

EANGUS

NEW PATRIOT



Vol. 27, No. 1

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States

Spring 2008

A photograph of a musher, Rodney Whaley, wearing a blue and black winter jacket with a white fur-lined hood. He is pulling a sled through deep snow, surrounded by a team of sled dogs. The dogs are of various breeds, including huskies and shepherds. The background shows snow-covered trees.

The World's Last Great Race

Tennessee Guardsman competes in Alaska Iditarod

Rodney Whaley, 56, a Master Sergeant in the Tennessee Army National Guard, is the only Tennessean in history to compete in the grueling 1,159-mile race. STORY ON PAGE 22 →



Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Alexandria, VA
Permit 934

EANGUS New Patriot
3133 Mt. Vernon Ave.
Alexandria, VA 22305

EANGUS

President

CSM (Ret) A. Frank Lever III

Vice President

CMSgt (Ret) Roger A. Hagan

Secretary

CMSgt Doug Simpson

Treasurer

CSM John F. Helbert

Past President

CMSgt (Ret) Edwin B. Brown

Executive Director

MSG (Ret) Michael P. Cline

Area I

1SG Frank E. Hotaling, Chairman (VT)

SMSgt (Ret) Ken Johnson (VT)

SFC Debbi Newton (CT)

Area II

CSM (Ret) Herman T. Preston, Jr. (DC),
Chairman

MSgt (Ret) David Mowry (T-10)

SFC (Ret) Joseph C. Wade (VA)

Area III

CSM (Ret) James Rains, Jr. (FL),
Chairman

SMSgt Terri Lever (SC)

SFC (Ret) John Glenn Schmidtkofer (AL)

Area IV

SMSgt David H. Culwell, (AR),
Chairman

SGT Mireya O. Cruz (TX)

SFC Max Miller (KS)

Area V

SSG (Ret) Timothy Wolf (ND), Chairman

CCM (Ret) Jesse Wayland (IL)

1SG (Ret) Christopher G. Sower (WI)

Area VI

SGM (Ret) Joe O. Fernandez (NM),
Chairman

CMSgt Daryl P. Elliott (ID)

CSM Sidney Cardon (UT)

Area VII

CMSgt Daniel S. Siekawitch (AK)
Chairman

CMSgt (Ret) Bart Inglese (CA)

MSG Kathryn L. Arizo (HI)

Bits and Pieces

Free CD for Soldiers

**Thirteen major recording artists prepared
a free CD for Soldiers.**

**It is available for download from the Army
and Air Force Exchange Service website.**

Music on the CD features:

Billy Joel; Brooks and Dunn; the Goo Goo Dolls;

Jewel; Josh Groban; Los Lonely Boys;

Melissa Ethridge; the Neville Brothers;

Sarah McLachlan; the LT Dan Band;

Montgomery Gentry; The Fray;

and Five for Fighting.

To download this music, visit: www.aafes.com

EANGUS Publication Staff

MANAGING EDITOR: Michael P. Cline, 3133 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22305

PUBLISHER: Enlisted Association of the National Guard

PRINTER: Chesapeake Publishing Corporation, 29088 Airpark Dr., Easton, MD 21601

PUBLICATIONS CHAIR: SFC Debbie Newton (CT)

EDITOR: Dian Cline

THE NEW PATRIOT is published by the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States, 3133 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22305.

COMMENTS, articles and state associations news should be forwarded to: To New Patriot Magazine Editor, 3133 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22305. Pictures submitted should be black and white and labeled on the back.

ADVERTISING: Contact the National Office for rates. Individuals wishing to sell advertising at the existing EANGUS rates will be paid 15% commission upon full payment of the ad. Subscription rate is \$9.00 per year and checks should be made payable to the New Patriot Magazine and mailed to New Patriot Magazine, 3133 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alexandria, VA 22305.

THE NEW PATRIOT MAGAZINE is published for all members for the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States. Opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the United States Army or Air Force, the National Guard of the United States or official EANGUS positions unless so stated.

www.eangus.org

From the EANGUS President...

CSM (Ret) Frank Lever

President

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States

EANGUS has experienced a very busy first quarter of 2008. We began the drive to retain our E-5 and E-6s who received their free membership from our partner, USAA. Our membership of over 90,000 has invigorated us to strive to go over 100,000 members. EANGUS needs YOU to talk to Soldiers and Airmen to remain members and if they are not members, ask them to join. EANGUS also needs every member to talk to our National Guard retiree community about joining our association. But, the question they will ask you is: **What have you done for me lately?** And that is a legitimate question, but one that I want to help you answer. I have listed below the accomplishments that EANGUS attained just this year, **2007**.

Early Retirement is In There! It has some imitations but it's a start. It reduces the age at which you can retire (from age 60) 90 days for every aggregate 90 days you are on active duty orders for a con-

National Guard Empowerment is In There!

- Places Chief National Guard Bureau on the Joint Chiefs of Staff
- Requires CNGB to identify gaps in Federal and State emergency response capabilities and to validate requirements, recommend funding, develop doctrine, and acquire materiel for Military Assistance to Civil Authorities to fill those gaps.
- Requires separate DOD budget documents for NG MACA training, doctrine development & acquisition.
- Requires establishment of an NGB "Federal Strategic Integrated Planning Directorate" and a "NGB Strategic Planning Process" and a planning committee to carry out the above tasks.
- Renames Directors Army National Guard and Air National Guard positions to Vice Chief, Army National Guard and Vice Chief, Air National

EANGUS agrees with those in The Military Coalition that military service is extraordinary and that the costs for quality health care have already been paid by the sacrifices made by the military member and their families.

tingency operation or National EMERGENCY (Title 10 or Title 32) within your retirement year. The orders don't have to be for 90 days or more, but credit is given in 90-day chunks at the end of the retirement year when posting to your records. Bad news--the law is not retroactive, so time already spent on orders prior to January 28th doesn't count--YET. We are working a legislative fix to backdate the provisions to 9/11/2001.

Guard respectively. Deputy Directors of the Army and Air Guard are renamed Deputy Vice Chiefs.

- Requires that duty as The Adjutant General is treated as Joint Duty for position qualification purposes.
- Requires CNGB to report annually to CJCS and Congress on officer and enlisted duty positions at State Joint Force Headquarters that should qualify as joint duty or joint duty experience.



CSM (Ret) Frank Lever

- Requires CJCS to report annually on joint education courses.
- Specifies the responsibilities of NORTHCOM and PACOM as combatant commands principally responsible for assisting State NG support of civil authorities.
- Requires a NORTHCOM-NGB Memorandum of Understanding.
- Requires Defense Secretary to prescribe that tactical control of active forces within a State is vested in the State's governor when such forces are engaged in emergency response activities in the State.
- Requires that ARNORTH and AF-NORTH commanders be NG officers with preference for former Adjutants General.
- A National Guard officer will remain Commander of Air Force North, while Guard officers shall become the Commander Army North, and Commander or Deputy Commander of Joint Task Force Alaska, Joint Task Force Civil Support, and Joint Task Force North.

Other Good Stuff is In There!

- Raised the creditable number of retirement points from 90 per year to 130 per year.

TO PAGE 6 →

From the Vice-President, Roger Hagan

CMSgt (Ret) Roger Hagan

Vice President

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States

As I write this article, spring is fast approaching in Montana. We have had our traditional winter weather and now look toward the season change, trees leafing out and flowers beginning to bud. Just the same as Mother Nature is showing us signs of a new year, our activities within EANGUS show signs of a new year as well.

There are many new and exciting things happening within our EANGUS organization. A new website look, individual member access to EANGUS on-line documents and communication with your congressional members, on-line membership management and on-line member profiles are just a few of the new or improved things that are on our plate. The one I am most closely related to is the planning and execution of our annual general conference in August. As you may know, this marks the first year that our Association has taken full responsibility for the conference. That includes developing the registration program, securing hotel rooms and conference meeting space and working with the host state to insure the operations support is in place.

I recently returned from a pre-site visit of the Savannah, GA conference facilities and meeting with our host state key players. Rest assured, we are in good shape with the operations support portion of this conference. GA Chairman, CSM James Dennis, and his staff have this thing well in hand. President Lever,

Auxiliary President Sheila Bandy, CMSgt Dee Riggie (EANGUS Conference Coordinator) and I were briefed comprehensively on their support plans and the staff they have to make this conference a resounding success. I know you will be glad you boarded the "Midnight Train To Georgia"! If you

haven't registered yet, please do so on-line at the EANGUS website. Remember, the cost goes up if you don't hurry and register now.

As an added benefit, Bob Metcalf, EANGUS 2009 Conference Chair from Minnesota was also able to attend the meeting. He gathered some valuable

information to assist his team in planning our conference in Rochester, MN in 2009. I am sure Bob went back to Minnesota with many great ideas from the Georgia folks. This is how we will approach conferences from now on, so we are literally writing the book as we go. Remember, if your state is even 'thinking' about bidding a conference in the future, start now. The deadline for submissions is early April of 2008. Please contact our Time and Place Committee Chair, CSM (Ret) Claude Imagna at cpi938@adelphia.net or Vice-Chair, SSG (Ret) Timothy Wolf, tjwolf3812@comcast.net.

The EANGUS 2008 Site Visit and President's Workshop will be held in conjunction with our Spring Executive Council Meeting from 29 May – 1 June 2008 in Savannah. The information for hotel reservations is posted on



CMSgt (Ret) Roger Hagan

the EANGUS website. Please plan on attending the President's Workshop and also the Site Visit briefings. This is an opportune time for you to prepare for your state delegation's arrival in August. We have had some on-line bugs to work out for the hotel room reservations system, are working to resolve room block issues, and continue to press to get all rooms assigned individual names and guaranteed by credit cards. All room blocks not assigned individual names, addresses and guaranteed by a credit card by 1 June will be cancelled and the rooms turned back to our EANGUS block for other attendees to secure. Please don't tie up rooms unnecessarily; this only puts other members in a position of not getting rooms in the contracted hotels.

As I work the preparations for the conference, an important part of our event is the Exhibitor Program. We have had growth in that program over the past few years and I am confident we will see continued growth this year. I attended the NGAUS Industry Day in December and met with and promoted our EANGUS Exhibit Program to several defense related corporations. I thank NGAUS for including EANGUS in their

TO PAGE 8 →

Auxiliary Message

Sheila Bandy

EANGUS Auxiliary President

Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States

Auxiliary is a word that has been around for many years. All of our Auxiliary members are volunteers because they feel it is a valuable tool and helps support the National Guard.

It is not limited to spouses even though some assume that it is. Our organization is open to anyone who cares about the existence of the National Guard - Army or Air. Our membership consists of officers and enlisted spouses, Army or Air National Guard, family members, neighbors etc. We do not wear the rank on our collar in the Auxiliary as we are all family and work together.

We have a common interest. Most of our members have been through 1, 2 and 3 deployments. We can encourage one another with our deployment experiences. We share our ideas and how we dealt with deployment. Many of our members were active during Viet

nam, focus on the mission, there is no end to what we can accomplish for the good of our soldiers, airmen and women, and their families. The Auxiliary conducts business meetings alongside EANGUS.

We have many different programs that benefit the family. Our scholarship program is open to spouses and their children.

Our Ronald McDonald house project, collecting pop tabs has benefited the community each year in the state that the National Conference is held, along with our toiletries. We also donate our toiletries to injured soldiers that are hospitalized in our communities.

The Family Readiness Groups are also very vital to the family, especially during deployments. They are most active when the unit is deployed.

Unlike the Family Readiness Group, the Auxiliary is not federally funded.

The Auxiliary's mission is to support EANGUS and the grass roots efforts on Capitol Hill. It is important to have an active Auxiliary in your state.

nam when we did not have emails, computers, cell phones etc. They had to wait weeks for a letter by snail mail. Things now are much better and will be beneficial to our Junior Enlisted families to prepare for future deployments. Many of the things we do today will benefit our next generation. It could be our grandchildren's future.

The Auxiliary's mission is to support EANGUS and the grass roots efforts on Capitol Hill. It is important to have an active Auxiliary in your state. If we

Auxiliary members can lobby on Capitol Hill. The Auxiliary is made up of some of the same spouses that attend the Family Readiness Group activities but instead of having family briefings and explaining the benefits that are available to the family, the Auxiliary is on The Hill fighting to maintain those benefits. We need both organizations to support the future of the Guard and its families.

Most organizations have to explain "What have you done for me lately"? I would like to ask you, "What have you



Sheila Bandy

done for the Auxiliary lately"?

It is so exciting that EANGUS has increased its membership and I know that 65% of those members are married. If you are one of those embers, have you signed up your spouse to be an Auxiliary member? What about your mom or your girlfriend or boyfriend? Have you even told your spouse about the Auxiliary? Do you attend military functions and leave your spouse at home or sitting out in the car? I have been a member since 1986 and nothing would surprise me. I have heard all kinds of excuses.

Everyone in the Guard has someone who loves them and is proud of them serving their country. They would be more than happy to help support your future in the Guard. We need all the support we can get to help keep our benefits. Benefits you have today may not be there tomorrow!! Do your part. Bring your spouse or family member to the next military function to meet the Auxiliary. You'll be glad you did!

A membership is just the first step in supporting the numbers needed to enhance our voice on Capitol Hill. The Auxiliary writes letters to congress, sends emails and faxes and makes phone calls on behalf of military issues

TO PAGE 9 →

From the EANGUS President

FROM PAGE 3

- Allows payment for IDT travel in certain circumstances.
- Repeals the changes to the Insurrection Act from last year.
- Extends VA health care from 2 years to 5 years post-deployment.
- Allows Mil Techs to be retained in their jobs if combat injured and discharged from the Guard, without regard to limits on non-dual status technicians.
- Allows saluting the flag when not in uniform

Also let them know of EANGUS' other accomplishments that have directly impacted their well-being whether a drilling service member or a retiree. Those are listed below:

- Reduced TRICARE rates for National Guard members
- Portability of MGIB benefits for being called to active duty.
- No TRICARE increases for Retirees

As we enter 2008, the legislative challenges remain significant and "SCARY". A Commission appointed by Secretary of Defense studied health care issues. In their report they recommended that TriCare fees increase.

Background. Health care is expensive, and the cost is growing every year. The military health care plan (TRICARE) is a HMO-like program for all active duty military members and their families; Reservists on active duty and their families; Reservists not on active duty who choose to cost share the premiums with DOD, and their families; retirees, their families, and surviving spouses who elect TRICARE as either their primary or secondary provider.

- There are no fees or premiums for TRICARE for active duty or their family members.
- There are no fees or premiums for retirees or survivors age 65 or older who are covered by Medicare and TRICARE For Life, as TFL acts as a Medicare supplement and covers

what Medicare doesn't.

- Reservists not on active duty (and their family members) must cost share the premiums with the Defense Department, paying 28% of the premium.
- Retirees under age 65 and their families must pay an enrollment fee, established in 1996, for either member or family coverage. Those who pay a fee or premium also have co-payments and deductibles to meet. The current rates for those who cost share were set in Fiscal 2006.

Due to rising health care costs, especially for TFL beneficiaries who make up 21% of the beneficiary base yet expend 57% of the budget, who have an expected 44% increase in costs in the next few years, the Defense Department has requested approval from Congress to increase fees, deductibles, and co-payments for retirees under age 65 and their families, and enrollment fees for Reservists and TFL beneficiaries.

EANGUS agrees with those in The Military Coalition that military service is extraordinary and that the costs for quality health care have already been paid by the sacrifices made by the military member and their families. In addition, increases in fees, co-payments and deductibles give no guarantee of better care or access to providers.

Task Force Chartered. Before considering the increases, Congress commissioned a task force on the future of military health care. Section 711 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 required that the Secretary of Defense establish a task force to examine matters related to the future of military health care. As directed by the Act, in December 2006 the Secretary of Defense appointed 14 members to the Department of Defense Task Force on the Future of Military Health Care. The Task Force includes individuals from within and outside the Department of Defense,

with wide expertise in issues related to health care programs and costs.

The Task Force issued its Final Report to Defense Secretary Robert Gates on December 20, 2007. The Task Force had two overriding and guiding principles to shape their recommendations:

- The Task Force also believes that those treated by this system—military members and retirees as well as their dependents—deserve a very generous health care benefit in recognition of their important service to the Nation, but not free.

- The system should provide much needed health care while considering fairness to the American taxpayer.

And Hold On!

The Commission on the National Guard and Reserve has issued a report that causes EANGUS and I would hope you, some major concern. I have listed just a few of their recommendations below:

- **#5.** DHS to determine civil support requirements, not DOD. DOD should shift capabilities currently resident in the Guard that are not required for its state missions but are required for its federal missions either to the federal reserve components or to the active duty military, as appropriate. This means the Guard will do homeland security and civil support missions only, not combat roles or missions.
- **#22-24.** Duty status reform—take 29 statuses down to 2—No MUTAs—one day pay for one day work—implement within 2 years, complete within 5 years. This may reduce duty statuses and DOD's liability for pay and benefits, but it also reduces the financial benefit for the Guard member, to include a reduction of retirement points and eventual retirement compensation (and possibly SBP annuity payments to surviving spouses). **EANGUS stands vehemently opposed to this.**
- **#27-28.** One retirement system for

TO PAGE 7 →

From the EANGUS President

FROM PAGE 6

active & reserve alike—5 year transition—vest at 10 years; age 62 for 10-20 yrs service; age 60 for 20 yrs service; age 57 for 30 yrs service; 5% reduction for each year earlier than age 57. This recommendation looks to implement the 2005 recommendations of the Defense Advisory Committee on Military Compensation. It penalizes all active duty sacrifices, to include Guard members on AGR status. No other retirement system in America has their employees work full time for 20 years and then retire and delay receipt of their retired pay for over 20 years into the future.

■ **#36, 38-39.** Replace all Army Reserve AGR with AC—kill Navy and USMC FTS positions. Keep Guard AGR positions, but integrate active duty soldiers in FTS positions. This recommendation effectively kills the Army Reserve, Navy and Marine FTS programs, allowing currently employed AGRs to complete their careers with no replacements. Active duty members who fill Guard AGR positions are to serve in both Title 32 and Title 10 status, which will require a complete change in the United States Code for them to do so. Killing these AGR programs is a precursor to killing the Guard AGR program. EANGUS is definitely opposed to this recommendation on many levels.

■ **#94.** Make Guard like Reserve on Army & Air Staff. Move Directors Army & Air Guard onto service staffs under CSA & CSAF. This strips the Chief, NGB of any control of the Guard. It makes the Directors commanders of their respective organizations, identical to Chief Army Reserve and Chief Air Force Reserve. It gives the Chiefs of Staff greater access to the Guard for placing active duty forces into Guard organizations and control. It moves Army and Air Guard staff onto respective service staff, becoming fodder for billets that free up active

assets for operational assignments. The Chiefs of Staff become responsible for combat operations, the reserve chiefs become the operational reserve for combat, and the Guard directors become advisors and commanders for homeland security and civil support. This will decimate the Guard Bureau as it is organized and authorized by law.

■ **#95.** Eliminate OSD/RA. By putting the Directors Army and Air Guard under the respective service chiefs, the need for a Reserve Affairs Assistant Secretary becomes moot. But the recommendation above (#94) has no merit, and neither does this one.

We, the National Guard must band together to fight these recommendations. That is the role of EANGUS. But to fight with Congress, EANGUS needs the support of all our Army and Air Guard members and our retirees. If you know someone who is not a member, tell them about these issues and how they can affect our 371 year old Militia.

In the first week of March, EANGUS conducted its Legislative Workshop in Washington, DC. We had 75 participants who came to Washington, DC to learn the legislative process, to develop their skills for discussing legislative issues with their Senator and Representative, to hear the importance of taking issues both in person and in writing to these Representatives and finally, to meet with their Senator or Representative. This year the Legislative Committee developed a two-tier workshop aimed at orienting the newcomer and further educating the ones who had attended in the past. I want to thank Jim Rains, committee chair and Stephanie Wynn, co-chair for a great workshop. I also want to recognize the contribution of Connie Myers and Roger Hagan in making the workshop a success.

For the final event, EANGUS hosts a Legislative Reception at the National Guard Memorial and invites all the members of Congress and their Staff as well as

the leadership of the National Guard to recognize that Senator and Representative who has made a significant contribution to the welfare of our Soldiers and Airmen, active and retired. EANGUS also recognizes two Congressional Staffers who through their knowledge, devotion and hard work contributed to the well being of our service members. This year's honorees were:

- ◆ Senator Blanch Lincoln, Arkansas
- ◆ Congressman Tom Davis, Virginia
- ◆ Mr. Tony McClain, Legislative Assistant for Military Affairs for U.S.
- ◆ Senator Blanche L, Lincoln, Arkansas
- ◆ Grace Washbourne, Senior Republican Professional Staff Member

I want to personally thank Dian Cline and her neighbors and close friends for preparing the food for this reception. Congress looks forward to this reception every year and shows its support by attending when not on the "floor" for a vote. And Congressmen do ask how they can get recognized for these awards. But in my opinion, they love the food. Dian has provided the food for the last 13 years and has built our reception as the "go to" reception. Thanks, Dian.

Finally, I want to give you some dates for your calendar.

- Awards: 15 April 2008
- Resolutions: 15 May 2008
- Scholarships: 1 July 2008

Site Visit and President's Workshop-Savannah, GA May 30-1 June

Hampton Inn Reservation code: EAN 912-231-9700 Rates: \$130.00 per night plus tax

Holiday Inn Express – 1-800-276-9074

Both hotels can be accessed through the EANGUS website.

37th Annual Conference-Savannah, GA August 18-21 "Midnight Train to Georgia"

Thank you for your support of this Association and of your Executive Council and Executive Officers.

Frank and Ellen Lever ☆

Vice President's Message

FROM PAGE 4

program and giving us the opportunity to address the attendees concerning our exhibit opportunities.

As I said in the last issue, we have lots of exhibit space available in the Convention Center so I ask that, as loyal EANGUS members, you seek out likely exhibitors for our annual conference and provide us with the names. Go to the EANGUS Website for the information on the 2008 EANGUS Exhibitor Referral Program. Make a copy of the Referral Program letter and submittal form and fill in the information on those businesses or educational institutions you think might be interested in coming to Savannah. If your referral results in an exhibitor, you will be entered into a contest for valuable prizes. Come on and join in the fun!

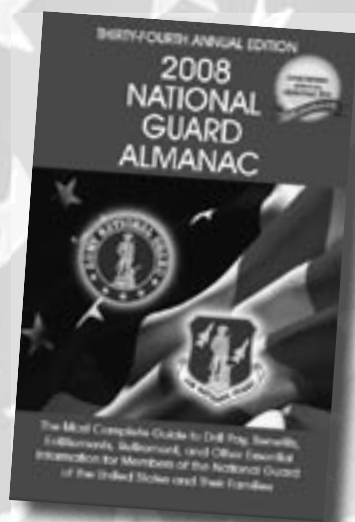
In January I attended the Area VI/VII Mid Winter Caucus in sunny Los Alamitos, CA. It was one of the best attended Area VI/VII caucuses I have seen. There is a lot to putting on one of these events and I tip my hat to the California delegation for their hard work. They did a wonderful job hosting the 14 states of the two areas.

In February I was honored to meet with and brief the Army National Guard State CSM Advisory Council at their meeting in Boise, ID. Thanks to CSM Gipe and Advisory Council Chair, CSM Bob Bennett (MT), for their kind invitation. EANGUS had yet another opportunity to spread the good word of EANGUS to senior enlisted leadership from around the U.S. I shared with all State CSM's in attendance our membership stats for

2007, sorted by percentage of potential by state. That spreadsheet tells a good story in an easy to read format. It clearly shows if a state is supporting EANGUS or not. My heartfelt thanks to 1SG Patrick Flaherty, Idaho EANG President, for his outstanding hospitality and support while I was in Boise. He made sure I was where I was supposed to be, when I was supposed to be. He accompanied me to the Advisory Council meeting and I 'shared' the Idaho Adjutant General's letter supporting professional military organizations such as EANGUS. There is great support for the Idaho Association. All State CSM's left the meeting with a copy of the letter to take to their TAG.

I had the opportunity to represent your President at the November Board of

TO PAGE 9 →



How to order:

For only **\$15.50** (price includes postage) you can own the most comprehensive guide to military pay and benefits available!



Mail check/money order to:
Uniformed Services Almanac, Inc.
PO Box 4144-E, Falls Church, VA 22044



1-888-872-9698 for credit card orders



Order secure online:
www.militaryalmanac.com

EANGUS Members! Stay informed and know your benefits!

Order your NEW 2008 Almanac today!

These outstanding fact-filled, 256 page reference books provide Guardmembers, retirees, and their families with the most current, detailed information on:
Compensation•Pay Tables with the latest information on the new 40 year pay table•DIC•SBP•Installation Listings•Retirement Enhancements •Health Care-Including TRICARE-Reserve Select for drilling Guardmembers•Medical Facilities•VA Benefits•Federal/State Taxes•Space-Available Travel•Statistics•Personal Affairs•Burial•Plus much, much more!

Yes! I want to stay up-to-date on my pay and benefits! Enclosed is my check/money order (payable to Uniformed Services Almanac, Inc.) for \$12.00 each plus \$3.50 shipping and handling. Add \$1.00 shipping per each additional book. VA residents please add 5% sales tax. Please allow 10-12 days for delivery.

Thank you for your order!

Please send me the 2008 edition of:

- ☐ **National Guard Almanac**
☐ **Uniformed Services Almanac**
☐ **Reserve Forces Almanac**
☐ **Retired Military Almanac**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Please print clearly or use address label.

EANGUS

Auxiliary Message

FROM PAGE 5

and concerns. Its efforts affect each and every Guardperson, spouse and or family member.

What can you do to help? We have online membership with EANGUS. Take a minute and sign up a member to the Auxiliary. Sometimes people do not get involved until it affects them personally but with the legislative process and the time it could take to react, you cannot afford to wait. It could be too late!

Let your voice be heard through EANGUS and its Auxiliary by becoming a member and providing the support needed to do so. If you have any questions or concerns, please call our EANGUS office 1-800-234-EANG.

If your state does not have an Auxiliary and you would like for an Auxiliary representative to come to your next association meeting, please let me know. We have area directors in six (6) areas and a state president in each chartered state that can provide support.

Auxiliary Update - January was the beginning of a new year and it has started off busy as usual. "Side by Side",

President Lever and I have been traveling around the states. We had a great time visiting with Areas 6 & 7 in California in mid January. Early February I visited the Area 2 caucus

as Director Lainhart was not able to attend due to a scheduling conflict. (These three caucuses were the largest to date.)

The following weekend we had a pre-site visit in Savannah, Georgia. Immediately after that I was able to visit with Area 4 in Tulsa, Oklahoma. It was great to be able to stay home long enough to attend the state conference for Kentucky the next weekend.

The last week end of the month was our annual Legislative Workshop and Reception on The Hill. A big thanks to our Legislative Chair, Connie Myers, as she was very instrumental in the workshop presentations. Again this year we

If we focus on the mission, there is no end to what we can accomplish for the good of our soldiers, airmen and women, and their families.

made appointments with our Legislators and had personal visits with them prior to the reception. The workshop is very informative and no matter how many times you attend, it is always worth the trip. Many of us invited our state Senators and Congressmen to

attend the reception and many staffers came. Now that we have returned home, we need to follow up and keep in touch with our legislators. Whenever you write to your congressman, most always they will respond to your letter of concern.

The reception was very well received and Dian Cline outdid herself again this year with an awesome spread of food and fun for everyone.

Along with the workshop, EANGUS held an Executive Board meeting. Director Elliott has volunteered to take the Auxiliary shopping cart to the next level on the website and I know you will be impressed. Take a few moments to view the website and see the products available, especially the purple items.

Our upcoming site visit in Savannah, Georgia will be held 29 May through June 2. It will be a jam packed weekend. We have a Presidents' workshop, EANGUS Executive Board meeting and an Auxiliary Executive Board meeting plus the site visit, tour of the hotels and other highlights for the National Conference. Plan to attend or send a representative from your state.

We look forward to seeing you in Savannah, GA. Keep the soldiers, airmen and women in your prayers.

God Bless

Side by Side

—Sheila Bandy,

EANGUS Auxiliary President ☆

—Roger ☆

Vice President's Message

FROM PAGE 8

Directors meeting of NGAUS. I reported our membership was growing and we projected nearly 90,000 members for 2007. We certainly got great comments from those board members about your efforts to promote our membership. Thanks for your hard work and keep it up. As you know, retention of the USAA members is one of your biggest challenges over this coming membership year. You need to give them a reason to renew their membership in the only organization that works for Enlisted National Guard members. I know you can do it. And, take the

opportunity to get the member to pick up an associate membership in the Auxiliary and their spouse or significant other to join the Auxiliary as well. "Side By Side" we can move mountains in supporting our Soldiers and Airmen.

Finally, as the weather gets warmer and you start those outdoor activities, please remember the risk assessment process and apply an extra measure of 'careful' to everything you do. Be safe and enjoy the great outdoors. God Bless You and God Bless America.

GAO Report on TRICARE Reserve Select

Congress asked the Government Accountability Office (GAO) to look into TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) health benefit plan. On December 21, 2007, they issued their report to Congress. What the GAO found was that DOD seriously overestimated the projected enrollment and projected costs of TRS, and made some recommendations based on their fact gathering.

ENROLLMENT. GAO said that DOD projected a TRS enrollment of 114,000 reservists in FY 2005. Of the 114,000 projected to enroll, only 11,000 actually did, roughly 9.6% of projections. As of January 2008, there are a total of 20,902 TRS plans. DOD projects an FY 2008 enrollment of 64,000.

PROGRAM COSTS. Because DOD projected an enrollment of 114,000 reservists, they projected their TRS program costs to be \$70 million in FY 2005 and \$442 million in FY 2006. In actuality, DOD's cost to administer the TRS program was \$5 million in FY 2005 and \$40 million in FY 2006. Therefore, DOD's actual cost to run the program was 7% of projection in FY 2005 and 9% of projection in FY 2006. DOD estimates that the program cost will be \$381 million in FY 2008.

PREMIUMS. In FY 2006, DOD raised premiums by 8.5% over FY 2005 rates, even though DOD calculated its average annual rate of medical care inflation to be about 4.9% that fiscal year. GAO stated in their report that based on actual enrollment and program costs, the monthly premium paid by a TRS participant should be

\$47.00 for member-only coverage (instead of \$81.00) and \$175.00 for family coverage (instead of \$253.00). This represents an overpayment of 72% for member-only and 45% for family coverage. The GAO report said, "DOD's cost projections were too high largely because it overestimated the number of reservists who would purchase TRS as well as the associated cost per plan of providing benefits through the program."

COST BASIS. GAO stated that DOD based TRS premiums on Blue Cross/Blue Shield (BCBS) premiums because, at the time of inception, there was no actual data on the costs of TRS. However, this data now exists and GAO recommended that DOD use that data. DOD officials told GAO that they plan to continue to use BCBS data due to the limitations associated with using currently available data to predict future TRS costs. GAO recommended in their report that the Secretary of Defense direct the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Health Affairs to stop basing TRS premium adjustments only on BCBS premium adjustments and use the reported costs of providing benefits through the TRS program when adjusting TRS premiums in future years as limitations associated with the reported cost data decrease.

NOTE: There is no indication from GAO or DOD whether there will be a refund of premiums to TRS participants for overcharges in previous fiscal years. There was no indication in the report from DOD

TRS ON THE NET. <http://www.tricare.mil/mybenefit/home/overview/Plans/ReserveSelect>. ☆

Servicemember Leave Law Signed by President Bush

President Bush has signed into law the Support for Injured Service members Act, which grants additional leave under the FMLA to employees who have family members in the military. The legislation creates two new categories of FMLA leave:

1) Active Duty Family Leave - Employees with a spouse, parent, or child who is on or has been called to active duty in the Armed Forces may take up to 12 weeks of FMLA leave when they experience a "qualifying exigency."

2) Injured Service member Leave - Employees who are the spouse, parent, child, or next of kin of a service member who incurred a serious injury or illness on active duty in the Armed Forces may take up to 26 weeks of leave in a 12-month period (including regular FMLA leave).

Employees may take injured service member leave intermittently, but must use it up within 12 months. There is no 12-month time limit on active duty family leave, which is more akin to traditional FMLA leave.

The DOL is expected to issue proposed regulations within the next few weeks that will define "qualifying exigency" and interpret other aspects of the new leave requirements. Nevertheless, employers that are covered by the FMLA should make good-faith efforts to comply immediately. Your first step should be to inform employees of the new leave entitlements. ☆

SERVICE MEANS YOUR HOME COMPUTER NOW ACCEPTS CHECKS.



INSURANCE

BANKING

INVESTMENTS

MEMBER SERVICES

A USAA FREE CHECKING ACCOUNT COMES WITH DEPOSIT@HOME CONVENIENCE.

You can deposit checks right from your home computer.* It's fast, easy and secure. Just scan your check to USAA.COM and you're done. The money is immediately credited to your account. Respecting your time and money drives everything we do. Because with USAA, you're more than a member, you're a part of the family we serve.

**» OPEN A USAA CHECKING ACCOUNT TODAY AT USAA.COM/BANKING
OR CALL 800.263.8029**



We know what it means to serve.®

USAA.COM

*You must qualify for Deposit@Home; credit approval required. Deposits may not be available for immediate withdrawal based on our funds availability policy. USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its affiliates. Use of the term "member" does not convey any legal, eligibility or ownership rights. Bank products provided by USAA Federal Savings Bank, Member FDIC. ©USAA, 2008. 87516-0408

Task Force on the Future of Military Health Care Final Report

Section 711 of the John Warner National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2007 required that the Secretary of Defense establish a task force to examine matters related to the future of military health care.

Assessment Areas.

The Task Force was asked to address ten specific elements relevant to the future of military healthcare and issue a final report with its assessment and recommendations within 12 months. These 10 elements are:

- Wellness initiatives and disease management programs of the Department of Defense, including health risk tracking and the use of rewards for wellness.
- Education programs focused on prevention awareness and patient-initiated health care.
- The ability to account for the true and accurate cost of health care in the military health system.
- Alternative health care initiatives to manage patient behavior and costs, including options and costs and benefits of a universal enrollment system for all TRICARE users.
- The appropriate command and control structure within the Department of Defense and the Armed Forces to manage the military health system (MHS).
- The adequacy of the military health care procurement system, including methods to streamline existing procurement activities.
- The appropriate mix of military and civilian personnel to meet future readiness and high-quality health care service requirements.
- The beneficiary and Government cost sharing structure required to sustain mili-

tary health benefits over the long term.

- Programs focused on managing the health care needs of Medicare-eligible military beneficiaries.
- Efficient and cost effective contracts for health care support and staffing services, including performance-based requirements for health care provider reimbursement.

Guiding Principles.

The Task Force issued its Final Report to Defense Secretary Robert Gates on December 20, 2007. Some of the salient points in the report are shown below. The Task Force had two overriding and guiding principles to shape their recommendations:

- The Task Force also believes that those treated by this system—military members and retirees as well as their dependents—deserve a very generous health care benefit in recognition of their important service to the Nation, but not free.
- The system should provide much needed health care while considering fairness to the American taxpayer.

Beneficiaries.

The Task Force report detailed the number of MHS beneficiaries in three categories:

- active duty and their family members (3.9 million, or 43% of all beneficiaries),

- under age 65 retirees and their family members (3.2 million, or 36% of all beneficiaries),
- and over age 65 retirees and their family members (1.9 million, or 21% of all beneficiaries).

Conversely, the active duty and their family members consume only 20% of the health care budget, under age 65 retirees and their families consume only 23% of the budget, but the over age 65 retirees and their families consume 57% of the budget.

Factors cited in the report that resulted in the increase of DOD health care spending from FY00 – FY05:

• TFL (>65 retirees + family)	48%
• Medical care inflation	24%
• Increase in <65 retirees	7%
• War on Terror	6%
• Other	14%

Cost Increase Recommendations.

The Task Force recommends no increases in costs for active duty and their family members. They recommend a modest enrollment fee for >65 retirees and their family members (who are on Medicare and TRICARE for Life—TFL) with waiver provisions if the retiree takes part in wellness programs. The report says that >65 retiree costs will rise by 44% in the next 5 years. They recommend the lion's share of cost share increases for the <65 retirees and their family members, including enrollment fees based on retired pay, increased co-payments, and increased deductibles based on retired pay.

TO PAGE 13 →

Capitol Hill Happenings

Frank Yoakum, SGM (ret), Legislative Director

Task Force on the Future of Military Health Care

FROM PAGE 12

The Task Force recommended increases in fees and deductibles for retirees using TRICARE based on retired pay:

Annual /Monthly ENROLLMENT Fees for PRIME Family before Proposed Indexing			
Retired Pay			
year	\$0 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$39,999	\$40,000 & above
2007	\$460/\$0	\$460/\$0	\$460/\$0
2008	\$570/\$50	\$640/\$55	\$780/\$65
2009	\$680/\$55	\$830/\$70	\$1,110/\$95
2010	\$790/\$65	\$1,010/\$85	\$1,430/\$120
2011	\$900/\$75	\$1,190/\$100	\$1,750/\$145
2012+	Annually adjust with index, relook at 5 yrs		

Annual/Monthly ENROLLMENT Fees for STANDARD Family before Proposed Indexing			
Retired Pay			
year	\$0 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$39,999	\$40,000 & above
2007	\$0/\$0	\$0/\$0	\$0/\$0
2008	\$30/\$5	\$30/\$5	\$30/\$5
2009	\$60/\$5	\$60/\$5	\$60/\$5
2010	\$90/\$10	\$90/\$10	\$90/\$10
2011	\$120/\$10	\$120/\$10	\$120/\$10
2012+	Annually adjust with index, relook at 5 yrs		

Annual DEDUCTIBLES for STANDARD Family before Any Reassessment			
Retired Pay			
year	\$0 - \$19,999	\$20,000 - \$39,999	\$40,000 & above
2007	\$0	\$0	\$0
2008	\$350	\$390	\$470
2009	\$390	\$470	\$630
2010	\$440	\$560	\$800
2011	\$490	\$650	\$960
2012+	Annually adjust with index, relook at 5 yrs		

◆ Single would feature an enrollment fee and a deductible that equals half of those for family rates.

Reserve health care.

The Task Force found that 80% of reservists have civilian health care insurance, but that dental readiness continues to be the greatest obstacle to medical readiness for most of the reserve forces.

The take rate for TRICARE dental care for reservists is approximately 9-11%, according to TMA.

According to the report, as of early November 2007, participation in TRICARE Reserve Select (TRS) is:

TRICARE Reserve Select Participation	
5,493	Member only plans
10,922	Member and family plans
16,415	Total TRS plans

TRS participation is equal to about 2% of the eligible population. If the report is correct, and 80% of reservists have civilian health insurance, and 2% are insured by TRS, 18% of the reserve forces (or just over 153K) have no health insurance.

Pharmacy.

The report states that prescription usage and costs have been the main cost driver contributing to the significant increases in MHS pharmacy costs. Pharmaceutical costs for those under 65 years of age average \$437 per eligible beneficiary, compared to \$1,784 for those who are 65 years of age or older, a difference of \$1,347 per eligible beneficiary. Only 7% of prescriptions are filled through the TRICARE Mail Order Pharmacy, where DOD can save \$24 million in costs for each 1% of the eligible population that switches from retail to TMOP.

On the Net.

The final report (204 pages in PDF format) of the Task Force can be found at: http://www.dodfuturehealthcare.net/images/103-06-2-Home-Task_Force_FINAL_REPORT_122007.pdf.

Task Force Web Site is at: <http://www.dodfuturehealthcare.net/>. ☺

Army Guard Honors New Noncommissioned Officers

BY TECH. SGT. MIKE R. SMITH
NATIONAL GUARD BUREAU

ARLINGTON, Va. – A crowded meeting room at the Army National Guard Readiness Center resounded with cheers and applause Jan. 16 when 37 Sergeants and Staff Sergeants were inducted into the Noncommissioned Officer Corps.

Army Guard officials said the center's first Noncommissioned Officer Induction Ceremony officially recognized the NCOs in their new capacities as leaders.

Before this event, the nearest induction ceremonies were held at nearby Fort Myer.

Col. Renwick Payne, the Army Guard's Chief of Staff, and Army Guard Command Sgt. Maj. John Gipe were among a host of leaders, guest speakers, fellow Soldiers, friends and family members who passed on good wishes and advice to the inductees. They also presented the NCOs with leadership coins and framed certificates of the Army's "Creed of the NCO" signed by SGM Gipe.

SGM Gipe, the Army Guard's highest ranking NCO, said he hoped the ceremony would become an annual or semi-annual tradition.

"Not that inducting NCOs is routine, but we want it to become routine so that we give every NCO the opportunity to take part in this ceremony," Gipe said. "We are getting these great NCOs, and we are doing things right to welcome them into the Noncommissioned Officer Corps."

During the ceremony the inducted NCOs, in dress uniforms, stood in ranks and held up their right hands to recite the Army's NCO Charge and the Creed of the NCO.

Noncommissioned Officers are often called the "backbone of the U.S. Army." The NCO Corps includes the ranks of Sergeant (E-5) to Sergeant Major (E-9). The NCO Corps' "Charge" is a state-



Army National Guard Readiness Center 1st Sgt. James Moore leads 37 sergeants and staff sergeants through the Noncommissioned Officers Charge during a Jan. 16 induction ceremony at the center in Arlington, Va. Army Guard officials said the center's first Noncommissioned Officers Induction Ceremony officially recognized the NCOs as members of the NCO Corps.

ment confirming that NCOs have accepted their obligations as leaders. The Creed of the NCO states the definition, tradition and conduct of NCOs and also stresses proficiency, leadership and integrity among the qualities that define Noncommissioned Officers.

Staff Sgt. Jack Simms was among the NCOs who recited both passages. He has worked at the center since 2005.

"Sometimes we can err in not following up on NCO traditions and should get back to the traditions of Soldiers," said Simms. "This is the first time I've seen this done in the years I've been here, and I'm ecstatic about it."

Calling the ceremony a right of passage, Gipe also reminded the NCOs that their promotions carry greater responsibilities.

"Noncommissioned officers are no longer just Soldiers, they are leaders of

Soldiers," said Gipe. "Sometimes you may not have a large group of Soldiers that you are responsible for, but you have a huge amount of responsibility in your areas. Everything that we do here affects Soldiers down range." He also reminded the group that Readiness Center Soldiers can be sent out to lead at any time.

Near the end of the ceremony, Simms and the other NCOs, waited in ranks as each was called onto a stage to receive congratulatory words and handshakes from the Army Guard's senior leadership, including Army Guard Deputy Director Maj. Gen. James Nuttall.

Readiness Center Sgt. Maj. Sherry Simmons was credited with organizing the ceremony. She said she wanted to provide an official way to bring NCOs into the NCO corps and empower new NCOs with leadership tools as well as

TO PAGE 15 →

Basrah Marks Halfway Point Of Iraqi Control

STORY BY SGT. NICOLE DYKSTRA
MULTI-NATIONAL FORCES - IRAQ

BASRAH, Iraq - Coalition forces transferred security responsibility of Basrah to provincial Iraqi government in a ceremony at the Basrah International Airport Dec. 16.

With the handover of Basrah, nine of Iraq's 18 provinces are now under control of local provincial governments. At the ceremony, Muwafaq al-Rubaie, Iraqi National Security Advisor, expressed hope and positive attitude for the future of Iraq.

"This event ensures the progress of the Iraqi armed forces abilities in training, efficiency and personal integrity. Basra province is the ninth province to fall under provincial Iraqi control. This is a big step towards taking over the responsibility of all provinces, which may happen by the middle of next year," he said.

In June 2005, the Government of Iraq and Multi-National Forces - Iraq finalized a plan to hand over security responsibility one province at a time to the Provincial Civil Authorities under control of the province's governor. The



Joint Committee to Transfer Security Responsibility was created to assess the readiness of the provinces for hand over. The JCTSR is comprised of representatives from the Government of Iraqi,

MNF-I and the embassy.

There are four conditions that are assessed to determine a province's eligibility for transfer: the capability of

TO PAGE 17 →

Army Guard Honors New Noncommissioned Officers

FROM PAGE 14

build camaraderie among them at the Center.

Sgt. Tamara Willcock was also inducted during the ceremony. She said she joined the District of Columbia Army Guard six months ago after completing an active duty enlistment, and she experienced similar NCO ceremonies during her active duty tour.

"It's very good because it makes you feel that you're a part of the organization," said Willcock. ★

Resolutions Update

After the National Defense Authorization Act for 2008 was signed into law (Public Law 110-181), we reviewed our legislative goals and we're pleased to report to you the status of our top priorities.

At our last annual national conference in Oklahoma City, the delegates passed a total of 57 legislative goals for 2007-2008. Of these 57 goals, 13 of them were determined to be priority one goals.

Here is a recap of our priority one goals:

- Employment protections for caregivers of wounded warriors [Public Law 110-181, Section 585]
- National Guard Empowerment provisions (2 resolutions) [Public Law 110-181, Sections 1801-1826]
- Reduced retirement eligibility ("age 55 retirement") [Public Law 110-181, Sections 647]
- CRSC/CRDP for 100% disabled & rated IU [Public Law 110-181, Section 642]

- TRICARE available on affordable cost share basis [Public Law 109-364, Section 706]

- Increased funding and modernization of equipment [NGREA increased from \$150M to \$800M from FY'07 to FY'08]

- Permanent TRICARE health and dental care [Funding streams provided in earlier fiscal years]

- Veteran status by Veterans Affairs for all 20-year retirees [Continuing to work with House staff on a bill]

- Increased AGR authorizations & control grades (2 resolutions) [AGR ramps protected; working with House staff on a bill for increased control grades]

Bear in mind that we can only advance the causes that members of Congress choose to support. If we have a goal that may be important to our membership but the timing is not right on the Hill, or Congress is going in a different direction, we will concentrate on those goals that we believe are supportable. ★

National Guard Medical Liaisons Care For Wounded

BY SGT. 1ST CLASS BRENDA BENNER

100TH MOBILE PUBLIC AFFAIRS DETACHMENT

LANDSTUHL, Germany – Imagine arriving at a hospital during the winter with nothing but a T-shirt and shorts to wear. If you are one of the unfortunate few, you have only blankets covering you on the gurney. You have no identification, no money and no personal belongings of any type. Worst yet, you don't have that precious little book of phone numbers for your family and friends.

A small percentage of National Guard Soldiers and Airmen arriving for advanced medical care at Landstuhl Regional Medical Center (LRMC) are in such a dire predicament, but a team of medical liaisons is there for the sole purpose of assisting in every way possible.

Arkansas Army National Guard Master Sgt. George Russell, of Hoxie, Ark., is one of such liaisons at the LRMC. During the past two years he has greeted many fellow Guard members -- some arriving on gurneys or in wheelchairs -- from their medical evacuation flights from the Middle East.

According to Russell, approximately 25 percent of the National Guard patients he encounters are battle wounded. Others, who are experiencing wounds or illnesses not treatable at their duty locations, come from all over the world for LRMC's first-class medical care.

The master sergeant explained that the many logistical and medical circumstances concerning a troop's injuries down range, their subsequent treatment locations, and the various time factors involved determine their individual arrival status.

Sergeant Russell, who has been a medic and a licensed practical nurse for 36 years, said his current assignment as a medical liaison is "the best job the Army has ever given me." Prior to his Germany assignment, he was with the



Master Sgt. George Russell (right) of Hoxie, Ark. gives a hospital tour to the 36th Infantry Division's commander, Maj. Gen. Jose S. Mayorga (far left) and Command Sgt. Maj. Jimmy L. Broyles.

(Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Brenda Benner, 100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Texas Army National Guard)

North Little Rock-based Medical Detachment, State Area Command.

"I meet the Guard patients as soon as they get off the bus or ambulance," said Sergeant Russell. "I let them know that we're here to help them solve their issues so they can put all of their concentration on getting better. We'll help with getting new uniforms, their pay issues, any business with their home units ... just about anything they need. We also make sure they make it to their doctor appointments, lab tests, x-rays and other procedures."

That alone is a great help as travel-weary patients negotiate more than three miles of hallways branching in all directions inside one of the U.S. military's largest medical facilities.

Another medical liaison helping patients through the system is Nevada Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Ilda Cruz from Reno. A medic for the past

eight years, Sergeant Cruz is new to her liaison position at the hospital. She said she can already tell that she enjoys the assignment.

"I take them to the chaplain's closet so they can pick out a few warm clothes to wear instead of their hospital gowns," Sergeant Cruz explained. "It gives me a good feeling to help lower their stress levels by settling their clothing and hygiene needs. After that, we can work on things such as pay problems and other paperwork."

Sgt. Devon Hand, of the Missouri Army National Guard's 129th Field Artillery, is a new patient at the LRMC who just arrived from Afghanistan. Since he is totally mobile, he has volunteered to help the medical liaisons, citing what a great help they've been since his arrival.

"I want to give back because the staff here at Landstuhl is great," Sergeant

TO PAGE 17 →

National Guard Medical Liaisons Care For Wounded

FROM PAGE 16

Hand explained. "I thought I'd give them an extra hand – literally. Besides, this way I can be with more of the troops every day while I'm waiting on my status."

It's clear while talking with Sergeant Hand that he is anxiously waiting for the opportunity to catch the next plane to Afghanistan.

Sergeant Russell said he is inspired daily by the commitment his fellow National Guard members show toward

their missions and to their unit members down range.

"I'd say about 95 percent of them beg the doctors to give them clearance to go back to the theater and join their buddies," said Sergeant Russell. "They don't want to let them down with their absence. I tell them to worry about their own health situation first ... to concentrate on getting better, and then they can return to duty when it's time." ☼



AMERICAN MADE AND HAND PAINTED

Discounts extended to men and women serving our nation in:
Military • Law Enforcement • Fire and Rescue Units

Crafted In: .999 Fine Silver 24Kt Gold Bronze Nickel Silver Copper	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hand painted with durable epoxy finish• Customized dies for your specific needs• Hundreds of stock dies available at no charge, visit our website to view the large selection
--	---

P.O. Box 424, Winchester, Indiana 47394
www.silvertownemint.com
Email: mintsales@silvertowne.com
Phone: 800-788-7481 ext 247 • Fax: 765-584-3419

NO MINIMUM ORDERS

Basrah Marks Half Way Point Of Iraqi Control

FROM PAGE 15

the Iraqi security forces, threat levels in the province, local government capacity, and the provincial government's relationship with Coalition forces.

Al Muthanna, in southern Iraq, was the first province to transfer on July 13, 2006. British, Australian, and Japanese forces returned control of the province in a ceremony attended by Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki.

Dhi Qar, whose ancient city Ur is said to be the birthplace of the biblical figure Abraham, followed two months later on Sept. 21.

The next province to be transferred was An Najaf, which is west of al Muthanna. The province officially came under Iraqi responsibility in December 2006.

On April 18, 2007, Maysan, which borders Iran, became the fourth province to be handed over. Maysan's population is predominately Shia.

The Kurdish Regional Government took control of the fifth, sixth, and seventh provinces in northern Iraq the following month in May. Erbil, Sulaymaniyah and Dahuk were officially transferred May 30. Previously, the South Korean Zaytun Division supported for peace-keeping and reconstruction efforts in the area.

In October, Karbala became the eighth province to be transferred. Its capital, the city of Karbala, is a holy city for Shi'ite Muslims.

With the handover of Basrah, one half of Iraq's provinces have been transferred to the control of Iraqi Security forces, a clear indication of progress toward national reconciliation, said al-Rubaie.

"I thank the MNF and the British Forces in particular for their great efforts in contributing to training and supporting armed forces and reconstruction in Basra," he said.

For more information on Provincial Iraqi Control, visit the official website of Multi-National Forces - Iraq at www.mnf-Iraq.com. ☼

TO: EANGUS Auxiliary Officers, Area Directors, State Presidents, and selected members
FROM: Jenny Lainhart, Chairman EANGUS Auxiliary Nominating Committee 2008

Enclosed* are three letters to be used by members seeking the office they are currently holding, members wishing to hold an office that is now open, and a letter for state endorsement. However, some of you will only receive two letters as you are not currently holding an official office and will not need that letter. Everyone needs to include a typed biography and a current picture.

This committee will have copies of the needed letters for anyone that wishes to be nominated from the floor, we encourage you to have these turned in prior to the conference. You must be a current annual or life member of the EANGUS Auxiliary to be eligible.

Please return your letters to Jenny Lainhart, with all blanks filled in. This committee would like to have a member running for each of the open positions before we arrive in Savannah, Georgia. We have so many openings this year that we must make every effort to be ready

and not have to run around asking members if they would be willing to serve at the last minute. Pressuring a member to run at the last minute is not good business. It may be necessary to ask for nominations from the floor but hopefully any member name submitted will have prior knowledge, and will be prepared for the task they are seeking.

If you have any questions, please ask the Nominating Committee for answers. If we do not have them immediately, we will search until we do.

Thanks to all of you for helping us do our job in the best and most effective way possible.

Jenny Lainhart-Nominations Chair
6007 Denty Place

Fort Belvoir, VA 22060

703-781-3755 or 571-723-3325

jenny.lainhart@us.army.mil or jllainhart@yahoo.com

*See application forms below and on following page.

Personal Application for Nominations

I, _____, hereby submit my name for consideration for the position of _____ of the EANGUS Auxiliary.

I declare that I am a member in good standing with the state auxiliary of _____ and with the EANGUS Auxiliary.

My mailing address is: _____ My home telephone is: _____

My Business telephone is: _____ My e-mail address is: _____

If elected to the above position of authority, I will serve to the best of my ability.

(Signature of Applicant)

ENDORSED BY: _____
(State President or Rep.) (Date)

CERTIFIED BY: _____
(EANGUS Aux. Treasurer or Rep.) (Date)

RECEIVED BY: _____
(Nominating Committee Rep.)

DATE: _____

FROM: _____

SUBJECT: State Nomination Application

The state auxiliary of _____ is pleased to submit the following person as a nominee for the position of _____.

The nominee is a member in good standing with the state auxiliary of _____ and with the EANGUS Auxiliary.

The nominee has the following qualifications for consideration for selection as a candidate for the above office:

The nominee's mailing address is: _____

The nominee's home telephone is: _____

The nominee's business telephone is: _____

The nominee's e-mail address is: _____

If elected to the above position of authority, I will serve to the best of my ability.

(Signature of Applicant)

ENDORSED BY: _____
(State President or Rep.) (Date)

CERTIFIED BY: _____
(EANGUS Aux. Treasurer or Rep.) (Date)

RECEIVED BY: _____
(Nominating Committee Rep.)

DATE: _____

Veterans and Retirees

ENLISTED ASSOCIATION OF THE NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES

To: Active and Retired Army/Air National Guard Member

Subject: Retiree Membership in EANGUS

On behalf of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States (EANGUS), I would like to ask you, our current members, to help us contact all the retirees of the National Guard who are not active members of EANGUS. They served our Nation and State for many years and we must continue the fight to maintain current benefits and fight for future benefits. Ask them to become a member of the only organization dedicated solely to representing the Enlisted men and women of the National Guard.

I have listed a few benefits that we currently enjoy and those specifically for retirees. When you speak to them discuss these benefits with them and the importance of membership as we fight for them on Capitol Hill.

- TRICARE Reserve Select, Active Guardsman and their families
- Commissary and PX/BX privileges year around
- Scholarship programs
- Many discount programs, Hotels, Rental Cars, Computers, and Cell Phones.


Retirees:

- TRICARE health care programs
- TRICARE for life at age 65
- Cost of Living pay increase each year
- Unlimited commissary and PX/BX privileges
- Space available military air travel
- Many discount programs, Hotels, Rental Cars, Computers, Cell Phones

Our membership has more than doubled in the past year and we look forward to further growth in the coming year. With this growth comes a better opportunity to have our voices heard when asking Congress for increased benefits for both our active force and our retirees. This voice needs to include our retirees' voices. By increasing the membership today, EANGUS can effect changes that impact you, your family, and future retirees tomorrow.

I encourage you to contact our retirees and ask them to become a member by completing the membership application. Again, by joining today they can help to maintain their current benefits and have a voice in obtaining future benefits.

I want to thank you for your help in growing EANGUS to be the Association of Choice for the current, past and future members of the National Guard. If you have questions about EANGUS, visit our website at www.eangus.org.



ON WATCH.

ON CALL.

ON GUARD.

Today, more than ever, the men and women of the National Guard stand vigilant in the defense of freedom. At Boeing, we're proud to stand with the Guard every day in its vital mission.

 **BOEING**

EANGUS Country, USA

AREA 3 ► Tennessee

Tennessee Guardsman Competes in Alaska Iditarod

NASHVILLE -- A Master Sergeant in the Tennessee Army National Guard became the first Tennessean in history to compete in Alaska's 2008 Iditarod, billed as "The World's Last Great Race."

Rodney Whaley, a veteran of 24 years in the Guard, is one of only 102 people in the world to qualify for the 1,159-mile race. Of that number, 52 are from Alaska, 14 from other states and 16 from foreign countries.

The 56-year-old National Guardsman from Franklin, Tennessee, ran 16 sled dogs in the event which started Saturday, March 1, in Anchorage, Alaska. The mushers were on the trail from 10-17 days, accompanied only by their dogs as they battle the fierce elements along the dangerous route.

The Iditarod is considered by many to be the most grueling and demanding individual sporting event in the world today.

The two-week race will take the Tennessean over frozen rivers, jagged mountain ranges, dense forests, desolate tundra and miles of windswept coast. Added to that are temperatures far below zero, winds that can cause a complete loss of visibility, long hours of darkness and treacherous climbs on side hills.

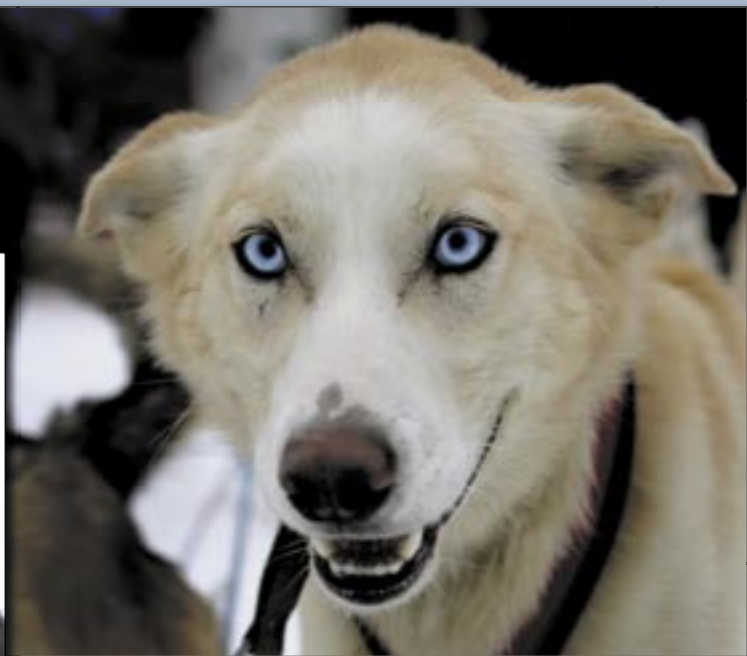
Master Sgt. Whaley, who lived his childhood in Alaska, is being sponsored by the Army National Guard. As a boy, he raced in junior sled dog competitions but has always remained passionate about the sport. In recent years, he has raced in British Columbia, Canada, Washington

state and northern Michigan.

"The Iditarod is the ultimate experience and my life-long dream," Whaley said. "Now, utilizing what I've learned in the Guard and with their sponsorship, it's a reality."

To qualify for the Iditarod, Whaley was required to successfully complete two sanctioned races, one of 300 miles and the other of 200 miles. He began full-time training in October of last year in Michigan and Minnesota, but he's been a familiar site in his Franklin neighborhood during the cold months as he ran his team using a "dogsled-on-wheels."

TO PAGE 23 →



Whaley's favorite sled dog.

Whaley, pictured with two of his dogs.

EANGUS Country, USA

Tennessee Guardsman Competes in Alaska Iditarod

FROM PAGE 22

The rules of the race lay out certain regulations by which each musher must abide. There are also certain pieces of required equipment: an arctic parka, an ax, a heavy sleeping bag, snowshoes, musher food, dog food and boots for each dog's feet to protect against cutting ice and hard-packed snow injuries.

On the trail every musher has a different tactic. Each one has a special diet for feeding and snacking the dogs. Each one also has a different strategy. Some run in the daylight; some run at night. Each has a different training schedule geared to the dogs' stamina and the musher's own personal stamina.

The Iditarod Trail had its beginnings as a mail and supply route from coastal towns to the interior mining camps. Men and supplies went in; gold came out, all via dog sled. Heroes were made and legends were born.

In 1925, part of the Trail became a life-saving highway for epidemic-stricken Nome. Diphtheria threatened the populace and serum had to be rushed in, again by intrepid mushers and their faithful, hard-driving dogs. The Iditarod is a commemoration of those early years, a not-so-distant past of which the Alaskans are particularly proud.

Note: Continually updated information on Master Sgt. Whaley and the Iditarod may be found at: <http://tndogmusher.com>. ★

AREA IV ► Texas

Lone Star Medal of Valor Winners

Helicopter Crew Rescues Four Flood Victims

BY SPC. JENNIFER ATKINSON

TEXAS MILITARY FORCES PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CAMP MABRY, Texas -- On May 27, 2007, during some of the worst flooding in recent memory, National Guard Soldiers were standing ready to help fellow Texans in need. While many of the evacuation efforts were concentrated on the ground, four members of C Company, 2-149th General Support Aviation Battalion found a higher calling.

At a ceremony At Camp Mabry on Jan. 24, 1st Lt. Melissa Macintyre, Chief Warrant Officer 4 David L. Torres, Sgt. 1st Class Juan J. Rendon and Staff Sgt. Michael L. Faulk were awarded the Lone Star Medal of Valor, the state's second-highest award, in recognition of their "extraordinary acts of courage" while in service to the military forces and citizens of Texas.

Launching the helicopter under stormy skies and close to sunset, the medical evacuation crew, along with a rescue swimmer, headed toward the Guadalupe River to help victims trapped by the rising water. The UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter



The Lone Star Medal of Valor was presented to the 1st Lt. Melissa Macintyre, Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Torres, Sgt. 1st Class Juan Rendon, and Staff Sgt. Michael Faulk for extraordinary acts of courage while in service to the military forces of Texas.

was equipped with a rescue hoist and TriSAR, a high-resolution radar processor used in search and rescue work.

Arriving at the scene 15 minutes after the initial call, the crew found themselves facing a challenging rescue. The four victims were trapped at the bottom of a cliff, meaning visual contact between the rescue swimmer and helicopter crew could be limited at best, and non-existent at worst.

After making a thorough reconnaissance of the area to decide on the best approach, Lieutenant McIntyre, the newest

TO PAGE 24 ➔

EANGUS Country, USA

AREA IV ► Texas

Helicopter Crew Rescues Four Flood Victims

FROM PAGE 23

medevac pilot-in-command in C Co., brought the helicopter to a steady hover high above the river.

Sergeant Rendon and Sergeant Faulk, a flight medic since 1992, guided the aircraft as close to the cliff and the victims as they could while keeping a safe distance from the rocky terrain.

For Sergeant Rendon, the hoist operator and a veteran of almost every type of mission the National Guard flies including floods, fires and a deployment to Kosovo, there was a little bit of added stress.

"I'd used it [the hoist] for about two years," he said, "but this was the very first hoist rescue in Texas — ever."

Using both visual guidance and information from the radar system, the rescue swimmer was lowered into the water and disappeared under the cliff overhang to reach the victims.

"It's a pretty tense moment when he goes under the water and you can't see him at all," said Sergeant Rendon. "You've got no visual observation of him at all."

Since visual contact would be so limited, the crew and the swimmer agreed on a 60-second delay after the swimmer hit the water to begin retracting the cable. After the 60 seconds had elapsed, the helicopter slid

sideways away from the side of the hill. and the swimmer and a victim were hoisted up.

One issue facing Sergeants Rendon and Faulk was oscillation, or unexpected rotation, along the hoist cable. Oscillation can also damage the hoist mechanism, the cable, the aircraft, and in a worse-case scenario, the people on the hoist.

"If the cable spins too fast or too hard, you can injure the person down there," said Lieutenant Macintyre. A spinning cable can also hit the helicopter, or the ground, she said. The rescue

swimmer and the victim had to wait for the two sergeants to stop the oscillation before continuing their upwards journey.

After the first rescue, the interval time was shortened to 30 seconds, and three more victims were lifted from the water. All four victims were safely lifted into the helicopter and transported to nearby rescue crews.

"Who's seen the Kevin Costner movie, 'The Guardian'?" asked Lt. Gen. (TX) Charles G. Rodriguez, Adjutant General of Texas, during the award ceremony. "It's a good movie, but these are

TO PAGE 25 →



Sgt. 1st Class Juan Rendon (left) and Staff Sgt. Michael Faulk observe as 1st Lt. Melissa Macintyre and Chief Warrant Officer 4 David Torres prepare for another takeoff under rainy skies.

(Texas Military Forces photos by Spc. Jennifer Atkinson)

EANGUS Country, USA

AREA VI ► Arizona

Arizona National Guard Rescues U.S. Senators

When a helicopter carrying three senior U.S. senators was forced to make an emergency landing Feb. 23 in the mountains of Afghanistan due to blizzard conditions, Soldiers of the Arizona National Guard's 1st Battalion, 158th Infantry responded.

The rescue team made a treacherous cross-country journey from Bagram Airfield to secure the site and evacuate Senators John Kerry (D-Mass.), Joseph Biden (D-Del.) and Chuck Hagel (R-Neb.).

In less than an hour after receiving notice of the downed aircraft, the platoon made the trek to their rendezvous point.

"The weather was our biggest adversary," said 1st Lt. Dennis Chamberlain who led the D Company platoon and other service members of Combined Joint Task Force-82.

"We moved out slow and methodically," Chamberlain said. "If we had crashed or had a problem with our convoy, it would have delayed our response

time even more. 'Slow is smooth and smooth is fast,' is a saying in the infantry and this mission was no different than any other."

Chamberlain's men were no strangers to adversity. Since arriving in Afghanistan 11 months ago, the platoon has been in more than 100 enemy engagements, primarily in Tag Ab valley, Kapisa Province, from where they had just recently returned after conducting numerous missions.

The unit was just beginning to enjoy a more relaxed atmosphere at Bagram, where they are attached to CJTF-82, when they received the order to move again. Initially, the Soldiers were unaware of the VIP passengers on the helicopters.

Army Staff Sgt. Chris Dempsey of Yuma, Ariz., who was conducting inventories in the platoon office when the call came, was concerned about the pilots and crews.

"They had so many times come to

our aid when we were pinned down by enemy fire. Now it was time to return the favor," Dempsey said.

When the platoon arrived at the site, one squad immediately convoyed the senators back to base while the rest of the platoon endured the bitter winds, freezing rain and snow for more than 15 hours through the night. They secured the helicopters and crews until relief could arrive the following day, said Army Sgt. Brian Genthe of Chandler, Ariz.

"We brought out cold weather gear," said Spc. Albert Jurado of Glendale, Ariz.

Due to the weather and limited visibility, finding a route to the downed aircraft proved to be tough, but Army Staff Sgt. William McClain of Peoria, Ariz., led the way.

"With only a grid to go by he led us," Dempsey said. "As the snow fell to the point where you could barely see the vehicle in front of you he stayed on course. When the road turned into no more than a trail he plowed through. As other vehicles fell to the wayside he kept going and when the trail ended he was the one who walked the rest of the way to the downed crews."

McClain's perseverance and guidance paid off, resulting in another successful mission by D Co., 1st Bn., 158th Inf. Reg., Arizona National Guard.

"Of all the units they could have sent out on that awful night, the Guard was the one that went," Dempsey added.

(Maj. John Bozicevic serves with the Arizona National Guard and wrote this article.) ✪

Helicopter Crew Rescues Four Flood Victims

FROM PAGE 24

the real guardians."

Many Guardsmen do the same kinds of things, in large and small ways, said General Rodriguez, but "this particular incident was very perilous, and it really is a watershed moment in the service of rotary aircraft we have in here in Texas."

For the medevac crew of aircraft TX-TF 1, helping others is the driving force behind everything they do in the

air, and why they joined the Texas National Guard.

"It's always about helping someone in need," said Sergeant Faulk.

For Chief Torres, the end result is the most satisfying part of his whole Guard experience.

"The rescue itself, saving lives, that's why we do it," he said. ✪

EANGUS Country, USA

AREA VII ► Alaska

Operation Arctic Care 2008 Brings Medical Teams to Kodiak Villages

The multi-service team braves adverse weather to get health care providers to six villages

BY SPC. MARGARET J. MOONIN



Alaska Air National Guard Staff Sgt. Travis Robotkay, with the 144th Airlift Squadron, prepares to unload a dog crate from the back of a C-130 Hercules that arrived March 2 with the remaining medical providers and supplies destined for six remote villages being serviced by Operation Arctic Care 2008.



Operation Arctic Care 2008 officer-in-charge Lt. Col. Jerry Arends, of the U.S. Air Force Reserve Command at Bolling Air Force Base, Washington, D.C., receives a box of Meals-Ready-to-Eat March 2 from Lt. Col. George Gosting, Virginia Air National Guard, to stack aboard the commercial fishing vessel "U Rascal."

KODIAK, Alaska – After three years, the Alaska National Guard, U.S. Army, U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force, U.S. Marine Corps and U.S. Public Health Service returned to Kodiak Island this week with military medical professionals to work side-by-side with the Kodiak Area Native Association (KANA) for Operation Arctic Care 2008.

The objective of Operation Arctic Care 2008 is to facilitate and provide health care for more than 800 patients living in villages on Kodiak, offering a wide array of medical services such as dental care, pediatric care, physical therapy and even veterinary care for family pets. This year's mission will serve the people of Old Harbor, Port Lions, Ouzinkie, Akhiok, Karluk and Larson Bay.

"We don't want this to be considered a humanitarian mission, but rather Americans helping Americans to get the provider care they would not normally have available to them," said Lt. Col. Jerry Arends, officer in charge of Arctic Care 2008 with the U.S. Air Force Reserve Command out of Bolling Air Force Base in Washington, D.C.

KANA is a non-profit corporation providing health and social services for Alaska Natives of the Koniag region. It is responsible for the health care needs of these villages but is not able to provide services as frequently as needed. "The corporation has limited funds available to send medical professionals to the villages as often as needed or to fly residents out to see a provider," said Kodiak Area Native Association dentist Melissa Wages.

"It's our job as health care professionals with Arctic Care to help KANA catch up on their patient load," Arends said.

The Arctic Care planning team coordinated with KANA in fall 2007 to evaluate the particular needs of each village. Dental care was deemed a necessary service, as the readily available snacks and sweetened drinks in rural Alaska tend to wreck havoc on teeth.

"The resources we receive from KANA and the community health aides will provide a crucial part of the execution and success of this mission," said Col. James Fike, International

TO PAGE 27 →

EANGUS Country, USA

Operation Arctic Care 2008 Brings Medical Teams to Kodiak Villages

FROM PAGE 26

Health Specialist Program consultant to the Air Force Surgeon General.

The work Arctic Care performs over the next week should also improve readiness for disasters, as the teams lay logistical groundwork and see through the challenge of getting equipment in and out of remote areas. The weather of the Alaska break-up season really put this to the test on Sunday, causing difficulty in getting air support to Kodiak.

“Like any exercise, there were changes dictated by weather and maintenance, which reflected in a requirement to adjust medical operations and logistics,” Fike continued. “But everyone did a great job of overcoming and by the end of the first 48 hours; everyone was working as a team to get the mission underway.”

Operation Arctic Care was created in 1996 by the 4th Force Service Support Group, Marine Corps Reserves, to be

TO PAGE 28 →



Col. Jeff Arnold, Joint Forces Headquarters-Alaska Army National Guard, lifts a case of bottled water onto the commercial fishing vessel “U Rascal” while Col. James Fike, International Health Specialist Program consultant to the Air Force Surgeon General, wheels another load to the ship. Photos: Spc. Margaret J. Moonin, DMVA Public Affairs

Alaska Guard Road Warriors Ensure Maximum Security in Iraq

Soldiers conducts checks, provide medical assistance



LSA Anaconda, Iraq - Spc. Dennis Alakayak, a gunner from Manokotak, provides convoys with security several nights a week. Ensuring all parts of his Armored Security Vehicle, including hatches, work properly is part of his job. Alakayak is a member of the Alaska Army National Guard's B Company, 297th Support Battalion and has been deployed to Iraq since Oct. 2007.



LSA ANACONDA, Iraq - Pfc. Veronica Alfaro, a medic and driver with the Alaska Army National Guard's B Company, 297th Support Battalion inventories supplies in her medical bag before a night mission guarding supply trucks and drivers. While on a convoy security mission Jan. 14, Alfaro provided emergency care to a civilian driver. Alfaro is originally from Modesto, Calif.

Photos: Sgt. Jasmine Chopra, 302nd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, U.S. Army Reserve

EANGUS Country, USA

AREA VII ► Alaska

Alaska Air National Guard Helps Save Afghan Boy

210th Rescue Squadron members administer life-saving skills in flight

BY: CAPT. TONI TONES

BAGRAM AIR BASE, Afghanistan – Members from the 210th Expeditionary Rescue Squadron (known as the Alaska Air National Guard's 210th and 212th Rescue Squadrons back in Alaska) were credited with helping save a 5-year-old local national boy's life after being struck by a vehicle near Jalalabad Airfield, Afghanistan, Feb. 2.

The squadron received the request from Combined Joint Task Force-82 Personnel Recovery Coordination Center to medevac the young boy who was diagnosed as being in stable condition with a broken left patella and possible skull fracture. They were airborne in three minutes.

"This is a testament to our aircraft maintainers," said Capt. Matt Calabro, 210th ERQS helicopter pilot. "They do a fantastic job having our aircraft ready which allowed us to make the fast alert response."

The weather was briefed as a visibility of two to three miles. However, once enroute, the weather was marginal but within helicopter standards. The

squadron's home station is Kulis Air National Guard Base, Alaska, and they're used to flying in inclement weather, added Calabro.

As the crew headed to the location, they were informed that the patient's father was being rushed to be with the son and would escort him on the helicopter back to Bagram's Craig Joint Theater Hospital.

After nearly an hour flight, the team arrived and immediately assessed the patient's status and prepared him for the return trip, only to realize his diagnosis was worse than briefed.

"He had two fractured legs, fluid seeping from the ears and nose indicating skull trauma, multiple signs of bodily trauma, a scalp laceration that had been stitched, and he was on a ventilator," said Tech Sgt. Brandon Stuemke, 210th ERQS pararescueman. "The little guy was in pretty bad shape and needed a CAT scan, which is why he was being medevaced to Bagram. We don't know who got him to Jalalabad, but the Army medical team

did a great job stabilizing him."

As the helicopters departed about 40 minutes later, Stuemke and Staff Sgt. Leo-van Claunan, another pararescueman on the crew, continued to administer medical care and worked to keep the patient sedated and alive.

"We kept his airway suctioned and monitored his blood pressure, pulse and ventilation," Stuemke said. "We constantly relayed his vitals to our flight doctor in the squadron who provided treatment options during the return flight."

When it was all said and done, the patient had bilateral temporal fracture, left femur fracture, right lower leg avulsion and a fractured pelvis, according to Stuemke. He also underwent abdominal surgery which identified a lacerated spleen which was removed.

From the first call to the patient's delivery at Bagram, it took a little more than two hours.

"I'm proud of the accomplishments of the combat search and rescue crew," said Lt. Col. Timothy O'Brien, 210th ERQS commander. "I know this child would not have survived if not for the efforts of the medical personnel at Jalalabad Airfield, our pararescuemen and aircrew and the hospital personnel at Bagram."

Stuemke visits the patient, who's the only son of four children, daily to see how he's progressing.

"He's on track, but only time will tell. It would be pretty incredible if he makes a full recovery...I know we're pulling for him." ❖

Operation Arctic Care 2008 Brings Medical Teams

FROM PAGE 27

an annual joint-service, joint-component exercise in medical readiness and logistics training. It helps to rebuild communities in underserved areas and offers training in moving people and materials to remote locations, providing healthcare under austere conditions.

At the same time service members will be getting the required annual cold weather training while conducting a military operation intended to simulate military and civilian humanitarian operations directed in times of crisis, conflict or disaster. ❖

SERVICE MEANS NEVER HAVING TO PAY FOR YOUR OWN MONEY.



INSURANCE

BANKING

INVESTMENTS

MEMBER SERVICES

A USAA FREE CHECKING ACCOUNT MEANS NO ATM FEES. Which means every ATM is your ATM. Use any ATM in the world and we'll refund the fee.* Eliminating fees is one way we keep our members' financial well-being in mind. And that drives everything we do. Because with USAA, you're more than a member, you're a part of the family we serve.

» OPEN A USAA CHECKING ACCOUNT TODAY AT [USAA.COM/BANKING](https://usaa.com/banking)
OR CALL 800.263.8029



We know what it means to serve.®

[USAA.COM](https://usaa.com)

*USAA does not charge a fee for the first 10 ATM withdrawals and refunds up to \$15 in other banks' ATM fees each month. USAA means United Services Automobile Association and its affiliates. Use of the term "member" does not convey any legal, eligibility or ownership rights. Bank products provided by USAA Federal Savings Bank, Member FDIC. © USAA, 2008. 87514-0408

EANGUS

19Jan 08

3133 Mount Vernon Ave
Alexandria, VA 22305-2640

Dear CSM (Ret) Frank Lever

I'm pleased to announce that USAA has set aside \$500.00 for each state, territory, and DC to assist with their 2006 enlisted state scholarship program. USAA, a membership company, takes pride in sponsoring scholarships to recognize outstanding enlisted members of the National Guard and their immediate family members for their contributions to our nation and communities. We've made some changes in our program to ensure USAA can provide a sound audit trail for our financial managers.

Enclosed* you will find the 2006 Enlisted Scholarship Request form. Scholarship checks will be issued only upon receipt of this completed form. Forms submitted after **August 30, 2008** will not be considered.

Many thanks to the EANGUS National Office for forwarding this letter and request form to the state enlisted associations. This program is between State associations and USAA.

Being able to offer financial support to the enlisted state scholarship program is another example of USAA's service to the men and women of our National Guard. USAA seeks to be the provider of choice for the military community by providing a full range of highly competitive financial products and services. Please do not hesitate to contact me at (210) 498-4730 or email at bud.smith@usaa.com with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Bud Smith, ARNG, CSM (Ret)
National Guard Program Manager
Military Affairs, USAA

cc: Mike Cline
State Enlisted Associations

Re-ELECT Frank Lever for EANGUS President

Qualifications:

- President of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
- Life Member of the Enlisted Association of the National Guard of the United States
- Vice-President of the National Guard Association of South Carolina
- President of the National Guard Association of South Carolina
- Life member of the National Guard Association of South Carolina
- CSM of the South Carolina National Guard
- CSM of the Army National Guard
- Bachelors Degree, The Citadel
- Masters Degree, Webster University
- Wife, Ellen, supportive Auxiliary Member

Why am I seeking Re-Election as your President?

- Being EANGUS President was one of my lifetime goals. I want to continue the momentum we have accomplished in the last year and half in this great organization.
- Many individuals in the organization are encouraging me to seek re-election. They have applauded the accomplishments we have achieved in such a short period of time but I remind them it's due to TEAM EANGUS efforts.

EANGUS ACCOMPLISHMENTS DURING MY TERM

- Increased membership.
- Re-established a workable budget while giving the Directors the flexibility to execute their budgets and plans.
- Auxiliary support.
- Better communication through the President's Connection and workshops for membership and training.
- Established new membership database with 24-hour online access to members and state associations.
- Revitalized our Web page and made it more accessible to state associations.
- Reduced duplications of efforts by both the state and national associations.
- Instituted Past Presidents' Council.
- New National Office procedures on dues renewals.

MY GOALS:

Financial Stability:

- Continue to operate in the black.
- Pay off our building fund debt. Use the interest to further our cause on Capitol Hill.
- Work with our Finance Committee that scrutinizes the budget, makes necessary adjustments and keeps EANGUS within its means.
- Continue to put monies into a Restricted Reserve account to meet unforeseen requirements.
- Work with Area Chairmen to ensure they exercise control over their budgets.

AUXILIARY:

- Maintain the wonderful working relationship with the President of the Auxiliary.
- Support our Auxiliary with its goal of establishing a chapter in every state and territory.
- Promote Auxiliary membership any time I speak.

Membership:

- Maintain increased membership of 90,000 from the previous low of 36,000.
- Make joining or renewing membership an easy task.
- Institute another free membership workshop.
- Provide States with real-time statistics on their membership progress.
- Institute a program to capture membership growth of our retired Soldiers and Airmen

Communications:

- Use every available means of communications to let everyone know what's going on at all times.
- Improve communications with the EANGUS leadership and State Associations through "The President's Connection".
- Answer any and all questions from members, State Presidents and Executive Council members.

Learning from Past Mistakes:

- Continue to encourage the Past Presi-



CSM (Ret) Frank Lever

dents of EANGUS to share their concerns.

- Involve Past Presidents all year.
- Research their recommendations.

Explore these Past President recommendations:

- The cost of holding Executive Council Meetings in other regions of the country so the members can see first-hand how their elected body represents them.
- Moving our National Office to a less expensive area of the country while only maintaining a legislative office in the DC area.

Awards Program:

- Continue to re-vitalize the Awards Program to make it easier to apply for awards.
- Enhance last year's practice of announcing the Army Soldier and NCO of the Year at our National Conference.

EANGUS "We Care for America" Foundation:

- Recruit corporate support as we must maintain enough funds to support this worthwhile program.
- Develop a plan to help our needy retirees.

Let's continue the momentum we've built to obtain the ambitious goals we have set. It's attainable with the right Leadership.

**Re-Elect
Frank Lever
for President**

Legislative Reception ~ March 5, 2008



Congressman Tom Davis



EANGUS President Lever &
Auxiliary President Bandy



Ellen Lever



Senator Blanche Lincoln



Ms Grace Washburn



Mr. Tony McClain



Honorable Thomas Hall

Six Alaska Nominations Received For 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award

Employers Across the Nation Nominated for Superior Support to National Guard and Reservist Employees

ARLINGTON, VA – Six Alaska National Guardsmen and Reservists nominated their employers to receive the 2008 Secretary of Defense Employer Support Freedom Award. The award is the U.S. Government's highest recognition given to employers for exceptional support of their employees serving in the Guard and Reserve. The Freedom Award is particularly significant because only members of the National Guard and Reserve or their family members are permitted to nominate employers for the award. The list of nominated employers is attached.

2,199 National Guard and Reserve members from across the country nominated their employers for their outstanding support. Many, for example, provided continued benefits, differential pay, family assistance and additional support. A national selection board comprised of senior Defense officials

and business leaders will select up to 15 recipients for this year's award. The Department of Defense will announce the 2008 Freedom Award recipients this summer. The 2008 Freedom Awards will be presented in Washington, D.C., on September 18th.

About ESGR

Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) is a Department of Defense agency established in 1972 that seeks to promote a culture in which all American employers support and value the military service of their employees. We recognize outstanding support, increase awareness of the law, and resolve conflicts through informal mediation. For more information, please visit www.esgr.mil.

About the Award

The Freedom Award was instituted in

1996 under the auspices of the National Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) to recognize exceptional support from the employer community. Previous honorees include American Express, General Motors, Sears, The Home Depot, the State of Tennessee and the family owned Augustine & Sons farm in Rose Hill, IA. ☼

The following employers were nominated by their employees for the award:

- Alaska Housing Finance Corporation
- Alaska Native Health Consortium
 - Chugach Electric
- Maniilaq Association (Hospital)
 - Northern Air Cargo
- Siemens Building Technologies

CMSgt Doug Simpson for EANGUS Secretary

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Executive Council for selecting me to complete SGM Marilyn Gabbard's term as EANGUS Secretary after she made the ultimate sacrifice in Iraq. In my letter of interest I stated that I would like to return stability to this position that we enjoyed under TSgt Jan DeRego's tenure and with your support and vote I would like to continue this commitment.

I have been involved with EANGUS and the National Guard Association of Washington (NGAW) since the 1980s. I have held several positions within the NGAW which have included two terms as President. For several years I have served EANGUS as Area VII Chairman, member of the Strategic Planning Committee and as a member of the Committee on Automation. I am a Life Member of EANGUS and an Associate Member of the



CMSgt Doug Simpson

Auxiliary through California.

I am now entering my next phase of life. In July 2008, I will be retiring from Civil Service and the

Air National Guard after 36 years of service. During these 36 years I served four (4) years on Active Duty, 12 years at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and the rest within Civil Engineering in the Washington Air National Guard. Three employers over 36 years shows a dedication to my employer. This is the same dedication I will give to EANGUS if I am elected as your next Secretary.

Over the last year I have been serving EANGUS as your Secretary, Chairman of the Oversight Committee, member of the Credential and Rules Committee and member of the "We Care For America" Awards Committee.

In closing I would like to thank MSgt Jan DeRego for signing on as my mentor and taking the time to make sure I am successful as your Secretary.

—CMSgt Doug Simpson ☼

Visiting Our Allies

BY DIANA L. CLINE

Thanks to the generosity of the Jewish War Veterans (JWV), a member of the Military Coalition, Executive Director Mike Cline and his wife, Diana, had the rare opportunity to spend 12 days in the state of Israel.

Mike and Dian were invited to represent both EANGUS and the Military Coalition of which Mike has been president for the past four years. He previously served as co-chairman of the Co-

alition and currently serves as co-chair for the Guard and Reserve committee, a committee which he co-founded. The Military Coalition represents six million members from every military and veterans service.

The JWV and EANGUS have played a major role as the Military Coalition has lobbied collectively for benefits for both active and retired National Guard members. The Coali-

tion's combined lobbying efforts have kept DoD from implementing increases in pharmacy benefits, TriCare co-payments for retirees and co-payments for Tri-Care for Life.

The Clines joined 15 other individuals from various veterans' organizations. The Allied Veterans group including Vietnam and WW II veterans, visited Christian, Jewish and Moslem holy sites.

The state of Israel is very modern. It carefully blends the old with the new. Its main exports are electronic components and software. The American fluence is visible from McDonalds to the five star hotels where we stayed. In several areas, all three major world religions—Christians, Jews and Moslems live in harmony.

Israel has no natural resources, its only fresh water, the Sea of Galilee. It must buy raw materials from other countries. Although it is a desert, there is a huge attempt to plant trees, crops and flowers wherever possible and parts of the country are truly beautiful. Because there are few trees, all buildings are made of concrete or rock. It's mandatory that all houses are heated through the use of solar energy.

The most intriguing part of the trip was the various military briefings, chances to meet young and old military soldiers and wounded Israeli soldiers from the 2006 War with Lebanon.

Israel does not have VA Hospitals. It maintains a social health care system.

Soldiers are integrated with other patients. We discussed Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) with the doctors. They feel that PTSD is not only war-related. Rape victims, car wreck victims, etc., also fall into this category. The US reports that 85% of PTSD patients are affected by drugs or alcohol. Israeli doctors believe that integrating PTSD patients with other traumatic patients with similar afflictions accounts for their 10% drug/alcohol rate.

Mike presented both EANGUS coins and his EANGUS Executive Director coins to soldiers at the hospital. At first they were hesitant to accept his gifts as they are not allowed to accept money from visitors.

During our visit we found young Israelis to be extremely patriotic and dedicated warriors to the state of Israel. Israeli

citizens, both male and female, grow up knowing that upon graduation from high school they will serve in the Israeli Defense Force (IDF). Males serve three years, females two. Citizens whose religious beliefs preclude them from serving in the military must work in hospitals, nursing homes, etc.

The IDF is made up of an Army and Navy and has its own Air Force. There was the constant roar of F-16s overhead if we were at the Jordanian border near the Dead Sea or Golan Heights near the Lebanon-Syrian border. A common sight was witnessing an Israeli soldier walking down the street carrying his/her sidearm or M-16.

The day after declaring its independence in 1948, six Arab nations declared war on Israel, a country the size of New Jersey. At that time the Israeli army was a ragtag militia fighting with WWII Sherman tanks from America. They had refitted them with 77mm and 105mm cannons. They defeated all six armies in the "War of Independence". Compared to US soldiers who pride themselves with neat appearance, the shabby Israeli soldiers say "Just bring it on!"

We visited Masada, a hilltop fortress built by King Herod over 2000 years ago.

Masada sits at the edge of the Dead Sea and the Jordanian border. The only way to get to the top of the mountain was either to climb or take a cable car. Needless to say, we chose the cable car.

It is amazing that this mountaintop "resort" was built in ten years. It provided shelter and crops and bath houses with swimming pools. Huge cisterns supplied the water which was carried by donkeys from nine miles away.

For three years, several legions of Romans were encamped at the bottom of the mountain, waiting for the occupants to run out of food and water. The Jews let them know they had no water shortage by pouring buckets of water over the side of

TO PAGE 35 →

Visiting Our Allies

FROM PAGE 34

the mountain. Finally in desperation, the Romans built a ramp. When it was inevitable that the Jews were to be taken captive, they committed mass suicide rather than become Roman slaves. The motto of the Israeli Air Force is "Masada will not fall again!"

Because of the nature of our tour, we were able to visit areas that "normal" tourists wouldn't see. We traveled in the West Bank along the Jordanian-Syrian-Lebanese borders on winding, twisted roads where we observed remains of bunkers, destroyed tanks and vehicles. We visited several historic battle sites, viewed destruction of houses and mine fields from many wars. We ventured through the Golan Heights at the time the Number 2 world terrorist was killed only 30 miles away. Tensions ran high as we observed busloads of heavily armed Israeli soldiers heading for Israel's borders.

We visited the only military high school in Israel. Elite 15-year old men and women are selected through testing for future leadership roles. These candidates, like their fellow IDF soldiers, wear the uniform and carry weapons wherever

they go. They are responsible for defending their base in the event of an attack.

We were broken into groups with two young soldiers assigned to answer questions and show us around the base. One of our soldiers was from Israel and training to be a paratrooper; the other from Russia.

The majority of these students will go into leadership roles in the IDF and after 18 months service, will have an opportunity to apply for Officer's School. Mike presented coins to them. As we boarded the bus, we witnessed a large group admiring the coins.

In Israel everyone serves in the Reserves until age 50. The Reserves can be called to active duty within 24 hours. To be considered a veteran, a soldier must serve 25 years and then only receives 2-3% of his/her basic pay. Active duty soldiers in the US receive 50% of their base pay after 20 years of service, depending on rank and years of service.

We visited Jerusalem. On Friday evening, the beginning of the Sabot, we observed people of all faiths at the Wailing Wall (Kotel). They stuck notes in the cracks of the wall, "e-mails to God".

We visited Bethlehem, birthplace of Christ, which

is under Palestinian control. Since our guide was Israeli, he was unable to accompany us through the long stone wall, topped with barbed wire. Guard towers held heavily armed Israeli soldiers on one side and Palestinian soldiers on the other side. We were told that if anything happened to us while we were in Bethlehem, we were on our own!

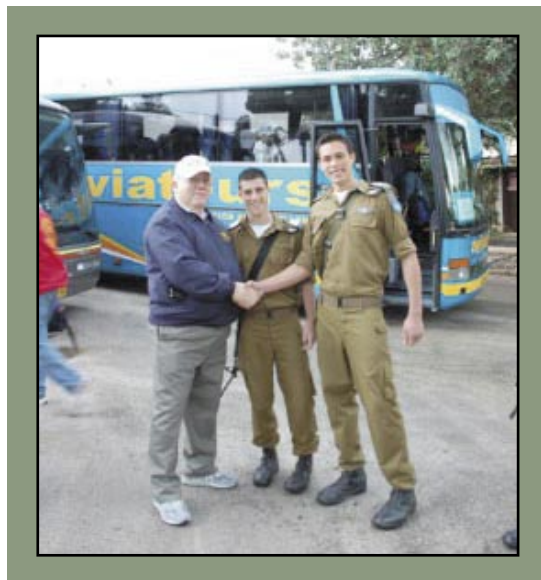
We visited Haifa, a beautiful port city on the Mediterranean Sea. It is the home of the Bahai religion and has an incredibly beautiful garden overlooking the harbor housing the Israeli navy.

We "floated" on the Dead Sea which is the lowest place on earth and 10 times saltier than the ocean. We took a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee, the only body of fresh water in the entire country, and I rode a camel! We spent one night in the Kibbutz (pronounced Key butz) Hagshrim Hotel, a commune close to the Lebanese border. We viewed Megiddo, the layered city that overlooks the Valley of Armageddon.

After spending this incredible time in Israel, we have a much better understanding of the various cultures and the strife that this part of the world endures. We understand the plight of the Israelis, Jews, Christians, and Palestinians attempting to live in harmony with such different views of life.

We have been asked many times, "Weren't you afraid?" We replied that we were more excited about visiting the Holy Land and spending time with one of our closest allies.

It was definitely the opportunity of a lifetime to learn about this small country called Israel. ✪



Mike presented both EANGUS coins and his EANGUS Executive Director coins to soldiers at the hospital.



NDAA 2008 Earlier Retirement Provisions

Earlier Retirement Eligibility--it's one of our association's top priorities (EANGUS Resolutions 07-04, 06-18, 05-09, 04-05 & 04-01), and one that the 110th Congress has addressed.

The National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), has language to reduce the retirement eligibility age from age 60 to a point no lower than age 50.

Reduction in age is based on day-for-day active duty service in a contingency operation or national emergency, credited in aggregate 90-day blocks at the end of the retirement year.

NDAA 2008 P.L. 110-181

SEC. 647. COMMENCEMENT OF RECEIPT OF NON-REGULAR SERVICE RETIRED PAY BY MEMBERS OF THE READY RESERVE ON ACTIVE FEDERAL STATUS OR ACTIVE DUTY FOR SIGNIFICANT PERIODS.

(a) REDUCED ELIGIBILITY AGE.—Section 12731 of title 10, United States Code, is amended—

Service on active duty is service on active duty pursuant to a call or order to active duty under a provision of law. Such service does not include service on active duty pursuant to a call or order to active duty under section 12310 of this title.

Active service described in this subparagraph is also service under a call to active service authorized by the President or the Secretary of Defense for purposes of responding to a national emergency declared by the President or supported by Federal funds.

The eligibility age may not be reduced below 50 years of age for any person.

(b) CONTINUATION OF AGE 60 AS MINIMUM AGE FOR ELIGIBILITY OF NON-REGULAR SERVICE RETIREES FOR HEALTH CARE does not apply to a member or former member entitled to retired pay for non-regular service under chapter 1223 of this title who is under 60 years of age.”.

(c) ADMINISTRATION OF RELATED PROVISIONS OF LAW OR POLICY.—

With respect to any provision of law, or of any policy, regulation, or directive of the executive branch that refers to a member or former member of the uniformed services as being eligible for, or entitled to, retired pay under chapter 1223 of title 10, United States Code, but for the fact that the member or former member is under 60 years of age, such provision shall be carried out with respect to that member or former member by substituting for the reference to being 60 years of age a reference to having attained the eligibility age applicable under subsection (f) of section 12731 of title 10, United States Code (as added by subsection (a)), to such member or former member for qualification for such retired pay under subsection (a) of such section.

Eligibility age is reduced from age 60 to an age no lower than age 50 based on these provisions. Credit is given in aggregate 90-day blocks. 90 days do not have to be consecutive. For example, if a member performed one period of 75 days and one period of 200 days of active duty in the same retirement year under these provisions, three 90-day blocks are credited for retirement purposes and subsequent reduction from age 60 allowed.

The orders must be for a “contingency operation” which means a military operation that results in the call or order to, or retention on, active duty of members of the uniformed services under Title 10 or any other provision of law during a war or during a national emergency declared by the President or Congress or supported by federal funds. These provisions specifically exclude service under Title 10 section 12310, which is for WMD-CST teams and Federal Reserve AGR service (other reserve components, but not typically Guard).

These provisions disconnect TRICARE coverage from early retirement, and state that retirees become eligible for TRICARE once they reach age 60 (and not before).

These provisions are not retroactive.

They take effect January 28, 2008. In other words, the active duty, to be credited, must be performed after the date the legislation is signed into law. Any active duty prior to that date doesn't count for early retirement eligibility. It does count for retirement, just not retiring earlier than age 60.

EANGUS is opposed to the lack of retroactivity. We believe it sends a message, loud and clear, that the budget of the United States has a higher priority than the lives sacrificed in its defense.

Although the estimate by the Congressional Research Service (CRS) is in excess of \$2 billion over a ten-year period, EANGUS believes the demographics used by CRS are overinflated and unrealistic.

Based on a DACMC (Defense Advisory Committee on Military Compensation) report in July 2005, only 47% of officers and 15% of enlisted will remain in uniform long enough to qualify for retirement at 20 years of service. Of those that qualify for a 20-year retirement, only 10% of officers and less than 5% of enlisted stay for 30 years of service.

When you apply these metrics against the Guard strength of approximately 460,000, only 5,227 will be eligible for earlier retirement, and many of those will be military technicians who desire to stay as long as possible to gain maximum annuity from their civilian retirement system. Even if you include the smaller Federal reserves, the numbers are small, and cannot possibly amount to over \$2 billion.

Representative Joe Wilson (R-SC) introduced HR4930, which makes the provisions retroactive to 9/11/2001. However, under the PAY-GO rules, which means there can be no legislation that decreases revenues or increases spending without an offset, the bill sponsors must either find a \$2 billion offset or get the House and Senate to waive the PAY-GO rule.

We are not confident in either event taking place, and remain supportive but cautious about the retroactivity under the 110th Congress. ★

The Financial Institution of the Future

Not banking online? You're throwing time and money out the window.

COURTESY OF USAA

In today's increasingly mobile society, it's clear that you can take it with you. Small and more powerful cell phones, notebook computers, and MP3 players mean that no matter where you are – no matter what you're doing – you are connected to family and friends, to work, and to entertainment. Today's technology also means that whether you're at home, across town, or across the ocean, your financial network is at your fingertips, too.

J.J. Montanaro, a USAA CERTIFIED FINANCIAL PLANNER™ practitioner, answers questions about the financial institution of the future, and how you can use the latest technology to manage your money.

What do you mean by "financial institution of the future?"

That's simple: The financial institution of the future will allow you to manage your money anytime, anywhere via telephone or computer. It will give you the freedom to bank and invest electronically – open accounts, move money, make deposits, check credit card and bank account balances, get stock market quotes – 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Why is it better to do business electronically? Isn't it preferable to speak to a "live person?"

There certainly will be times when it's necessary to seek advice from an experienced banking or investing representative. But for day-to-day financial activities, electronic banking and investing is far more convenient. You never have to wait for banking hours to begin – your financial institution is

open day and night, and you'll never have to step inside a physical branch.

Will the financial institution of the future save me money?

Absolutely. Online institutions don't have to spend money on building and maintaining brick and mortar buildings, real estate taxes, electricity, or outsized labor forces. The savings are passed on to consumers in the form of better rates and up-to-date technology that saves you time and money.

What about the unique needs of military families?

Online financial institutions are tailor-made to serve the unique needs of the military community. Even soldiers deployed in war zones can manage their money via e-mail and cell phones. Distance doesn't matter and time zones are no obstacle when banking and investing needs are handled electronically.

What about cash withdrawals? Those can't be handled electronically. What do I do when I need money right away?

The best online financial institutions give their customers easy access to cash through ATMs anywhere in the world. Look for a bank that will reimburse all or part of ATM fees charged by third-party banks.

How can I make deposits to my accounts? Won't it take days to deposit a check by mail?

Look for a financial institution that allows you to make deposits from anywhere in the world – day or night – with a scanner and a computer. With just a few clicks of a mouse, your money will be securely deposited and readily available.

What if I want to review my statements? How can I track

my spending, savings and investment earnings?

With electronic banking and investing, it's easy to track funds. When you pay a bill online, you'll see exactly when a payment was made or cleared, simply by logging on to your account. Look for a financial institution that will let you review several months of banking or investing statements online – and one that will let you download your records to financial software, such as Quicken or Microsoft Money. That will make budgeting and record-keeping even easier.

What other benefits do the financial institutions of the future offer?

Look for an institution that is truly personalized – one that goes the extra mile by offering financial advice via e-mail, customized bank account and credit card alerts, and special features such as online debt analysis and start-to-finish loan applications and approvals.

About USAA

USAA, a diversified financial services company, is the leading provider of competitively priced financial planning, insurance, investments, and banking products to members of the U.S. military and their families. Named by BusinessWeek as 2007's Customer Service Champion and ranked highest among financial services companies for customer advocacy in a Forrester Research survey, USAA provides convenient and accessible financial products to its more than 6 million members. For more information about USAA, or to learn more about membership, visit usaa.com.

USAA is a diversified insurance and financial services organization that has served the military community since 1922. USAA Financial Planning ServicesSM refers to financial planning services and financial advice provided by USAA Financial Planning Ser-

VA Travel Reimbursement

In 38 USC (United States Code) § 111, “Payments or Allowances for Beneficiary Travel” the Secretary of Veterans Affairs has the authority to establish rates for payment of mileage reimbursement for certain eligible beneficiaries. Funding for beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement comes directly from the annual health care appropriation and decreases those funds available for direct medical care.

Payments may be made to the following:

- ◆ Veterans whose service-connected disabilities are rated 30% or more.
- ◆ Veterans traveling for treatment of service-connected conditions.
- ◆ Veterans who receive a VA pension.
- ◆ Veterans traveling for scheduled compensation or pension examinations.
- ◆ Veterans whose gross household income does not exceed the maximum annual VA pension rate.
- ◆ Veterans whose medical condition requires a special mode of transportation, if they are unable to defray the costs and travel is pre-authorized. Advance authorization is not required in an emergency if a delay would be hazardous to life or health.

On February 1, 2008, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) increased the beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement from 11 cents per mile to 28.5 cents per mile effective that day (not retroactive). This was the first increase in the mileage reimbursement since 1978. The increase was codified in Public Law 110-161 Division I (Military-Veterans) signed by President Bush on December 26, 2007.

The beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement is meant to help offset some of the travel costs associated with obtaining health care in VA facilities, but is not meant to offset all costs. Reimbursements may also include ferry fares, and tolls for bridges, roads, and tunnels.

The rate of 28.5 cents per mile comes from the current reimbursement rate for Federal employees if a Government-owned vehicle is available and the employee chooses to drive a personally owned vehicle. Reimbursement for mileage is for travel incurred for medical care, including recalls due to a deficient lab, electrocardiogram (EKG), and x-ray in relation to a Compensation and Pension examination.

Also in 38 USC § 111, the VA is required to adjust proportionately the beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement rate deductibles for travel in relation to examination, treatment or care effective on the date of a beneficiary travel mileage reimbursement rate change.

Therefore, the deductible was adjusted on February 1st, from \$3 one-way to \$7.77 one-way; from \$6 round trip to \$15.54 round trip; with a maximum deductible of \$46.62 per calendar month (raised from \$18 per calendar month).

No deductible is made when travel is for a Compensation and Pension examination, or when special modes of transportation are used, such as an ambulance or a specially equipped van.

NOTE: These deductibles may be waived under 32 CFR (Code of Federal Regulations) § 17.144(b) when their imposition would cause severe financial hardship. ⚡

IDT Travel Reimbursement

37 USC (United States Code) § 408a, “Travel and transportation allowances: inactive duty training outside of normal commuting distances” signed into law by President Bush on January 28, 2008.

It allows the Secretary of Defense to reimburse an eligible member of the Selected Reserve (SR) of the Ready Reserve for travel expenses for travel to an inactive duty training (IDT) location to perform IDT when the member is required to commute a distance from the member’s permanent residence to the IDT location that is outside the normal commuting distance.

Implementing instructions will be issued by the service Secretaries, with approval by the Secretary of Defense.

Since there were no funds appropriated for IDT travel reimbursement, each orders issuing activity must find the funds for this authorization within existing appropriations, or it will not be funded (or allowed).

Payments to Selected Reservists of the Ready Reserve may be made if:

- ❖ The member is qualified in a skill designated as critically short by the Secretary; or
- ❖ Assigned to a unit of the SR with a critical manpower shortage or in a pay grade in the member’s reserve component with a critical manpower shortage; or
- ❖ Assigned to a unit or position that is disestablished or relocated as a result of defense base closure or realignment or another force structure reallocation.

The maximum amount of reimbursement for each round trip to a training location may not exceed \$300.00. IDT travel reimbursement is scheduled to end on December 31, 2010. There is no retroactivity for this travel reimbursement prior to January 28, 2008. ⚡

As an EANGUS member, you are now able to save up to \$150 on your new cell phone by purchasing through the EANGUS Wireless Solutions Center.



Select from all the major carriers including:

- **AT&T, Sprint, T-Mobile and Verizon Wireless**

Check out all the latest cell phones and smart phones from:

- **Blackberry, Motorola, Nokia, Palm, Samsung and more**

Choose the plan that is best for you. All plans are available including:

- Individual, Family and Small Business

(get up to 8% off your invoice – discounts start with 5 employees or more)

Need help to select the right phone and plan for you?

Please call Customer Care toll-free at 1-866-922-8003 for help.

Visit www.eanguscellservice.com today and enjoy:

- **Up to \$150 in savings on your handset**
- **FREE shipping**
- **30-day satisfaction guarantee**
- **Safe, secure order process**

Don't see something you want? Let us know and, if we can, we will get it for you. This is your mobile communications center so let us know how we can make it better for you. Just email customer care at **all@a2connect.com** or call us.

SERVICE IS INTEREST RATES THAT SERVE YOUR INTERESTS.



INSURANCE

BANKING

INVESTMENTS

MEMBER SERVICES

A USAA CREDIT CARD MEANS LOW RATES THAT STAY LOW. When you choose an American Express® Card or MasterCard® from USAA, you get a credit card with low rates designed to save you money. Plus, you can choose rewards that suit your needs. Low rates and high rewards are benefits our members have earned. Because with USAA, you're more than a member, you're a part of the family we serve.

» APPLY TODAY AT USAA.COM/BANKING OR CALL 800.292.8013



We know what it means to serve.®

USAA.COM