



# MOUNTAINEER DEFENDER

Magazine of the West Virginia National Guard

FALL 2006

Cover story

Soldiers &  
Airmen  
Head to  
Southwest  
Border!

Also inside:

- Deployment updates
- ANG member recognized by NAACP
- MP named State Police Trooper of the year
- Bird Flu update
- GRAP expands for Air and Army





Magazine of the  
West Virginia National Guard  
Fall 2006



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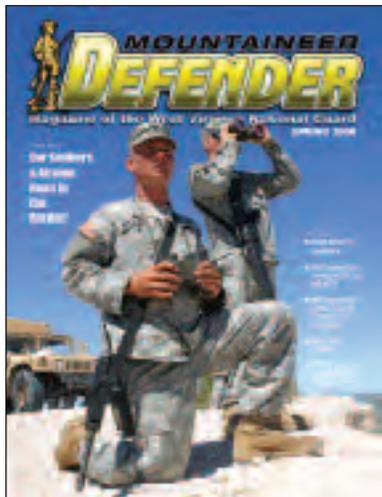
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*On the cover:*

Sgt. Randy DeBerry and Spc. John Clark scan the U.S.-Mexico border for illegal border crossings near Santa Teresa, N.M. The Soldiers are part of Task Force Mountaineer providing border security for Operation Jump Start. Read more about West Virginia's contributions to Jump Start on Page 4.

Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell  
153d Public Affairs Detachment



**Adjutant General**

Maj. Gen. Allen E. Tackett

**State Command Sergeant Major**

Command Sgt. Maj.  
Lawrence R. Vance

**State Command Chief Master Sergeant**

Command Chief Master Sgt.  
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## The Adjutant General

Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work. Those are the words of Vince Lombardi, former football coach of the three-time Super Bowl champion Green Bay Packers.

Lombardi's words, like those of many visionaries, apply outside the context in which they were first used. He used those words to motivate his football team. I choose those words to recognize each of you for the monumental effort you give toward helping the West Virginia National Guard meet strength goals.

Our Soldiers and Airmen are the embodiment of Lombardi's spirit. Individual commitment to a group effort, particularly in the strength management area, is the reason the West Virginia National Guard is so successful. We just finished another fiscal year, and I'm happy to report that we once again exceeded NGB and state strength goals.

Consider our success in 2006...The Army Guard is 1st in the nation (116 percent) in authorized versus assigned strength, 2nd in officer accessions, 2nd in reenlistment rate, 3rd in warrant officer accessions, and 4th in retention. Army Guard success is



Maj. Gen. Allen E. Tackett

directly attributable to Soldiers like Sgt. 1st Class Rob Jewell, who led Army Guard recruiters with 49 accessions.

The Air Guard is 4th in the nation, according to HQ ANG statistics, and working hard to fill more than 200 additional positions the state was given for the C-5 conversion. Tech Sgt. Bob Hall, a 167th recruiter, enlisted 88 applicants this year, a whopping 7.3 per month. This is the kind of individual commitment it takes to making our Guard successful.

But there's more work to be done. Both the Army and Air Guard still have vacancies, and we are expecting additional force structure based on our ability to recruit and retain quality Soldiers and Airmen. With new force structure comes great opportunities for additional full-time positions and increases in our M-day rank structure.

Success comes from hard work, dedication, and a desire to be the best. There's no better statement to summarize our philosophy over the past year. I applaud your efforts in 2006 and ask you to continue that same level of energy as we strive toward the Army Guard goal of 4,500 in 2007. I believe in each and every one of you. I know you can do it.

## State Command Chief Master Sergeant



Command Chief  
Master Sgt. Bowe

In my last article I commented on the Air Force core values. Over my next three articles I plan to go more in-depth with each value as it is viewed by the Air Force. First, Integrity is the ability to hold together and properly regulate all the elements of a personality. A person with integrity possesses the traits of courage, honesty, responsibility, accountability, justice, openness, self-respect and humility.

Why is integrity important? It builds trust and helps our co-workers, subordinates and supervisors trust what we say and do. Integrity ensures that the public will trust the decisions the military makes in defending our nation. Integrity is demonstrated in

the daily performance of our duties through accurate reporting, being truthful about bad news, admitting mistakes and taking responsibility for decisions and actions.

What prevents enlisted members from living by core values? Some of the reasons include a belief that small violations of standards have insignificant effects on others and the mission; lack of consideration for the secondary effects of their actions or inactions; and a lack of commitment to the oath they took. I encourage you to continue to be honest, unselfish and truthful in all that you do, and your career will continue to flourish.

## State Command Sergeant Major

"All U.S. military doctrine is based on the ingenuity of the individual working on his own initiative as a member of a team and using the most modern weapons and equipment which we can provide him." – *General Manton S. Eddy, Commanding General, XII Corps, World War II.* This quote rings true in everything the WVNG is trying to accomplish.

Soldiers teamed up with R&R under GRAP to reach the recruiting goal of 4,250 for this year. Also, our retention rate is fourth in the nation.

Team effort isn't only evident in R&R efforts. The WVARNG answered the nation's call, mobilizing over 3,700 Soldiers. The Mobilization Teams, formed to process Soldiers, worked endlessly to make every Soldier deployable.

Another outstanding team effort is the Family Readiness Group



Command Sgt. Maj. Vance

program. Recently, over 1,000 members were present at the National Guard Family Program Volunteer Workshop. Efforts were directed at taking care of Soldiers' and Airmen's families.

Pride in equipment and facilities indicates another outstanding team effort. The State Leadership Team is committed to having the most modern and innovative facilities.

The team effort starts at home. Spouses and loved ones have sacrificed many things to support the WVNG. Employers and community leaders are also an important part of our team. When people ask, "How does the WVNG do it," tell them it's all in the team effort. Because of such team efforts the WVNG is gaining force structure and will continue to have a bright future for members and families.

# West Virginia

# GETS A JUMP START

## on Border Security

Story and photos by Maj. Todd Harrell  
153d Public Affairs Detachment

Spc. Barry Moore and Border Patrol Agent Gabriel Gonzalez, Jr. scan the U.S.-Mexico border from inside an infrared surveillance truck commonly referred to as "Fred."

SANTA TERESA, N.M. – Sgt. Jessica Homeres, whose mother emigrated from the Phillipines in 1973, initially saw little problem with people illegally crossing the U.S.-Mexico border. "Who are we to prevent them from having a better life?" she said.

But Homeres' outlook quickly changed after the West Virginia National Guard sent her to New Mexico to help the U.S. Customs & Border Patrol stem the tide of illegal crossings from Mexico into the U.S.

"Being down there has really opened my eyes to what is happening," Homeres said.

### President sends troops to border

With nearly 2,000 miles of U.S.-Mexico border to secure, it is difficult for Border Patrol agents to prevent people from crossing the border unlawfully.

In May, President Bush authorized Operation Jump Start, an initiative to send up to 6,000 National Guard Soldiers from across the country to Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California to augment the Border Patrol.

Homeres is one of about 100 West Virginia Soldiers and Airmen deployed, as part of Task Force Mountaineer, to Santa Teresa, N.M., where New Mexico, Texas and Mexico converge. Santa Teresa is believed to be a major thoroughfare for the trafficking of drugs and illegal aliens into the U.S.

Task Force Mountaineer members are on the front line, posting entry identification teams at critical locations along a 60-mile area of responsibility and serving as liaison between the Border Patrol and National Guard.

Working with the Border Patrol, Soldiers witness firsthand the challenges Border Patrol agents face.

"Once you get down here and see who and what is coming across, you realize how short the Border Patrol is on manpower. It tells you how much you need to be here," said Staff Sgt. Philip Smith, a mechanic with the 1257th Transportation Company.

For Pfc. Christopher Vandergrift, a supply specialist with the 115th Engineer Company, the decision was easy.

"I wanted to come down here and help make a difference. I see everyone else going on deployments. I thought I might take a hand in it."

According to Jose Cruz, assistant border patrol agent in charge at Santa Teresa, the agency appreciates the Guard's assistance. "The West Virginia National Guard has given us a shot in the arm to provide better security of the border and gain operational control of the area," Cruz said. "They have become an integral part of our strategy. The success is immeasurable."



Using infrared surveillance, illegal immigrants are closely monitored as they cross the border.



Above: Pfc. James Patterson (left) and Spc. Thomas Mulcahy monitor the border from Entry Identification Point Noria.

### The Guard mission

Monument Three, often referred to as “Mont 3,” is the busiest of the entry identification points manned by West Virginia Soldiers. The small hilltop site overlooks Juarez, Mexico; Sunland, New Mexico and El Paso, Texas. A simple fence, posts straightened by strands of barbed wire, is all that separates the countries.

Challenges at Mont 3 are evident. In one recent evening, 51 illegal entries were thwarted by Guard members and the Border Patrol. It’s a hi-tech game of cat-and-mouse, 24 hours per day.

When electronic sensors are triggered, the Border Patrol notifies Soldiers of the breach. Using binoculars by day and an array of technologies at night, Guard members scan the border for signs of illegal entry. Once movement is detected, Guard members guide the Border Patrol to interdict.

Soldiers believe most illegal crossings are people simply looking for work or to reunite with family already in the U.S. Illegals generally pose no personal threat to the Soldiers.

Pfc. James Patterson, a 3664th Maintenance Company mechanic working one of the many EIT sites, tried hard to reconcile his feelings about the mission.

“I feel kinda sorry for the immigrants trying to make a better life for themselves, but there’s a right way and a wrong way.”

Often, the greatest danger is to illegal immigrants themselves. The southwest border provides a natural deterrent for



Top: A simple barbed wire fence separates the U.S. and Mexico near Monument 3. Middle: Sgt. Pierre Woodard scans the border for signs of illegal entry. Bottom: Agent Gabriel Gonzalez, Jr. and Spc. Sebastian Berry discuss a nearby landfill that is a common entry point for illegal immigrants.

many attempting to cross. Smugglers, known as “coyotes,” hired to guide people across the border often abandon their clients, leaving them victim to the harsh desert climate.

The presence of the Guard helps deter

such tragedies, Cruz said. “Indirectly, they’re saving lives.”

Cruz feels the relationship between the troops and the border agents is symbiotic. “It’s like getting more Border Patrol Agents assigned,” he said. “They are a part of us, we’re one. They are afforded the same respect as our own agents, and the comradery between the Border Patrol and National Guard is wonderful.”

Despite the apprehensions, many Soldiers believe that it’s not only illegal immigrants that justify the presence of the Guard.

“I see,” Homeres said, “there’s more of a drug trafficking issue.”

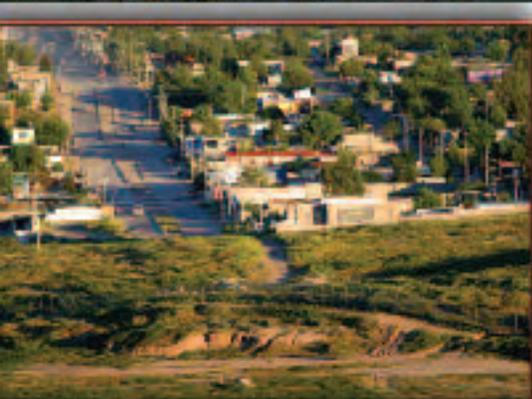
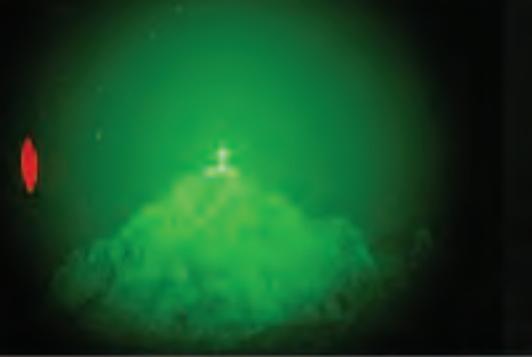
Border Patrol agents have long known about drugs flowing illegally into the U.S. and see the Guard as a force multiplier.

“The mere presence of the Guard intimidates them [drug traffickers]. Through our joint effort with the Guard, we have smugglers back on their heels, guessing and looking for other ways around us,” Cruz said.

Smugglers use a variety of tactics to test the border. Among the green scrub grass and sandy outcroppings directly across the border from Mont 3, sits a small guard tower used to observe U.S. surveillance teams.

Guard members are watched by those looking for entry into the United States and understand that each crossing attempt may be a test of reaction time, or perhaps a diversion for other attempts.

Soldiers know that they have prevented hundreds of illegal aliens and tons of drugs from reaching U.S. streets.



Top left: Mt. Cristo Rey is a popular crossing area for illegal aliens near Entry Identification Point Crow's Nest. Top middle and right: Staff Sgt. Robert Anderson scans the ridgeline at Crow's Nest in search of illegal entries. Far left: A Mexican resident named Miguel stands inside Mexico beside the border marker at Mont 3. Left middle: Sgt. Stephen Hixenbaugh (sitting) discusses work with Sgt. Pierre Woodward at Mont 3.

### Impact – Soldiers and mission

Cruz knows that it's hard to measure the Guard's impact on border security operations. What is evident, he said, is that there are less illegal crossings and drug activity than prior to the Guard's arrival.

Guard members also know they are making a difference, but with harvest season for drugs approaching, they're quick to point out that the mission is far from over.

While Soldiers feel good about stopping the flow of drugs and illegal aliens into the U.S., border patrol duty comes with added benefits. For many Soldiers, it gives them relevant experience to take back to their civilian careers.

"Border Patrol trainees spend three to four months training, but we're right here, working beside them,"

Homeres said. "I can put down that I have worked with the Border Patrol. They'll see that I have more experience as opposed to a regular college student."

A Guard medic from the 1092nd Engineer Battalion also sees leadership opportunities in the Jump Start deployment. Staff Sgt. Teresa Miller is encouraged by training she believes is relevant to the Soldiers' wartime mission.

"It [deployment] gives them a chance to lead and be responsible, an opportunity to work that provides challenges, a chance to grow," Miller said. According to Miller, NCO's have the opportunity to work at least one rank and position higher than normal.

Homeres agreed. "I'll have a better heads up on how to be a team leader. This experience also prepares me to deal with Soldier care issues," she said.

Cruz reinforced the benefits of the collaboration. He said that Guard member skill sets transfer very well to the border patrol mission, and work on the border may help Guard members with their wartime mission.

Spc. Thomas Mulcahy, a cavalry scout with 1/150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, concurred.

"I look at what I've seen in Iraq and pray it never comes here. I'm putting the skills I've been taught to use, but there's still more to learn."

That's why the National Guard is relevant to the border patrol mission.

Mulcahy brings

Iraqi Freedom deployment experience to the mission. Homeres, a college student, brings classroom knowledge and an understanding of the immigrant's viewpoint to the border security debate. Other Soldiers protecting the border bring local law enforcement experience to the mission.

Lt. Gen. H. Stephen Blum, chief of National Guard Bureau, says often that protecting the homeland is the National Guard's top priority. West Virginia Soldiers on the border are doing that despite the challenges associated with the mission.

A Soldier standing point overlooking Monument 3 summed up the Guard's mission. "We've made our presence known, and we're going to stand firm."

*"...as a 22 year veteran of the Border Patrol, I have come to gain a great level of respect for the Command Staff and the Guardsmen and women sent here to help us out. When they first arrived here, I saw them as Guardsmen. I now see them as our partners. Their deep commitment to the mission is evident in the amount of personal suffering they are willing to endure to accomplish the mission. Their dedication is admirable and embodies the spirit of the true patriot."*

APAIC Jose G. Cruz  
US Border Patrol

Left: A close up view shows the border between the U.S. and Mexico. The fence crosses over gaping holes left by heavy rain and flooding. This remains a popular area for illegal crossings near Monument 3. Below: A wide angle image reveals one of two major areas covered by Soldiers at Monument 3.

# Air Guard Unit Jump Starts Medical Care

By Sgt. Jim Greenhill  
National Guard Bureau

PLAYAS, N.M. – A former medical clinic is rising like a phoenix after years of neglect in this abandoned New Mexico borderland town as a group of West Virginia Air Guard members establish medical services for personnel serving in Operation Jump Start.

Until 1999, Playas housed employees of the Phelps Dodge Hidalgo copper smelter in remote, sparsely populated southwest New Mexico within sight of Mexico.

The smelter closed, leaving Playas nearly abandoned. The Department of Homeland Security paid about \$5 million for the 1,840-acre town in 2003, according to media reports, and it is now being used as a training center by the New Mexico Institute of Mining and Technology. It is the New Mexico Tech Playas Training Center.

It is also close to National Guard Soldiers and Airmen participating in Operation Jump Start, the National Guard's support to Customs and Border Patrol to secure the U.S. border with Mexico.

Seven West Virginia Air Guard medical personnel are renovating the town's former medical clinic for people who face medical risks in the harsh desert climate.

"Our mission is to deliver general medical care in an innovative manner in an isolated area," said Capt. Anita Fouch, a nurse practitioner with the West Virginia Air Guard's 130th Airlift Wing.

Jump Start troops are susceptible to such risks as dehydration, sunburn, insect bites and stings, snake bites and twisted ankles, medical team members said.

"We were the first to respond to the request by the governor of New Mexico to the governor of West Virginia," said Col. David Porter, a flight surgeon and the commander of West Virginia's 167th Medical Group.

Porter's team was told on July 8, a Saturday, to prepare to deploy. "By Tuesday we were all ready," he said. "We've been very proud to be able to be here and to serve the Citizen-Soldiers who are out there pounding the desert.

"There's usually a core in every unit that steps up, and these are the ones," Porter said.

He has deployed five times since the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks. He has served in Southwest Asia.

"This is desert," Porter observed. "It's just like Southwest Asia. You're going to see a lot of the same things – minus, of course, the war trauma that you see there, and even that's a possibility."

The first order of business was reestablishing Playas' medical clinic. The building needed to be cleaned. It needed telephone and computer lines, air conditioning and water. It needed to be stocked with medical supplies.

But the team members did not start from scratch. The examining tables, some beds and other equipment left behind when the town was abandoned are all serviceable, they determined.

Porter said Operation Jump Start is a good training opportunity. "There's nothing like hands-on to really learn the job," he said. The Airmen, who include four medical technicians and a medical administrator, would rather not see any Citizen-Soldiers professionally.

"Be physically in shape to begin with," Porter recommended to Citizen-Soldiers deploying for Jump Start. "Start your hydration before you leave home."

While medical team members say Citizen-Soldiers should be cautious while on duty, they also say many injuries happen during off-duty hours.

"Be cautious during your recreation," Porter said. "Avoid excessive abuse of alcohol because it leads to dehydration the next day during duty hours and lack of concentration. Alertness in the desert is critical. Cute spiders don't make good pets."

These West Virginia Air Guard members – initially deployed for a month – say they're proud to serve.

"It's good to be a part of something that directly impacts the lives of all Americans, not just the military," Fouch said. "We're very much needed. This is not something that just impacts the lives of the people on the border. This is a nationwide event."

*Editor's Note: Reuters News Service contributed background information to this report.*



Above: Medical members of the 130th and 167th Airlift Wings join with N.J. Army National Guard members in Playas, N.M.

Below: Staff Sgt. Sarah Morris of the 167th Medical Group prepares medical supplies at a makeshift medical clinic in Playas, N.M.

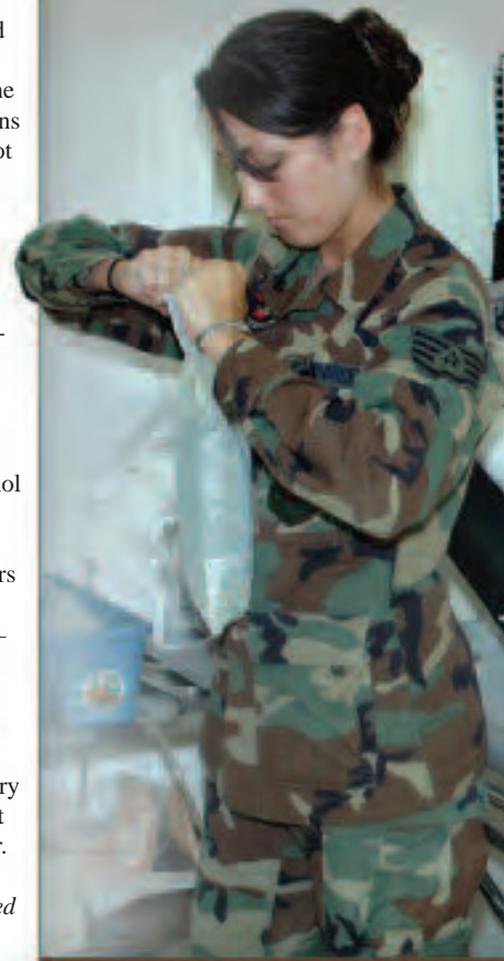




Photo courtesy of the 167th Airlift Wing  
Senior Airman Tracie Engle (left) and Staff Sgt. Sarah Morris  
of the 167th Airlift Wing represent W.Va. Air National Guard  
while serving as medics in New Mexico in support of  
Operation Jump Start along the southwest border.



Photo by Lt. Col. Craig Lambert, 771st Troop Command  
Maj. Gen. Tackett visits members of the 753d EOD at Camp Atterbury  
as they prepare for mobilization.



Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell, 153d PAD  
Debbie Bennett visits with her son, Sgt. Jeffrey Bennett, and daughter, Sgt. Jennifer  
Bennett, during CERFP training at Benedum Airport. The siblings are both members of  
the W.Va. National Guard CERFP extraction team. Their father, Jeffrey Bennett, Sr.  
(not shown), is a member of the W.Va. Air National Guard.



Photo by Sgt. David Dyer, 153d PAD  
Soldiers participate in a historic ceremony as the  
111th Engineer Group officially converts to the 111th Engineer  
Brigade during an event held in September.



Photo courtesy of 193d ESP  
The guidon is passed to mark the activation of the the new 193d  
Engineer Support Platoon. The ceremony also marked the  
deactivation of Det. 1, Company C, 1092d.



Photo by Sgt. Sherree Casper, 153d PAD  
Left to right: Sgt. 1st Class Michael Miller, Sgt. Gary Rice, Sgt. 1st Class Nathaniel Payton, Staff Sgt. Eric Aikens, Staff Sgt. Timothy White undergo MOUT training at Ft. Pickett in September.



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Rick Ware, 130th Airlift Wing  
1st Lt. Harold F. Nicely, III holds his newborn son, Harold F. Nicely, IV, during the 146th Medical Company's Bosnia homecoming ceremony.



Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Rick Ware, 130th Airlift Wing  
A P-51 Mustang stands on public display during the 130th Airlift Wing's annual open house held at the Charleston Air Base in September. The public was treated to military and civilian aircraft visiting from around the country.

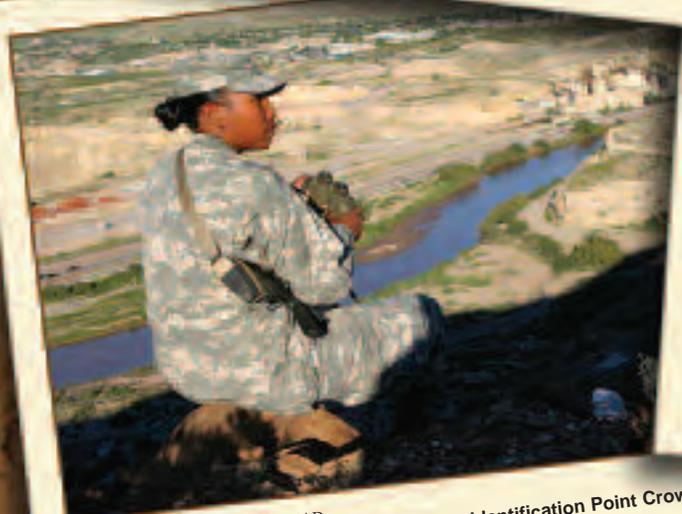


Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell, 153d PAD  
Sgt. Jessica Homeres stands watch at Entry Identification Point Crow's Nest in support of Operation Jump Start along the Southwest border.



Photo by Tech. Sgt. Emily Beightol-Deyerle, 167th Airlift Wing  
Left to right: Lt. Col. Shawn Perkowski, Glen Catrow Sr. (retired), Jim Renner (retired), Master Sgt. Jay Stuckey, Senior Master Sgt. Glen Catrow II, Tech. Sgt. Paul Dick, Master Sgt. Steve Munson and Master Sgt. Mike Rice perform for Valley View Elementary during their Heritage Day held on October 10. The band consisted of current and retired members of the 167th Airlift Wing.

# Deployment Updates

By Lt. Col. Mike Cadle

Joint Forces HQ, Public Affairs Office

About 450 WVNG Soldiers and Airmen are on federal duty supporting military operations around the world.

- More than 200 members of the 2/19th Special Forces Group returned to West Virginia or are awaiting return from the mobilization station after serving about nine months in Iraq.

- About 150 Soldiers in the 1257th Transportation Co. are providing installation security at one of the most important supply bases in Iraq.

- The 130th and 167th Airlift Wings have about 10 Airmen mobilized in Germany and Iraq supporting OIF/OEF.

- About 15 members of the 1863rd Military Police Company (Provisional) remain on duty providing installation security at Fort Polk, La.

- The 146th Medical Co. (Air Ambulance) recently returned 20 Soldiers from New Horizon exercises

in Peru and eight soldiers from Joint Guardian operations in Kosovo.

- The redesignated C/150th Aviation (formerly 1-137th) unit in Wheeling has more than 60 Soldiers deployed to Iraq.

- Six members of the 753rd Explosive Ordnance Disposal Co. have arrived in Europe and will begin supporting Operation Joint Guardian.

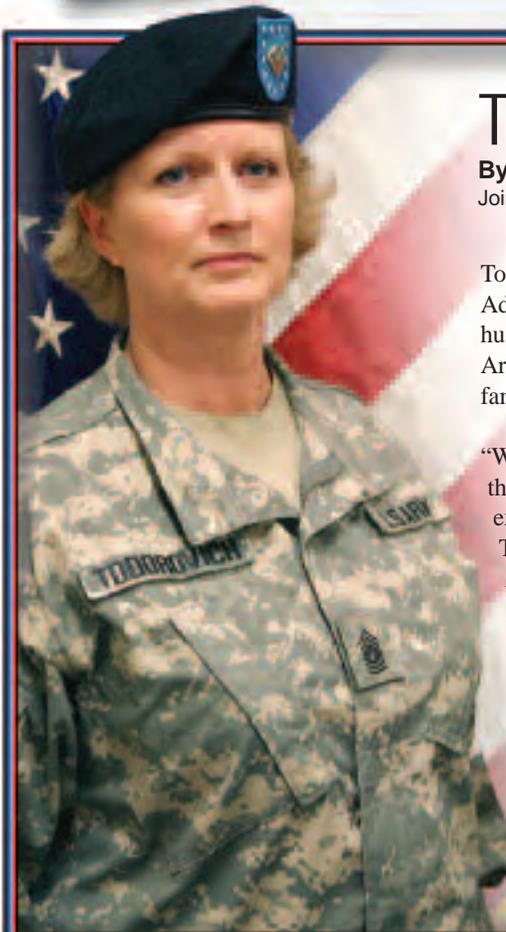
- More than 40 Soldiers in the 151st Military Police Battalion are in the process of deploying to Fort Bragg, N.C., for a law and order mission. Soldiers may be deployed up to one year.

- West Virginia's National Guard is actively supporting Operation Jump Start, the southwest U.S. border mission. More than 90 Soldiers and Airmen have been deployed as part of Task Force Mountaineer working in New Mexico and Arizona.

*Editor's note: These numbers were accurate as of Oct. 20.*



Left: Soldiers and aircraft of the 146th Medical Co. (Air Ambulance) get media attention for their support of Operation New Horizon in Peru.



## Todorovich promoted to CSM

By Lt. Col. Mike Cadle

Joint Forces HQ, Public Affairs Office

Command Sergeant Major Cindy L. Todorovich was pinned on June 6 by Adjutant General Allen Tackett and her husband, Mike, a lieutenant colonel in the Army Guard, at a ceremony attended by family and about 200 co-workers.

"I'm so honored," Todorovich said. "When I joined this organization more than 20 years ago I never would have expected to make it to this level.

The NCO is truly the backbone of the Army. It's an awesome responsibility, and I look forward to the opportunity."

"Today's ceremony marks another first in the history of the West Virginia National Guard," Tackett said. "First Sergeant Todorovich's promotion demonstrates to our Soldiers that through hard work and dedication they can achieve their goals and become leaders in the Army Guard."

Being the first female to achieve

the Army's highest enlisted rank comes with a lot of responsibility, according to State Command Sgt. Major Lawrence Vance, the Army Guard's top enlisted Soldier. "She will set the standard for other female Soldiers to follow."

"The Guard has provided a good life for my family," Todorovich said. "Anyone considering joining the military should think about the opportunities the National Guard can provide. Getting an education is just one of those opportunities. The Guard will help pay for Soldiers to go to college, and now they can earn all the way up to a masters degree."

Todorovich studied International Terrorism and has an Associate of Arts degree from the University of Charleston. Her most recent military education was the Army Sergeants Major Academy at Fort Bliss, Texas.

# Hale to the Chief

Local Air Guard member receives NAACP award

By Lt. Col. Mike Cadle

Joint Forces HQ, Public Affairs Office



CHARLESTON – Air Guard Major Kenneth L. Hale, 50, of Charleston, was presented the Roy L. Wilkins Renown Service Award by the NAACP on July 18 during the group's 31st Annual Armed Services and Veterans Affairs Awards Dinner in Washington, D.C.

Hale was the only Air Guard member to receive the award this year, representing West Virginia's 2,300 Air Guard members and more than 105,000 Airmen nationwide. The award recognizes military members who have distinguished themselves by contributing to military equal opportunity policies and programs.

"This was a mountaintop experience for me, but once you've gotten the spiritual revelation you understand that there is still plenty of work to do and a long road to haul," Hale said. "But I look forward to those challenges."

Hale serves as the labor relations and state equal employment manager for the National Guard, providing advice to Adjutant General Allen Tackett on matters relating to diversity, workplace training, and the military-civilian collective bargaining agreement.

"Maj. Hale is an important member of our human resources team," Tackett said. "He works hard to promote diversity in our organization and is an outstanding public servant in his community."

Hale's work in the community inspired Brig. Gen. Terry Butler, commander of the state's Air Guard, to nominate Hale for the award. "Kenny is involved in many things that make a real difference in his community," Butler said. "He's coached little league football for more than 20 years, he volunteers as an assistant basketball coach at a local middle school, he works with the Black Ministerial Alliance on social issues



## Army Guard MP named State Police Trooper of the year

By Sgt. Zoe Morris  
153d Public Affairs Detachment



An Army Guard military policeman received the highest award given by the West Virginia State Police during the Troopers Association Annual Conference in Morgantown on June 10.

Staff Sgt. David Eldridge, 37, an MP with the 156th Military Police Detachment in Monaville, W.Va., was named the State Police's 2005 Trooper of the Year. When his name was announced, Eldridge said, "It was a bit of a shock. I think [being chosen] was based largely on my work ethic. We work until the job is done. I learned those [ethics] early on in the military and carried them with me."

After joining the Army at 19, Eldridge served six years active duty as a military policeman. He said he knew he wanted to work in law enforcement, but looked at the Army as a way to try it out for a few years to make sure.

After leaving active duty, Eldridge joined the Army Reserves for three years and began to pursue a career in civilian law enforcement, knowing police work was for him. He joined the Army National Guard after leaving the Reserves.

Eldridge, a State Police corporal, was submitted for the award by his supervisor, Sgt. T.L. Williams.

"The military does provide you essential skills that allow you to accomplish great tasks later on in life, not only in the military, but in your civilian life, too," Eldridge said.

Photo courtesy of W.Va. State Police  
**Staff Sgt. David Eldridge (left) is presented his award as Trooper of the Year by Sergeant James Merrill (right), president of the West Virginia Troopers Association.**

– the list goes on and on."

Family is also important to Hale, the father of seven children. Hale credits his work ethic and desire to make a difference in the world to his late father, Edward.

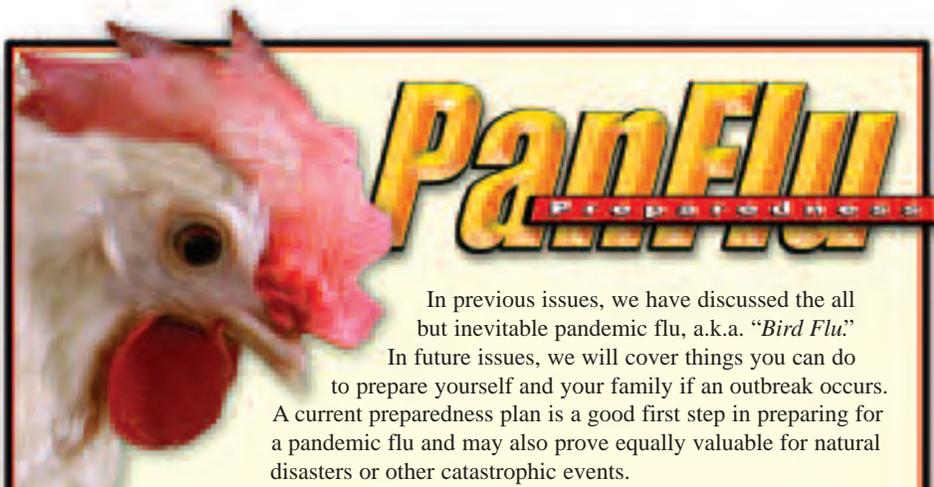
"He is most definitely the reason I've done the things I've done," Hale said. "I'm happy to carry on the torch so that others may have the same chances for success that I've had."

Edward Hale was a member of the Tuskegee Airmen, a group of dedicated young black men who enlisted at a time when many thought black men lacked the skill and intelligence to be military aviators. History debunked this myth, and men like Hale's father became known as

pioneers in the fight for freedom – against the Axis powers overseas and against racism and prejudice at home.

According to Hale, the Buffalo Soldiers and Tuskegee Airmen were trail blazers in the fight for equal rights in the military and true African-American patriots. "It makes me very proud to know that I stand on the shoulders of those who've gone before me," he said.

Hale is among a distinguished group of military members to receive the Wilkins award. Past award recipients include Lt. Gens. Roger Schultz and Russ Davis, past directors of the Army and Air National Guard.



In previous issues, we have discussed the all but inevitable pandemic flu, a.k.a. "Bird Flu." In future issues, we will cover things you can do to prepare yourself and your family if an outbreak occurs. A current preparedness plan is a good first step in preparing for a pandemic flu and may also prove equally valuable for natural disasters or other catastrophic events.

An effective **Preparedness Plan** should include the following information:

- **Emergency kits**  
Prepare kits for your home and vehicles. (see sidebar for recommended contents)
- **Prepare for hazards**  
Install smoke & carbon monoxide detectors and test regularly.  
Learn to react to hazards such as floods, epidemics, terrorism and other events.
- **Evacuation routes**  
Create home evacuation plans.  
Learn community evacuation plans.
- **Family meeting locations**  
Establish two locations, one at home and another in case you can't make it home.
- **Phone numbers**  
Teach children about dialing 911.  
Learn important numbers and have at least one out-of-town contact. Provide numbers to schools.
- **Warning signals**  
Know community warning signals.
- **Emergency plans**  
Know plans for work and school.
- **Know how to shut off utilities**  
Know how to shut off gas, water & electric.
- **Plan for special needs**  
Plan any transportation, medication, etc. for sick, elderly or disabled.
- **Plan for pets**  
Have photos, ID tags and boarding plans.
- **Insurance coverage**  
Ensure you have appropriate type and documentation of coverage.
- **Review and practice plans**  
Know your plan and update as necessary.
- **Emergency Kit Contents**
  - water, food, utensils
  - radio, flashlights
  - first-aid kit, matches
  - medications, money
  - light sticks, whistle
  - sleeping bag, blankets
  - personal hygiene
  - utility knife, tools
  - tape, rope
  - paper, pencils, pens
  - maps, compass
  - family & pet photos
  - prepaid phone cards
  - copies of important legal documents

With confirmed cases of bird-to-human transmission of the Bird Flu overseas, we asked some West Virginia Soldiers and Airmen if they saw reason for concern.



*"I'm not paranoid until we hear about a case in the U.S."*

**Spc. Lisa Stone/111th Engineer BDE**

*"I just graduated from nursing school, and I did a research project on epidemiology, and I am not only concerned about the flu outbreak but others as well. The government is doing the best job they can, but you can only produce so many flu shots or encourage people so much to take care of themselves and stay fit."*

**Staff Sgt Brian Reynolds/167th AES**



*"I really don't worry about it too much."*

**Staff Sgt. William Manley/130th MXS**

*"I'm not concerned about it. People should just take the normal precautions with any emergency."*

**Tech. Sgt. Bruce Clark/130th Security Forces**



*"Oh yeah, I'm a lot concerned about it. I really do think it's going to happen."*

**Sgt. Pierce Woodard/111th Engineer BDE**

*"I am aware but not overly concerned about an outbreak in the continental United States at this time. Awareness measures such as this continue to foster preparedness."*

**2nd Lt. Chris Tusing/167th LRS**



For more information on Pandemic Flu and how to prepare:

www.wvdhhr.org/healthprep ■ www.wvdhsem.gov ■ www.fema.gov ■ www.ready.gov  
or call: 1-800-BE-READY (1-800-237-3239)

## Guard celebrates Women's History Month

Woman, supervisor of the year honored

By Lt. Col. Mike Cadle

Joint Forces HQ, Public Affairs Office



Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell, 153d PAD  
**Maj. Gen. Rita Aragon addresses members of the local media during her visit to Charleston.**

More than 100 West Virginia National Guard members participated in the annual Women's History Month celebration Aug. 25 at the Charleston Air Guard base.

The theme for the 2006 event was "Women: Builders of Communities and Dreams."

Maj. Gen. Rita Aragon, an Oklahoma Air Guard member now serving as special assistant to the commander of Air Education and Training Command, was guest speaker for the event.

Aragon built a reputation for getting the job done in both her military and civilian occupation. Her message to female Soldiers, Airmen and civilians was simple.

"Being a woman never kept me from getting a job. I believe that the military is one of the greatest leveling fields for equality that there is," Aragon said.

Aragon emphasized that getting ahead meant getting involved, and that women must take responsibility for their careers. She encouraged the audience to find a mentor, focus on others before focusing on themselves, and "when in need, sow a seed."

Service members in attendance also helped recognize the West Virginia Guard's woman and supervisor of the year honorees. Maj. Doyle Hayes of the Human Resources Office was selected as the Supervisor of the Year. Capt. Amanda Mullins of the 111th Engineer Brigade was chosen as Woman of the Year.

*Editor's note: Capt. Amanda Mullins contributed to this article.*

## Education Service Office helps put college on the fast track

**By Capt. Jason Webb**  
Education Services Officer

Staff Sgt. James Coffey, 1st Battalion, 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, recently completed the last 30 hours of his college degree in only seven days. And it didn't cost him a dime.

Coffey tested out of the final hours required for his Regents B.A. degree by signing up for exams at the Army Guard Education Service Office. Capt. Jason Webb, Education Services Officer, helped Coffey identify DSST, CLEP, and Excelsior examinations that he needed to complete his degree.

Tests are available for about 320 hours of college classes, but testing is only one service provided to military members by the ESO. Service and family members from any branch can also get college and career counseling, take certification tests, receive scholarship and tuition assistance information, and check on GI bill benefits and loan repayments.

The Education Services Office also provides free study guides and other information at:

[www.wv.ngb.army.mil/education](http://www.wv.ngb.army.mil/education)



### Air Guard gets GRAP!

Airmen can earn \$2,000 per recruit

The Guard Recruiting Assistance Program (G-RAP) is a program that allows Airmen to volunteer as part-time Recruiting Assistants (RA). The RA works for a contractor, not the ANG. Each RA should seek out potential recruits based on family, school, work, and social relationships.

Responsibilities of an RA are to identify potential recruits, promote benefits of service in the Air Guard, and input profile data into the G-RAP web site to begin the application process. Nominations must be entered into the system prior to the contract date in order to qualify for payments under the G-RAP. RA's will arrange meetings between potential recruits and ANG recruiters, accompany the ANG recruiter at parental consent meetings for recruits under 18 years of age, and work with recruiters to prepare recruits for MEPS and ASVAB appointments.

Once the applicant enlists, the RA will receive an initial payment of \$1,000 with a second \$1,000 payment after the recruit ships to Basic Training. For prior service recruits, payment is made after the applicant completes 90 days and three drills with the unit.



### ARNG GRAP

accessions may qualify Soldiers and families for health insurance

Thanks to a unique collaboration with United Healthcare, all active M-Day Soldiers of the Army National Guard participating in G-RAP may also qualify for optional healthcare coverage. (Retired members of the Army National Guard are not eligible for the healthcare program.)

The plan includes Medical, Dental, Vision and Life Insurance.

**Option 1:** Individual Healthcare Insurance  
One accession pays for 12 months individual coverage.

**Option 2:** Family Healthcare Insurance  
Three accessions pays for 12 months family coverage.

**NEW!** Retired Army National Guard Soldiers now eligible to participate in G-RAP!

Retired Soldiers with 20+ years of service may be eligible for \$2,000 per accession.

Soldiers must have been in a retired status for six months to participate in G-RAP.

For more information about GRAP, visit:  
[www.guardrecruitingassistant.com](http://www.guardrecruitingassistant.com)

## 2006: WVARNG surpasses recruiting and retention goals!

The West Virginia Army National Guard concluded a record year at 116.5 percent strength. This is due to the hard work of the NCOs of the Recruiting and Retention Force, coupled with the teamwork of unit members and command teams around the state. As the new fiscal year starts, we are building this year's strength around the theme of STRENGTH FROM WITHIN.

The Guard Recruiting Assistant Program (G-RAP), which

kicked off in December 2005, is still going strong and is available to both Army and Air National Guard members. Just recently, the program expanded. National Guard retirees may now join the program as Recruiting Assistants and qualify to receive \$2,000 for every new enlistment.

Over 31 percent of Army National Guard members are active Recruiting Assistants.

# Kids Kamp at Camp Dawson is success

Story by Sgt. Sherree Casper

153d Public Affairs Detachment

CAMP DAWSON – Even the wettest June on record couldn't dampen the spirits of those who participated in 2006 Kids Kamp at Camp Dawson in June.

Designed to give kids of Guard families the opportunity to play, learn and relate with one another, Kids Kamp is in its 15th year. More than 170 kids participated in this year's event with 64 adults assuming roles as counselors and support staff.

The first Kids Kamp began in 1991 for 40 children whose family members were deployed in support of Desert Storm, said retired Sgt. Maj. Gary Conley, who is the longtime director of the camp that caters to kids ages 9 to 14.

Some returning kampers have declared that they would rather attend the week-long camp than head to the beach with their parents, said Conley, who works full-time in the National Guard's environmental office in Charleston.

"That tells me we are doing something right," he added.

Despite the record rainfall in June, the retired sergeant major said this year's Kids Kamp, which featured everything from

maneuvering through an obstacle course to scaling a rock wall, was one of the best. Conley pointed out that it rained almost every day at the West Virginia Army National Guard training installation near Kingwood, W.Va.



## Youth Leaders Camp 2006 held at Camp Dawson

Staff Sgt. Mary Beth Hackney

130th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The West Virginia National Guard held its 40th annual Youth Leaders Camp in Kingwood, June 24-30.

The week-long event, hosted at Camp Dawson, provides select high school juniors and seniors an opportunity to learn leadership, problem solving, and teamwork skills while observing military customs and courtesies.

"The camp provides a great opportunity for youth leaders to expand their experience and gain the understanding that they, too, can excel," said Brigadier Gen. Terry L. Butler, Commander of the W.Va. Air National Guard.

The program, which accommodated 84 campers this year, is staffed by members of W.Va. Army and Air National Guard.



Coordination for YLC goes on year-round. As soon as the current camp ends, a team of program administrators start planning the next year's event, according to Master Sgt. Cindy Cundiff, a human resources assistant with State Headquarters and a YLC staff member for the past seven years.

This year staff had to make last-minute adjustments to the event schedule because

"Everything we had planned occurred thanks to the staff's efforts," Conley said. "Everything we wanted to do we did."

Events throughout the week-long camp featured an array of activities that included arts and crafts, team building, swimming, Starbase, drug awareness, sports, paddle boats, jousting, dealing with youth stress, dance, laser tag, rocket launch, first aid and range.

Master Sgt. Bill Lively served as head counselor for Team 2. Lively noted that his daughters, Galia and Trystan, attended Kids Kamp while his oldest daughter, Sacha, participated in this year's Youth Leaders Camp. Lively recently adopted Galia and Sacha from southern Russia.

"It gives kids activities to do in a supervised environment," said Lively, who works for Joint Forces Headquarters in Charleston.

"It gives them a little taste of what the military is like," he said of barracks accommodations and accountability for every minute of the day.

Next year's Kids Kamp is slated for June 14-22.

of persistent rainfall during the first three days of camp. But they were still able to accomplish the planned exercises and events.

"It [the rain] didn't seem to bother the kids," said Cundiff. "Camp was a great success; they love it ... by the end of camp, they didn't want to go home."

Camp instructors, referred to as TACs (Train, Advise, and Counsel), work in shifts and are with campers around the clock. Throughout the week of camp, TACs instruct and motivate their campers in everything from maintaining their living quarters to leading the platoon in drill and ceremony exercises and competitive events. Scores are recorded for each event, and at the end of the week the platoon with the most points is rewarded for its hard work.

This year the 1st Platoon, led by Staff Sgt. Nicole Snuffer, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Bates, and Senior Airman Kris Rader, won the honor.

At the end of the week, YLC staff members presented campers with their "Honorable Discharges" during an award and graduation ceremony that concluded this year's camp.

# News you can use

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## SGLI rate increase

Premiums for SGLI increased in July from 6.5 cents per \$1,000 to 7 cents per \$1,000. This change increases the rate for maximum coverage from \$26 to \$28 per month. Family member SGLI decreased, with new rates based on age. Please contact your Finance Office for more info.

## Post-deployment health education

Walter Reed has a great website that highlights the importance of recognizing the different mindset that our returning Soldiers must overcome when returning from the battlefield. Commanders, family members and supervisors should visit:

<http://www.battlemind.org>

## American cemeteries overseas

The American Battle Monuments Commission is charged with maintaining all American cemeteries located overseas. Site can be used to locate fallen heroes at:

[www.abmc.gov](http://www.abmc.gov)

## Scholarships available for military members/families

<http://education.military.com/money-for-school/scholarships>

<http://aid.military.com/scholarship/search-for-scholarships.do>

## Check GI Bill eligibility

Soldiers can check GI Bill eligibility and apply for federal tuition assistance on-line. Soldiers will need AKO login and password to enter the site.

[www.nationalguardbenefits.com](http://www.nationalguardbenefits.com)

## CAMC offers free ATV classes

Classes are held about 10 miles south of Southridge Shopping Center on Wash Branch Road off Corridor G. Participants must provide own ATV and have all safety equipment. For more information and to register, call 304-388-7859.

## Internet radio honors troops

Hooah!! Radio is an internet radio station dedicated to supporting troops and families. The station takes dedications and requests for troops overseas. Families and friends can also record a "shout out" for military loved ones that will be played on air.

<http://www.hooahradio.com>

## Check these sites for free stuff for troops

Free computers for spouses or parents of deployed Soldiers in ranks E1 – E5.

[www.operationhomelink.org](http://www.operationhomelink.org)

Free mail/gifts sent to children of deployed Soldiers at:

[www.prweb.com/releases/2004/2/prweb106818.htm](http://www.prweb.com/releases/2004/2/prweb106818.htm)

Free phonecards

[www.operationuplink.org](http://www.operationuplink.org)

To sign up for sponsoring Soldier care packages for theater.

[www.anysoldier.com/forsoldiersonly.cfm](http://www.anysoldier.com/forsoldiersonly.cfm)

Commanders sign up for mugs for unit troops.

[www.appreciateourtroops.org/forourtroops.shtml](http://www.appreciateourtroops.org/forourtroops.shtml)

Free shoebox care package at:

[www.operationshoebox.com](http://www.operationshoebox.com)

Free cookies at:

[www.treatthetroops.org](http://www.treatthetroops.org)

Low airfares available at:

[www.bluestarmoms.org/airfare.html](http://www.bluestarmoms.org/airfare.html)

Free care packages

[www.bluestarmoms.org/care.html](http://www.bluestarmoms.org/care.html)

Free air conditioners/heaters

<http://66.241.249.83>

Free air travel is available for emergency leave, and for family members of injured Soldiers to travel to medical facility.

[www.heromiles.org](http://www.heromiles.org)

Airline discounts for R & R.

[www.bluestarmothers.org/airlinespecials.php](http://www.bluestarmothers.org/airlinespecials.php)

Daily prayer and scriptures.

<http://prayercentral.net/engage/militaryprayer/daily.php>

Get adopted to receive stuff

[www.soldiersangels.org/heroes/submit\\_a\\_soldier.php](http://www.soldiersangels.org/heroes/submit_a_soldier.php)

Free gifts and care packages

[www.treatfortroops.com/registration/index.php](http://www.treatfortroops.com/registration/index.php)

## Special mortgage program for Guard/Reserves

Chase Bank is providing mortgage incentives to mobilizing Guard/Reserve members at the time of loan origination, during mobilization and for more than a year after demobilization. The incentives could save borrowers thousands of dollars. For more information, visit a Chase bank branch (refer to code SSAS A072) or go to:

[www.chasemilitaryhomeloan.com](http://www.chasemilitaryhomeloan.com)

## Child care for military families

Several programs are available for military families with children. Military Child Care in your Neighborhood is available for Guard members living in areas where military child care is not available. Operation Military Child Care is for children of activated Guard/Reserve members. Operation: Child Care is for families of servicemembers deployed for OIF/OEF.

For more information, please call 1-800-424-2246 ext 341 or

<http://www.ChildCareAware.org>

## Low income energy assistance program begins in October

The West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources will accept applications from the general public for LIEAP beginning Monday, Dec. 4 and ending Friday, Dec. 15. Those who received LIEAP in 2005 will receive applications by mail this year. The LIEAP program will allow households to obtain assistance with home heating before the start of winter weather increases demand and shortens supply of some fuels, such as wood. Applications may be picked up and dropped off after completing at local DHHR offices, community action agencies, or senior centers operated by any Area Agency on Aging. Applications will also be available on the DHHR website beginning Dec. 4 and ending Dec. 15 at:

<http://www.wvinroads.org>

LIEAP forms must not be mailed to home heating providers, as this will delay the application process. DHHR will make the final determination regarding eligibility.



Staff Sgt. Philip Smith of the 1257th Transportation Company befriends a young Mexican boy through the fence that divides the U.S.-Mexico border at an Entry Identification Point known as "Monument 3." Staff Sgt. Smith is part of Task Force Mountaineer, participating in Operation Jump Start, providing border security near Santa Teresa, N.M.

Photo by Maj. Todd Harrell, 153d PAD

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