napa at the Saint John the Baptist Church, where the bishop of Santa Rosa — Bishop Robert F. Vasa — presided. More than a thousand California Guardsmen are still in place, supporting firefighting efforts in Napa and Sonoma counties.

The California Guardsmen, as well as other first responders, were the special audience among the hundreds of Napa residents who attended. In his sermon, Vasa thanked the Soldiers for their sacrifices and amplified their support to the stricken community.

“Without a doubt, your presence is a great source of consolation to all the people,” said Vasa, looking at the Soldiers. “It lets the people know they are not alone in their struggles. The nation is here for us.”

Vasa clapped, showing his approval, and all the church goers in attendance

began applauding with him.

“You have all come from different places to help our community,” Vasa added. “For that we thank you and pray for your safety.”

The Northern California wildfires continue setting state records for destruction. More than 40 have died, according to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE). Several blazes have destroyed nearly 6,000 homes and structures, and have displaced more than 100,000 residents, sending many into evacuation centers, some nearly 75 miles away. Hundreds more are still unaccounted, per CAL FIRE information.

Vasa, who oversees an official Catholic population of nearly 180,000 people in the counties of Sonoma, Napa, Mendocino, Lake, Humboldt, and Del Norte, asked for prayers for all who have passed and those who continue to be affected.

“For most Soldiers, religion is a part of their life,” said Chaplain (Capt.) David Evans, the Cal Guard’s 49th Military Police Brigade religious affairs officer. “The



Bishop Robert F. Vasa, bishop of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, California, applauds the California Army National Guard from his podium for their efforts during the California wildfires during a special Oct. 15 mass at Saint John the Baptist Church in Napa. Photo by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

bottom line is taking care of their spirituality and getting them integrated within the community, to show we are one.” Sonoma County has taken the brunt of

the fire rampage. Per CAL FIRE, almost 11,000 firefighters were still battling more than a dozen fires burning across a 100-mile stretch of Northern California.

The Sonoma Developmental Center in Glen Ellen gets a helping hand from the Cal Guard

By STAFF SGT. EDDIE SIGUENZA
69th Public Affairs Detachment

At a place where people give a helping hand, the California Army National Guard provided its open arms for support.

During one of the last missions prior to the Cal Guard’s deactivation from the 2017 Northern California wildfires, approximately two dozen Soldiers unloaded boxes and crates that will allow the Sonoma Developmental Center’s (SDC) to return to operations. Inside an open box were picture frames, each portraying present and past residents of this facility which takes care of people with developmental and intellectual disabilities.

“Make sure you don’t drop that (box),” says Sgt. Carrie Bautista of the Cal Guard’s 340th Brigade Sustainment Battalion, to his team. “Those are important memories.”

Everyone in the pictures is smiling. Likewise, every Guardsman is doing the same as they haul boxes, furniture, bedding, and more into one of the care homes. For about a week they’ve swept floors, mopped smoke-tainted walls and ceilings, cut grass, and moved even more equip-

ment from one storage area into the center’s buildings. This came shortly after a wildfire scorched this small town and crept just a few hundred meters from the facility’s front doorstep.

“We couldn’t have done this without the help of the Cal Guard,” said Aleana Carreon, SDC executive director. “They have been so polite and so generous to our staff and to our residents. They’ve been amazing since the day they got here.”

The center is one of four state-run facilities, but it’s the only one that was severely threatened by wildfires that destroyed 6,000-plus buildings and structures in Sonoma, Napa, and Solano counties. For two weeks, almost two hundred disabled residents evacuated their comforts and relocated to shelters as far away as Dixon and Auburn “due to the air quality,” said Jorge Fernandez, SDC assistant executive director. “They didn’t have to wear (respiratory) masks in those cities.”

The center reopened, but it had to erase the smoke stench and fire residue for the residents. Carreon solicited the Cal Guard’s help and the Soldiers came through, she proudly declared.

“Everything we have asked them



TOP: Col. Robert Spano, fourth from right, chief of staff of the California National Guard, joins members of the 49th Military Police Brigade’s Task Force 49 at the Sonoma Developmental Center in Sonoma, California, as Cal Guardsmen complete a final effort to assist the facility’s recovery from the Northern California wildfires. LEFT: Lt. Col. Eric W. Sharyer, commander of the 185th Military Police Battalion, presents a gift to Aleana Carreon, executive director of the Sonoma Developmental Center, Oct. 25. RIGHT: Sgt. Carrie Bautista, left, and Pfc. Jesh Escamilla of the 340th Brigade Sustainment Battalion, California Army National Guard, carry a crate full of office supplies into a loading van Oct. 25 at the Sonoma Developmental Center in Glen Ellen, California. Photos by Staff Sgt. Eddie Siguenza

to do, they did it without hesitation and without questioning,” she added. “We had so much to do to reopen this place, and again, we couldn’t have done it without

the Guard’s help. They’ve been so respectful to the people who live here.”

“They’ve been amazing. They’ve

been remarkable,” added Fernandez.

The 340th took the helm of this operation, assisted by members of the 1040th Quartermaster Company. The units were part of the 49th Military Police Brigade’s task force that activated nearly 2,000 troops at the peak of the fires.

“For some of these people, this is the only place they’ve known for their entire lives. We’re helping them move back into their homes,” said 340th’s Chief Warrant Officer 3 Benjamin Joyette. “We’re always willing to do our part to help out with the evacuation efforts. Whatever we need to do.”

Cal Guardsmen cared so much about this facility that two Soldiers, both engineers, created a gift that was presented to Carreon and her staff. Lt. Col. Eric W. Sharyer, commander of the 185th Military Police Battalion, presented them with the object displaying the 49th MP patch.

“This is something we’ll remember and proudly display on our walls,” Carreon said.

On the walls, next to the picture frames of beautiful, smiling disabled residents who are back home.

New chapter for storied 40th ID

Division Headquarters ships out to Afghanistan for first combat mission in 60 years

By **SPC. AMY CARLE**
69th Public Affairs Detachment

A small group of Soldiers lined up in front of their formation, shifting anxiously after being called out by name. The guardsmen were scheduled to leave for Fort Hood in just over an hour, part of the 40th Infantry Division's Headquarters Element about to deploy to Afghanistan. Their commander, Brig. Gen. John W. Lathrop, stood in front of them.

Lathrop called out to his first sergeant, "None of them know what's happening, right?"

He began to joke with the Soldiers before addressing the crowd of friends and family. They had gathered Sept. 18 at Joint Forces Training Base, Los Alamitos, to say goodbye to the guardsmen departing for the first phase of a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan.

Finally, Lathrop let the Soldiers in on the surprise, explaining that they all had birthdays this month, and he wanted to lead the crowd in singing "Happy Birthday" before they left. At the end of the impromptu song, he invited their loved ones up to the front for another chance to share the moment together.

The brief celebration and deployment sendoff came at the end of an entire weekend of events centered on the 40th ID's 100th anniversary. Many of the Soldiers said that the celebration puts the deployment in context as the next chapter in the division's history.

"It's the first time in 60 years we'll be going over there into a combat zone as a division headquarters," 1st Sgt. Alfredo R. Juarez said. "It's definitely a large impact. There's a lot of history behind it."

Juarez started as a private first class with the Division, and said it was very meaningful for him to be able to lead the element for this deployment.

"To be able to come back as a first sergeant and take the Soldiers forward is huge to me," he said. "It's definitely an honor, and definitely an honor to be part of the 40th ID at this time."

The Soldiers had also been recognized with a deployment ceremony the previous day, which was attended by around 150 friends and family, and included a performance by the 40th ID Band.

The weekend's celebrations had included a building dedication to a Korean War commander, a division change of command, and an anniversary ball. Throughout the events, attendees were given the chance to recognize and learn about the division's 100-year history, and the great accomplishments of the past.

"It's poignant," said Spc. William D. Morgan, an information technology specialist and the only junior enlisted personnel deploying with the element. "It feels appropriate that we're stepping up to deploy again, and doing our part."

Sgt. 1st Class Yolanda Aispuro-Duarte, division personnel noncommissioned officer in charge, felt the same.

"It gave me a sense of pride and honor to be part of this organization," Aispuro-Duarte said. "It's a great group of people. Good Soldiers, and seasoned Soldiers at that."

She said the group had been able to come together over the pre-mobilization training that took them back to basics and let them learn how to work as a unit.

Morgan had just graduated from Vanguard University with a degree in communication when he learned he'd be included in the deployment. He immediately began training in satellite communications before heading to the pre-mobilization training. He agreed that the training was effective at building cohesion, especially amongst a group that was heavy in senior leadership.

"I had a general next to me digging foxholes, and a full-bird colonel doing a room clearing," he said.

Morgan said he felt a lot of pressure as the only junior enlisted member, but that this deployment was so important to him that he had reenlisted to be able to go on the mission.

"When I joined, I joined to deploy, to carry the torch," he said. "This is the culmination of my six years in."

The 40th ID has come a long way in its 100-year history. During the Second World War and the Korean War, most Soldiers still hadn't gone through standardized basic training, said retired Maj. Gen. James Delk, Korean War veteran and former commander of the division. Delk was in leadership when the division began to change and formalize its standards. He said it was a matter of taking soldiering more seriously.

Delk had returned to the base for the anniversary celebration, and said he was astonished by the updated headquarters building, and proud to see how the division was preparing to set the stage for its next chapter.

"When you have a good leavening of Soldiers who've actually been there and done that, like this division has now, that's all the difference in the world," Delk said. "We have every reason to be very proud of our 40th."

Col. Michael J. Leeney, the division chief of staff, echoed the sentiment.

"This is the first combat deployment of the division HQ since the Korean War," Leeney said. "They are establishing another page in the history of the division. The deployment that's going out right now will be issued an Afghanistan campaign streamer for the division headquarters. They are establishing a unique piece of history."

While this deployment is certainly historic for the headquarters staff, it is also



TOP: Brig. Gen. John W. Lathrop shakes hands with Brig. Gen. Jeffrey D. Smiley before boarding a chartered plane at the Joint Force Training Base airfield in Los Alamitos, California, Sept. 18. Lathrop, along with nearly 100 Guardsmen from the 40th Infantry Division's Headquarters, was headed to Fort Hood, Texas for the first phase of a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan. **LEFT:** A Soldier with the Cal Guard's 40th Infantry Division kisses his daughter Sept. 18 at the Joint Force Training Base airfield in Los Alamitos, California. Soldiers were sharing last moments with their families before flying out to Fort Hood, Texas for the first phase of a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan. **RIGHT:** Soldiers with the CalGuard's 40th Infantry Division hug goodbye Sept. 17 at the Joint Force Training Base airfield in Los Alamitos, California. Nearly 100 Soldiers from the Division Headquarters were being honored with a ceremony before traveling to Afghanistan for their first combat deployment in 60 years. **Photos by Spc. Amy Carle**

just one of several deployments scheduled for subordinate units in the 40th ID. Nearly 300 members of the 1-184th Infantry Regiment will soon leave to Jordan, and nearly 500 members of the 1-143rd Field Artillery Regiment will be heading to Qatar and Bahrain. In 2018, Guardsmen within the division will also ship to Kosovo, the Horn of Africa and Kuwait, as well as a second turn in Afghanistan for the headquarters element.

Juarez said he and his Soldiers were ready to get started, and wanted to make their families, the division, and the National Guard proud. He said he is looking forward to a successful mission with his troops.

"They're going to go forward and do great things for this country, for this organization, and represent their families and the 40th ID well."

Celebration of a Century

40th Infantry Division honors 100 years of its history before combat deployment

By **SPC. AMY CARLE**

69th Public Affairs Detachment

The ballroom's foyer was full of lively chatter, and Soldiers in dress blues and mess uniforms cheerfully posed for photographs with family and friends in black tie and ball gowns. Brig. Gen. Mark G. Malanka, fresh from his change of command ceremony, slipped past the crowd and began to read name cards at his table. He gently laid his wife's handbag at her place setting before returning to her side to escort her to the table.

The gala of the century was about to begin.

The 40th ID celebrated its 100th anniversary Sept. 16 - 17 at Joint Forces Training Base in Los Alamitos, honoring a century of memories and accomplishments.

The division has been part of every major international campaign, and it was important to recognize this legacy, said Maj. Gen. Lawrence A. Haskins, the 40th's outgoing commander.

"The lineage and honors of the 40th ID and its subordinate brigades need to be recognized and celebrated in memory of all who have served in the division, and so current members understand their rich history," Haskins said. "We really can't talk about the history of the California Army National Guard without recognizing the significant role the 40th ID has played."

As one of the few divisions to continually serve the nation, its history spans across continents and oceans, and nearly every significant military event since it was formed.

A STORIED HISTORY

The division has such a profound legacy that it is difficult to focus on any one point of impact, said Sgt. Maj. Daniel M. Sebby, an historian with the California Military Department.

"Their whole history is good," Sebby said, beginning to list the 40th's many accomplishments.

The division formed in San Diego, Sept. 17, 1917 as the U.S. entered the First World War. Originally a depot division, it supplied over 27,000 fresh troops to the seasoned combat divisions already in the fight. By the end of the war, 2,500 40th ID Soldiers had died in battle and nearly 12,000 were injured.

Early in 1941, the 40th began to mobilize in response to the war in Europe and Asia. Within 48 hours of the attack on Pearl Harbor, elements from the division spread across California, Arizona and Utah in preparation for an expected attack on the West Coast.

By 1942, the Soldiers left to complete additional training in Washington before shipping to Hawaii for further operations. Throughout the war they battled Japanese forces in the Pacific and earned campaign streamers for the division in Luzon, the Southern Philippines and the Bismarck Archipelago.



TOP: Cal Guard Soldiers from the 40th Infantry Division await the arrival of the official party during a Change of Command ceremony, Sept. 16 at the Joint Force Training Base in Los Alamitos. The ceremony included a performance by the 40th ID Band and an M119 Howitzer salute, and was part of the Division's 100th anniversary celebrations. **Photo by Spc. Amy Carle** **BOTTOM LEFT:** Soldiers from the 40th Infantry Division search surrendering Soldiers from the Imperial Japanese Army in Panay, Philippines, in Sept. 1945. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** A Soldier from the 40th Infantry Division poses with school children in this vintage photograph from the Korean War. Soldiers from the 40th took up a collection to help build a school in Gapyeong, near the front lines, and the Division continues to maintain a close relationship with organizations and emissaries from the region. **Historical photographs courtesy of Sgt. Maj. Daniel M. Sebby, historian and curator for the California Military Department**

After returning from the Second World War, the Division enjoyed only four short years of peace before being reactivated for the war in Korea. By September of 1950, the entire division had mobilized to what is now Vandenberg Air Force Base, recruiting and training until shipping to Honshu in March of 1951. By 1952, under the command of Maj. Gen. Daniel H. Hudelson, they had taken their place on the front line.

There, the division participated in major battles, including Punchbowl and Heartbreak Ridge, and also formed close relationships with members of the local community. Soldiers even took up a collection to help build a school in Gapyeong, South Korea, not far from the front lines. They maintain those relationships to this day, with continued visits and collaboration

between emissaries from South Korea and the 40th.

More recently, members of the division have represented the California Guard in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan, and are currently deploying to countries across the Middle East, including Qatar and Jordan. On Monday, Sept. 18, members from the division headquarters staff left for the first phase of a deployment to Afghanistan, their first combat deployment in 60 years.

In addition to international campaigns, the division has been deeply involved with state support efforts since its inception. It mobilized to help stop the Folsom Prison Riots in 1927, the Longshoremen's strike in 1934, the Watts Riots in 1965, the

Los Angeles Riots in 1992 and the Northridge Earthquake in 1994. This year members of the division have responded to natural disasters such as wildfires and the Oroville Dam floods.

That ability to respond to any situation is one of things the division's outgoing commander is most proud about.

"When we look at the history of the division, it has consistently been there for the nation in national crisis, as well as the state during numerous state emergencies to this day," Haskins said. "The 40 ID is probably the best it's ever been and we have lived-up to and exceeded the quality of our predecessors."

Continued next page



Gun crews from the 1-143rd Field Artillery Regiment fire an M119 Howitzer during a rehearsal for the 40th Infantry Division's change of command at the Joint Force Training Base in Los Alamitos, California, Sept. 16. The cannons were fired during the ceremony, which was part of the Division's 100th anniversary celebrations. **Photos by Spc. Amy Carle**

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A PLACE TO CALL HOME

Since its inception in 1917, the division has moved often and changed considerably. Though it originated in San Diego, it has also called Berkeley home, as well as Los Angeles, Long Beach and finally Los Alamitos in 1981.

Throughout the past century the Division also experienced the broader changes within the National Guard, most notably the regulation that all Guardsmen must attend basic training. Leadership began to change the expectations for the division, formalizing and tightening standards to ensure the division followed the same rigor and discipline found in the active-duty Army.

"It was a 180-degree change, a whole mindset shift," Sebby said. "The op tempo completely changed."

With the updated standards, the division also needed new resources to help achieve its mission, said retired Maj. Gen. Keith Jones, former division commander. He came on staff at Los Alamitos in 1994.

"The building was pretty tight and we couldn't fit all the Division staff inside it," Jones said. "The ability to communicate and work under the same roof, and the identity you get under one roof lends a certain synergy."

Jones helped advocate for, and establish, new headquarters. After the building was completed, the staff began



Visitors to the Joint Force Training Base in Los Alamitos, California, lower their heads for an invocation during the 40th Infantry Division's headquarters dedication, Sept. 16. The building was dedicated to former commander Maj. Gen. Daniel H. Hudelson as part of the the Division's 100th anniversary celebration. **Photo by Spc. Amy Carle**

decorating the bare walls with memorabilia, under the guidance and leadership of Chief of Staff Col. Michael J. Leeney. Leeney said it's important to showcase the division's history to help Soldiers connect with the division's legacy.

"It never fails," he said. "I have that moment when I see a new Soldier walking down the hallways, looking at it all and going, 'Wow!' Because now they're understanding what they are a part of."

Jones echoed the sentiment, reflecting on the emotional impact the headquarters seemed to have on visiting veterans.

"You can see the sense of pride," he said. "This is now the heart and soul of the 40th ID."

A CHANGE OF COMMAND TO REMEMBER

Members of the 143rd Field Artillery Regiment had been set up and ready for action since the previous morning, tasked with honoring division leadership by firing M119 Howitzers after the official change of command between Haskins and Malanka.

Even during the rehearsal, members of the gun crews stood silently at parade rest, awaiting the hand signal to fire.

The official formation stretched across the airfield, colors waving in front of hundreds of Soldiers. Speakers ran through speeches and the division band practiced their marks. When everything was ready, Sgt. 1st Class Anthony J. Phillips, the chief of the firing battery, lowered his hand.

The booming of the Howitzers was a signal that everything was now in place.

Earlier in the morning, a charter bus brought dozens of attendees through the gates to watch the dedication of Building 1000, the updated division headquarters. The crowd of veterans and supporters applauded as the black covering lifted from the letters that proclaimed the building as MG Daniel D. Hudelson Hall. Mark Hudelson, grandson of the famed division commander, was in attendance, and had lent his grandfather's artifacts in support of the event.

By noon the visitors were making their way to the airfield, filling seats and bleachers in preparation for the change of command. Nearly 300 Soldiers stood ready, awaiting the arrival of the official party.

The official party arrived at the airfield in a vintage jeep, saluting the formation as they drove past. The 40th ID band performed, marching in front of the general officers. Under

the sunny blue sky, the color guard presented the streamer bedecked flags, and the colors were passed. Malanka's wife, Kim, beamed as she watched him assume command.

"That was the change of command to end all changes of command," remarked one of the attendees.

And though the official ceremonies had concluded for the day, the celebrations were only getting started.

HAVE FUN - IT'S AN ORDER

After a day filled with somber commemorations and formal ceremonies, the 40th ID 100th Anniversary Ball at the Disneyland Hotel was a chance for the nearly 800 guests to celebrate the history of a century of accomplishments.

In the back of the hall, members of the California Air National Guard finalized preparation for the night's video feed and presentations while Soldiers in dress blues checked name cards and table numbers, and straightened wine glasses etched with the Sunburst insignia. The color guard and division band stood at the ready. A solitary "Missing Man Table" was set to the left of the stage, dimly lit and ready for the ceremony of remembrance.

While the day had been an important reminder of honor and sacrifice, tonight's gala was about celebrating accomplishments and looking forward to the future. Leeney, the evening's master of ceremonies, told the audience that having fun was the priority for the evening, by order of the commander.

That joyous spirit was alive in the room, and Leeney helped it along with jokes and banter, keeping the audience laughing all the way through dessert. In addition to speeches and presentations, Sgt. Maj. Sebby entertained the audience with vintage images from the division's past, and a display of military uniforms paraded across the stage by members of California's State Military Reserve.

Winding down the evening's ceremony, Malanka and Command Sgt. Maj. Robert Whittle used the ceremonial saber to cut a giant division birthday cake. "Now it's tradition for them to feed each other," Leeney quipped.

As the dishes and coffee cups were cleared from the tables, DJs began to play music, signaling that it was time for the real fun to begin. Guests pulled out their cameras to snap selfies with friends and colleagues before making their way to the dance floor.

As night fell on the Sunburst Division's anniversary celebrations, their next chapter was just about to begin.

68 Whatever: Cal Guard course prepares medics for uncertainties of combat

By CAPT. WILL MARTIN

California Military Department Public Affairs

Each military occupation has its share of perishable skills. But for Army combat medics, the term takes on a literal meaning. If their skills perish, so could the Soldiers under their care.

"(In Afghanistan) I was a medic that was assigned to many different little outposts and I was the sole medical provider," said Spc. Sean Winters, a medic with the California Army National Guard's 1-185th Armor Battalion in San Bernardino. "I was it... the only one who was going to be making all these medical decisions."

But unlike their active duty counterparts, Winters and most of the 480 or so Army medics in the Cal Guard have civilian lives unrelated to the medical field. Which is why in 2014 the Cal Guard's Medical Detachment began offering a 68W sustainment course on Camp San Luis Obispo.

"Of the 16 in this class, only two work in the medical field in their full-time jobs," said 68W senior instructor Staff Sgt. Glyn Elias, referring to an August course. "They're accountants, paralegals... of all the ones who come through here, about 10 percent do medical on the outside."

The 10-day course graduates about 250 Cal Guard medics each year, allowing them to stay compliant with Army regulations. More importantly, it knocks the rust off their live-saving skills between deployments and Army schoolhouse stints.

"It's really important to me, especially considering I don't really do anything medical on the civilian side," said Winters, a full-time law enforcement student. "I



Cal Guard Army combat medics from across the state participated in a 68W sustainment course on Camp San Luis Obispo, California, from Aug. 4-14. The Cal Guard's Medical Detachment conducts the course for about 250 Cal Guard Army medics each year, ensuring they stay in compliance with U.S. Army standards and maintain proficiency in their battlefield treatment skills. It is one of several Army courses offered by the Cal Guard's 223rd Regional Training Institute on Camp SLO.

Photo by Capt. Will Martin

need to keep these skills fresh because these are really what the basis of what a medic is about. It's what's going to save the lives of Soldiers."

The course's students cover a dizzying array of subjects in just 10 days. From pediatric emergencies to battlefield head trauma, the 68 Whiskeys – known affectionately to some as a "68 Whatever" – drink deeply from the well of emergency medicine instructions to prepare for "what-

ever" combat might throw their way.

"It's very helpful to get a refresher. Every year they have new things," said Spc. Ian Barton, who before the Cal Guard deployed to Afghanistan as an active duty Army medic. "They taught us ultrasound this year, EKG this year. This gives you the foundation you need."

Fundamental to the course is hands-on testing in realistic settings. And realism for a combat medic can mean only one thing: battlefield stress.

Enter Camp San Luis Obispo's "shoot house," a facility used mostly to train the Cal Guard's military police. 68W students deployed into the building are greeted with overhead speakers blaring the sound of approaching Black Hawk helicopters, smoke-filled corridors, and simulation rounds to which they're expected to return fire.

"This program takes a lot of time, energy and hard work," said Lt. Col. Loretta Zanetti, a nurse practitioner and Cal Guard medical officer. "They really built this program from nothing."

Between dodging enemy paintballs and navigating hazy hallways, 68W students face their stiffest challenge: a mannequin. The course employs cutting-edge medical mannequins that present students with a range of battlefield injuries. From airway complications to severed limbs, the high-tech dummies replicate combat wounds with remarkable accuracy, complete with spurting arterial blood and vital signs feedback.

"These scenarios are great; they are very, very accurate," said Barton. "How they work it here is incredible and something that I never really got active duty side. This is a great program."

20 years of changing lives

Grizzly Youth Academy director reflects on two decades of operation

By CAPT. WILL MARTIN

California Military Department Public Affairs

Wars and wildfires. Those two missions have come to define the Cal Guard over the past two decades. But 20 years ago, the Military Department started another critical mission, one that reaches deep into the communities in which its guardsmen live and serve.

"I tell kids who are thinking of coming here, 'This may not be your last chance, but it's your best chance to get back on track,'" said Lt. Col. Timothy Vincent, director of the Grizzly Youth Academy on Camp San Luis Obispo. "I tell them, 'We're not focused on your past, we're focused on your future.'"

Grizzly was the first of the Cal Guard's three National Guard Youth ChalleNge programs. Twenty-five years ago, the National Guard launched 10 academic institutions across the nation, each dedicated to turning around the lives of youth who were at risk of dropping from school.

By partnering with local educators, the National Guard established a network of schools set in military-style, residential environments. The atmosphere of discipline and strong academics proved a successful combination. The program expanded, and in 1998, Grizzly Youth Academy was born.

"We are responsible for virtually every aspect of their

life," said Vincent, who has led the program for the past 5 years. "It's not just the 'three Rs' (reading, 'riting and 'rithmatics) ... we're also they're de facto parents."

That all-encompassing, immersive environment was a professional departure for Vincent, an educator with Santa Maria public schools for 18 years. But after a quarter century as a National Guard field artillery Soldier, Vincent was ready to combine his two passions.

"I had a fantastic time in high school and liked working with kids," Vincent said. "Grizzly Youth Academy is the best of both worlds, and I still get to wear the uniform."

Grizzly will welcome class No. 40 in January. Its sister programs, Sunburst Youth Academy in Los Alamitos and Discovery Academy near Stockton, turn 10 and 1 years old this year. In addition, the Cal Guard runs Oakland Military Institute, a non-ChalleNge program for at-risk youth that was the brainchild of then-Oakland Mayor Jerry Brown. All of the Cal Guard programs outpace their public school counterparts in graduation and college placement rates.

"We have a graduation rate of over 90 percent," said Vincent. "It's about identifying the right kids for the program."

But Vincent and the Grizzly staff aren't content to rest on the laurels of 20 years of changed lives. Instead, they

are creating new paths for their students to better their futures.

"We're focused on career and technical education, which is vocational education," said Vincent. "We incorporate instructors from Cuesta College to provide them with solid skills and college credits."

Cuesta College shares real estate with Camp San Luis Obispo. The strong relationship between the neighboring agencies has provided an opportunity for students to pursue vocational studies in automotive mechanics, construction, web design, broadcasting, and culinary arts. Students not only earn marketable credentials, such as a food handler's certificate, but they can earn college credits. For some, the college exposure sets their sights beyond their vocational studies.

"A lot of kids come in here, and they say, 'College, that's not for me,'" said Vincent. "But then they get that exposure and they say, 'Hey, I can do this.'"

But more than better students, Vincent wants to encourage his cadets to become better people. That's why each Grizzly student is required to perform about 60 hours of service to the community. Projects vary from veteran's events to upkeep on the base's war memorials. And his vision for the program has room for expansion.

"We're funded for over 380 each year, but graduate over 400," he said. "(But) we have space for growth."



ABOVE: A CDTF member cuts down illegally grown marijuana in Calaveras County, Aug. 2. **RIGHT:** A CDTF member looks up at the rows of illegal marijuana planted on a hillside in Calaveras County, July 31. From April-September, CDTF supported the Calaveras County Sheriff's efforts to suppress the illegal marijuana grow sites in his county. Photo by Sgt. Brianne Roudebush

CDTF supports large-scale, multi-agency operation

By **SGT. BRIANNE ROUDEBUSH**
Counterdrug Task Force

April through September is peak marijuana growing season in California. According to an economic report commissioned by the California Department of Food and Agriculture, 13.5 million pounds of marijuana are grown in California each year, with an estimated 80 percent being illegally exported out of the state.

One of the challenges local law enforcement agencies face in their efforts to suppress illegal marijuana cultivation is the ability to bring multiple agencies together in order to increase manpower and capabilities, First Sgt. Ian Bones, a CDTF district noncommissioned officer in charge, said.

CDTF, having worked with federal, state and local agencies throughout California since 1989, is in the unique position to bring those agencies together to execute large-scale operations.

"We are able to be the liaison piece that a lot of smaller agencies don't have," Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Smith, CDTF ground tactical noncommissioned officer in charge, said. "We can coordinate between the Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Control Board, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, etc. and bring in all those extra people."

Smith, who worked with the Calaveras County Sheriff's Office from April to September this year to set up a "focused operation" in the county, said, "before we (CDTF) got there, the sheriff's office didn't work with any agencies outside their own."

Operation Terminus, the focused operation that took place July 31-Aug. 4, aimed to serve search warrants at illegal grow sites, eradicate illicit marijuana, issue citations and arrest perpetrators on felony charges.

Over the course of four days, the Calaveras County Sheriff's Office, Cal Fire, CDFW, the state water boards and CDTF executed 19 search warrants resulting in 28,000 illicit marijuana plants eradicated, 1,900 pounds of processed marijuana and 13 weapons seized, 35 arrests made, and 155 citations issued.

In addition to logistical and planning support, CDTF provided man-power and aircraft which allowed for over watch, command and control, short hauling personnel in and out of grow sites, and aerial removal of the eradicated marijuana.

"This operation could not have been the success it was without the collaboration of all involved," Calaveras County Sheriff Rick Dibasilio said in an email following the operation. "I feel this event is a testament to the ability we have shown the state as a whole; that our agencies can work together as a team to combat the marijuana issues we are currently facing."

The success of the support provided to CCSO lies not only in the outcome of Operation Terminus, but in the resources provided that enables them to coordinate and conduct future multi-agency operations.

"Our ability to work long-term with the sheriff's office to initially develop a joint operation gave them a template to pursue future operations on their own," Bones said.

CREATING NEW OPPORTUNITIES

Service members are encouraged to leverage the experience and connections they make during tours with CDTF to gain employment with outside entities and the federal, state and local agencies the task force partners with.

Staff Sgt. David Bailey

In April 2016, Staff Sgt. David Bailey had the unique opportunity to be the first CDTF member assigned to work with the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, Major Narcotics Division. He recently accepted a new position as a financial crimes investigator for a regional bank in Dallas, Texas.

During his tour with CDTF, he was able to "capitalize on criminal analyst training, DA lectures and classes, networking opportunities, and experience with courtroom procedure," he said. "The exposure to ongoing criminal analyst and intel training opened up a tremendous role for me that otherwise may never have been made possible."

Sgt. Kathryn Tanson

After serving for a year and a half as a CDTF ground tactical team member, Sgt. Kathryn Tanson started a new career as law enforcement officer with the U.S. Forest Service Sept. 3.

Having worked closely with USFS on numerous occasions with CDTF, Tanson was able to build rapport, cultivate professional relationships, and gain valuable experience that proved beneficial as she went through the hiring process.

"I'm excited for the new adventure," she said. "This is a great opportunity. I've seen the way they work and it's such a close group - almost like the military."

Work for Warriors celebrates 5th birthday and nearly 6,000 jobs

By **CAPT. WILL MARTIN**

California Military Department
Public Affairs

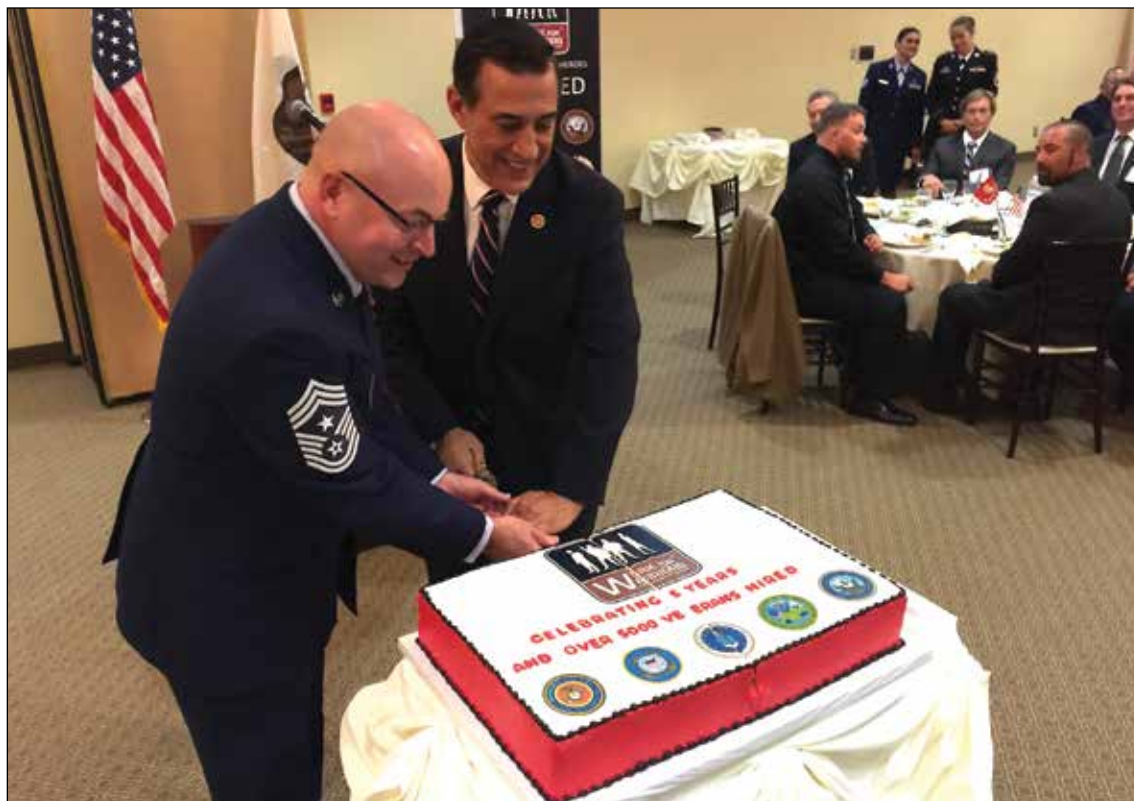
In 2012, Cal Guardsmen had been deploying to combat in the tens of thousands for nearly a decade. Many guardsmen were returning from yearlong deployments to find themselves either out of work or in jobs that hardly paid the bills.

The state's adjutant general, Maj. Gen. David S. Baldwin, recognized this as both a soldier/airmen-care and a readiness issue. He reached out to then-California Assembly Speaker John Perez, and together they launched Work for Warriors, an employment program that aimed to reduce unemployment in the Cal Guard by 25 percent in its first year.

Fast forward five years and the program not only shattered its first-year goal, but also expanded to embrace guardsmen, reservists, veterans, military spouses and Gold Star families in finding civilian employment. In fact, in five years the program has helped place nearly 6,000 people with military-friendly jobs across the state.

The program has become a model for military and veteran-employment programs across the nation. Even Nevada has started its own chapters, and other states are expected to soon follow.

To recognize this accomplishment, its staff marked Work for Warriors' fifth birthday with an



Cal Guard Senior Enlisted Advisor to the Adjutant General Chief Master Sgt. Thomas L. James and Congressman Darell Issa (R-Vista) cut a cake at the fifth anniversary of the Work for Warriors program at Camp Pendleton on Aug 17. Photo by Capt. Will Martin

Aug. 17 celebration on Camp Pendleton. The event welcomed some of the 400-plus employers who have partnered with Work for Warriors in the hope of encouraging further expansion, and moreover, more jobs for out-of-work veterans.

"These are the organizations that we end up placing a lot of veterans with because of that two-way feedback," said Maj. Chris Mitchell, Work for Warriors director. "They tell us what they need, we

refine the search for what they're looking for. They get quality people, we place veterans. It's a win all around."

While the Work for Warriors' 20 staff members have as their goal landing jobs for military and veteran clients, much of their focus is on establishing relationships with potential employers. It's hard to have a jobs program without jobs to offer, after all. Their task is made easier by the fact they are recommending em-

ployees who know the meaning of hard work, respect and, possibly most important, showing up on time.


Lloyd Songne represents Work for Warriors through a partnership with Camp Pendleton, where he seeks out those in the San Diego military and veteran community who need a steady gig. Recently, his efforts secured work for a Marine for whom the paint had just begun to dry on his military retirement.

"Through attending transition readiness seminars, I was able to meet Lloyd, and he referred me to Fortinet, a cyber-security company," said retired Master Sgt. Jay Garcia, who officially hung up his uniform in July 2017. "Lloyd actually offered a lot of tips and techniques on how to conduct interviews, how to do a resume, but the most important thing he was able to do was put me in contact with Fortinet. It's a great professional networking organization."

Another pillar of the program's success lies in its support from California elected officials. In the beginning, Perez worked to secure significant funding on behalf of Work for Warriors. Its cost-effective track record has encouraged further political support, including from Rep. Darrell Issa, a retired Army captain and member of the Work for Warriors Congressional Caucus.

"There is no question in my mind that we owe to those that served to be sure they are at the head of the line every chance we get so they can play catch up for some of that time lost," Issa said in addressing the Aug. 17 crowd at the birthday event. "That's the one area that I don't think the civilian population understands... (By serving for several years) they have lost seniority in the civilian sector, but they have gained skills and maturity that make them the best employees."

To learn more about Work for Warriors, visit: www.workforwarriors.org.



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Second Lt. Thomas Loretz has his gold bars revealed during the Cal Guard Officer Candidate Class of 2017 graduation at Camp San Luis Obispo's Perlee Theater on Aug. 26.

Photo by Capt. Jason Sweeney

OCS Class of 2017 graduates with honors

On Aug. 26, twenty-six candidates from the Class of 2017 came together to pin on their gold bars as newly minted second lieutenants at a graduation ceremony at Camp San Luis Obispo's Perlee Theater.

The class included candidates who attended the traditional 18-month course at Camp San Luis Obispo, California; accelerated courses at Fort Meade, South Dakota and Fort McClellan, Alabama; and the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia.

In a first for any OCS class, California candidates swept the distinguished honor graduate categories at both accelerated OCS courses and at the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School.

During the ceremony, 2nd Lt. Rhian Rogan was awarded the General Albert L. Leman Annual Award for her achievements in the 18-month traditional course, which is run by the Cal Guard's 2nd Battalion, 223rd Regiment, Regional Training Institute.

Of the 26 candidates, three completed the accelerated course at Fort Meade; four completed the accelerated course at Fort McClellan; and seven the U.S. Army Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning. For these courses, the Cal Guard candidates were mixed in with candidates from around the country.

Second Lt. DeVory Darkins was the distinguished honor graduate at Fort Meade, 2nd Lt. James Hutchcraft was the distinguished honor grad at Fort McClellan, while 2nd Lt. Joshua Egli took the distinguished honor grad slot at Fort Benning.

Second Lt. Marilu Sandoval was the distinguished honor graduate for the traditional course at Camp San Luis Obispo.

Also graduating in the Class of 2017 were 16 officer and warrant officer candidates from the California State Military Reserve (CSMR). The CSMR is a volunteer operational force that supports the Cal Guard. This was the first class to graduate new CSMR officers from California's newly formed Naval Militia.

Maj. Gen. Lawrence A. Haskins, Commander of the California Army National Guard, presided over the ceremony while Brig. Gen. Kelly Fisher, California National Guard Land Component Commander, was the guest of honor. Capt. Cedric Williams, an OCS instructor, was selected by the candidates to be the keynote speaker.

144th Civil Engineer Squadron heads to Moldova

Over thirty California Air National Guardsmen from the 144th Civil Engineer Squadron traveled over 6,300 miles to lend their expertise to a much needed restoration project of two schools near the capital of the Eastern European country of Moldova. They arrived in late July and completed the mission mid-August.

The thirty man team from Fresno, California, split up between two schools that desperately needed repairs and refurbishment. At the school in the village of Gratiesti the team focused on providing over 650 linear feet of walkway to allow the school children to participate in their mandatory 60 minutes of daily physical activity, no matter the weather conditions. They also placed efforts to install baseboards for the newly laid floors and installed safety covers for the steam radiators - the only source of heat for the classrooms. At the village of Hoboka school the team upgraded the classroom lighting to LED lighting and installed drop-in ceilings throughout the school, alleviating a major concern of the old ceiling dropping on the children during class.

Cal Guard supports Rapid Trident 17 in Ukraine

Soldiers with the California Army National Guard were deployed to the International Peacekeeping Security Centre in Yavoriv, Ukraine, in September to support their Ukrainian partners while participating in Rapid Trident 17.

Their participation in this multinational training exercise reinforces the initiative of the State Partnership Program implemented between the California Army National Guard and the Ukraine armed forces over 20 years ago.

The State Partnership Program developed from a 1991 U.S. European Command decision to set up the Joint Contact Team Program in the Baltic Region with Reserve soldiers and Airmen. This unique program includes 73 security partnerships involving 79 nations around the world. The SPP links components of the Department of Defense and states' National Guard with the armed forces of a partner country in a cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship.

Through the SPP, National Guard units conduct military-to-military engagements in support of defense security objectives, but also leverage combined capabilities to facilitate broader integrity.

The California-Ukraine SPP is one of the most important and progressive partnerships within the European Command. Combined training exercises like Rapid Trident highlight the continuous effort to build on the professional relationship that was established 1993.



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Leadership from the 40th Infantry Division salute an airplane carrying nearly 100 deploying Soldiers Sept. 18, at Joint Force Training Base, Los Alamitos. The Cal Guardsmen were flying to Fort Hood, Texas, to begin the first phase of a yearlong deployment to Southern Afghanistan. Photo by Spc. Amy Carle

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