

Militiaman

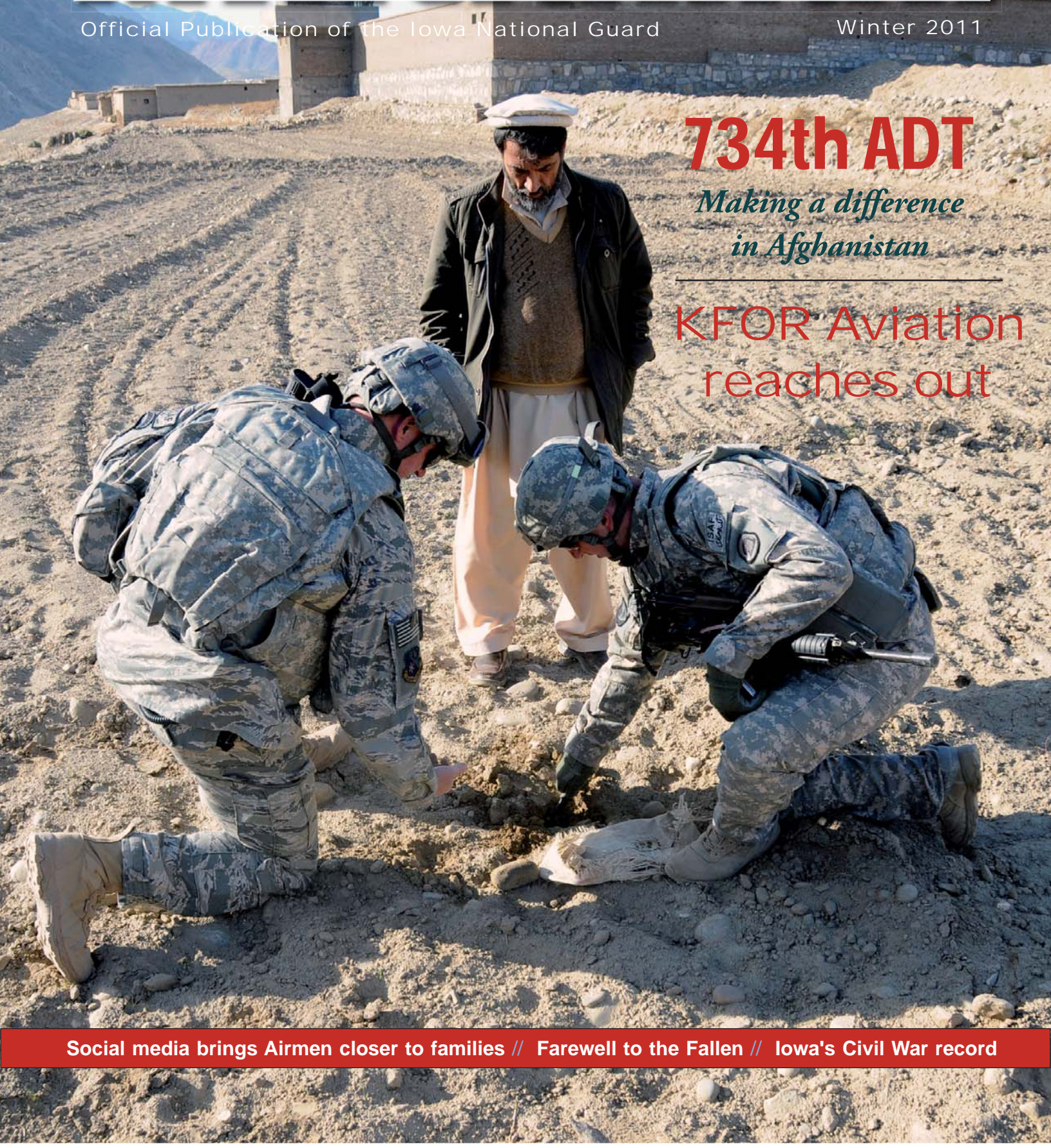
Official Publication of the Iowa National Guard

Winter 2011

734th ADT

*Making a difference
in Afghanistan*

KFOR Aviation
reaches out



Social media brings Airmen closer to families // Farewell to the Fallen // Iowa's Civil War record



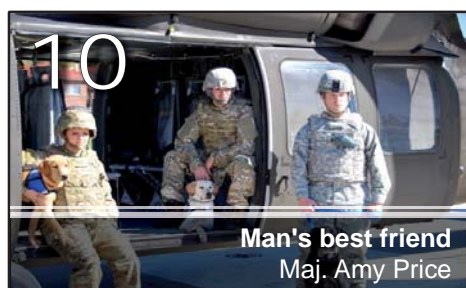
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Militiaman

Winter 2011

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On the Cover

Photo by Capt, Peter Shinn

U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Don Kuchl, Jackson, Minn., (left) and 1st Lt. Scott Shirk, Emmetsburg, Iowa, both of the 734th Agribusiness Development Team, take a soil sample from a potential demonstration farm site just north of Asadabad, Afghanistan, as a government

official watches on.



Caring for our families

Supporting our most valuable assets

This past summer we had an aggressive agenda. We held our first state-wide Army annual training event at Camp Ripley, we finalized the mobilization preparation for over 3,400 Soldiers and Airmen, and have concluded over 30 individual unit send-offs.

We anticipate a busy upcoming year, as well. With that said, we are fully committed to supporting our deployed forces, their families, and the employers of deployed Soldiers and Airmen. In this issue of the Militiamen magazine, I want to focus on caring for families.

Military readiness is directly tied to family readiness. In every deployment, our Soldiers and Airmen leave behind the one thing they cherish the most – their families. We couldn't do our mission without the support of our families.

When I talk with Soldiers and Airmen, their concern isn't the mission – they're anxious to do the mission and they understand the mission. The one thing they're concerned about, is making sure their families will be okay while they are gone.

At each unit send-off ceremony, I ask our warriors to focus on their mission and let them know that our focus back home is on taking care of their families. This is a vital component to mission success. The service member and their unit are strengthened, knowing their families are provided information, resources and the support they need.

We have learned valuable lessons from past deployments and have sought to improve our support capabilities. Our commitment is to continue to improve our family support program.

The Iowa National Guard has transformed from the "Guard" of 2001. There's no institution where things have changed more dramatically. Like other elements of the Iowa Guard, our family organization and support capabilities have continued to improve for the better. When the War on Terror first began, we had two full-time family support personnel and

numerous family readiness groups among our commands.

Today, we have created the Iowa National Guard Warrior & Family Services Branch. This is a Joint-Force initiative that serves as the foundation for support to families of Iowa Army and Air National Guard members. The Warrior & Family Services Branch acts as a network allowing families to mutually support one another.

This branch consists of seven full-time Family Assistance Specialists, multiple Family Readiness Groups, a State Child and Youth Program, and a Psychological Health section. The program also includes Survivor Outreach Services, the Yellow Ribbon Programs, the State Chaplain's Strong Bonds Program, Health and Wellness Team, Military and Family Life Consultants, and Military One Source resources.

The Warrior & Family Services Branch is available to our Army and Air National Guard team members and their families.

I encourage you to use these resources to assist your family or help other families in need. The best way to get in contact with



the Warrior & Family Services Branch is to call 1-800-294-6607, ext 4416, or e-mail them at NGIA.FRG.JFHQ@ng.army.mil.

Finally, I'm frequently asked by the public, "What can we do for our deployed warrior's families while they are gone?"

It is really the simple things that matter most, like mowing the grass, shoveling snow, dropping off a home-cooked meal, or offering to watch the kids. Whatever you decide to do, it will make a difference for those families and show we really care about our deployed warriors. I challenge you to give your best effort in getting involved and making a difference.

To all of our military families in the Iowa National Guard, I offer my sincerest thank you. Your courage, service, and sacrifice are an inspiration to us all.



Capt. Tim Mills, commander, 135th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment hugs his daughter, Kennady, age 8, while daughter Taylor, 13, looks on, at the unit's homecoming ceremony, following a year-long Iraq deployment as part of Operations Iraqi Freedom/New Dawn. (Iowa National Guard photo by Justin Cato).



734th ADT aids widows, orphans, and school girls

Story and photos by Capt. Peter Shinn

On a late Summer day outside Forward Operating Base Wright, Sgt. 1st Class Melissa Brumley helped load a slightly scuffed Toyota Corolla with boxes of clothing for the families of war widows and school supplies for the Fatima Girls School in nearby Asadabad, Afghanistan, the provincial capital of Kunar.

Brumley, of Stewart, Iowa, is the Non-commissioned Officer in Charge of Administration for the Iowa National Guard's 734th Agri-Business Development Team. She expressed pleasure at being able to help the schoolgirls of Kunar province.

"We know the rate of literacy among women and girls in this province is very low, and we also know educating women is important to long-term development here," Brumley said. "Honestly, it's a joy to help in this way."

The Iowa ADT is part of Combined Joint Task Force 101, also known as Task Force Bastogne. The ADT's primary mission is to improve food security in Kunar province by building the capacity of the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to deliver agricultural services.

That means the ADT works with local and provincial agricultural officials, as well as with individual Afghan farmers and livestock producers.

But agriculture is not the ADT's sole focus. The ADT is also working closely with the Kunar Province Department of Women's Affairs. Naseema Shfiq Sadat, a European university graduate, who has lived most of her life in Kunar province, heads the Women's Affairs Department. She is also the director of the Fatima Girls School.

Sadat's focus has been on providing for widows and their families and ensuring schoolgirls have the materials necessary to get a quality education.

"My staff and I were pleased to present clothes and supplies to widows' families and children at the Fatima Girls School," said Sadat. "We're very grateful to the ADT and all the American families that donated materials to this cause."

The Iowa ADT receives school supplies and clothing from a number of private charitable groups in the United States, according to Maj. Mary Parmenter, of Perry, Iowa. Parmenter, Operations officer for the Iowa ADT, channels that materiel through the Women's Affairs Department to the Afghan citizens who need it the most.

"We have a number of American organizations that are providing us with school sup-

plies, clothing, shoes, hats, coats and gloves," Parmenter said.

"Director Sadat has been instrumental in helping us narrow the focus of this effort and ensuring these much-needed items get to widows and schoolgirls."

After 30 years of war, Parmenter noted, there are a large number of widows in the province, most of whom have families to support. Like Brumley, Parmenter also pointed out the critical importance of increasing literacy rates among Afghan girls and women.

Parmenter pointed to Sadat as the lynchpin of the efforts on both fronts in Kunar province. She also praised Sadat's personal courage.

"Director Sadat is the most prominent woman in the Kunar provincial government," she said. "In this society, which is extremely male dominated, that takes a lot of guts."

"We know the rate of literacy among women and girls in this province is very low, and we also know educating women is important to long-term development here. Honestly, it's a joy to help in this way."

**Sgt. 1st Class Melissa Brumley
734th Agribusiness Development Team**



As two Afghan children look on (above), Sgt. 1st Class Melissa Brumley of the Iowa National Guard's 734th Agri-Business Development Team, helps load school supplies and clothing for schoolgirls and families of widows in Kunar Province, Afghanistan.

Brumley (below) speaks through an interpreter to staff members of the Kunar Province Director of Women's Affairs after loading their vehicle with supplies for local schoolgirls and clothes for the families of widows in the province.



KFOR aviation reaches out to Kosovo students

*Story and photos by Sgt. Jerry Boffen
130th Public Affairs Detachment*

To most teenagers, the months of July and August are associated with a summer break from school. This is their opportunity to go to the pool, pick up a summer job, enjoy the weather, or take a vacation with their friends and families. These two months provide a chance to forget about school; a time to just be a teenager and revel in the precious months away from the classroom.

Many teenage students in the vicinity of Ferizaj/Urosevac, Kosovo, have taken advantage of a unique opportunity during those summer months, thanks in large part to a group of U.S. Soldiers from Task Force Griffin, the aviation component of Multinational Battle Group East (MNBG-E).

Twice a week, between 10 and 15 Soldiers from the Arkansas and Iowa National Guard spend several hours teaching English to local students at the Youth Center in Ferizaj/Urosevac. Normally, between 60 and 80 students attend the sessions, all of whom are there voluntarily.

“What’s really cool about this is all of these kids are here because they want to be,” said Capt. Joshua Owens, Conway, Ark., a helicopter pilot and commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-114th Security and Support Aviation Battalion, Arkansas National Guard, Task Force Griffin.

“Nobody has to be here. They’re all out of school for the summer and could be doing any number of things, but they choose to come here

and learn English from us.”

This is the fifth rotation of Kosovo Forces (KFOR) aviation Soldiers participating in the effort to reach out to the local communities by teaching English at the Youth Center.

“We inherited the program from the KFOR 12 aviation element,” said Owens. “I think a lot of the attendance we have is due, in part, to the great job that KFOR 12 did in securing and maintaining the trust of the local population and the parents of these kids.”

The sessions are typically broken up into two main groups; one large group of students and a smaller, more advanced group of about 10 students.

The focus of the large group is to familiarize the students with reading and carrying on conversations in English, said Master Sgt. Terry Martin, Cabot, Ark., HHC, 1-114th, the noncommissioned officer in charge of operations for Task Force Griffin.

The majority of the Soldiers will work with the larger group to improve the students’ English comprehension through various exercises. These exercises include reading current news articles or popular song lyrics, playing various word games, or simply holding a conversation in English.

“I think it’s important to have the kids do more than just read some-



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Jeremy Walburn, Des Moines, Iowa, a helicopter pilot with C Company, 2-147th Aviation Battalion, Task Force Griffin, Multinational Battle Group East (above), helps two students with a reading exercise at the Youth Center in Ferizaj/Urosevac, Kosovo. Capt. Eric M. Nelson, Madrid, Iowa, a helicopter pilot and commander of C Company, 2-147th Aviation Battalion, Task Force Griffin, Multinational Battle Group East (right), reads a lesson from a Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) handbook, to a group of students at the Youth Center in Ferizaj/Urosevac, Kosovo,





1st Lt. Aaron Rosheim, Ames, Iowa, a helicopter pilot with C Company, 2-147th Aviation Battalion, Task Force Griffin, Multinational Battle Group East, explains an essay assignment to a group of students at the Youth Center in Ferizaj/Urosevac, Kosovo.

Rosheim is among a group of MNBG E Soldiers who visit the Youth Center twice a week to prepare a group of students to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language. Rosheim is deployed as a part of MNBG E in support of the NATO peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

thing in English,” said Martin. “I can pick something up that is written in French or another language and read it, but that doesn’t mean I know what it means. So I try to get the kids engaged to see if they actually comprehend the material.”

Once the students reach a high enough level of English comprehension, they are encouraged to participate in the advanced group, which is designed to prepare the students to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL).

The TOEFL evaluates an individual’s ability to use and understand English in an academic environment, said Capt. Eric M. Nelson, Madrid, Iowa, a helicopter pilot and commander of Company, C 2-147th Aviation Battalion, Iowa National Guard, Task Force Falcon.

The Soldiers prepare the students for the TOEFL through reading, listening and essay-writing exercises. They also engage the students in conversations on topics such as current local and world events, as well as daily conversational topics.

Nelson said that the TOEFL is needed for a variety of the students’ educational endeavors, especially at the university level, so it’s an important test for some of the students.

“With all the different goals you guys have, it’s important to finish school and get a degree,” Nelson said to his group of students. “Even if you end up changing your mind about what you want to do in life, having that degree will open up a lot of opportunities for you.”

Many of the students in Nelson’s group reflected his sentiments on the importance of education.

“I’d like to be a journalist when I finish school,” said Elira, one of the students. “I think that for me to be a really good journalist, it’s important for me to be able to speak more languages than just my own.”

Nazim, another student in Nelson’s group, had a similar perspective.

“I want to be a helicopter mechanic,” he said. “It’s just a dream of mine. I’ll probably

have to go outside of Kosovo for that, since there really aren’t any schools for helicopter mechanics available in Kosovo. Being fluent in English will really help me realize my dream.”

The students aren’t the only ones that get something out of these teaching sessions. Many of the Soldiers have also expressed their satisfaction with the program.

“A lot of the kids that I’ve been able to work with are the same age as my daughter,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Jim Funk, Ames, Iowa, a helicopter pilot with C Co., 2-147th. “It’s really cool to talk with these kids, because I see a lot of similarities between them and my daughter.”

“This is my favorite part of my job, just seeing the kids develop,” added Owens. “These kids are amazing.”

The Soldiers of Task Force Griffin plan to continue these outings throughout the remainder of their deployment in Kosovo and intend to pass the torch to their KFOR 14 successors.



Farewell to the Fallen

by Master Sgt Mike Battien
Iowa ANG Public Affairs

The final, haunting strain of "Taps" rings through my head, as another American Servicemember returns home for the last time. The ultimate price is paid once again.

I recently spent three months at the Air Force Mortuary Affairs Operations Center (AFMAO) at Dover Air Force Base, Del. AFMAO is the Department of Defense' primary provider of mortuary services for casualties from Iraq and Afghanistan.

DoD changed its long-standing policy in April 2009 to allow full media coverage of Dignified Transfers – the formal process of returning the fallen to America from war zones in Iraq and Afghanistan. When that change occurred, Air Force leaders committed to providing a video of the Dignified Transfer to the families as a keepsake. It's through that video production I saw the dignity, honor and respect that AFMAO provides each fallen hero.

Highly trained Honor Guard "Carry Teams" lift and transport fallen Servicemembers from the aircraft and oversee the actual transfer

to AFMAO. This is the most visible activity for families and the public. Each member of these teams moves with precision, control and purpose. They perform this solemn event with the same meticulous attention to detail and care every time – even when family and media are not present.

The Dignified Transfer is open, at family discretion, to DoD and public media. One of Dover's colonels, an AFMAO chaplain and a high-ranking member representing the Fallen's service, make up the Official Party who march to the plane, pray for the Fallen and oversee the transfer. When the transfer to AFMAO is complete, a new set of Airmen, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and civilians takes over. Dignified Transfers happen at all hours of the day and night – DoD policy mandates that war casualties are expedited home on next-available aircraft.

Each fallen Servicemember receives care and compassion through their stay at AFMAO. Personal effects are cataloged and services are coordinated with family members. Brand-new dress uniforms are built specifically for the individual while they are prepared for burial, or cremation. Medical examiners and mortuary specialists complete thorough forensic studies ensuring positive identification and work with leaders

to develop equipment and practices to prevent similar deaths.

It's all part of a huge job, accomplished by a small force. Each service maintains a liaison team at AFMAO to facilitate accurate record keeping and to help families at every step. When autopsies, embalming or cremation, and final prep are done, each person heading home is given a final semi-formal farewell.

What's most amazing is the sense of purpose and reward felt in every person serving at this unique facility. Every four to six months, half of the total workforce rotates out and is replaced by a new group.

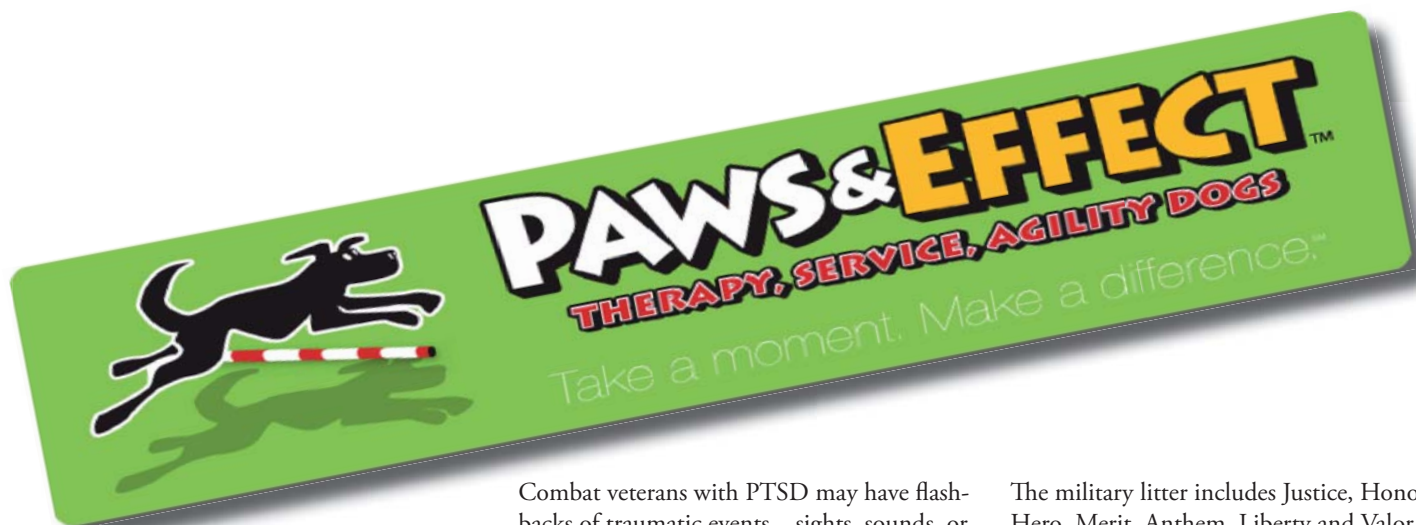
Many of the incoming Airmen are part of the 512th Mortuary Affairs Squadron (Air Force Reserve) based at Dover. A large number of them are on tour number two, three, or more. This duty makes you feel like you're part of something truly honorable and it fosters a desire to return and continue the endeavor and find ways to improve the process and experience for future Airmen.

It's also duty that would be even better if it wasn't necessary. As part of the video production, I added Taps as a closing tribute and the final note still gives me chills every time I hear it.

Man's best friend

by Maj. Amy Price

**Dogs assist Iowa Soldiers
with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder**



For a Soldier with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, a loud noise can be frightening. Sometimes, it's just a door slamming shut...sometimes, it's a sudden movement...sometimes, it's just the sights and sounds of everyday life...a life that combat has made him, or her, forget.

A life that, sometimes, they need a little help to remember.

Soldiers who return from Iraq and Afghanistan with wounds that no one else can see are especially challenging. These wounds may be diagnosed as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). According to the Mayo Clinic, PTSD is a type of anxiety disorder that's triggered by a traumatic event. PTSD can be developed when one experiences, or witnesses an event that causes intense fear, helplessness, or horror.

Many people involved in traumatic events have a brief period of difficulty adjusting and coping. But with time and healthy coping methods, such traumatic reactions usually get better. In some cases though, the symptoms can get worse, lasting for months, or even years. Sometimes the symptoms may completely disrupt the individual's life, as in PTSD.

Combat veterans with PTSD may have flashbacks of traumatic events – sights, sounds, or scents from war. They may feel emotionally numb and hopeless about the future, while experiencing anger, irritability and anxiety. Other common symptoms include trouble sleeping, memory problems and difficulty concentrating. In public places, a combat veteran with PTSD may be anxious in crowds and easily startled.

Today, there are specially-trained partners to assist these Soldiers.

Paws and Effect is a non-profit organization that raises and trains service dogs for placement with combat veterans. They focus on physical disabilities, as well as disabilities that may not be apparent to the naked eye. A litter of puppies whelped in August 2010 have their future mapped – they are being trained for placement with Soldiers in Spring 2012.

The military litter includes Justice, Honor, Hero, Merit, Anthem, Liberty and Valor, each of whom has integrated into the community. Three older dogs will have already been placed with their permanent owners.

These dogs possess unique and specialized skills. Their training prepares them to work in adverse conditions and unpredictable circumstances. The service dogs are partnered with combat veterans diagnosed with PTSD, helping identify sounds that aren't dangerous, thereby putting them at ease in the middle of crowds, or stopping a panic attack before it begins. This program honors and empowers Wounded Warriors, increasing their independence and making a significant difference in their lives.

These highly-trained dogs pick up dropped objects, open and close doors, open refrigerators, pull wheelchairs, prevent overcrowding in public, interrupt nightmares and flashbacks, remind them to take meds, warn of approaching strangers and reduce anxiety and stress, all the while providing unconditional love and comfort.

Just as valuable to the combat veteran in distress, it may be as simple as the dog placing his chin reassuringly on the Wounded Warrior's knee to stave off an oncoming panic attack.

Paws and Effect places puppies

***A service dog is not a pet.
A service dog is not a companion.
A service dog is a necessary means
for a disabled person to navigate
through an able-bodied world.
Just like a wheelchair. Just like a cane.
The disability may not be obvious.
Service dogs also help veterans
recovering from Post Traumatic Stress Disorder,
seizures, or other issues.***

with “foster families” who assist in raising and training the puppies until it is time for placement with their new owner, the combat veteran with PTSD. Among the volunteers assisting in the raising and training of these puppies are two members of the Iowa Army National Guard – Col. Greg Hapgood and Staff Sgt. Dianna Raymond.

Raymond is a full-time technician serving as the Medical Support NCO in the Health Service Section. When she learned about Paws and Effect at the TAG’s Professional Development, she realized she wanted to volunteer in raising one of these dogs for a Soldier. Raymond said, “I knew it was a great opportunity to assist with a good cause.”

Raymond is raising Fiyero, a black Labrador Retriever. She quickly fell in love with Fiyero, but has no qualms about giving him back in five to 10 months, when he is placed with his permanent owner.

She says his training is already evident. Raymond has a young nephew, Tom, with special needs. While playing outside, a van pulled up and Fiyero immediately placed himself between the van and Tom, to protect him. Through Fiyero’s training, another young, three-year-old nephew is able to easily walk Fiyero, who is not distracted by rabbits or other things.

Paws and Effect filmed a series of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) at Camp Dodge and in the Des Moines area in October. The PSAs, themed “We serve with honor,” describes the work of both the combat veterans and service dogs. These PSAs will be seen on TV channels throughout Iowa in the coming months.

The purpose of the PSAs is to raise the public’s awareness about service dogs and the tasks they perform. It will also let the public know a service dog owner has the full legal

right to bring their dog into any area of public accommodation, including restaurants, bars, grocery stores, and theaters.

Service dogs aren’t a luxury. They may be a necessity.

Paws & Effect is committed to placing these dogs at no cost to the combat veteran. If you’re interested in learning more about this program, please contact Nicole Shumate, at nicoleshumate@paws-effect.org.

**As a Service Member
with a dog can attest,
“Now that I’m back from the front ,
it’s good to know
my service dog’s got my back.”**



Cast members from the Paws & Effect Public Service Announcements pose for still shots during filming at Camp Dodge's Joint Maneuver Training Center late last year. From left to right, are Spc. Bailey Mingo, 294th Area Support Medical Company, with Jake, Sgt.

Joshua Gates, 294th ASMC, with Velo, and 2nd Lt. Brandon Cochran, 132nd Medical Group, Iowa Air National Guard, with Roggen. (Iowa National Guard photo by Maj. Amy Price).

Returning Home: Have you attended a Yellow Ribbon reintegration program, yet?

The Yellow Ribbon Reintegration Program is designed to provide deployment cycle support for National Guard and Reserve members and their families. The program was signed into law as part of the National Defense Authorization Act of 2008, and participation is mandatory for Service Members.

The Yellow Ribbon Program brings military and community resources and information under one roof through a series of events during the deployment cycle. Since National Guard and Reserve members are spread out geographically, it can be challenging to find and access support services.

In addition, since Guard and Reserve members are not always on an installation, they don't always receive the most current information about benefits and entitlements they have earned while activated. The Yellow Ribbon Program assists in filling that gap.

The Yellow Ribbon Program connects servicemembers and families to information, resources, and benefits primarily through a series of events held before deployment, during deployment (for Family Members), and after deployment to prepare, sustain, and reintegrate servicemembers and families.

Events are held in informal settings, and give servicemembers and family members the opportunity to interact with

each other and service providers.

This is meant to enhance knowledge and utilization of earned benefits and military and community resources, general personal and family readiness, communication and relationship skills, and resiliency for servicemembers and families.

The Yellow Ribbon Program is a joint service program and events are held throughout the country.

While events are generally hosted by a particular component or unit, events are open to servicemembers and family members from all components. This allows attendees to go to events that are most convenient for them, both in location and date.

Servicemembers should obtain command approval and coordination to attend events hosted by other units, and family members may register for events in any location.

Registration should be coordinated through the servicemember's Yellow Ribbon support specialists so they can arrange lodging and reimbursement for mileage and meals as needed.

Servicemembers must be in a paid status to attend Yellow Ribbon events, and two family members per servicemember are authorized funding for events. Child care and youth programming are available at some of these events.

Information about the Yellow Ribbon Program can be found on the Joint Services Support website, www.jointservicesupport.org. There, you can find everything from the program's mission and history, to event dates and locations, to contact information for your state's Yellow Ribbon event coordinators and program managers.

You do not need to establish a profile on the JSS portal in order to access this information or register for events. However, if you do establish an account, you will have access to richer content and more features for the Yellow Ribbon Program and the other support programs housed on the JSS portal.

These programs include the National Guard Family Programs, Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, and the Transition Assistance and Warrior Support programs.





Social media brings Airmen closer to home for the holidays

by Staff Sgt. Rich Murphy
185th Air Refueling Wing

At 1 a. m., Lori Hill is awakened by a strange sound coming from another room. She slowly stumbles into the room and turns on her computer monitor. On the screen, her husband, Master Sgt. Marshall Hill, a boom operator with the 185th Air Refueling Wing, greets her with a cheery, “Good Morning!”

The old fashioned “morale calls,” where deployed airmen would wait in line for a 15-minute phone call home, are quickly being replaced by web-cam chatting, status updates, and image sharing.

In February 2010, the United States Air Force issued a memorandum announcing that social media sites such as Skype, Facebook, Twitter, Flickr, and YouTube would no longer be banned from military computers. This memo allows deployed soldiers to maintain daily contact with family and friends, using new media which is becoming increasingly more important during the holiday season.

"My husband and I talk to each other over Skype just about every other day. Just being able to see his face makes a big difference," said Lori. Lori and Marshall use the social media program "Skype," which allows users to chat via web cam across the internet for free.

Lori added, "In previous deployments, Marshall might call once a week. Now we can chat whenever he has some time off."

The Air Force lifted the ban on social media due to the growth of sites such as Facebook and Twitter. According to Gen. C. Robert Kehler, Air Force Space Commander, "The Air Force views the use of social media sites as a positive way to communicate and conduct business. Providing more open access will allow the Air Force to communicate more effectively to all Air Force personnel, their families, and external audiences."

One of the biggest names in social media, Facebook, has become an important tool for deployed units communicating with family and friends. Lori said, "Marshall constantly updates us on what he is doing over there. It is comforting to see his updates."

The military has also been using social media to communicate with family and friends. The 185th ARW and the 185th Airman and Fam-

ily Program both use Facebook pages to post images, links to stories, and display video clips to communicate with the public.

Air Force 2nd Lt. Jeremy McClure, the 185th ARW Public Affairs Officer, is responsible for updating the wing's official Facebook page. "Facebook is a great channel to communicate with our airmen. It also gives us a place to informally interact and build relationships with the community," he said

The 734th Agribusiness Development Team (ADT), a unit made up of Iowa Army and Air Force Guard members, has been deployed to Afghanistan for several months and uses Facebook to keep family and friends updated.

Air Force Capt. Peter Shinn, the 734th ADT Public Affairs Officer, posts daily photos and updates. Shinn said, "We are doing a lot of good work over here and we want to let our friends and family know what's happening. Facebook allows us to stay in touch with our people and keep them informed."

While the use of social media has certainly benefited those on deployments, it is not without its share of problems.

Air Force personnel must be careful about what they disclose. Sites such as foursquare.com are mobile programs that indicate where

someone is currently located. Such information could provide enemies with valuable data.

Additionally, Airmen are cautioned to consider operational security when posting information, pictures, and status updates. Social media activity, both on and off duty, is subject to the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

The minute-by-minute updates provided by sites such as Facebook and Twitter can also violate the privacy rights of combat casualties. The military holds fast to its tradition of contacting next of kin before releasing information about those injured or killed in combat. Commanders may cut off access to social media during emergencies, or in the case of fatalities, so that next-of-kin can be properly informed.

Despite the risks social media poses to military operations, the benefits are certainly being felt by Soldiers, Airmen and their families.

"Marshall uses common sense and is careful not to disclose too much about what is happening over there," said Lori. "Sites like Facebook and Skype are just a blessing. It is still hard to deal with him being gone, but these sites make it a little bit easier."

Lori Hill and grandson Landon Hill, Sioux City, Iowa, (left) talk with Master Sgt. Marshall Hill of the 185th Air Refueling Wing over Skype. In February 2010, the Air Force lifted the ban on social media sites such as Facebook and Skype, giving airmen another way to communicate with family and friends during deployments. A group of children (from left) Dominic, Payton, Colby, and Noah East, children of Tech. Sgt. Ryan East, pose for a picture with Santa at the Santa House. From left. Airmen of the 185th Air Refueling Wing, volunteered at the Santa House on Dec. 5, 2010, in Sioux City, Iowa. (Iowa National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Oscar M. Sanchez)



Enlisting the faithful



Iowa turns to congregations for aid to families, Soldiers returning from duty

Faced with a shortage of military chaplains, the Iowa National Guard is enlisting congregations from across the state to form a loose-knit support network for Soldiers, Airmen and their families, including those rejoining their communities after tours of duty.

Military Family Support Ministry includes congregations spanning a range of denominations. The network is a community-level response to what many regard as insufficient domestic support for Soldiers serving in Afghanistan and Iraq. Reservists typically do not have the same resources active duty personnel have at their disposal.

“It’s particularly important that Soldiers who return home feel a part of their community rather than apart from it,” said Robert

Ursano, an expert in post-traumatic stress disorder at the Uniformed Services University of Health Sciences in Bethesda. “Faith is very much a part of every unit ... and of the reintegration programs, because faith communities provide important recognition of the needs of an individual.”

Approximately 27 congregations have signed up. There are 592 communities in Iowa affected by the 2-34th BCT deployment alone. The goal is to have at least one congregation available for assistance in all 2,365 communities in Iowa.

Iowa Guard chaplain assistant, Master Sgt. Jason Crandall, said the network was assembled in part because of a shortage of chaplains in the state. Six of the 11 Army National Guard chaplains are in Afghanistan, and two of the five Air National Guard Chaplains are deployed. The Reserve has only about half of its chaplain positions filled because members of the clergy are hesitant to join the Guard, Crandall said.

“Participating institutions agree to provide free help. Most of the Soldiers referred through the program are unaffiliated with a religious group. The only basis for referral is proximity to the congregation,” he said.

“Nothing’s expected, except to welcome Soldiers and their families,” said Crandall.

The needs extend beyond those of separated Guard families and returning Soldiers. The Navy, Marine Corps and Army Reserve all have Soldiers and families living across Iowa. These warriors and their families need support too.

When Capt. Gavin Sandvig, left for his deployment, his wife Shannon, was forced to take on dual roles as a parent, which included tending to repairs at their Altoona home. Many spouses never fill the handyman role of the household. A deployment often forces them into unfamiliar circumstances.

Shannon was referred by the chaplain to St. Luke’s Episcopal Church in Des Moines,

which arranged for a member to look at her broken clothes dryer. The church helped repair the dryer for free.

Churches across the region are finding ways to help. In Glidden, Pleasant Ridge Community Church hosted a program for parents whose spouses are overseas. Congregation members provided the location, some meals and fellowship.

It’s not about proselytizing. It’s about reaching out to one another and helping them out.

Response from Soldiers has been slow, but Crandall and religious leaders hope it will pick up as word spreads and families warm to the idea of seeking assistance from their community.

Other states have similar programs, Crandall said. The National Guard Bureau heard about the pilot program the Maryland National Guard has and has offered it to other states as a model. Officials in Idaho, Montana and Minnesota have also contacted Maryland for information, he added.

The military provides counseling for reservists through Military OneSource and, in more extreme cases, through the Department of Veterans Affairs. But there’s little officials can offer to a Soldier who doesn’t feel accepted or valued by neighbors, a need which programs such as Military Family Support Ministry are trying to fill.

Support for the war is not a prerequisite for inclusion in the program. Branches of the pacifist Church of the Brethren, have asked to join. They wanted to make it clear they were not endorsing war and their participation is not a political statement. Rather, it’s a matter of caring about people from the community.

Crandall said no money was exchanged between the government and the congregations, and the state judge advocate general had to sign off on the program between the Guard and the churches.

Many times congregations want to help Soldiers and their families, but don’t know how to connect their desire to help with the needs that are out there. This program is offered as a conduit to connect those congregations with military families in need, he said.

Briefs

133rd TS hosts BC3-E testing

The Battlespace Command and Control Center – Expeditionary (BC3-E) is the third generation Command and Control (C2) platform that supports the United States Air Forces Central Command (USAFCENT) in its support of air operations in Iraq, Afghanistan and the Arabian Gulf region.

BC3-E presents the Air Force with a robust C2 capability to conduct air surveillance, aircraft control and airspace management. It conducts tactical execution of the air battle for the Combined Forces Air Component Commander.

Recently, the 133rd Test Squadron of Fort Dodge, Iowa hosted BC3-E system pre-deployment testing. The Airmen of the 133rd provided the equipment and expertise essential to the system's evaluation and timely delivery.

FAS offers valuable resources

Having trouble finding information on TRICARE benefits, or Power of Attorney? Contact your regional Family Assistance Specialist (FAS). Located in seven regions across Iowa, including Iowa City, Davenport, Waterloo, Ft. Dodge, Sioux City, Council Bluffs and Des Moines, they work with all Service branches.

The FASs are a resource of information regarding TRICARE, dental insurance, VA assistance, pay, American Red Cross, Employer Support of Guard and Reserve, military ID cards, childcare, legal and financial assistance, and much more. They are the go-to people for resources and referrals.

For more information, contact your local FAS at 515-252-4758 or email NGIA.FAC@ng.army.mil.

'Gray area retirees' now covered

Per the National Defense Authorization Act of 2010, Reserve and National Guard retirees are now eligible to purchase Tricare Standard coverage before age 60. These retired individuals who have not yet reached age 60 are called "gray area retirees." The Tricare Reserve Retired (TRR) program will now provide temporary benefits to these individuals who pay the premium rates of \$408.01 for a single person and \$1020.05 for family coverage, beginning in 2011.

The premiums are in addition to the same deductible and copayment rates provided under Tricare Standard, which is a \$150 deductible for single-person coverage or

\$300 for family coverage and the 25 percent copayment for doctor's and emergency room visits. Premium rates will be adjusted annually by the Tricare Management Agency's estimated cost of coverage for those enrolled in the preceding years. Under Tricare Reserve Select, those enrolled pay only 28 percent of their coverage costs.

Transition to GoArmyEd begins

Effective June 2011, United States Army National Guard (ARNG) Soldiers will begin the transition to GoArmyEd, the Army's enterprise education system serving both components as a virtual gateway to education—anytime, anywhere.

GoArmyEd supports Active Duty and Army Reservists as a one-stop Web site that allows Soldiers, Army Education Counselors, and schools to conduct business for all education needs in a seamless Soldier-centric environment. June's transition realizes the Army's vision for a system serving all Army components.

GoArmyEd will give 24/7 online access to register for classes, access to a counselor, school, or the GoArmyEd Helpdesk, and many self-service features putting Soldiers in the driver's seat as they plan for and pursue their education. GoArmyEd will be sending

out invitations to set-up an account in June 2011.

Veteran Affairs Services warning

An organization called Veterans Affairs Services (VAS) is providing benefit and general information on VA and gathering personal information on veterans. This organization is not affiliated with VA in any way

Websites with the name "vaservices" immediately after the "www" ARE NOT part of the Department of Veterans Affairs, the US Government agency. Keep in mind the real VA website only ends in .gov.

Also, be aware the Department of Veterans Affairs does not randomly call veterans, nor does it ask for information which it does not already have--like Social Security Numbers. The VA never conducts official business nor asks for personal information by email.

If you have examples of VAS acts that violate chapter 59 of Title 38 United States Code, such as VAS employees assisting veterans in the preparation and presentation of benefit claims, please pass any additional information to Michael G. Daugherty, Staff Attorney, at Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of General Counsel (022G2), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420.



Col. Kevin "Hook" Heer takes over from Brig. Gen. Derek Hill, as the Iowa Air National Guard Chief of Staff. Hill was recently promoted and named as the Assistant Adjutant General for Strategic Development at Joint Forces Headquarters at Camp Dodge, and appointed Homeland

Security Advisor to the Governor and head of Iowa Homeland Security and Emergency Management. Heer, an experienced combat fighter pilot, was most recently the commander of the 132nd Fighter Wing Operations Group. (Iowa National Guard photo by Master Sgt. Mike Battien)

ARNG-Federal Tuition Assistance

Effective June 2011, U.S. Army National Guard (ARNG) Soldiers begin the transition from iMARC to GoArmyEd, the Army's Virtual Gateway to Education -- Anytime, Anywhere. GoArmyEd currently supports the Active Duty and Army Reserves as a one-stop site that allows Soldiers, Army Education Counselors and schools to conduct business in a seamless Soldier-centric environment.

National Guard Soldiers will be able to register for college courses, or on-duty classes and review their student records 24/7. GoArmyEd links directly with schools to allow the Army to pay upfront, ensuring schools are paid in a timely manner. GoArmyEd enforces Army tuition assistance (TA) policy throughout the portal, ensuring registered classes are found on the Soldier's degree plan, no duplicate courses are taken, and the Soldier maintains a GPA standard required to be eligible for TA.

Post 9/11 GI Bill (Chap. 33)

This GI Bill allows Soldiers and Airmen to transfer of entitled benefit (TEB) to their spouse or dependents. The TEB needs to be done before retirement or ETS. Applications are being processed online at www.gibill.va.gov. To learn more, visit the VA website. To become eligible for CH 33, Soldiers/Airmen must have at least 90 aggregate days of Active Duty or serve 30 days continuous with a service connected disability. On the www.iowanationalguard.com web site, the education office has posted a CH 33 tab, under the Army Education tab, with a presentation to assist Iowa National Guard members in applying and transferring their CH 33 benefits.

MGIB-Select Reserve

Soldiers who want to receive CH1606, may contact their VA Certifying Official (VACO) at their college or university, the VACO will help process all VA benefits. Chapter 1606 has a rate of \$337 a month at a full-time rate. Soldiers must provide a copy of their Notice of Basic Eligibility (NOBE) and GI Bill kicker (if you have one) to the VACO. NOBE's can be found in your iPERMS Soldier file. If you are having difficulty locating this document, contact your unit for assistance.

The VACO will send the documents to a VA Regional office. It may take 10-12 weeks to

process the claim, so start the process early. If you need assistance locating your NOBE, contact your unit of assignment. Don't forget to do your end of month verification, 1-877-823-2378 or the W.A.V.E. program online.

NGEAP

The application process for the NGEAP is to establish an "I Have a Plan Iowa" account. On the www.iowanationalguard.com web site, there is a link and presentation on the Tuition Assistance tab under the Army Education tab. The Education Office will determine if Soldiers/Airmen are eligible for the assistance. There will be an email when you apply and a second email if you have been approved or denied. Print the approved email and take it to the financial aid office at the college or university. This is a first-come, first-served tuition assistance program.

REAP Chapter 1607

When applying for the REAP, for those that have deployed, submit your DD 214 and GI Bill Kicker (if you have one) to the VA Certifying Official (VACO) at your college or university. All documents can be found in your iPERMS Soldier file. Contact your unit for iPERMS issues.

Eligibility depends on how many months of deployment each Soldier has completed. Unlike CH 33, Soldiers cannot add multiple deployments to get a higher percentage of benefit. Don't forget to do your end of month verification by calling 1-877-823-2378 or the Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (W.A.V.E.) on the www.gibill.va.gov web site.

SLRP or ELRP

Soldiers who have Student Loan Repayment Program (SLRP) will receive a DD 2475 at their last known home of record. If you have moved, make sure your unit has the new address. The DD2475 will be sent three months prior to the Soldier's anniversary (contract start) date. This form is to be filled out by the Soldier or Power of Attorney (if Soldier is deployed).

On the DD 2475, section 3 is to be filled out completely. On the web site, click on Army Education, then the SLRP tab. The form is to be mailed or e-mailed to the education office for processing. With the DD 2475, provide master promissory notes (MPN) and NSLDS

loan notes. Soldiers can obtain the MPN and loan notes at www.studentloans.gov.

MGIB-Active Duty

Soldiers eligible for MGIB-Active Duty, Chapter 30, need to submit their DD 2366, DD 2366-1 (if available) to their VACO. Chapter 30 has a full-time rate of \$1,462/month. These forms can be found in your iPERMS Soldier file if you are bought into Chapter 30. You need to verify at the end of each month and the rates can be found on the www.gibill.va.gov web site, by calling 1-877-823-2378 or through the Web Automated Verification of Enrollment (W.A.V.E.).

Testing

Soldiers who need college testing college, or to raise their ASVAB scores and want to re-test can go to the web site, click on Army Education and then the testing tab. Please give plenty of time for your request. Exams, as well as results, may take three to four weeks for delivery. ASVAB retake scores are provided the same day of the exam.

Degree planning

If you need assistance with choosing a college or university, use the www.iowanationalguard.com web site, click on the Career Counseling tab. This will allow Soldiers to complete an online application and the Education Support Center will provide you with three degree plans, sent to your home of record.

Key dates to remember

June 4, 2011 – Schools with historical ARNG enrollments set-up in GoArmyEd; ARNG Soldiers begin setting up GoArmyEd accounts; after completing their set-ups, ARNG Soldiers will be restricted from requesting TA in GoArmyEd until Aug. 1, 2011.

Aug. 1, 2011 – ARNG Soldiers begin requesting TA in GoArmyEd for courses that start on or after Oct. 1, 2011. ARNG Soldiers will continue to use the current system to request courses that start prior to Oct. 1, 2011.

Oct. 1, 2011 – All ARNG Soldiers and Army education personnel use GoArmyEd to manage TA for courses on or after Oct. 1, 2011; schools using GoArmyEd receive TA requests, process grades, and submit invoices; the current system is used only for grade reporting, invoicing, and recoupment.

As part of Operation Grandstand, in preparation for the Operational Readiness Inspection which will begin in October, Sr. Airmen Benjamin Rogers (left) and Brandon Bond (right) review ammunition forms on the west ramp of the 132nd Fighter Wing in Des Moines, Iowa. Bond is delivering the missiles to Rogers, who will load them onto an F-16C aircraft. (Iowa National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Linda E. Kephart)



2010 marks busy year for Des Moines fighter unit

by Col. Drew 'Toto' DeHaes
Commander, 132nd Fighter Wing

The year 2010 was another busy one for the 132nd Fighter Wing. The year started with almost 380 Airmen on much needed reconstitution time. The 132nd Fighter Wing had deployed to 11 Aerospace Expeditionary Force (AEF) locations, including 268 Airmen who deployed to Joint Base Balad, Iraq, where they flew more than 1,200 hours of combat sorties.

Members of the Wing's aviation package deployed to Tyndall, Air Force Base, Fla. for Combat Archer, an exercise involving the build-up, loading, and firing of live missiles. In addition, wing Airmen also participated in a Weapon System Evaluation Program to test the missiles' performance in different shooting profiles.

Members of the Medical Group deployed to Alpena, Mich. for expeditionary medical training. This involved not only training needed skills for an AEF environment, but on skills needed for their Homeland Security mission, such as the set-up, operation, and tear down of a field hospital.

Clearly, one of the biggest contributing factors to the break-neck pace of 2010 was construction. The 132nd Civil Engineering Squadron finalized, executed, and planned a near-record number of construction projects.

In review, the \$2.7 million remodel of the Engine Shop was finalized and enhanced this critical operation by adding much-needed offices and classrooms. On-going projects such as the \$3.6 million expansion of the Distributed Training Operations Center (DTOC) will provide more event control centers, ultimately enhancing the capability of the DTOC to accomplish more missions and and more robust missions for active duty, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard units.

Other major, on-going projects included the new \$6 million Communications building. This project, to include paving a new parking lot over the former building 107 (Finance building), consolidated several Communications Flight functions ultimately posturing the 132nd Fighter Wing for new missions in the quickly-evolving new frontier of warfare, cyberspace.

On the cutting edge of mission training capability, the \$280,000 expansion of the Mission Training Center (MTC) was in the contacting and design phase this past year. This

project, involving four wrap-around simulators, will give Combat Air Force F-16 pilots realistic training.

The MTC, when it becomes operational in spring 2011, will be a regional training center, one of only three in the Guard.

Of course, the main focus of the 2010 was preparing for the October Phase I Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI); the Wing's readiness report card. A Phase I ORI, also called Initial Response, is an evaluation of the unit's capability to transition from peacetime readiness to a wartime posture. To accomplish this, the Wing conducted numerous mini-exercises, table-top deployment exercises, and aircraft generation exercises. This was in addition to two full-scale Operational Readiness Exercises.

With The Phase 1 Operational Readiness Inspection (ORI) now in our rearview mirror, the 132nd earned an overall grade of "Satisfactory." While we fell short of our goal of "Excellent," the good news (and the bottom line) is the 132nd Fighter Wing clearly exceeds ACC standards. 42 percent, or 15 of the 36 graded areas, were rated "Outstanding," and 22 percent of the graded areas were rated "Excellent."

The year 2010 will be remembered as a year in which the Wing maintained its high mission readiness posture through rigorous training, maintained its relevance as a key element in the Air Force's force structure through new and remodeled facilities, and maintained its reputation of excellence through its performance in the ORI.

STATE	POPULATION	UNION	UNION	UNION	CASUALTIES	CASUALTIES
	in 1860	# SERVING	% SERVING	CASUALTIES	% SERVING	as % OF POP.
IOWA	674,878	76,242	11.3%	13,001	17.05%	1.93%
KANSAS	107,017	20,149	18.8%	2,630	13.05%	2.46%
MAINE	628,274	70,107	11.2%	9,398	13.41%	1.50%
MICHIGAN	742,941	87,364	11.8%	14,753	16.89%	1.99%
MINNESOTA	169,654	24,020	14.2%	2,584	10.76%	1.52%
ILLINOIS	1,711,919	259,092	15.1%	34,834	13.44%	2.03%
INDIANA	1,350,138	196,363	14.5%	26,672	13.58%	1.98%
WISCONSIN	776,864	91,194	11.7%	12,301	13.49%	1.58%
PENNSYLVANIA	2,359,757	337,936	14.3%	33,183	9.82%	1.41%
NEW YORK	3,880,595	448,850	11.6%	46,534	10.37%	1.20%
OHIO	2,339,481	313,180	13.4%	35,475	11.33%	1.52%
DELAWARE	112,216	11,236	10.0%	882	7.85%	0.79%
KENTUCKY	1,155,651	51,743	4.5%	10,774	20.82%	0.93%
MISSOURI	1,181,992	100,616	8.5%	13,885	13.80%	1.17%
N HAMPSHIRE	326,073	32,930	10.1%	4,882	14.83%	1.50%
NEW JERSEY	672,035	67,500	10.0%	5,754	8.52%	0.86%
CONNECTICUT	460,131	51,937	11.3%	5,354	10.31%	1.16%
MARYLAND	687,049	33,995	4.9%	2,982	8.77%	0.43%
MASSACHUSETTS	1,231,034	146,730	11.9%	13,942	9.50%	1.13%
CALIFORNIA	327,263	15,725	4.8%	573	3.64%	0.18%
VERMONT	315,078	33,288	10.6%	5,224	15.69%	1.66%
RHODE ISLAND	174,601	23,236	13.3%	1,321	5.69%	0.76%
OREGON	52,288	1,810	3.5%	45	2.49%	0.09%
NEBRASKA	28,778	3,157	11.0%	239	7.57%	0.83%

(includes Black soldiers serving the Union)

by: Michael J. Musel, Historian, Iowa Gold Star Military Museum, Camp Dodge, Prepared April 17, 2009

Sources: The Civil War Book of Lists. Cambridge (MA): Da Capo Press, 1994.

Roster & Record of Iowa Soldiers. Vols. I - V. Des Moines: Gen Assembly, 1908 - 1911.



The Hawkeye State's record in the Civil War: Legend or fact?

By: Lt. Col. (Ret) Michael J. Musel

Conventional wisdom among Iowa residents recognizes how our state stands in the forefront of the Union in the numbers of military-aged men sent to fight in the Civil War. This old myth notes more than 50 percent of Iowa's military-aged men served in the Civil War – a higher percentage than any other state in the Union.

However, a close statistical study about the men who served in the Civil War suggests a different answer. Data from a book titled "Civil War Book of Lists," is a compilation providing a detailed source of information for comparing Iowa's role in the Civil War with other Union states.

So what defines military-aged men? It is "the body of men between 18 and 45 years of age that are called to fight and is comparable across the Union States. As no state in the table lists any number of men near 50 percent as serving the Union, the data compares the states equally. The table lists the number of Union soldiers serving and the percentage of those serving, derived from each state's population

While Iowa doesn't meet the standard for first place in the number of military-aged men provided to the Union, Iowa provided 11.3 percent of its population to serve. A review of the table shows Iowa gained a well-deserved reputation for being in the thick of the fighting.

The "Casualties" column offers a percentage of "Serving" showing Iowa ranks second, behind the border state of Kentucky in the

Of particular interest, note the data for Kentucky refers to "Union" soldiers and does not include Kentucky soldiers that fought on the Confederate side.

Consequently, there doesn't appear to be a ready source of information that provides us with data on Iowa's (or any other state's) military-aged men as a percent of the population serving for comparison to enlistments from other states. Therefore we are forced to compare the population of a state, to the number of enlistments, to determine the percentage serving the Union.

It is inconceivable that Iowa, a growing agricultural state requiring labor to man her farms, could afford to send any more of her sons to battle than the more settled states east of the Mississippi River. This conclusion supports the premise of Iowa sending more of her military-aged men to fight than any other state. Thus Iowa's 76,242 soldiers serving in the Civil War, was a similar percentage of its military age men serving, compared to other states, but we are not Number One in that category.

Iowa provided 41 Regiments of Volunteer Infantry, four Batteries of Light Artillery, and nine Regiments of Volunteer Cavalry, whose term of service was three years. Five Regiments of Volunteer Infantry, known as One Hundred Day Organization recruited near the end of the conflict, were included in the role of Iowan's service during the Civil War.

Roster & Record of Iowa Soldiers. Vols. I – V. Des Moines: Gen Assembly, 1908 – 1911.



Readiness ...

Focusing on our military families ...

“Communication is one of the most important things we do. We must ensure open communication between our Soldiers, their families, the units and the FRGs.”



During the past several months, the Iowa National Guard has accomplished a tremendous amount of work, revolving around the deployment of approximately 3,400 Soldiers and Airman in support of contingency operations.

Our State Annual Training (AT) at Camp Ripley, Minn. was extremely successful. The main focus was to fulfill training requirements for our deploying units. This training was well put together – it was realistic, organized, and resourced – and provided our Soldiers an excellent opportunity to increase their proficiency on important tasks.

In addition to the preparation for actual mobilizations, we have had numerous operational readiness exercises, inspections and other day-to-day tasks and events, requiring long hours and attention to detail.

As we look to the future, we must apply that same effort and commitment into caring for our families and making sure they have what they need to accomplish their mission here on the home front.

Our Family Readiness Groups (FRGs) are critical in providing care for our families. In many cases, the FRG will be the first to know when one of them needs help. That being said, our units must stay

engaged and provide the support they need.

Communication is one of the most important things we do. We must ensure open communication between our Soldiers, their families, the units and the FRGs. Getting the right information to the right people at the right time helps everyone.

It takes strength to ask for help, but the help is there if needed. Our warriors have battle buddies, and wingmen, whose job is to take care of each other, to talk to each other, to know when something is wrong and get help if needed.

Our FRGs help families access the many programs available to provide that same type of help here at home. With this huge number of deployers, there will also be hundreds of children affected by the absence of their military member. We have to work on building resiliency in our children so they are better prepared to handle the trials of the separation.

We need to train our educators to understand what to expect from the children and what they can do to help. Free training is available for our schools and teachers through the Warrior & Family Services Branch.

At the National Guard Bureau's Sergeants Major conference this year,

the theme was “Ready and Resilient,” focusing on our families. They introduced an initiative to help our warriors and their families deal with the stress of everyday life.

The Comprehensive Soldier Fitness program is aimed at building strength and resiliency in five dimensions to include: physical, emotional, social, spiritual and family fitness.

The CSF program is designed to provide Family members with the thinking skills and coping strategies needed to take care of themselves and their Soldier. The program helps link them with resources and tools available in the military community that can build resilience. Please take some time and visit <http://www.army.mil/csf/> to learn more.

As I mentioned at the beginning, we have accomplished a tremendous amount of work in the past several months. The future promises to be just as challenging. I want to thank all of you for your hard work and efforts.

I want to especially thank our families for what they do. We know every time we put on our uniform, be it for drill, annual training, school or a deployment, they make sacrifices. We also know that without their support we couldn't do what we do.

Warrior Ready!

Chaplain's Corner

Chaplain (Col.) Jim Luder, Iowa State Chaplain

Has anyone asked, 'Just who do you think you are?'

I'm quite sure that at one time or another, all of us have been asked, "Just who do you think you are?"

Whether in anger or curiosity, it bears asking again, because as Christians, we can answer very strongly as to who we know we are.

There is a story about the conversation between a psychiatrist and a man who was being discharged from a mental hospital following years of analysis and counseling. "Why do I have to leave?" asked the patient. "Because, you're cured," said the doctor. "Some cure!" the man snorted, "When I first came here, I was Napoleon Bonaparte. Now I'm nobody."

It works the opposite with the Christian life. When you come to Jesus, you're nobody and then he gives you a new life. In First Corinthians, Christians are referred to as, "the temple of God."

This is something brand new for New Testament believers, our being the temple of Christ. Prior to the coming of Christ, God's presence was in the tabernacle, or temple. But now we are the dwelling place of God's presence. No one has to sacrifice or worship for me! I am a place of worship.

Whether in Church, in the car, in the truck, in the workshop, or sitting in the bathroom – all becomes a place of worship!

But in First Peter, we are also told we are Children of God and because of that we are heirs of God.

If we are children of God, it means he is our father, he is our dad. "Dad" has a ring of familiarity about it. Children, when they are young, might call their father "Daddy." There is just something special about Dad. Dad is fun, Dad loves me.

If I am hurt and crying, I can run to Dad. If I have a problem, I can go to Dad, and He will help me. That's the kind of relationship we can have with God!

Remember, if we are heirs then we own the same thing as the father. We own heaven. We own eternity.

But not only that, we are also referred to as the bride of Christ in Revelations.

I've had the opportunity to be about everything there is in a wedding. I was a groom once, I've been an usher a groomsman a number of times. I was the gift carrier once, I gave the bride away once (not my own daughter, but my niece), I was the scripture reader at a Catholic wedding, and I've been the minister more times than I'd like to remember.

But I've never been the bride. However, according to Revelations, I'll get that chance someday. And not only that, I'll be a beautiful bride.

So back to our original question, "Just who do you think you are?"

Well, we've seen that if you know Jesus, then you're the temple of God. You're also a child of God and therefore an heir and you are the beautiful bride of Christ.

You know, if you think about, when you come to know the Lord, you're really someone.

