

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TENNESSEE MILITARY DEPARTMENT

# TENNESSEE GUARDSMAN

OPERATION  
DESERT STORM

# 30

ANNIVERSARY

1991 - 2021

## ■ FROM THE EDITOR

LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS  
MANAGING EDITOR

Anniversaries often celebrate, but sometimes memorialize, important events that hold personal or historical significance to us. We use this time to remember and honor these events but they also provide us with opportunities to commemorate, reflect, and learn about our past.

In this issue of the *Tennessee Guardsman*, we choose to remember the 30th Anniversary of Desert Storm. More than 2,500 Tennessee Guardsmen served overseas during the conflict and it was the United States' first major combat operation since the end of the Vietnam War. We asked retired Sgt. 1st Class William Jones to search out and interview some of the Desert Storm veterans who are still serving with us today. Since he was on active-duty during that period, he was very enthusiastic about taking that walk down memory lane. What he found out is there are many veterans still serving, in and out of uniform, and their stories are fascinating. The few you read here are just a tiny part of the stories available to us from veterans who are still in our ranks. After reading this issue, I challenge everyone to find a veteran who is still in your unit, where you work, in your neighborhood, or wherever and listen to their stories. They will astound you and you might just learn something.

We also continue to honor veterans in this issue with our book review on Camp Forrest, the World War II camp in Tullahoma. During the war, Tullahoma was a vibrant mobilization camp filled with thousands of Soldiers training for the war in Europe. Their voices are heard in the artifacts they left behind and many of them are still in the areas we train. Next time you are at Tullahoma's Volunteer Training Site, look around, you will be amazed at what you can find and learn.

Lastly, we continue to bring to you the stories affecting our team and highlight the incredible work and service everyone is doing. From units returning from deployment, covering the presidential inauguration, to interviewing our new State Command Sergeant Major, we try our best to cover the historic events occurring today. Years from now, these will be the events we remember and honor in anniversaries to come.



ON THE COVER: Dust settling in Desert. (Photo  
Getty Images / Illustration by Rob Pennington)

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## LETTER FROM LEADERSHIP

CHIEF MASTER SGT. KENNETH SIMMONS



### You have grown as professionals and as a mature battle staff

The Tennessee Military Department's vision is to maintain a relevant, professional organization committed to readiness, responsiveness and quality service in support of state and federal missions. You have shown personal courage and selfless service in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. As I write this letter, there are more than 680 Guardsmen currently deployed across Tennessee supporting the Department of Health's COVID-19 vaccination and testing efforts. All the while you have remained ready, vigilant, and have continuously executed your federal mission.

In just the last few weeks, you helped administer over 530,000 vaccines to our fellow Tennesseans. Many of those recipients are Soldiers and Airmen working on the frontlines within the state. You have tested over 870,000 Tennesseans and continue to provide testing. Governor Bill Lee joined you for a ribbon cutting ceremony of the new Joint Emergency Operations Center you built. Recently, you were called to provide a generator to power a Tactical Air Navigation System in Christiana and delivered six two-thousand gallon HIPPOS to Memphis due to water mains breaking during sustained freezing temperatures. Your commitment to Tennesseans is immeasurable.

Please don't ever forget the history you made when we sent almost one thousand Soldiers and Airmen to Washington, D.C. in June 2020 due to civil unrest in our Nation's capital. The Tennessee National Guard used our own C17s and KC135s to transport our forces. You responded to our Commander-in-Chief and you responded at the speed of relevance. You returned with 450 Soldiers and Airmen in January 2021 to support the inauguration of our President. You answered the Nation's call.

You were still clearing debris from the deadly tornadoes in March 2020 when the battle with COVID-19 broke out. You stood up the Joint Adaptive Battle Staff and got to work combating this pandemic. Soldiers and Airmen have rotated through our formations providing valuable assistance to the team and gaining new experiences. You have grown as professionals and as a mature battle staff. Tennesseans recognize the Tennessee Military Department as a professional organization. Understand you're still in the battle and gaining momentum.

Additional training opportunities will begin presenting themselves and we must focus on our wartime mission while maintaining readiness. Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes stated, "Everything prior to mobilization is ours! We have to own it!" As professionals, we must challenge ourselves to own it, remain proficient, and keep ourselves healthy in any environment. Please understand the challenges we face, but let's get back to training.

You have done an outstanding job responding to this pandemic and I appreciate your ongoing efforts. I am extremely proud of you. It comforts me knowing you're ready for the call.

Stay healthy, stay safe, and may God bless you and your family.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "K Simmons". The signature is stylized with a large, sweeping "K" and a long, horizontal stroke extending to the right.

*Chief Master Sgt. Kenneth J. Simmons  
Senior Enlisted Leader Tennessee*



## Soldiers and Airmen Fight Winter Weather

Tennessee Guardsmen assist citizens when winter weather strikes in February

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — Soldiers and Airmen from the Tennessee National Guard helped citizens in response to the severe winter weather that struck throughout Tennessee in February.

Soldiers from Lobelville's A Troop with the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment provided a 2,200-gallon water tanker to Saint Francis Hospital in Memphis. The hospital experienced water outages due to freezing temperatures. The Soldiers from Lobelville operated the tanker as well as prepared additional tankers to provide to other hospitals in need.

Nashville's 118th Wing, in coordination with the Tennessee Department of Transportation, delivered a 100-kilowatt generator to a downed communication tower in Rutherford County that supports Tennessee Highway Patrol and first responders. Their efforts helped restore communications for first responders enabling them to continue assisting across the state.

The 45th Civil Support Team, based out of Smyrna, transported two Red Cross trailers to Lynchburg and Manchester. These trailers provide shelter for displaced civilians during natural disasters and weather events.

As part of the Tennessee National Guard's COVID-19 Task Force, medics deployed to Putnam and White counties to help administer vaccines that were at risk of expiring. Despite the severe weather conditions, the Tennessee National Guard was able to assist vaccinating members of the community before the vaccines reached their expiration date.

"I'm extremely proud of our Soldiers and Airman and all that they continue to do for our state," said Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General. "The realization is that they are trained to operate in these very complex environments and they are performing magnificently."

- Story by Lt. Col. Darrin Haas



### 278th Change of Command

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. The Tennessee National Guard's 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment conducted a change of command ceremony at Knoxville's West High School football field on Sunday, Feb. 7. Col. John "Brad" Bowlin, the current 278th commander, relinquished command to Lt. Col. Steven Turner. The 278th is one of five Armored Brigade Combat Teams in the Army National Guard and consists of over 4,000 Soldiers. Subordinate units are located in three different states and throughout Tennessee. (Photo by Staff Sgt. John Cunningham)



### Brig. Gen. Winstead Retires

NASHVILLE, Tenn. After 30 years of service, Brig. Gen. Kurtis J. Winstead retired from the Tennessee National Guard on Feb. 6. Winstead served as the Director of the Joint Staff for the Tennessee National Guard, a position he has held since February 2017. He began his military career in 1990 when he received a direct commission as a first lieutenant in the Judge Advocate Corps. Congratulations Sir and thank you for your dedicated service to the Tennessee National Guard! (Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Edgar Castro)



### Family Meeting in Memphis

MEMPHIS, Tenn. Members of the 164th Airlift Wing, along with their spouses and other family members, had a Key Spouses meeting in the Wing auditorium at the Memphis Air National Guard Base on Feb. 7. The Key Spouses volunteer to help different outreach programs in Memphis. They go through training to help individuals within the Wing and plan to organize events for families to enjoy spending time with their Airmen. Due to COVID-19, many of the participants were on zoom from the safety of their homes during the meeting.. (Photo by Airman 1st Class TraVonna Hawkins)



### New State Command Sergeant Major

NASHVILLE, Tenn. Command Sgt. Maj. James D. Crockett, the State Command Sergeant Major for the Tennessee Army National Guard, stands with his wife, Sharon, following the Jan. 31, Change of Responsibility ceremony in Nashville. Crockett is the 9th State Command Sergeant Major in the history of the Tennessee Army National Guard. (Photo courtesy Tennessee National Guard)



### State-of-the-Art Operations Center

NASHVILLE, Tenn. Gov. Bill Lee attended the ribbon-cutting ceremony opening the new Joint Operations Center at the Tennessee National Guard's Joint Force Headquarters on March 2. The JOC is a state-of-the-art response center that can expand to meet the State's needs in the event of emergencies and natural disasters. (Photo by retired Sgt. 1st Class William Jones)





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### PROMOTIONS WITH A D.C. BACKDROP

Jan. 21, 2021 - During a historical mission to Washington D.C., in support of the 59th Presidential Inauguration, Soldiers assigned to the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment were promoted at the Capitol Building.

PHOTO BY: SGT. ARTURO GUZMAN





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### HIGHLIGHTING A DIVERSE GUARD

Feb. 24, 2021 - Airman 1st Class Tylan Taylor, a financial technician with the 118th Wing is one of several members the Wing highlighted throughout African-American History Month. Taylor wants to become a cargo or RPA pilot.

PHOTO BY: 118TH WING





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### A STEP IN THE FIGHT AGAINST COVID-19

Jan. 14, 2021 - Soldiers and Airmen with Joint Task Force Medical help administer the COVID-19 vaccine to military personnel. These men and women voluntarily receiving the vaccine have been diligently working to combat the pandemic.

PHOTO BY: SENIOR MASTER SGT. KENDRA OWENBY





## TENNESSEE SNAPSHOT

### **BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION 2021**

Feb. 25, 2021 - A Soldier throws a simulated grenade during an event at the Best Warrior competition at the Volunteer Training Site in Tullahoma. This competition includes a variety of challenges designed to test every aspect of being a Soldier.

*PHOTO BY: SGT. ARTURO GUZMAN*



30TH ANNIVERSARY  
OPERATION  
DESERT STORM



STORY BY RETIRED SGT. 1ST CLASS WILLIAM JONES

The 30-year anniversary of the end of the first major U.S. conflict since the war in Vietnam was earlier this year in February. The five-month operation began on Aug. 2, 1990, when Iraq invaded Kuwait in an attempt to annex the sovereign nation. Nations from all over the world condemned this invasion and formed the largest military coalition not seen since World War II. The Gulf War, initially known as Operation Desert Shield, began in August with the accumulation of coalition troops in Saudi Arabia. Operation Desert Shield transitioned to Operation Desert Storm when military action to repel Iraq from Kuwait began in January 1991. The ground war ended after five weeks when Iraqi troops withdrew from Kuwait.

Eighteen Tennessee Guard units deployed to the Middle East in support of the Gulf War. Over 2,500 Tennessee Soldiers and Airmen from across the Volunteer State traded in their woodland camouflage uniforms for desert camouflage uniforms. When the units arrived in the Middle East, their swift, professional response set the standard for the future conflicts to come. For example, the 212th Engineer Company, attached to the 101st Airborne Division, was one of the first units to breach the Iraqi defense zones. They broke the border berm, infiltrated enemy territory, and built a six-lane road before the ground war began. The 196th Field Artillery Brigade with the 1-181st Field Artillery Regiment engaged in direct combat. Every unit and Soldier that deployed from Tennessee has a story of overcoming obstacles and showing why we uphold the tradition as the Volunteer State. Here are three of those Soldiers' stories:

18 different units from the Tennessee National Guard mobilized for Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

212th Engineer Company  
*Dunlap and Monteagle*

155th Engineer Company  
*Waverly and Erin*

775th Engineer Company  
*Camden*

268th Military Police Company  
*Dyersburg*

269th Military Police Company  
*Ripley*

251st Supply and Support Company  
*Lewisburg and Tullahoma*

1175th Quartermaster Company  
*Carthage and Lafayette*

1174th Transportation Company  
*Dresden*

196th Field Artillery Brigade  
*Chattanooga*

1/181st Field Artillery Battalion  
*Chattanooga and Dayton*

118th Public Affairs  
*Nashville*

Health Services Liaison Detachment  
*Smyrna*

130th Rear Area Operations Center  
*Smyrna*

300th CSH  
*Smyrna*

568th Personnel Services Company  
*Smyrna*

HHD, 176th Maintenance Company  
*Johnson City*

663rd Medical Detachment  
*Nashville*

776th Maintenance Company  
*Elizabethton and Trade*





## **Capt. Patricia Jones**

Company Commander  
269th Military Department  
Dyersburg, Tennessee

### ***What was your job while you were deployed?***

We provided area security to include quick reaction force for Camp Al Opyland and perimeter security for the Enemy Prisoner of War camp. Command and control were from the 800th Military Police Brigade and the 401st Military Police Camp, U.S. Army Reserves from Nashville, Tenn. The camp was in Saudi Arabia and it provided EPW operations for over 21,000 prisoners.

As the camp transported the enemy prisoners of war, the 269th Military Police Company was re-missioned to conduct customs inspection at Dhahran Airport for the theater redeployment.

### ***What were your feelings, and did they change while you were deployed?***

I was excited the company was getting the opportunity to prove its capability and perform the mission we have trained for, to do our part in support of the war effort.

While the mission was “gurgling” at times and I missed my family, my feelings did not change.

### ***How long were you in theater?***

We were in country for six months.



Capt. Jones attends a senior leader meeting during Desert Storm.



Jan. 1991 somewhere around the Dhahran  
Aerial Port Of Embarkation.



***How were you notified about your deployment?***

I received a "roaring bull" call on the telephone. Which was a predesignated code when the unit is called up for deployment.

***Were there any interesting events that happened while you deployed?***

Several members of the company were in Kuwait and the best story I remember is about a gas station attendant that gave them free fuel saying, "Free like Kuwait - thanks to the USA!"

***What was most memorable about your experience?***

What I remember most about the deployment is the Soldier's perseverance; this deployment spotlighted the flexibility and ingenuity of the National Guardsmen. The supply chain was overwhelmed; the Soldiers utilized their initiative and civilian acquired skills to fill the gaps, making life as comfortable as possible. Covering the full spectrum of needs: securing food, water, building furniture, putting lights in tents, designing a Frisbee golf course, as well as building the EPW enclosures. I was amazed and proud of the men and women with the 269th Military Police Company, on and off mission.



Col. Patricia "Patty" Jones was appointed the Director of the United States Property and Fiscal Office of Tennessee in 2012.

She deployed a second time in 2003 to Iraqi Freedom, and in 2005 as the commander on the 168th Military Police Battalion in support of Hurricane Katrina disaster relief.



## **Pvt. 1st Class Jimmy Reed**

Commander's Driver  
130th Rear Area Operations Center  
Smyrna, Tennessee

### ***What was your job while you were deployed?***

I was assigned as the commander's driver, Lt. Col. Joe Hancock until his death, and then I drove for Lt. Col. J.W. Noles. I deployed to Dhahran, Saudi Arabia and was detailed out from the 130th Rear Area Operations Center to work for the 22nd Support Command Headquarters, United States Army Central Command as a protocol driver. We drove dignitaries and VIPs from the airport to their meetings in and around Dhahran. Working on the protocol detail, I had the opportunity to play basketball three times a week with Maj. Gen. Gus Pagonis and his staff. I even played basketball with Vice President Dan Quayle. I had the opportunity to drive actor Steve Martin, he was a "wild and crazy guy", and boxer Thomas "The Hitman" Hearns. As part of the detail, I drove in President George H. W. Bush and General Norman Schwarzkopf's motorcade when they came to Dhahran.

### ***How long were you in theater?***

We were there six months. The unit mobilized and conducted pre-mob training at Fort Campbell and flew on a C-5A with the rear party, in which I was a part of, to Dhahran on a C-141 a day later. The 130th Rear Area Operations Center was in country from September 1990 to March 1991.



Pvt. 1st Class Reed poses with then Lt. Col. J. W. Noles, the commander of the 130th Rear Area Operations Center.





Staff Sgt. Lee Sharber, Spc. Shane Fletcher, and Spc. Jimmy Reed pose for a photo while training at their mobilization site at Fort Campbell, Kentucky prior to deploying to the Middle East.



Spc. Jimmy Reed carries the 130th Rear Area Operations Center guidon behind Maj. Gen. Carl Wallace, Tennessee's Adjutant General, and Lt. Col. J. W. Noles, 130th commander, when the unit returned home to Tennessee.

***What was your job while you were deployed?***

I was a private first class and I was an 88M, Motor Transport Operator. I was chosen to be the commander's driver prior to deployment.

***How were you notified you were deploying?***

I received a "raging bull alert" phone call from the unit to report on Aug. 27, 1990 in preparation for deployment to the Middle East.

***What were your feelings, and did they change while you were deployed?***

I just graduated from Advanced Individual Training and having reenrolled at Middle Tennessee State University, I really did not think the National Guard would ever get called up for deployment, so I was surprised and excited about the opportunity to serve.

***Were there any interesting events that happened while you were deployed?***

Enemy scud missile attacks happened often. We had to mask-up in case of chemical or biological agents. On Feb. 25, 1991, the 14th Quartermaster Detachment, United States Army Reserve unit from Pennsylvania lost 13 Soldiers in a Scud attack just down the street from my lodging in Dhahran.

When Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf came to visit, I got to meet the Air Force Pilot, Capt. Steve Tate, who allegedly shot down the first Iraqi Air Force Mirage F-1 on Jan. 16, 1991.



Col. James "Jimmy" Reed was appointed the Chief of the Joint Staff in June 2019.

He deployed a second time in 2004 as the commander of Iron Troop, 3/278th Armored Cavalry Regiment in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



## **Sgt. Michael Jarrett**

Assistant Operations NCO  
130th Rear Area Operations Center  
Smyrna, Tennessee

### ***What was your job while you were deployed?***

We arrived in theater way earlier than we should have, so we helped an Area Support Group that ran Camp Jack. After a few months, we setup as a Rear Area Operations Center and started doing our jobs. We tracked everything in theater, all 33 countries military, as well as the enemy combatants. I believe we became the theater Rear Area Operations Center early on, and we briefed all the way to four-star generals.

### ***How were you notified about your deployment?***

During our annual training in August of 1990, we had performed duty for around six days when we were told to pack up and head back to Nashville. We had three days to get our affairs in order, and off we went to Fort Campbell for mobilization. We were there for approximately 12 days and flew in a C-5 and a C-141 Starlifter straight into Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. After three days on the ground, we were informed we were in the wrong place, and needed to go to Dhahran. Since there were no air assets available, we convoyed 12 hours across the desert to Dhahran.

### ***How long were you in theater?***

Six and a half months.



Sgt. Jarrett spends time with local children at a food market in the city of Dhahran.



***What were your feelings, and did they change while you were deployed?***

I was a young Soldier and I will never forget my dad asking me as I got on the bus in Fort Campbell to take us to the airfield, "You really want to go over there, don't you?" and I looked at him and said, "Yeah, I do, that's why I joined, to serve my country."

***Were there any interesting events that happened while you deployed?***

I stayed behind with 18 other Soldiers to load our CONEX and we arrived about 20 days later. They landed us at Hunter Army Airfield, Georgia, and left us in the middle of nowhere in a hanger. They said a bus would pick us up in a few hours. Four hours later, we found a payphone in the back of the hanger, and I called my father and explained the situation. He happened to be part of the planning committee for the parade and contacted Headquarters, State Area Command (later Joint Force Headquarters). He called back and told us "Do not accept any transportation that shows up, you have a ride coming." He would not tell me anything else. A few hours later, a C-130 lands and taxis to the hanger, and out steps The Adjutant General of Tennessee, Maj. Gen Jerry Wyatt.



Sgt. Jarrett poses with another Soldier during a trip to Kuwait City.

***What was most memorable about your experience?***

We flew into Berry Field and were surprised to see the entire 130th Rear Area Operations Center there to greet us at 10:30 at night. The whole deployment was surreal, but an overall great experience. The whole unit stuck together and there was never any in fighting.



Master Sgt. Michael "Mike" Jarrett is a dual status federal technician at Joint Force Headquarters.

During the week, he works with G3 Training Office as the State Training Ammunition Manager. He does organizational training and inspections on drill weekend.

# MP COMPANY RETURNS HOME

253rd Military Police Company Returns from Deployment



**SMYRNA, Tenn.** – More than 100 Soldiers assigned to the Tennessee National Guard's 253rd Military Police Company returned home Wednesday, Feb. 3, after an 11-month deployment overseas.

"We're all excited to be back home," said Capt. Dana Shears, commander

of the 253rd Military Police Company. "It was a great deployment. Everyone worked hard and we proudly represented the Volunteer State."

Headquartered in Lenoir City and with a detachment in Bristol, the 253rd mobilized this past March. They were the first Soldiers from

Soldiers from the 253rd Military Police Company are welcomed home by Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General, and his command team, as they arrived in Smyrna on Feb. 3, following an 11-month deployment in support of overseas contingency operations. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)





Tennessee to train and deploy in support of overseas contingency operations in the midst of a worldwide pandemic.

“These Tennesseans mobilized just as the COVID-19 pandemic began,” said Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee’s Adjutant General. “The unit overcame many challenges as there were so many unknowns at the beginning, but these Soldiers were adaptive and agile and focused on their mission. They exemplified selfless-service and one of their

most difficult tasks was to leave their home and families during a tumultuous time and trust us here at home to look after them.”

The 253rd Military Police Company Soldiers returned to Smyrna’s Volunteer Training Site at approximately 11 a.m. and were greeted by family and friends. After conducting a short in processing, the unit bused to Lenoir City and released to go home.

“I’m proud of the great job they did and all they persevered through,”

Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee’s Adjutant General, welcomes home Soldiers from the 253rd Military Police Company just after they arrived at Smyrna’s Volunteer Training Center on Feb. 3, following an 11-month deployment in support of overseas contingency operations. (Photo by Capt. Kealy Moriarty)

said Holmes. “Their professionalism exemplifies the caliber of Soldiers who serve in the Tennessee National Guard.”

**- LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS**

# SPOTLIGHT ON LEADERSHIP

An Interview with Command Sgt. Maj. James D. Crockett

In January 2021, the Tennessee National Guard welcomed its ninth State Command Sergeant Major, Command Sgt. Maj. James Dale Crockett. Crockett, a veteran of 30 years, is from Crossville but spent most of his career with the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment based in Knoxville.

Capt. Kealy Moriarty sat down with him to talk about his new role as top advisor for the Land Component Commander on matters pertaining to policies and actions regarding enlisted Soldiers.



Sgt. Maj. James Crockett Command Photo.

**Capt. Moriarty: What are your expectations for the men and women in the Tennessee Army National Guard, and what should they expect from their senior enlisted leaders?**

*Sgt. Maj. Crockett:* I expect both Soldiers and civilians to be stewards of the Army profession. Throughout my career, I've always heard and applied the "Army profession," however, it wasn't until I attended the Nominate Leader Course last year when I really grasped the term. I expect all personnel, both uniformed and civilian, to uphold the five characteristics of the army profession,

which are trust, honorable service, military expertise, stewardship, and esprit de corps. These traits are the framework for my decisions, and I expect nothing less from all senior leaders in our organization.

**Capt. Moriarty: What are the basic principles of your leadership philosophy?**

*Sgt. Maj. Crockett:* I first put pen to paper on my leadership philosophy back in 2012 when I was promoted to Command Sergeant

Major for 2nd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment. Those principles have remained unchanged, and I only modified the document to fit the different positions I was entrusted to lead. I have six principles; Values, Integrity, Training, Maintaining, Caring for Soldiers, and Leader development. These are the principles I strive to demonstrate and counsel to all leaders.





Crockett when he was Command Sgt. Maj. of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment congratulates a U.S. team that took home first place during a Polish Armed Forces Day competition held at Yavoriv, Ukraine, Aug. 15, 2018. (Photo by Sgt. Timothy Massey)

**Capt. Moriarty: Who is someone you have looked up to in the past, and why?**

*Sgt. Maj. Crockett:* There have been several people that have shaped my leadership style throughout my career. The Army's ranks are filled with genuinely inspirational leaders, and I am thankful to have served with them. A few of the more famous folks I have read books about, and that I often reflect on their path and experiences are George Catlett Marshall, Dick Winters, Chesty Puller, David Hackworth, Meriwether Lewis, and

Stonewall Jackson.

**Capt. Moriarty: In what ways do you plan to influence the Tennessee National Guard?**

*Sgt. Maj. Crockett:* Like all leaders before me, I want to leave the organization a little better than I found it, and fortunately for me, those before me were successful in that endeavor. I have several initiatives I want to start during my tenure, but one of my focus

**“Values, Integrity, Training, Maintaining, Caring for Soldiers, and Leader development. These are the principles I strive to demonstrate and counsel to all leaders.”**

- Sgt. Maj. James Crockett



## INTERVIEW: SGT. MAJ. CROCKETT



Crockett In Iraq in 2005 while conducting a sniper overwatch mission in Diyala province.



Crockett (right) with other Tennessee National Guard leadership in Ukraine during a capabilities brief in 2018.

areas will be strengthening leadership at the squad leader level. Providing more training and increasing the capability of squad leaders will enable better-trained and better-prepared Soldiers. One of the ways I plan to do this is by launching a First Line Leader Course. The Regimental Training Institute will facilitate this course, and the cadre will consist of highly-trained leaders from all the formations. Currently, the course is planned for the fall of 2021 and spring of 2022.

### **Capt. Moriarty: Are you related to Tennessee legend Davy Crockett?**

*Sgt. Maj. Crockett:* As you can imagine, I have been asked that question many times throughout my life. Until about five years ago, I could not have answered that question truthfully, but I then decided to do some research with the help of a popular online genealogy research tool. It did not take long to reveal I was related to Davy Crockett; he is my first cousin 6 times removed (my 5th great grandfather's brother's son).



Painting of Davy Crockett by Levi Wells Prentice. (Courtesy of Gilcrease Museum)

*Interview by Capt. Kealy A. Moriarty*

*Photos courtesy of Sgt. Maj. James Crockett*





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# SUPPORT IN WASHINGTON

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Tennessee National Guard Supports Presidential Inauguration



**WASHINGTON, D.C.** – Over 750 Soldiers and Airmen with the Tennessee National Guard were part of a 25,000 member National Guard task force supporting the 59th Presidential Inauguration and assisting with security for the U.S. Capitol and other Federal properties in Washington, D.C.

The Tennessee Army National Guard provided over 700 Soldiers from the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment headquartered in Knoxville, the 194th Engineer Brigade headquartered in Jackson and the 230th Sustainment Brigade headquartered in Chattanooga. These Soldiers assisted civil law enforce-

A Soldier with the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment keeps watch in Washington D.C. on Jan. 17. (Photo by Sgt. Arturo Guzman)

ment and first responders with crowd management and security for the event.

In addition to the Soldiers providing support, roughly 50 Airmen with

Members of the 194th Engineer Brigade and 117th Regimental Training Institute prepare to keep the peace at the 59th Presidential Inauguration. (Photo by Sgt. Arturo Guzman)



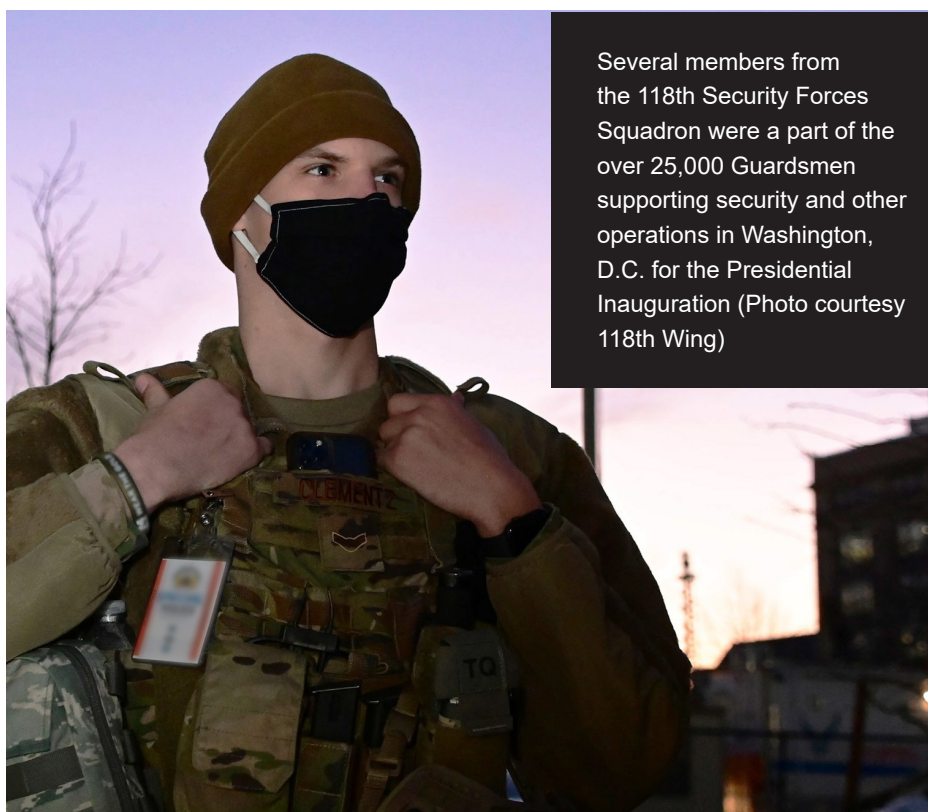
the Tennessee Air National Guard are supported the inauguration with logistical, communications, food service and religious support. The Airmen are from Nashville's 118th Wing, Knoxville's 134th Air Refueling Wing and 119th Cyber Operations Squadron. These Soldiers and Airmen were transported via Tennessee Air National Guard aircraft from Memphis's 164th Airlift Wing and Knoxville's 134th Air Refueling Wing.

"The ability for the National Guard to rapidly alert, mobilize and deploy this size of formation from all 54 states and territories in less than a week is unprecedented and a testament to the commitment to duty of our citizen soldiers," said Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General. "Furthermore, it demonstrates we are an apolitical organization that is responsive to the needs of our Nation in whatever mission is directed by our civilian authorities."

The current number of Soldiers and Airmen assigned to missions inside and outside the State represent less than 10% of our available Tennessee National Guard.

"The support to our Nation's Capital will not reduce in any way the COVID-19 response support we are currently providing to the Department of Health nor our ability to support other missions within our great state—this is why our more than 12,000 Soldiers and Airmen wear the uniform," said Holmes.

**- LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS**



Several members from the 118th Security Forces Squadron were a part of the over 25,000 Guardsmen supporting security and other operations in Washington, D.C. for the Presidential Inauguration (Photo courtesy 118th Wing)



# BEST WARRIOR

Tenn. National Guard hosts State Best Warrior Competition



**TULLAHOMA, Tenn.** – Soldiers and Airmen with the Tennessee National Guard competed in the State’s Best Warrior Competition held at Tullahoma’s Volunteer Training Site, Feb. 23-26.

This competition is designed to test non-commissioned officers and

junior enlisted leaders on their ability to perform soldier tasks under high-stress situations to reinforce warfighter skills.

“The most difficult part was turning off the part of my brain that tells me to stop,” said Sgt. James Baggett, a Franklin native assigned to Smyrna’s Medical Command. “It’s all

Soldiers compete in the Best Warrior Competition in Tullahoma, Feb. 25. (Photo by Sgt. Arturo Guzman)

mental; I had to turn that part of my brain off and focus on the mission.”

Events included a 12-mile ruck

march, land navigation, obstacle courses, weapons' qualification under stress, a physical fitness test, and uniform inspections. These warriors were challenged in every aspect to earn the highly coveted title of State Best Warrior.

"I'm a Soldier first and a generator mechanic second," said Sgt. William Lukens, a Murfreesboro native and member of the 208th Area Support Medical Company. "I love enhancing my soldiering skills with all of these guys, and the brotherhood we built instantly was great."

Of the eight Soldiers and Airmen who competed, three surpassed the rest. Sgt. James Baggett placed first, earning the title of Tennessee's NCO of the Year. Airman 1st Class Benjamin O'Neal, assigned to the 118th Security Forces Squadron, placed first in the junior enlisted competition and earned the title of Tennes-



Sgt. William Lukens, assigned to the 208th Area Support Medical Company, watches the final event during the State Best Warrior Competition, Feb. 26. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew M. Brown)

see's Warrior of the Year. The top Army finisher in the junior enlisted competition, Sgt. William Lukens will continue on and represent Tennessee in the regional competition.

"I persevered, I gave it everything I had, and I won. It feels amazing," said Baggett.

The State Best Warrior Competition is a prequalification to the Region III Best Warrior Competition, held each year. The top-scoring non-commissioned officer and the top-scoring junior enlisted Soldier from the State BWC will represent Tennessee and advance to the regional competition.

"It was a grind, and it definitely challenged us to the brink, but it was a blast because I was going through it with all of my brothers," said Lukens.

**- CAPT. KEALY A. MORIARTY**



Tennessee National Guardsmen stand with their mentors following the State Best Warrior Competition, Feb. 26. (Photo by Sgt. Matthew M. Brown)



# CHANGING OF THE GUARD

## A Change of Command in the Tennessee State Guard

NASHVILLE, Tenn. – Brig. Gen. (Tenn.) Juan R. Santiago assumed command of the Tennessee State Guard from Brig. Gen. (Tenn.) Craig Johnson in a change of command ceremony held at Nashville's Joint Force Headquarters on Feb. 6.

Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes, Tennessee's Adjutant General, officiated over the ceremony.

"Gen. Santiago is a committed Soldier and volunteer," said Maj. Gen. Jeff Holmes. "He is a talented leader and I am looking forward to what he will bring to his new role in the State Guard."

For more than 30 years, Santiago, a Memphis native, has served in the military as a member of the U.S. Air Force, U.S. Air Force Reserves, and the Tennessee State Guard. He is a veteran of Desert Storm and served as an Information Technology (Cyber) Officer for the Air Force. As a volunteer in the Tennessee State Guard, Santiago served in multiple leadership positions including Regimental Commander, Chief of Staff,



Brig. Gen. Santiago (right) assumed command of the Tennessee State Guard from Brig. Gen. Johnson (left) on Feb. 6. (Photo by 1st Lt. Sarah Khort)

and Deputy Commanding General for Operations. He is also the Executive Director of the State Guard Association of the United States.

Johnson, who relinquished command after more than four-and-a-half years, retired after the official change of command.

"Johnson has done a fantastic job,"

said Holmes. "It is a great loss to our State but his retirement is well deserved after spending more than 36 years in uniform."

Johnson began his military career in 1983 when he enlisted as a combat engineer in McMinnville's I Troop with the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment's 3rd Squadron. After two



Members of the Tennessee State Guard during the Change of Command ceremony at Joint Force Headquarters in Nashville. (Photo by 1st Lt. Sarah Khort)

years, he earned a commission from Middle Tennessee State University's ROTC program in 1985. In October of 1990, Johnson deployed to Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Shield as a platoon leader with Dunlap's 212th Engineer Company. His company was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division and broke the border berm into enemy territory, building a two-lane road. The unit traversed six miles before the ground war began, becoming the first unit of the division into Iraq and one of the first U.S. units to breach the Iraqi defensive zones.

Following Desert Storm, Johnson held a series of challenging assignments. He became the commander of the 212th Engineer Company and was then an Operations Officer for the 7th Army Training Command in Heidelberg, Germany. During the Global War on Terror, Johnson deployed to Iraq in 2005 as an As-

sistant Operations Officer with Jackson's 194th Engineer Brigade, commanded Trenton's 230th Engineer Battalion on two missions for Operation Jump Start along the Southwest border in 2006 and 2008, and deployed to Iraq again in 2009 as the Executive Officer for Jackson's 194th Engineer Brigade.

Johnson completed his National Guard career as the commander for the 194th Engineer Brigade where they supported the European Reassurance Initiative in Romania and Bulgaria. After retiring from the Tennessee National Guard in 2015, he was selected to command the Tennessee State Guard in August 2016.

"Brig. Gen. Johnson has been an integral part of our organization," said Holmes. "His leadership and passion for leading combat troops in two different wars and then volunteering to lead the State Guard

after already serving 32 years in the Tennessee National Guard is beyond selfless-service. He will be sorely missed, but we thank him for his dedication spanning nearly four decades, and wish him luck on what lies ahead."

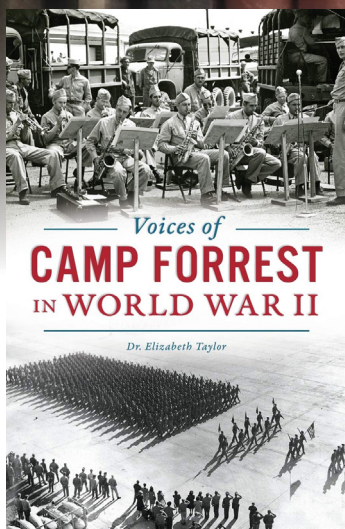
Throughout his career, Johnson earned numerous recognitions, including the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal with two oak leaf clusters, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, and the Army Meritorious Service Medal. He also earned a Master of Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College in 2010.

A graduate of the University of Tennessee School of Law with a Doctorate of Jurisprudence, Johnson has been a Circuit Judge in the 14th Judicial District of the State of Tennessee since 1998. Johnson and his wife Marybeth have three sons.

The Tennessee State Guard is the all-volunteer arm of the Tennessee Military Department headquartered in Nashville. It consists of approximately 500 volunteers and authorized by Tennessee Code Annotated 58-1-401.

**- LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS**





*Voices of Camp Forrest  
in World War II*  
By Dr. Elizabeth Taylor

Lt. Col. Darrin Haas Gives his Review of:

# VOICES OF CAMP FORREST IN WORLD WAR II

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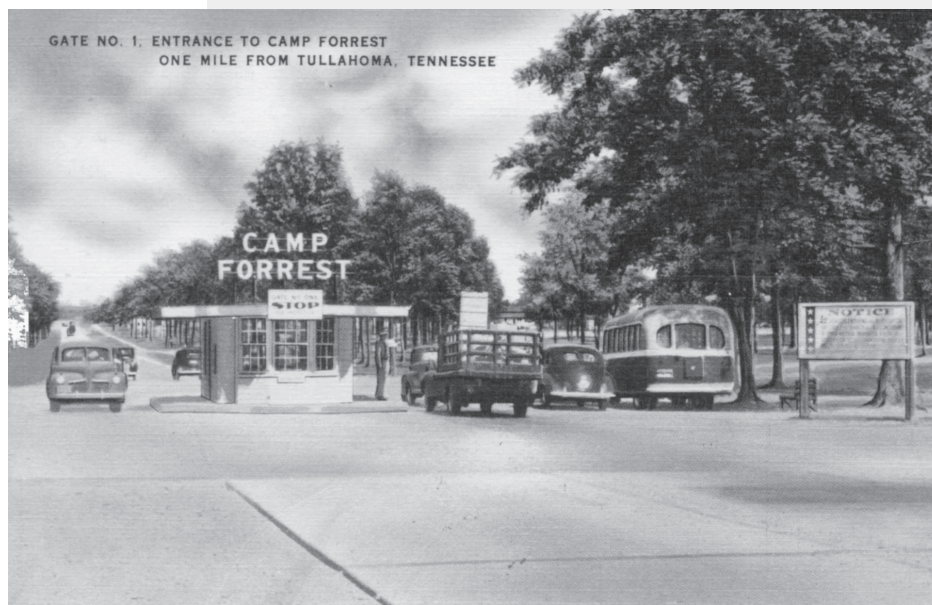
Tullahoma's Volunteer Training Site is the largest and one of the most widely used training facilities maintained by the Tennessee National Guard. Thousands of guardsmen, soldiers, ROTC cadets, and countless other government agencies use the state-of-the-art facility to train and qualify on various weapon systems each year. However, it is more than just a training site. It is a time capsule for our state's history. Now thanks to Dr. Elizabeth Taylor and her new book, *Voices of Camp Forrest in World War II*, a major part of that history has been unearthed.

Through meticulous and painstaking research spanning over a decade, Taylor explored the history of Camp Forrest, a major encampment built to support the U.S. Military's expansion at the onset of World War II. As war loomed in 1940, the U.S. Govern-

ment constructed military facilities throughout the country to prepare for the impending conflict. In September 1940, the U.S. Government chose to expand Camp Peay, a Tennessee National Guard training camp in Tullahoma. Originally built in 1926, Camp Peay consisted of over 1,000 acres of military training area. Within a year, it was renamed Camp Forrest and expanded to nearly 85,000 acres. Approximately 22,000 to 28,000 laborers flooded into Tullahoma to construct the roads, buildings, and countless other facilities needed to mobilize and train soldiers for combat.

At Camp Forrest's height, it had over 1,300 buildings, 55 miles of roads, and five miles of railroad tracks. There were numerous training areas, artillery and rifle ranges, and an airfield. It also featured one of the first urban training facilities, a "Nazi

A vintage postcard from Camp Forrest. (Courtesy Photo)



village,” where Army Rangers and Soldiers trained to fight in inhabited areas. Throughout the war, Camp Forrest existed as a self-sustaining city with over 70,000 Soldiers and another 12,000 civilians on post at any given time. However, when the war ended, the federal government deemed the camp too costly to maintain and decommissioned it. Many of the buildings were removed or destroyed and much of the property was repurposed.

Throughout her book, Taylor looks at the impact Camp Forrest had on Tullahoma and the Middle Tennessee area. She examines the effect Pearl Harbor had on Middle Tennessee, the construction of Camp Forrest, and what it was like to live and work at and around the camp. She also looks at the effect housing prisoners of war had on

the area and the impact decommissioning the facility had on the local economy.

In order to tell this story, Taylor personally interviewed many of the soldiers, families, and civilians who lived, worked, trained, and grew up in and around Camp Forrest. She scoured through countless newspapers, personal diaries, and scrapbooks found in the archives and personal collections to weave her story together. Taylor’s interest stemmed from research she conducted on prisoners of war interred in Tullahoma during the war. Camp Forrest served as a prisoner of war facility holding German, Japanese, and Italian prisoners. By 1944, more

than 20,000 German prisoners were detained there, many awaiting processing and shipment to other POW facilities around the country.

Overall, *Voices of Camp Forrest in World War II* is a masterful work I would highly recommend to any reader interested in the history of World War II, Middle Tennessee, or the Tennessee National Guard. Taylor’s scholarship is sound, vibrant, and full of interesting stories keeping the reader riveted and engaged. Her work is incredibly well written and impeccably researched. It is an essential read for anyone interested in Tennessee and World War II history.

**- LT. COL. DARRIN HAAS**





Produced in collaboration with the Tennessee Military Department  
and the Tennessee National Guard