

Militiaman

Official Publication of the Iowa National Guard

Fall 2011

Region IV

Best Warrior competition

Guard assists in Missouri River flood relief // 132nd FW at Volk Field // Golden Coyote 2011

4



Shadow run: Afghan Dam to Dam
Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden

6



Soldier/NCO of the Year contest
Spc. Cassandra Monroe

8



Soldier takes bullet to head
Spc. James Wilton

10 » **Golden Coyote 2011**
Sgt. Darwin Seehusen

12 » **132nd takes over Volk Field**
Master Sgt. Todd Moomaw

14 » **Guard assists in flooding**
Sgt. Darwin Seehusen

3 TAG Sends

Maj. Gen. Tim Orr
The Adjutant General

13 Family Readiness

Rebecca Schrader
Family Assistance Specialist

17 Education Office

Maj. Linda Perdue
Education Center

22 Through the Ranks

Command Sgt. Maj.
John Breitsprecker
Joint Senior Enlisted Leader

23 Chaplain's Corner

Chap. (Lt. Col.) Paul Lippstock
Iowa State Chaplain

Militiaman

Fall 2011

The Adjutant General
Public Affairs Officer
Editor/Designer
State Photographer

Maj. Gen. Tim Orr
Col. Greg Hapgood
Master Sgt. Duff McFadden
Sgt. Chad Nelson

Contributing Writers/Photographers:

1st Lt. Brandon Cochran

The Iowa Militiaman is an official publication authorized under the provisions of AR 360-1. It is published by the Iowa National Guard State Public Affairs Office and is printed four times annually. News and opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Adjutant General of Iowa or the Department of Defense.

Full color version available online at
www.iowanationalguard.com/publicaffairs/militiaman.htm

Follow the Iowa National Guard on Facebook
www.facebook.com/IowaNationalGuard

Address all submissions to:
The Iowa National Guard Militiaman Magazine
State Public Affairs Office
7105 NW 70th Ave.
Johnston, Iowa 50131-1824
or e-mail: paoia@us.army.mil
Comm: (515) 252-4582
DSN: 431-4582

On the Cover

Photo by Sgt. Chad Nelson

A competitor during the Region IV Best Warrior Competition at Camp Dodge plunges into the deep end of Urbandale High School's swimming pool during Combat Wearer Survival Training. More than a dozen Soldiers, from seven states, took part in the four-day competition.



Partnership with Kosovo promises bright future

Last spring, the National Guard Bureau (NGB) announced the Iowa National Guard was selected as the newest member of the State Partnership Program (SPP) with the Republic of Kosovo. The announcement was great news for the Iowa National Guard and our future.

Iowa was one of only three states that didn't have a state partner country. Today, Iowa joins 48 U.S. states, two territories, and the District of Columbia as partners with 54 countries around the world.

The SPP was established following NGB's spring 1993 proposal to pair State National Guard organizations with the Baltic countries of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The NGB proposal was prompted by Commander-in-Chief, Europe's January 1993 decision to staff the Military Liaison Teams in the Baltics with Reserve Component personnel, in order to send a message of cooperation to the Russian Federation.

The SPP thus began as a bilateral, military-to-military contact program to engage the countries of central and eastern Europe, and is a direct outgrowth of U.S. European Command's Joint Contact Team Program.

The National Guard SPP links U.S. states with partner countries to support the security cooperation objectives of the Combatant Commander. The program's goals reflect an evolving international affairs mission for the National Guard using their unique civil-military nature to interact with both active and reserve forces of foreign countries.

All activities are coordinated through the Theater Combatant Commander and the U.S. Ambassadors' country teams, and other agencies as appropriate, to ensure National Guard support is tailored to meet both U.S. and partner country objectives.

The Iowa National Guard SPP program with Kosovo will be focused around a holistic approach to engagement with military, business, education, government, medical, and

agricultural entities. Initially, we will focus our efforts on mentoring and developing Kosovo Security Force officers and Non-Commissioned Officers (NCOs), along with enhancing domestic response operations, until NATO authorizes the Kosovo government to move to the next step in their military development program.

Iowa has tremendous deployment experience with Kosovo over the last 10 years with the more than 800 Soldiers from the 1st Squadron, 113th Cavalry, 2nd BCT; the 135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, and Company B, 2-211th General Support Aviation Battalion. This institutional experience and knowledge will greatly assist us in our efforts.

We selected Maj. Joel Jacobson as the first Bilateral Affairs Officer and he will be assigned to the U.S. Embassy for a two-year tour. His responsibilities will be to establish the program of events, coordinate exchanges between the countries, and work all issues associated

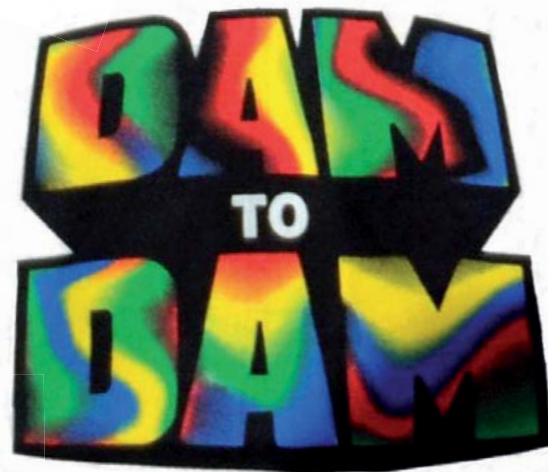
with the SPP. During TY-12, we have over 20 events planned between Kosovo Security Forces and the Iowa National Guard.

The next event will send four senior NCOs from the Iowa Army National Guard to assess the Kosovo Security Force's NCO corps and develop a strategy for developing and mentoring their enlisted leadership.

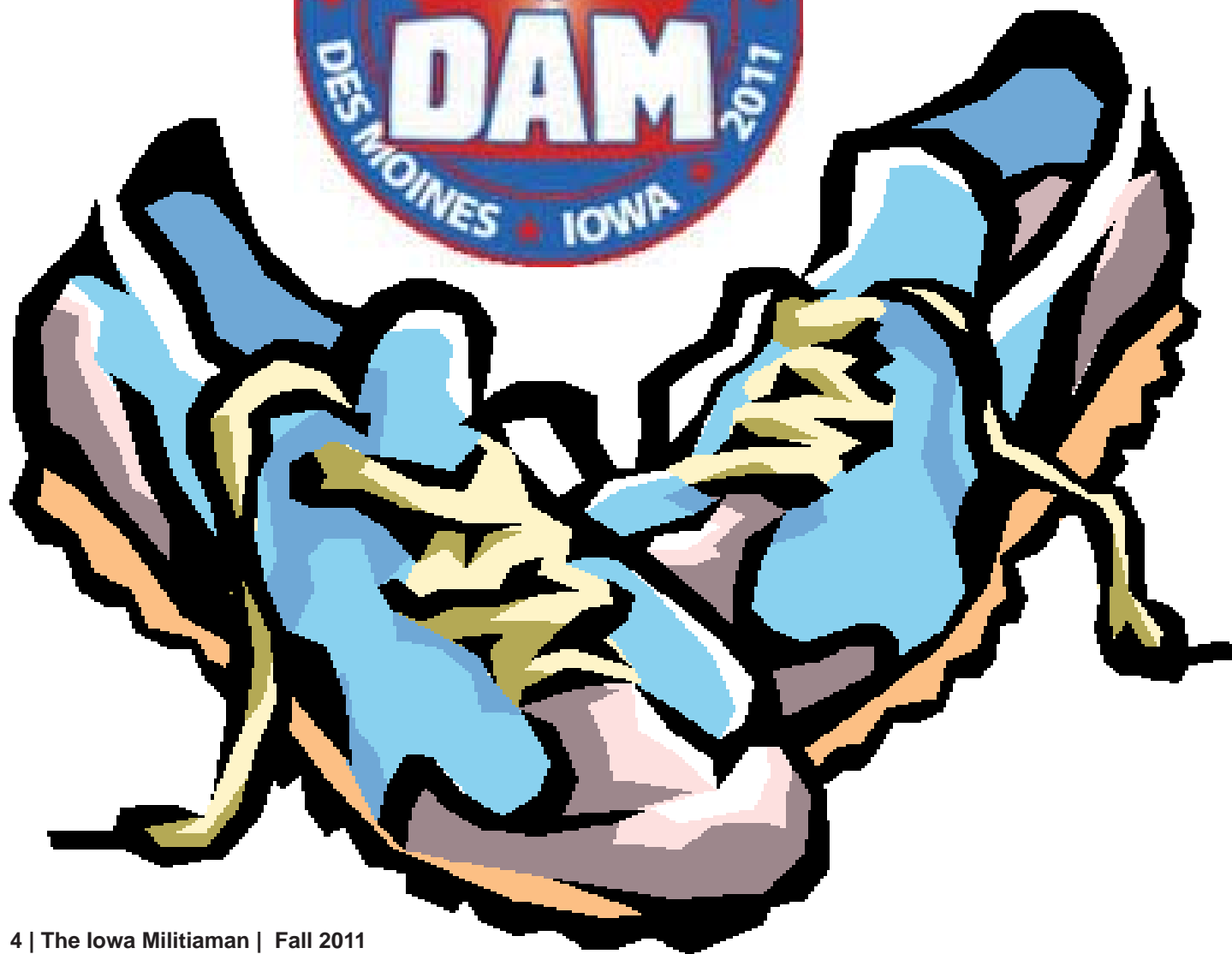
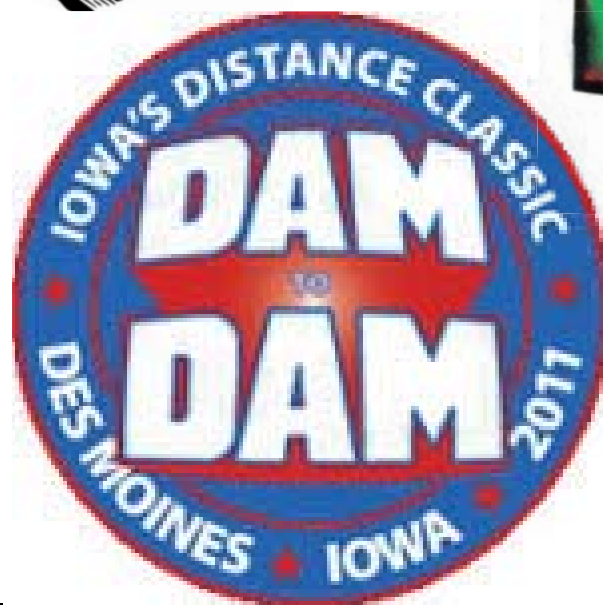
We are elated to be partnered with the Republic of Kosovo and to be involved in the formation and professionalization of their armed forces. We look forward to a long and prosperous relationship with the Kosovo Security Force and the people of Kosovo.



Maj. Gen. Tim Orr, hosts (from left to right), Kastriot Bujupi, advisor, Kosovo Ministry of Health, Ferid Agani, Minister, Kosovo Ministry of Health and Kosovo Ambassador to the U.S. Avni Spahiu, at the Iowa State Fair (Iowa National Guard photo by Sgt. Chad Nelson).



Afghanistan 2011



Shadow Run

by Master Sgt. Duff E. McFadden

By the time Santa Fe, N.M.'s Samuel Kosgel and Elmhurst, Ill.'s James Akita, had crossed the finish line for Des Moines' annual Dam to Dam 20K and 5K, nearly 500 competitors had already concluded their own "shadow run" at Bagram Air Field in Afghanistan, home to many of the 2nd Brigade, 34th Infantry Division Soldiers of the Iowa National Guard.

While the Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Brigade Combat Team normally hosted 5-Kilometer and other runs every couple of weeks for various causes and events, Maj. Eric Wieland said he wanted to organize an event that was directly tied to Iowa. So, he contacted race directors for the Dam to Dam in December.

"Eric contacted the race during the winter about a Dam to Dam race in Afghanistan on June 4," said Assistant Race Director, Cal

Murdock. "He is a fan of the Iowa race and wanted to bring it to the military service-members stationed there during the war. So, Eric organized the event.

"Dam to Dam was proud to assist," Murdock said. "We provided/donated special shirts for the runners and volunteers. The results were also posted on our website, DamtoDam.com.

"In addition, one of our Dam to Dam committee members organized flags to be placed at a crucial location in the race – mile seven – where the runners enter the Des Moines city limits via the largest uphill on the course. Each flag represented a lost Iowa Soldier in the Afghanistan war," he added.

Unlike the Des Moines event, traffic wouldn't be much of an issue, as it's restricted in the morning on Bagram Air Base to allow runners time to get their daily mileage in. The event started at 5 a.m. with the last finishers crossing the finish line on the out-and-back course at 8:13 a.m.

"We had about 500 servicemembers and civilians register," said Wieland. "We had over 350 runners here at Bagram and more than

100 at other locations in Afghanistan. We opened the event to anyone who wanted to participate. I had 14 volunteers that helped execute the event and the MWR section helped me coordinate the event."

As the 20-kilometer route looped around the eight-mile perimeter of Bagram, Wieland said it wasn't "the most scenic."

"However, the weather was almost perfect. It was in the 60's and sunny and warmed up to almost 80 degrees at the end of the event," Wieland noted.

20K Bagram winners

1. Walick, Dave (MAJ), 39	1:22:49
2. Ackison, Chad (CPT), 37	1:22:49
3. Lakeness, John (CIV), 29	1:24:11
4. Sowers, Thomas (CIV), 40	1:24:36
5. Banks, Jon (CPT), 29	1:28:34
6. Lim, Trevor (LTC), 38	1:29:25
7. Blankenship, Joe (CW3), 35	1:29:57
8. Patterson, Ryan (SFC), 34	1:30:51
9. Hogan, Jarrod (SGT), 27	1:32:27
10. Hartwell, Samuel (COL), 52	1:33:06

5K Bagram winners

1. Journet, Hubert, 44	19:50
2. Neunsinger, Trevor (Pol), 35	21:05
3. Sylvain, Revoit, 37	21:14
4. Hau, Dong JinSuh (CPL), 22	21:23
5. Maust, Bradley (CPL), 26	21:25
6. Middleton, David (SGT), 28	21:25
7. Hak, Cho Jae (CWO), 38	21:44
8. Joiner, Lawerance (O4), 40	21:44
9. Ruiz, Arturo, (O4), 44	21:46
10. Morrow, Jada (CPT), 26 (F)	21:50





Training for the test

Soldiers compete in Region IV Best Warrior Competition

By Spc. Cassandra Monroe
135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

Climbing ropes and conquering towers...Plunging into deep water, weighed down by equipment...Nighttime treks with nothing but a compass and a map.

Although this sounds like the plot from a thrilling, action-packed blockbuster, it was just another day in the lives of Soldiers competing in the Region IV Best Warrior Competition at Camp Dodge, Iowa.

The competition contained two sub-categories – Soldier of the Year and Non-commissioned Officer (NCO) of the Year competition. Seven Soldiers and six NCO's from Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin competed to secure their place as the top Warrior in each category.

Each Soldier and NCO first competed at the state level, which led them to represent their entire state at the Region IV competition.

"We bring the best Soldiers and the best NCOs from each state," said the Iowa Joint Senior Enlisted Leader, Command Sgt. Maj. John Breitsprecker.

These 13 Soldiers, the best of their respective states, competed at the regional level for a chance to move on to the National Guard Bureau level, which will be held at Fort Benning, Ga. The competition included a variety of tasks and skills, which evaluated each Soldier's skill as a Warfighter.

"Every one of the tasks we test here are Soldier-type skills, to include the combat water survival tasks, the marksmanship training and the physical readiness... it's all tied at what warriors do either in combat or during their unit missions," continued Breitsprecker.

After all the grueling, physical events and intimidating mental evaluations, the winners and runners-up were announced at an award ceremony in the Iowa Army National Guard's Freedom Center.

Wisconsin ran away with the event, with Sgt. Steven Dahl winning Soldier of the Year and Sgt. Brandon Swanson, Abbottsford, Wis., an infantryman with Co. A, 1st 128th, 32nd BCT, winning the NCO of the Year.

"It's a lot of weight off my chest, that's for sure," said Dahl. "I'm relieved now. Hopefully next year I can sponsor one of my Soldiers and take it again to give him a heads up."

“The competition was great, and all the competitors were phenomenal, and in the end I was not expecting to win,” said Swanson. “I can’t even describe how I felt. I was just as happy when Sgt. Dahl’s name was called out because we’re from the same company.”

Spc. Matthew Kosloski, of Lansing, Mich., was chosen as the Soldier of the Year runner-up, and Staff Sgt. Patrick Helderman, Medina, Ohio, a military policeman with the 838th Military Police Company, was the NCO runner-up.

Although not all the competitors placed, most took away experiences they’ll share with their units back home.

“When it comes down to it, these are great guys and they have the same heart and spirit,” said NCO of the Year competitor Staff Sgt. Tyler Detwiler, a Flanigan, Ill., native and a cavalry scout and infantryman with Alpha Troop, 2nd Squadron, 106th Cavalry Regiment, 33rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

“What kept me going, honestly, were my guys, my unit. It’s hard to get to places like this. It’s about pride, it’s about believing in yourself, it’s about doing the best you can. Train hard, fight hard, have fun,” he said.

Sgt Brandon Swanson, Abbottsford, Wisc., with Co. A, 1-128th, 32nd BCT, crawls under barbed wire during the Region IV Best Warrior Competition at Camp Dodge. Pfc. Benjamin Armstrong, (right) a Blaine, Minn. native with Company B, 834th Aviation Support Bn., scales the “Weaver,” an obstacle which requires Soldiers to weave in and out, during the obstacle course event. Soldiers battle each other for a top spot in the combative event (bottom right), as a competitor fires on the 9mm qualification course (bottom left). (Iowa National Guard photos by Spc. Cassandra Monroe, except for bottom left, by Sgt. Chad Nelson).



PPE saves lives



Soldier takes bullet to helmet, walks away unscathed

Story & photos by Spc. James Wilton

BAGRAM, Afghanistan – “There is something I need to tell you” are not the words any mother wants to hear from her son who is deployed to Afghanistan. This time U.S. Army Spc. Tom Albers, a Troop C, 1st Squadron, 113th Cavalry Regiment, Task Force Redhorse, driver and infantryman from Alton, Iowa, had good news, considering the alternative.

“I am fine and healthy and not hurt, everything is OK but,” said Albers to his mother over the phone, “I have been shot in the helmet.”

“You were wearing the helmet right,” his mother responded, said Albers.

The phone call was made from Craig Joint Theater Hospital on Bagram Air Field, Afghanistan, May 28.

Albers and his team were conducting a dismounted joint presence patrol earlier that day in Parwan province when the Afghan

national police officers they were teamed with spotted an individual they knew to be associated with insurgent forces. While searching a hillside for the individual, the team came under fire.

“My head cleared the hill ... I saw a house on my right and as I was in the middle of saying ‘Hey I got a house over here,’ when I heard the first shot,” said Albers

“It felt something hit me in the side of the helmet and was knocked to the ground. It felt like someone had hit me in the head with a wooden baseball bat.”

The team quickly took cover and responded with fire on the building. Albers was momentarily stunned, but after checking himself and realizing he was still alive, he regained his bearings and took up a position to return fire.

“I laid there for what seemed like five minutes but realized later that it was just a couple of seconds, I thought to myself, ‘Am I dying? No I don’t really think so,’ Albers said. “Felt my head, no blood or anything, so I thought ‘okay what just happened to me?’ I was confused but I turned around and started laying down fire from the direction it had come from.”

Albers and the joint terminal attack controller were on one side of the building while the

rest of the team was 50 to 100 meters away on the other side. They were taking heavy fire so they decided to pull back and join the rest of the team.

“I was just getting plinked at, rounds were hitting in a consistent, natural firing rhythm, but I look up at Albers and his position is just getting obliterated, he was covered in dust,” said U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Jason Roland, the 116th Air Support Operations Squadron JTAC from Tacoma, Wash., who was attached to Albers’ team that day. “Someone was going full-auto on his position, so I yelled up at him and told him to move.”

The group provided suppressive fire so Albers and Roland could pull back and regroup with the rest of team who were taking cover behind a building and wall.

“It really surprised me, from the moment I thought, ‘OK, I am fine, and there is no blood running down my face,’ until after we met up with the lieutenant, I don’t really remember anything,” said Albers.

“I think that is because I wasn’t thinking, I was reacting, doing what needed to be done; covering fire, moving back, whatever it was. I think that was all because of our training, muscle memory kicked in. It made me think, all that time we spent training wasn’t stupid, it wasn’t pointless, it is needed and it works.”

Albers reacted like he was trained to, and he seemed responsive and aware said Roland. The only part that seemed strange to his fellow team member was a question he kept asking.

“Albers did fine, the only thing that was funny is as we fell back, I realized something is little weird with Albers. He keeps asking about his helmet,” said Roland.

“It feels like something hit his helmet, he wants me to look at his helmet, I say ‘I don’t care about your helmet, I want you to (watch) to the north because if we get attacked they’re going to come from the North.’”

The team called in air support and enemy fire subsided enough to assess the situation. One ANP suffered a wound to his backside, so medics were called to attend to him. Albers even assisted the medic with the other injured teammate.

“At that time, the medic had time to check on Albers and he realizes that he got shot in the helmet,” said Roland. “He passes this on to the lieutenant who decides it is time to pull back.”

As they began pulling out, Albers said he finally realized the seriousness of what just happened.

“I was pulling security and just keep thinking to myself, ‘I just got shot in the head,’ I would hear something and move and again think, ‘I just got shot in the head, what just happened?’” said Albers.

The events that day stuck in his mind for days to come said Albers. They serve as a reminder to stay vigilant. The smile on his face at the hospital, would also serve as a reminder to enjoy every day, no matter how tough.

Medics evacuated Albers, and after hospital staff gave him a battery of tests, they found him to be perfectly healthy, minus a small burn mark across the top of his head.

***“I would hear something
and move
and again think,
‘I just got shot
in the head,
what just happened?’***



Spc. Tom Albers

The patrol that day was a normal day for any infantryman with risks every soldier has a chance of facing. Albers knew this, but he wanted to be in the military ever since he could remember.

“According to my parents I have wanted to join the military since I could talk, it was either Marines, Air Force, this, that,” said Albers.

When he was 17, Albers spoke with a recruiter, who is now a first sergeant in the same squadron, and decided the time was

right. Now 20, he said he feels the deployment is going well and has enjoyed every part of his three-year military career.

Albers is the only member of his large family currently in the military, but his father and grandfather are both veterans.

“My favorite part is the camaraderie, especially after this incident. Everyone has been very supportive,” said Albers. “They are all like my brothers now.”

The team takes their roles as brothers very seriously. They watched over him at first, making sure he was doing all right.

“Everyone was cool about it. Everyone was here for me, making sure I was OK and if I had to talk to anybody they were here for me,” said Albers

“We joke around about it, now that I they know I am fine, and now that I got the Purple Heart, ‘Oh the one-upper, had to get the Purple Heart.’”

Albers’ 15 minutes of fame is a big part of the jokes shared about the team. These simple actions prove to Albers that they care and also help him to not take the incident too seriously. His family has also helped to keep him smiling about the incident.

“My nephew, Talon, got on his mom’s (social media page) and sent me a message, ‘I am glad you’re OK, but no more messing around, that was scary, don’t be messing around anymore,’” said Albers.

The shot has not deterred his desire to be in the military, and he plans to reenlist when his current contract ends. Albers plans to stay in the infantry and has hopes to move up in the ranks becoming a squad or platoon sergeant.

The helmet, which will be sent to his house after military officials examine it, will serve as a good training tool to teach his Soldiers the importance of proper wear of their protective equipment or at the very least, keep their heads down.



Providing humanitarian aid to Native American communities, providing tactical experience for Iowa Soldiers

**Story and photos
by Sgt. Darwin Seehusen**

RAPID CITY, South Dakota - Being the commander of a transportation unit is a challenge in itself, but for Capt. Stefan A. Shirley of Ames, Iowa, being commander of the 1168th Transportation Company, 1034th Combat Sustainment-Support Battalion, Iowa National Guard, provides unique challenges. His headquarters is located in Perry, but the unit also has a detachment in Audubon and another in Marshalltown.

Because of the distance, logistical and communication problems have to be overcome and maintenance and training procedures standardized.

Annual training fit the bill perfectly, bringing

all three Detachments together in support of the 2011 Operation Golden Coyote at Custer State Park, outside of Rapid City, S.D., while helping provide humanitarian assistance to the local Native American reservations.

"This is the exact training we do on a tactical level," said Shirley

Operation Golden Coyote is an annual exercise started in 1984, offering mission-focused training while providing humanitarian aid and infrastructure support to local Native Americans. This year's exercise involved more than 3,200 servicemembers from 17 states, as well as units from Canada, Germany and Scotland.

The 1168th Transportation Co.'s main focus was to transport harvested logs from Black Hills National Forest to local drop off sites on the local Indian reservations.

One site was the Community Services Center in the Wakpamni District outside of Pine Ridge, S.D. The center provides services such as fuel assistance for medical trips to Rapid City and congregate meals for elderly members of the tribe. The center also helps distribute firewood for cooking and heat in the winter.

Every year the center receives 10 truckloads of timber during Operation Golden Coyote. "It's a good thing. Every little bit helps," said Joe Yellow Hair, the center's building maintenance technician. "Without this delivery, the residents rely on vendors for their firewood which they have to pay for. The timber is used by local families, mostly for firewood in the winter," he explained.

Defiance, Iowa native Pvt. 1st Class. Jason A. Muhlbauer, a truck driver with Detachment 2, 1168th Transportation Co. participated in the lumber haul as part of his first annual

training with the unit. "It's an awesome idea knowing you're helping so many people and its good training for us. Everybody wins."

Another drop off site was the Red Shirt District outside of Hermosa, S.D. Local resident Steve Weasel Bear said this was the first time his district received a lumber drop. "The district has about a hundred people and the community will cut and haul it to local residents, mostly for the elderly," he said.

"Mom volunteered me," he added.

Jerry Two Bulls, another resident, said some of the wood will be used to make a corral in the community, but most will go for winter-time firewood.

A natural resources technician with the South Dakota Natural Resources Regulatory Agency, Dennis Yellow Thunder is helping coordinate efforts between these units and the Indian Councils to get the wood to the communities. "It benefits the units with training and it benefits us with fuel in the winter," he said.

Staff Sgt. Robert F. Ott, a Jewell, Iowa resident assigned to Detachment 1, 1168th Transportation Co. from Marshalltown, Iowa feels this is an excellent opportunity for his new Soldiers to gain driving experience, while training for their war-time mission of hauling supplies in-theater.

"Our job is to train to go to war and to train troops to the best of our ability of readiness," said Ott.

Ott has been deployed overseas three times and has performed humanitarian missions. "It's nice to do things here in the States, seeing the people you're helping. It's a good thing when you can help another American, in America," he said.



Staff Sgt. Robert F. Ott, (top) Detachment 1, 1168th Transportation Company, 1034th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Iowa National Guard, watches as a forklift unloads timber off the back of his truck in the Red Shirt Reservation District near Hermosa, S.D.

Capt. Stefan A. Shirley, (below) commander of the 1168th Transportation Company, 1034th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, Iowa National Guard, plans upcoming missions with his senior leaders as they transport logs from the Black Hills National Forest near Custer, S.D., to drop sites on local Native American reservations during annual training.



by Master Sgt. Todd Moomaw

More than 800 members of the 132nd Fighter Wing, Iowa Air National Guard, deployed for two weeks to the Air National Guard, Volk Field Combined Regional Training Center (CRTC) near Camp McCoy, Wisc.

The first week members completed Total Force Annual Training (TFAT) including Information Assurance, Human Relations, Force Protection and Free Exercise of Religion in the Air Force.

Utilizing the time spent at Volk Field affords members more opportunity in becoming proficient in their individual career fields and being fully prepped for deployments and contingency operations, such as the Missouri River flooding.

The second week, Airmen were evaluated in the areas of Command and Control, Ability to Survive and Operate and Aircraft Generation. The Wing performed well, considering uncooperative weather and fielding of the new Joint Ser-



'Operation Lightning Bug' dominates Volk Field

vice Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology (JSLIST) for chemical warfare. Airmen are now in preparation for an upcoming Phase II Operational Readiness Inspection.

In the past year, 18,366 Air Guardsmen have deployed to 62 countries, as well as every continent, including Antarctica.



"Injured" Senior Master Sgt. Chris Hughes is carried into medical by members of the 132nd Fighter Wing Medical Group (left), as Sgt. Nick Rohmiller (left), Staff Sgt. Steve Kruse (middle), and Staff Sgt. Rosko Crouse (right), of the 132nd Fighter Wing Weapons shop, download a missile from an F-16 aircraft (above). (Iowa National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Linda E. Kephart)

2011 Iowa Family Readiness Conference and Youth Symposium

A record number of 450 servicemembers, family members, volunteers and youth attended the 2011 Iowa Family Readiness Conference and Youth Symposium at the Des Moines Airport Holiday Inn.

The conference provided servicemembers and their families not only a weekend to relax and recharge, but also an opportunity to network and discuss important issues Guard families experience during all phases of the deployment cycle.

This year's theme was "Guard Families Going...Beyond All Limits." With approximately 3,000 Iowa National Guard Soldiers and Airmen currently deployed, the goal was to provide quality training and assist servicemembers and their families prepare for the many issues they deal with during the deployment cycle.

This year's topics included financial preparedness, resiliency for adults and children, dealing with PTSD and suicide, stress man-

agement, "Laughing your Way to a Better Marriage" and a host of others.

Maj. Gen. Timothy E. Orr spoke, ensuring he and his staff were doing everything possible to enhance the care and services provided injured Soldiers and Airmen. He discussed new post-deployment initiatives that would help ensure those needing medical, employment, or other assistance, would not fall through the cracks.

Kevin Kush, head football coach at Boys Town, challenged both adults and teens to adapt to change and realize how everyone on a team affects morale.

"As pieces of the puzzle that make up the Iowa team, we all have the responsibility to respect our teammates, overcome adversity, control what we can control, be accountable and don't be part of the 'duck pond' that breeds negativity," said Kush.

Despite the rain and chill, the Youth Sympo-

sium provided exciting opportunities for the children. Youth were divided into three age groups – Kindergarteners through third graders ran, jumped and bounced to their heart's content at Triad Kids Campus, Ankeny, while fourth through sixth grade children received rock climbing lessons and free climbing at Climb Iowa.

The teens learned shooting skills and tackling the high ropes during their overnight stay at the YMCA Camp in Boone.

All three groups also participated in fun activities teaching coping skills to help them through the deployment cycle. During the evening, the children were free to spend time with their friends and family at the pool and enjoy live entertainment from the dueling piano players.

Nevaeh Hill, daughter of Master Sgt. Marshall Hill, a member of the 185th Air Refueling Wing, said, "I enjoyed meeting new friends that had a parent deployed just like my own dad."

The conference and symposium, held annually in April, is just one of the many events and programs available at little or no cost to our Iowa National Guard families and volunteers.

For more information regarding family readiness programs, contact Shalee Torrence, Senior Family Readiness Assistant, at 515-252-4781 or email shalee.torrence@us.army.mil.

Don't forget to register at www.jointservices-support.org and become a fan on the Iowa National Guard Warrior and Family Services Branch Facebook page to receive the most current information regarding upcoming events, training, resources and special offers for servicemembers and their Families.



Some of the youth participating in the 2011 Iowa Family Readiness Conference and Youth Symposium are (from left to right) Alex Louw, Brandon Schluns and Sara LeFever.

Stemming the Missouri River



Iowa National Guard Soldiers attempt to halt the steady flow of the Missouri River by creating a new levee (left) as Adjutant General of the Iowa National Guard, Maj. Gen. Tim Orr, observes flood damage from the air (right). (Iowa National Guard photos by Sgt. Chad Nelson)

by Sgt. Darwin Seehusen
135th Mobile Public Affair Detachment

For Iowa Army National Guard Soldiers, military training is often put to use helping local communities during time of need. When natural disasters happen, the Guard is often called to assist local emergency services to protect citizens and aid in recovery efforts.

Since June, more than 260 Soldiers have been called to State Active Duty to assist Federal, State and local emergency management agencies to help assess and monitor levees protecting communities along the Missouri River in western Iowa. These agencies include local police and fire departments, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Coast Guard and the Army Corp of Engineers.

"Soldiers patrol levees once every six hours, inspecting them for cracks and boils,

sink holes, water seepage or any potential hazards that may compromise the integrity of the levee," said Task Force South Battle Captain, Capt. Fred D. Leytham, 1034th Combat Service Support Battalion.

If a potential hazard is found, the information is passed on to the city to make an assessment and a repair team is dispatched.

"So far, Soldiers have located over 330 potential hazards in Pottawattamie County alone," said Leytham. "Without the Soldiers, there would be limited resources from other agencies to perform these duties," he added.

As TF South Battle Captain, Leytham was tasked with developing a plan in the event a levee broke around Council Bluffs and evacuation needed. An evacuation exercise was conducted on July 22, north of the city on a flooded portion of Interstate 29.

The exercise included Council Bluffs firemen, DNR officers, and Soldiers role-playing "evacuees." The evacuees were loaded into boats manned by fire and DNR officials and then transferred to waiting military trucks, driven by Soldiers, to take them to safe areas.

A 20-year Navy veteran and Council Bluffs fireman, Austin L. Bailey from Station 2 noted it was good to work with the different agencies in case actual flooding happens. "Communication is a big issue between inter-agencies," he said.

DNR District Supervisor Mark P. Sedlmayer from Lewis, Iowa, also said it was good training. "It helps us become familiar with the military vehicles so we can advise our officers the best way to transfer evacuees should the need arise," he said. Sedlmayer said all his officers have been trained in swift-water rescue and DNR resources could provide 20 to 30 boats

ver on Iowa's western shore



within eight hours for rescue operations. With patrols and evacuation training a 24-hour operation, keeping military equipment mission-ready has also been a 24-hour operation for Chief Warrant Officer 3 Don E. Yost and his mechanics.

"We repair three to four trucks a night and usually two or three during the day. The types of repairs needed varies," said Yost, the head of maintenance. His mechanics check for water in engines and drive train components, such as transmissions and wheel hubs, which can cause failures.

Yost also stated that fuel usage has been around 12,000 gallons since operations began in June. "That's more than I've seen used in the last five years," he added.

When not on patrol, or training for possible rescue operations, Soldiers have used their own time to volunteer with other community-related activities.

Soldiers from Company C, 2nd Battalion, 211th General Support Aviation Battalion, based in Waterloo, partnered with McMillan Magnet Middle School in Omaha, Neb. and the Council Bluffs Municipal Airport to display their UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter for students during an airport field trip.

The aircrew was on hand to answer students questions and provide information on rescue capabilities of the Blackhawk. The crew also talked to students about careers in aviation and what skills are needed to become a helicopter pilot or crewmember.

"I had a great time learning about everything, but the seatbelts are weird," said 12-year-old student Emma Newman, describing the Blackhawk's four-point restraint system.

Blackhawk pilot Capt. Curtis D. Rubendall from Aurelia, Iowa, enjoyed participating in the event. "It brings awareness of what we can do for the community," he said.



Spc. Shalmarie Oakes, 1st Platoon, 1133 Transportation Co., 1034 Combat Service Support Battalion, Mason City (left), patrols a Council Bluffs levee for damage that could cause structural failure. Pfc. Sean Stoll, Headquarters and Headquarters Co., 1034 Combat Service Support Battalion, Camp Dodge, and Spc. Cyle Spieker, Maintenance Platoon, 1133 Transportation Co., Mason City, repair a Humvee hub assembly at the Council Bluffs Armory. (Iowa National Guard photos by Sgt. Darwin Seehusen)

132nd Airman wins championship

More than 300 Army Soldiers descended on Fort Benning to take part in the 2011 U.S. Army Small Arms Championship. Hosted by the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, Soldiers competed in rifle, pistol, and combined arms matches, split into four main categories -- novice, open, pro and cadet.

And when the smoke had cleared, Staff Sgt. Matthew Waechter, 132nd Fighter Wing, was named the Service Rifle Champion. Waechter also earned the Col. Ralph Puckett Excellence in Marksmanship award, given to the Soldier in the novice class who achieved the highest aggregate score of the two Excellence in Competition matches.

Purple Heart Eligibility Revised

Both the Army and Marine Corps will allow more battlefield concussions to be eligible for the Purple Heart. The decision to expand the definition for concussions means thousands of Purple Heart medals could go to Soldiers and Marines who may have been denied the award in the past.

The new eligibility still requires all injuries to be the result of direct or indirect enemy action, retroactive to Sept. 11, 2001. The Departments of the Air Force and Navy are still considering regulation changes.

Soldiers should reapply through their chain of command; Army veterans can call 888-276-9472 or send an e-mail to hrc.tagd.awards@conus.army.mil. Marines should consult the Commandant's coordinating instructions at <http://www.marines.mil/news/messages/Pages/MARADMIN245-11.aspx/>.

New Tuition Assistance regs

Army Regulation 621-5, Rapid Action Revision, outlines the new policy for Tuition Assistance and the number of credit hours that will be paid for servicemembers using Federal Tuition Assistance.

Tuition assistance is available for: A bachelor's degree, or up to 150 semester hours of undergraduate credit, (whichever comes first);

A master's degree, or up to 45 semester hours of graduate credit, (whichever comes first); One academic or vocational certificate from a regionally, or nationally accredited institution, solely at the undergraduate level.

For more information, contact Ileen Rogers, at (502) 613-8588, or by e-mail at ileen.rogers@us.army.mil.

Free Writers Workshop for vets

The University of Iowa Veterans Center is sponsoring its second free weekend workshop for U.S. military personnel: Writing My Way Back Home, Oct. 14-16 in the UI Communications Center, 116 S. Madison St. (between Washington & Burlington), Iowa City. No writing experience is needed to attend this workshop.

For more information or participating in the workshop, call Mikelson at 319-384-2020 or john-mikelson@uiowa.edu or Rainey at 641-919-2654 or emma.rainey4@gmail.com or link to Writing My Way Back Home: <http://www.wix.com/emmarainey4/writingmyway-backhome#>!

Yellow ribbon Program update

Post-Deployment event dates and locations for the Agribusiness Development Team (ADT) and the 2/34 Brigade Combat Team (BCT). Yellow Ribbon events are mandatory for Service members and highly encouraged for Family members. Up to two family members per Servicemember can receive entitlements such as lodging, mileage and per diem depending on distance from the event.

Upcoming events are:
Sep 30-Oct 2: 2/34 BSTB in Cedar Rapids;
334 BSB in Des Moines
Oct 7-9: 1-194 FA in Okoboji

Check out the NGB news app

The National Guard Bureau has unveiled a new application which enables iPhone and iPad users to stay in touch with National Guard news and videos anytime via their mobile devices.

The National Guard News Mobile App - available for free download at www.ng.mil keeps readers connected with up-to-the-minute updates and enables the National Guard's 22,000 Facebook fans and 12,000 Twitter followers to share their favorite stories with their friends on popular social media platforms.

IOWA ESGR employment training

Iowa Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve, as well as its partners, will host a free one-day Employment Assistance Training (EAT) workshop designed towards helping servicemembers and military spouses find jobs. A free lunch, sponsored by ESGR, will be served to all attendees.

The EAT workshops will be held from 7:45 a.m. to 5 p.m., at the following sites: Oct. 5, Iowa City; Oct. 19, Sioux City; Nov. 3, Des Moines; and Nov. 15 at Cedar Rapids.

Yoga-inspired fitness class

A yoga-inspired fitness class will be held Thursdays, from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., on the north side of the racquetball court, Camp Dodge Wellness Center. Participants are encouraged to bring their own mats.

Military family retreat

A Military Family Retreat for Military Families with a member returning from deployment, will be held Oct. 28-31, at Camp Okoboji, 1531 Edgewood Drive, Milford, Iowa.

This event is designed for couples and their children with sessions led by military Chaplains. Families are responsible for travel expenses to Camp Okoboji and Friday night dinner. Lodging, all other meals and registration cost are provided by the Camp and the churches of the Lutheran Churches Missouri Synod participating in Operation Barnabas.

Points of contact are Lori Camp, (712) 337-3325, lori.camp@1idwlcms.org, and Chaplain (Maj.) Mike Crawford, (515) 570-9705, michael.v.crawford@us.army.mil.

GoArmyEd

The Army's Virtual Gateway to Education - Anytime, Anywhere

GoArmyEd Participation

- **GoArmyEd serves Active Army, National Guard and Army Reserve Soldiers.**
- **More than 350,000 Soldiers worldwide have GoArmyEd accounts.**
- **Soldiers have access to more than 2,500 accredited schools.**
- **More than 1,000 Soldiers enroll in classes every day.**
- **More than 1.6 million classes have been completed since April 1, 2006.**

eArmyU

- **GoArmyEd also hosts eArmyU, the award-winning online program, a trusted source for online education. eArmyU is approved by Army Education and enables Soldiers to work toward a college degree and certificate anytime, anywhere. Credits can be transferred across institutions, enabling Soldiers to quickly and conveniently progress toward their educational goals.**
- **eArmyU awards maximum credit for military experience and training with two-way guaranteed transferability of credit between eArmyU schools.**
- **eArmyU provides 100 percent online degree programs from regionally accredited schools to help Soldiers continue their studies even as their responsibilities, schedules and duty assignments change.**

Unprecedented Access

The Army Continuing Education System (ACES) launched GoArmyEd.com on April 1, 2006, for Active Duty Soldiers to request tuition assistance (TA) and shortly thereafter added On-Duty class requests. In 2010, the United States Army Reserve (USAR) was incorporated into the program. In 2011, the National Guard joined GoArmyEd, making it a total Army-wide enterprise system, providing Soldiers 24/7 access to GoArmyEd -- anytime, anywhere.



Benefits of GoArmyEd to Soldiers

GoArmyEd enables Soldiers, Army-wide, to request TA online eliminating wait time and reducing time away from duty. Soldiers receive 100 percent tuition assistance up to an established semester hour cap and tuition ceiling. GoArmyEd also...

- Provides Army-wide access to TA for Active Army, National Guard, and Army Reserve Soldiers -- anytime, anywhere.
- Offers Soldiers thousands of regionally and nationally accredited schools to choose from.
- Enables Soldiers to view an electronic copy of their Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Army Degree (SOCAD) Student Agreement (SA) or documented degree plan.
- Provides one place for Soldiers, counselors and schools to conduct business
- Allows Soldiers to register, drop, or withdraw from classes 24/7, gives them online visibility of their student records, TA balances, class grades, current course enrollments and provides the capability to cancel TA requests.
- Expedites processing of annual and term Tuition Assistance Statements of Understanding (annual TA SOU must be signed by Commanders; Soldiers in the rank of SFC and above may sign for both themselves and Commanders).
- Permits most Soldiers to research admission requirements, course costs and accreditation information.
- Helps most Soldiers access online advising tools to select classes that meet their degree requirements.
- Allows Active Duty Soldiers to enroll in on-duty classes.
- Enables colleges to deliver degree and course offerings and report Soldier's progress.
- Provides Soldiers with access to technical support through the GoArmyEd Helpdesk.

GoArmyEd - Serving all Soldiers!

www.GoArmyEd.com

GoArmyEd Schools

More than 2,500 schools partner with GoArmyEd. High-volume schools access GoArmyEd to upload classes for registration, manage class enrollments, submit grades, prepare and verify invoices, and troubleshoot Soldier issues from one centralized, integrated location. Schools with lower participation rates submit grades and invoices to GoArmyEd, allowing all Soldiers access to up-front Tuition Assistance.

GoArmyEd Support Team

The GoArmyEd Support Team includes Army Education Counselors/ESS from all Army components, colleges and universities, Servicemembers Opportunity Colleges Army Degrees (SOCAD), and International Business Machines (IBM). Army Education Counselors/ESS assist Soldiers in setting and achieving education goals. GoArmyEd allows Army Education Counselors/ESS to focus more time and effort on counseling and empowering Soldiers rather than on routine, time-intensive, paper-based processes. SOCAD serves as the Army's GoArmyEd academic facilitator, while IBM provides technical integration and virtual solutions.

Supporting the Expeditionary Force

Education is a powerful incentive tool that boosts retention and re-enlistment while growing the critical thinking and decision-making skills needed to support future Army leaders through Soldier readiness and development. GoArmyEd is a sound enterprise strategy for centralized information management and virtualized self-service. Electronic invoicing and automated business processes allow academic institutions to receive payment from the Army for TA charges in three to five business days once payment is authorized. Additionally, GoArmyEd supports the Army's transformation and reduces costs through standardization processes by letting Soldiers request TA online.

College of the American Soldier (CAS)

The College of the American Soldier expands existing civilian higher-education degree choices to provide Combat Arms Non-Commissioned Officers (NCO) with college credit for specific Non-Commissioned Officer Education System (NCOES) courses. Participating colleges certify up front the amount of credit to be applied to a Career NCO Degree based on American Council on Education (ACE) credit recommendations. CAS degrees are listed in GoArmyEd.

Army Career Degrees

The Army Career Degrees program helps Soldiers transition into related civilian occupations after completing active service. The degrees are matched to MOS/ Career Management Fields (CMF). Occupation-based associate and bachelors degrees uniquely relate to MOS skills, contain specific college courses that match MOS/CMF competencies, and maximize credit for military experience and training. Army Career Degrees program information is located in GoArmyEd.

GoArmyEd enables and reinforces development of an educated, technology-savvy Soldier who can support the Army's goal to leverage network-centric warfare by:

- Integrating educational opportunities while strengthening the Army's commitment to a flexible, adaptive and competent future force.
- Empowering Soldiers to develop critical thinking skills.
- Adhering to Army TA policy processes and procedures.

The impact of GoArmyEd is felt across the Army as the program graduates Soldiers who are better educated and better prepared to demonstrate the Pentathlete ethos. An educated Soldier is the Army's best asset.



GoArmyEd allows more than 350,000 Soldiers to access their degree programs and register for classes using TA anytime.

Visit www.GoArmyEd.com or contact your local Army Education Center

185th ARW deploys to Germany

By Master Sgt. Bill Wiseman
185th Public Affairs

Geilenkirchen, Germany -- Over 40 members of the 185th Air Refueling Wing (ARW), Sioux City, Iowa, and two KC-135 Strato-Tankers deployed to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Early Warning and Control Force, E-3A Component, in Geilenkirchen, Germany, to provide air refueling training in July.

"Our mission here is to provide a training platform for the NATO pilots flying the E-3A Airborne Warning & Control Systems (AWACS) aircraft with air-to-air refueling" said Col. Dave McKinney, the 185th ARW Vice Commander.

"And not just here; we will also be forward deploying one jet and support staff to Forward Operating Base Atkion, Greece to provide training with more of the NATO pilots," he added.

McKinney noted how the Air National Guard is helping fulfill an important NATO mission with the training while providing valuable experience to Iowa pilots, giving them the opportunity to fly in European airspace and work with NATO pilots from different countries.

McKinney is coming to the end of a four-year tour as the Air National Guard Liaison at the NATO air base. While his time has been fun and rewarding, he said he is ready to come home.

This is the seventh rotation for the 185th at Geilenkirchen. The training mission at Geilenkirchen has been fulfilled year-round entirely by Air National Guard units since 1993, with most units deploying for two to three weeks at a time so there is a unit on station at all times.



A NATO E-3A AWACS prepares to hook up with a KC-135 from the 185th Air Refueling Wing (above) during a training mission over the North Sea. Tech. Sgt. Misty McNamara, 185th Air Refueling Wing, guides the boom from a KC-135, during an air-to-air refueling mission (below).



Iowans at the siege of Vicksburg

by Col. (Ret.)
Robert Pitts

Both sides could not expect to win the Civil War without control of the Mississippi River. One of the Union keys was reopening the Mississippi River to commerce. These goods, as well as the river itself, were the lifeline of the war effort. In the southern part of the “Big Muddy,” Confederate ports such as Memphis (June 1862) and New Orleans (April 1862) were captured by Union forces.



Vicksburg, Miss., along with Port Hudson, was the last stronghold to reopening the Mississippi River. It had high bluffs that afforded excellent positions for batteries and difficult terrain and capturing it would be a strategic victory, as it would split the Confederacy along a north/south axis. An east/west railroad also ran through Vicksburg, carrying agricultural goods from Texas, Arkansas, Missouri, the Indian Territory (Oklahoma) and parts of Louisiana. Capturing Vicksburg would also help prevent the movement of troops and goods from the west.

Iowa in 1863 was a mere 17 years old. With a population of approximately 675,000 citizens, Iowa provided 116,000 men for military duty, with approximately 75,000 volunteers answering the call. At Vicksburg, the number of Iowa units was third behind the older and more populated states of Illinois (with 79 regiments and batteries), and Ohio (39). Iowa contributed 28 infantry regiments, two batteries and two cavalry regiments.

Iowa sailors serving aboard Union ships and

gun boats also contributed to the Vicksburg campaign. In addition to firing on Confederate batteries and the city, the Navy transported soldiers, provided essential sustenance and had assault vessels carry soldiers across the river, providing an amphibious landing deep in Confederate territory.

During the Battle of Chickasaw Bayou, Dec. 29, 1862, Maj. Gen. William T. Sherman had four divisions in his expeditionary force. The 4th Iowa, commanded by Col. James Williamson, was part of Brig. Gen. John Thayer's 3rd Brigade of Brig. Gen. Frederick Steele's 4th Division. The 3rd Brigade had six Iowa regiments and one Iowa light artillery battery. The 4th Iowa, along with other Iowa regiments of Thayer's Brigade, were to support Col. John DeCourcy's Brigade.

Three brigades were to attack along a narrow front which contained a dense forest, a corduroy bridge and a marsh, all within easy reach of fierce Confederate artillery and infantry fire. Sherman was informed of the impracticality of the attack, but said, “That is the route to take,” and “We will lose 5,000

men before we take Vicksburg and may as well lose them here as anywhere else.”

Led by Thayer and Williamson, the 4th Iowa moved out in a column of fours, supporting DeCourcy's attack. As soon as they crossed the corduroy bridge, the 4th Iowa and DeCourcy's Brigade met with a wall of rifle fire, as Confederate artillery shredded the Iowan's flanks. They were to protect DeCourcy's Brigade's right flank, but before the Iowans could do that, his Brigade from Ohio, Illinois and Kentucky were forced back. Their retreat left the 4th Iowa exposed and under fire.

Hoping for a breakthrough, the Iowans were ordered to attack. “Those sturdy Iowans,” as they were referred to, closed on the enemy positions of the 42nd Georgia and the 29th Louisiana. The 4th Iowa's situation was tenuous, but Williamson was told to hold his ground while Thayer dashed to the rear looking for help.

The closest unit was an Ohio unit from DeCourcy's Brigade. They were in a ditch near the bridge, protected from enemy fire.

The 42nd Ohio refused to help, saying they were under orders to cover the retreat. The 3rd brigade, under Brig. Gen. Frank Blair, was also withdrawing, leaving the 4th Iowa isolated.

Despite a withering fire, the 4th Iowa held. After Williamson realized he was the only Federal unit south of the bayou, he gave the order to withdraw, as the 4th Iowa had suffered heavy losses.

Williamson's aggressive actions at Chickasaw Bayou earned him the Medal of Honor, which was awarded in January 1895. The citation reads, "Led his regiment against a superior force, strongly entrenched, and held his ground when all support had been withdrawn."

Other Iowa soldiers at Vicksburg were equally heroic. On May 22, 1863, Grant hoped to avoid a long siege by assaulting the strong Confederate defensive works along a three and-a-half mile front. They consisted of forts with overlapping fire, a steep front slope, and a deep ditch at the bottom. Union soldiers assaulting these forts would have to crawl up the slope under an artillery storm.

At one of the forts, the Railroad Redoubt, an attack was led on the right by the 22nd Iowa Infantry Regiment and supported by the 21st Iowa Infantry Regiment. Two Iowans of the 22nd Iowa, Sgt. Joseph Griffith and Sgt. Nicholas Messenger, encountered fierce Confederate resistance. They led a small band of brave and daring Iowans into the Railroad Redoubt where they planted the regimental flag, captured the defenders and held the fort for several hours.

Later that afternoon, the Confederates counterattacked and regained possession of the Railroad Redoubt.

Both forces then settled down into siege operations with only a couple of minor Federal excursions. Throughout the 47 days of siege, the noose became tighter and tighter, with a Union victory on July 4, 1863. One day before the fall of Vicksburg, the Confederates suffered a major defeat at Gettysburg. The North was gaining momentum after two years of failures and Iowa soldiers, sailors and citizens had a significant part in gaining that momentum.

The Iowa monument at Vicksburg

Iowans fought at Pea Ridge, Shiloh, Chattanooga and other places, but Vicksburg is Iowa's brightest moment in the Civil War. The Iowa Monument there is both spectacular and impressive.

In his 1906 dedication address at the Iowa Monument, it was Maj. Gen. Grenville Dodge, who stated that Gen. Ulysses S. Grant often praised the battlefield efficiency of Iowa soldiers. Grant liked and admired his Iowans. In the 1901 "Commission to Locate the Position of Iowa Troops in the Siege of Vicksburg," J.K.P. Thompson, the commission chairman, said, "A grateful posterity will not fail to cherish and honor

either the courage displayed, or the sacrifice made."

In the 1906 Iowa Monument dedication speech, Dodge, made special mention of the 4th Iowa Infantry as being first at Chickasaw Bayou. He stated he had the honor to be its commander at one time – at Pea Ridge, where he was wounded.

Let's have a grand rededication ceremony of the restored monument in March 2013 and continue to cherish the brave forefathers of our Iowa National Guard. Help take care of this monument, which honors Iowa courage and Iowa sacrifice.



In the 1888 painting, "The Siege of Vicksburg," (previous page) artists Kurz and Allison capture a slice of this American Civil War Battle. The Iowa Monument at Vicksburg (left) is in dire need of restoration. The white granite is now gray, some of the rifles and flag staffs are broken, and the foundation has settled. During his 1906 dedication address at the Iowa Monument, (below) it was Gen. Grenville M. Dodge, who stated that General Grant often praised the battlefield efficiency of Iowa soldiers.



Caring for others

“As we look forward, our focus will change towards those critical events and tasks which re-set our force.”



The Iowa National Guard is coming off an incredible summer. In addition to day-to-day operations, our Soldiers and Airman have been engaged in emergency operations in support of flooding on the Missouri River in southwest Iowa.

However, most significantly, we have re-deployed nearly 3,000 Airmen and Soldiers from contingency operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Kosovo.

As we look forward, our focus will change towards those critical events and tasks which re-set our force. Many of these tasks, like the Yellow Ribbon events, are well underway.

Others, like getting our Warriors to required military schools, will take time. It is crucial we use the same deliberate process and intensity to reset our force, as we used to deploy it.

As we move through the re-set process our NCO's at all levels need to remain focused on these two TAG Priorities: First, care for our Soldiers, Airman and their families and second, develop our Soldiers Airman and Leaders (COG).

Care for our Soldiers, Airman and their families

Wounded Warriors – Nothing we do is more important than taking care of our Wounded Warriors and their families. We currently have over 90 warriors in various Warrior Transition Units (WTUs) around the country. It is essential we keep in contact with these Warriors and their families. In addition to keeping them in our thoughts, we

must visit them by phone or in person. I truly appreciate the efforts from those who have painstakingly taken the time to visit these Soldiers, but we must stay actively engaged, until we have them back home to their families, friends and communities.

Resources and Training – In order to enable Leaders/NCO's to care for our organization, we must know what resources are available and how to access them. I want to highlight just a few of those available programs.

Families and Services Branch – Our Families and Services Branch provide a wide range of services and resources for our Warriors and Families. Yellow Ribbon support, Chaplain's support and Family Readiness Group support, are just a few,

Comprehensive Soldier/Airman Fitness (CSF) – The Army has been talking about this over the past two years and in August, the Air Force announced they will adopt a similar program. Both programs focus on helping our Warriors and their families deal with the stress of everyday life. They take a holistic approach to building strength and resilience in our Warriors and families and target those dimensions of strength – physical, emotional, family, spiritual, and social.

Much of this is not new, in fact it's many of the things our leaders have been doing in taking care of their Warriors and Families, now under one program.

Resilience Trainer Assistant (RTA) and Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) training – These are new, or im-

proved programs taught by our Families and Services Branch.

These are both outstanding courses and our leaders need to understand what is being taught and engaged in identifying the relevant Warriors who need to attend. This is all about caring for our warriors.

Develop Soldiers, Airman and Leaders

NCO's, you have a huge part in developing our Warriors and Leaders during this reset period. This is helping to shape the Iowa National Guard for the future. Ensure all administrative tasks are complete – performance counseling, NCOERs, security clearances and physicals. Ensure your Warriors are enrolled in their required military courses (NCOES/OES). Establish training plans to ensure your Warriors are physically and technically prepared to attend these courses.

Doing this correctly provides every Warrior in the Iowa National Guard the opportunity to achieve his or her goals and it also provides the organization its best possible leaders.

What we have accomplished over the past six to nine months is incredible. This was possible because of the efforts of every Warrior and family member within the Iowa National Guard. While the next six months will bring many challenges, I'm confident each and every member of our team will live up to these challenges.

I just want to thank each and every one of you for what you do, each and every day.

Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Paul Lippstock, Iowa State Chaplain

'No greater love than this...'

On May 27, 1978 I was ordained for service to the Archdiocese of Dubuque at St Joseph Parish Key West (Dubuque). The Gospel for that celebration was John 15:9-17. A line from that gospel which still resonates strongly is verse 13: "There is no greater love than this: To lay down one's life for one's friends."

Every time we lose a Soldier "down range," I find myself meditating on this verse. I would like to share a story about a fellow priest from the Archdiocese of Dubuque-- Father Aloysius Herman Schmitt.

On Sunday, Dec. 7, 1941, at 7:55 a.m., the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor Naval Base in Honolulu, Hawaii. In the end, there were 2,000 U.S. deaths, including 448 Sailors on the USS Oklahoma. Chap. (LTJG) Al Schmitt was the USS Oklahoma's chaplain and the first chaplain to give his life for God and country in World War II.

Three days earlier Al celebrated his 32nd birthday and was one day short of celebrating his sixth anniversary in the priesthood. December 7 took our nation by surprise; it was a day that ended in horror, yet made some new heroes.

Henry and Mary Schmitt gave birth to their tenth son, Aloysius Schmitt, on Dec. 4, 1909. At his baptism, his Godmother said a special prayer that Al would someday become a priest, for the rest of his life.

He returned home a priest to St Lucas, where he celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving on May 10, 1936. After two temporary assignments, Al felt called to serve God and Country, and in 1939, became a chaplain in the U.S. Navy.

After celebrating Mass on the USS Oklahoma the morning of December 7, the command "All hands to General Quarters" was given. The attack came from the north on the 93 ships in the harbor. The USS Oklahoma was the first to be attacked and "Abandon Ship" went out before the men reached their battle stations. Many of the Sailors were trapped below deck as the ship rolled over.

Al made his way to a small compartment with a porthole. It was there he brought Sailor after Sailor, pushing and kicking these men through the porthole to safety. Although he was asked to come, he chose to remain behind and retrieve more men caught in the wreckage below. He wanted to bless his men and pray the commendation prayers for the dying.

The USS Oklahoma was raised one-and-a-half years later, but Al's body was never found. His heroic actions inspired over 50 eastern Iowa priests to join the military. Al could have saved himself, but he chose to help others escape. Matthew 16:24-25, speaks loudly about this chaplain-hero: "Then Jesus said to his disciples, 'Whoever wishes to come after me must deny himself, take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.'"

Al is one of my heroes. He was posthumously awarded the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps Medal and the Purple Heart. There are nine memorials to Al located in the United States and Italy. In 1943, Al's sister was given the special military honor of christening the Navy's newest destroyer escort -- the USS Schmitt. All graduates of Al's alma mater, Loras College, make a solemn pledge at their commencement ceremony -- Pro Deo et Patria.

Thank you, Chap. Aloysius Schmitt, for showing us how to love and to grow in our faith. I am a better Iowa Chaplain and Soldier for your being Christ to us. You teach us all how to serve God and country.

In 1914 --

1,000 miles east of the Schmitt farm -- the U.S. Navy was christening the USS Oklahoma. Back in Iowa, Al fulfilled his Grandmother's wish, as he enrolled at Columbia (later, Loras College), where he found purpose in the school motto, "Pro Deo et Patria" (for God and Country). He embraced this motto for the rest of his life.





1636



1776



1863



1918



Always Ready, Always There

- Direct descendent of the militias of the 13 English colonies; the oldest component of the U.S. military, with units dating back to 1636.
- According to the U.S. Constitution, both a state and Federal force, under control of the governor, unless called to active service by the President.
- Has fought in every American war, from the 1600's to present combat in Afghanistan and Iraq. At one point in 2005, Army National Guard brigades made up more than 50 percent of the U.S. combat brigades in Iraq, the Army National Guard's largest combat role since WWII.
- In its state role, a key player in homeland defense and disaster relief; within two weeks of Hurricane Katrina's landfall, more than 42,000 National Guard troops from across the country were deployed to the Gulf Coast for relief operations.



1951



1969



2005