



# **MOUNTAINEER** **DEFENDER**

Magazine of the West Virginia National Guard

## *Making a Difference*

**Iron Chefs!**  
In the kitchen with  
1201st FSC troops

**WVNG Soldiers**  
battle blizzards in  
northern WV

**167th Airlift Wing**  
provides aid to Haitian  
earthquake victims

**Guardsmen rescue**  
survivors of Navy  
helicopter crash

**SPRING 2010**

# MOUNTAINEER DEFENDER

Magazine of the  
West Virginia National Guard  
Spring 2010

Command Messages 3

Sexual Assault Awareness 4

Soldiers rescue stranded mother, baby 5

1201st FSC troops cook up a win! 6

Families, friends welcome soldiers home, say goodbye to others 7

MPs take over mission in northern Iraq 8

35th CST participates in multi-state maritime exercise 9

Blizzards slam northern WV; Soldiers, Airmen provide aid 10

167th AW honors hometown heroes 12

150th mechanics train Iraqi troops 12

Hercules gets a bath 13

167th AW aids Haiti relief effort 14

Engineers improve quality of life for U.S. forces in Iraq 15

EOD Soldiers having a blast in Kosovo 16

Guardsmen rescue victims of Navy helicopter crash 18

**Page 5**



**Page 6**



**Page 7**



**Page 10**



**Page 14**



**On the cover:**

West Virginia Soldiers and Airmen were called to state active duty in February when heavy snows blanketed the northern and eastern parts of the state. Guard members assisted in clearing roads, delivering supplies, transporting the sick and elderly to medical facilities, and rescuing those stranded without power or heat.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Bryan Stevens, 130th AW Public Affairs



**Adjutant General**  
Maj. Gen. Allen E. Tackett

**State Senior Enlisted Leader**  
Command Sgt. Maj.  
Lawrence R. Vance

**State Command Chief Master Sergeant**  
Command Chief Master Sgt.  
Ronald D. Bowe

**State Public Affairs Officer & Editor-in-Chief**  
Lt. Col. Mike Cadle

**Design & Layout**  
Spc. Anna-Marie Hizer

The Mountaineer Defender is an authorized publication of the West Virginia National Guard. Contents are not necessarily the official views of, nor are they endorsed by, the United States government, the Department of Defense, the West Virginia National Guard or the state of West Virginia. Publication of material is determined by available space and reader interest. The staff reserves the right to edit all material.

**Send comments/contributions to:**  
State Public Affairs Office  
WV National Guard  
1679 Coonskin Drive  
Charleston, WV 25311  
or  
michael.cadle@ang.af.mil



## The Adjutant General

“Never doubt that a small group of committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

I ask you to consider those words by respected American cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead in the smaller context of what we do as members of the West Virginia National Guard.

I strongly believe that our organization of about 6,800 Soldiers and Airmen is making a positive difference in the lives of those we serve in the course of our business.

When you look back on the past few months, consider how many people we’ve touched and how that contact has vastly improved their lives.

Winter hit us hard in mid-December when heavy snowfall shut down the West Virginia Turnpike and paralyzed much of southern West Virginia. Motorists were stranded for hours on remote sections of the interstate, and thousands of West Virginians were left without power. If not for Soldiers and Airmen who delivered food, water and blankets to these snowbound individuals, the outcome may have been much different.

Early February brought back-to-back bliz-



**Maj. Gen. Allen E. Tackett**

zards that cut off much of northern West Virginia. More than 800 Guard members supported the recovery effort, clearing roads with the Division of Highways, delivering food, water, heating oil, and other supplies to those stranded by the storms, and transporting home bound patients for medical care.

While we were still on snow duty, a Navy helicopter crashed in remote Pocahontas County on Feb. 17. Once again, the Guard was first on the scene, and the heroic efforts of our aircrews, flight medics, and local civilian first responders no doubt saved lives that frigid evening.

After reviewing what our Guard has done over the past few months, I hope you understand why I’m so proud of you, the outstanding Soldiers and Airmen that choose to serve in the West Virginia National Guard. Army Soldiers Staff Sgt. Harry Accor and Spc. Derek Folk, who rescued a mother and baby from a home in Morgan County and Staff Sgt. Nicole Hopkins and Spc. Casey Dunfee who were hoisted to the helicopter crash site and spent all night keeping survivors alive, are often the face of the Guard.

You are changing the world, and that’s why I’m so proud to be your Adjutant General. I often say that people join the Guard because they want to serve their local communities, and I’m amazed everyday at the job you do. Thank you for being a member of the West Virginia National Guard.

## The State Senior Enlisted Leader

Today I would like to bring to your attention a program that saved our service members and their families more than \$22,000 in 2009. The program I am talking about is the Commissary On-site Sale Program. Many have taken advantage of this benefit by shopping at the sale, held in armories across the state.

The Guard/Reserve On-site Sale Program provides the commissary benefit to deserving Reserve component members, retirees and their families who live in areas not close to an existing commissary. This program brings a savings of 30 percent or more to our members.

Each on-site sale brings different items according to the season and desires of the patrons that fill out the sales survey as they check out. Yes, you will see many of your favorite brand names at a great savings.

Another added surprise at many of the on-site sales is free door prize give-a-ways. Recently, during the Charleston armory’s on-site sale, Karen Frazier -- wife of Master Sgt. Tim Frazier of the 130th Airlift Wing -- won a new Kenmore washer and dryer.

To learn more about the On-site Sale Program and other commissary-related subjects, visit [www.commissaries.com](http://www.commissaries.com). You



**Command Sgt. Maj. Vance**

will find information regarding on-site sales in your area.

Thank you for your support and all you do!

## The State Command Chief Master Sergeant



**Command Chief Master Sgt. Bowe**

I would like to talk to you in this issue of Defender about “fit to fight.” You should be aware that we have a new fitness standard taking effect 1 July 2010. Our mission requires

us to be physically fit. Being fit can prove to be the deciding factor between life and death for Airmen and their fellow wingmen when combat actions require extreme physical exertion. We must constantly hone our physical fitness abilities to withstand and overcome the demanding rigors of deployment and combat.

I applaud our Airmen who realize the importance of physical fitness. However, I realize there are also some who are not living up to their health and fitness potential.

Every Airman is critical to completion of day-to-day and overseas missions, and we need each Airman performing at the highest level.

While working to improve fitness levels,

it’s important to realize that simply passing the annual fitness test is not the Air Force goal. Focusing only on the test won’t help as much as a mix of cardiovascular, muscular and flexibility training. To successfully boost fitness levels, we must all make regular exercise and a healthy lifestyle a part of our daily regimen.

In closing, I encourage you to establish personal fitness goals and participate in unit and base physical training programs. You should also provide assistance to those needing encouragement.

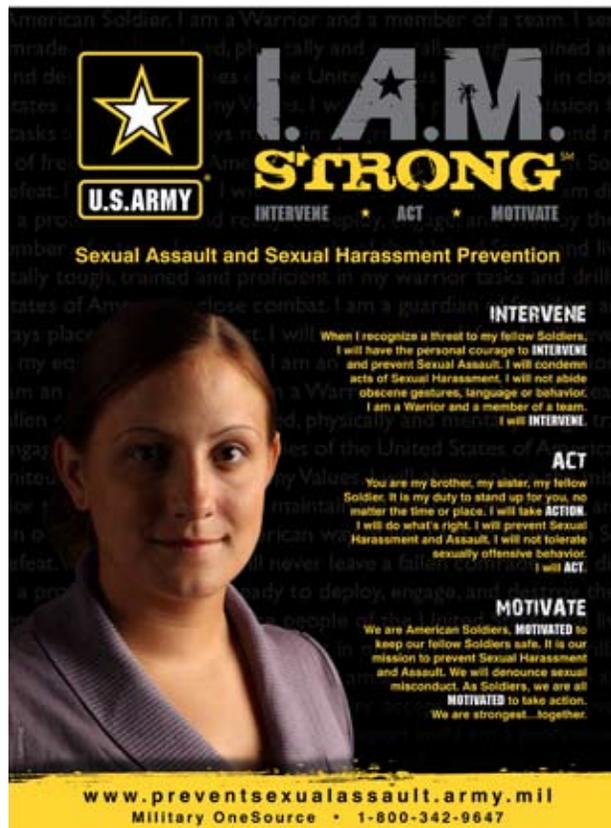
The rewards will be obvious and beneficial to all. As always I thank you for all the daily sacrifices you and your family make and I

# Sexual Assault prevention program focuses on readiness, responsibility

by Capt. Bridget Saunders  
Sexual Assault Prevention  
and Response Officer

The West Virginia National Guard Sexual Assault Prevention and Response Office is responsible for oversight of Dept. of Defense sexual assault policy.

The WVNG is committed to the prevention of sexual assault. The SAPR Office has implemented a comprehensive policy to ensure the safety, dignity and well-being of all members of the Armed Forces. Our men and women serving throughout the world and here in West Virginia deserve nothing less. WVNG leaders -- both military and civilian -- are committed to maintaining a workplace environment that rejects sexual assault and reinforces a culture of prevention, response and accountability.



The SAPR Office works hand-in-hand with the Army and Air National Guard and the civilian commu-

nity to develop and implement innovative prevention and response programs for survivors of sexual assault.

Nationally, Sexual Assault Awareness Month occurs in April and is designed to raise awareness and promote the prevention of sexual violence through special events and public education.

The 2010 campaign, "Hurts one, Affects all," focused on the impact sexual assault has on mission readiness. As is understood throughout the military, mission readiness defines a unit's ability to deploy quickly and efficiently. A sexual assault can reverberate throughout a unit and beyond, degrade readiness and impact teamwork.

Join the campaign and step forward to end sexual assault.

## West Virginia National Guard Deployment Update

About 30 Soldiers in the **C Co., 2/104th Aviation** have been mobilized for a one-year tour in Afghanistan. This marks the unit's fifth overseas deployment since 9/11.

**1st Battalion, 201st Field Artillery** has been mobilized for duty in Iraq. Soldiers are expected to deploy overseas later this year.

**1092nd Engineer Battalion** is currently deployed to Afghanistan. Soldiers are expected to return to West Virginia in Spring 2011.

Nearly 165 Soldiers in the **151st Military Police Battalion** are deployed to Iraq. The unit is expected to return later this summer.

About 175 Soldiers in the **115th Engineer Battalion** are currently deployed to Iraq. The unit is expected to return in May 2010.

Approximately five Soldiers in the **153rd Public Affairs Detachment** are currently deployed to Afghanistan. The unit is expected to return in June 2010.

Approximately five Soldiers in the **753rd Explosive Ordnance Disposal team** are currently deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. The unit is expected to return in August 2010.

About 130 Airmen in the **167th Airlift Wing** have received 240-day, home station mobilization orders to support current and future military operations around the world.

More than 25 Airmen in the **130th Airlift Wing** are now deployed and about 200 others will be deployed later this year for various AEF/ECS taskings.



Photo by Staff Sgt. Sherree Grebenstein, 167th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

Spc. Derek C. Folk (left) and Staff Sgt. Harry F. Accor III, medics with the 201st Field Artillery Battalion, show off the handmade snowshoes the pair used while rescuing a mother and baby who had been without power for two days in Berkeley Springs.

## West Virginia Soldiers rescue stranded mom, baby

by Staff Sgt. Sherree Grebenstein  
167th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

**BERKELEY SPRINGS, W.Va.** -- Necessity has been called the mother of invention.

Just ask two West Virginia National Guard Soldiers who found themselves attempting to rescue a mother and her four-week-old baby stranded at home in Morgan County. Back-to-back blizzards socked the Eastern Panhandle with more than three feet of snow in some areas.

In order to reach the pair in the early morning hours of Feb. 10, Staff Sgt. Harry F. Accor III and Spc. Derek C. Folk, medics with the Fairmont-based 201st Field Artillery Battalion, fashioned snowshoes from pine tree branches and clotheslines.

What makes the feat perhaps even more amazing is that Folk, who graduated from Berkeley County's Hedgesville High School in 2005, performed the rescue with three broken bones in his right hand. During a rescue mission earlier in the week, the Morgantown Soldier sustained the injury while helping evacuate a bilateral amputee with

diabetes from his home in Berkeley Springs.

Maj. Chris Nasser, a member of the 167th Airlift Wing, assigned as a military liaison officer at the Morgan County Emergency Services complex, said both Soldiers were innovative in their efforts to rescue the trapped mother and baby.

"They made their own handmade snowshoes to evacuate them," Nasser said. "They were really prepared for whatever they faced."

Accor said that a concerned neighbor alerted officials to help the mother and baby who reportedly were living in a home in the Highland Ridge area that had been without power for two days.

Because the snow was so deep -- four to eight foot drifts in some places -- the Soldiers were forced to hike for about three miles up a ridge to the home.

The only way they could maneuver through the snow without sinking was on the snowshoes.

Getting the mother and baby back down the ridge to a waiting Humvee was just as tricky.

"We just wanted to get them out of there to safety," Accor, of Philadelphia, Pa., said. After he got the baby he wrapped it in more blankets and tucked it in his rucksack, then placed heated hand warmers around the blankets to keep the baby warm.

Meanwhile, the woman was placed on an emergency medical extraction sked for evacuation.

"The whole time I was walking through the snow I was happy that the snowshoes didn't break," Accor said.

Once back at the Humvee, the Soldiers transported the mother and baby to a nearby family home.

When asked how they felt about their rescue mission, both Soldiers said they were just doing what they are trained to do.

"It's our job," Accor said. "That's what we are here for."

And what about the now famous snowshoes?

Both pairs are expected to be put on display in the battalion's headquarters.

# Iron Chefs

## 1201st FSC cooks claim national title



Photos by Sgt. Mickey Miller, 153rd Public Affairs Detachment  
Cooks of the 1201st FSC serve troops the meal being judged for the Phillip A. Connelly Excellence in Food Service competition at Camp Dawson.

by Sgt. Mickey Miller  
153rd Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

**KINGWOOD, W.Va.** (Nov. 7, 2009) -- National Guard cooks in the Morgantown-based 1201st Forward Support Company took top prize in the Army's Phillip A. Connelly Excellence in Food Service Competition held in November at Camp Dawson.

"This is another indication of how well the unit is doing in all aspects," said Maj. Gen. John Barnette, Land Component Commander of the West Virginia Army National Guard. "Soldiers are doing a number of things extremely well, and to enter this contest at their busiest time and win is an indication of their dedication and discipline. They're just outstanding," Barnette said.

The annual competition allows food service personnel to showcase their skills and determine the "best of the best" in the National Guard. Cooks in the 1201st outscored their peers at state and regional levels before competing with other field kitchen staffs in the national contest.

Soldiers moved through their stations with a rhythm that appeared intensely rehearsed. Runners took ingredients and handed them to cooks; cooks took ingredients and prepped them. Chefs called out commands: "I need salt, garlic, and ground black pepper!" As one Soldier marinated chicken, another diced celery. Communication between the four cooks was like communication between medics on the battlefield. Soldiers preparing food were at the top of their game.

Sgt. Brian Hall, first cook for the West Virginia team, was in charge of making sure everyone followed the

menu and each food was prepared at the right time.

"This is the best team I've had since I've been in [the military]. I've been in nine years and we just flow so [well]. Everyone has got each others' backs and we work great together. We are all so knowledgeable that we catch each others' mistakes," Hall said.

When preparation was done and Soldiers entered the Mobile Kitchen Trailer, they found cucumbers cut to look like exotic plants garnished with orange peels set around the serving line. Portions were large and the line moved quickly. Cooks transformed into servers, loading plates with rolls and golden brown garlic-roasted potato wedges. Inside the dining tent, troops smiled, laughed and ate like they had done a thousand times before in military dining facilities around the world.

Master Sgt. Franklin Booker, an evaluator for the competition, said it was all about the troops.

"We want to deter Soldiers getting out in the field and saying they are tired of eating the same thing over and over," he said. "Then, Soldiers skip meals and get sick or malnourished. So we promote good eating habits in the field by giving more variety and quality."

Booker explained how military cooks are vital to the mission of the Army. "No Soldier can complete his mission without a healthy diet," he said.

West Virginia is no stranger to the Connelly Competition, having already won five national titles. But past successes do not give Soldiers a false sense of security. The unit's commander, Lt. Col. Clay Coatney, said troops and command staff take the competition seriously.

"There is nothing that would ruin morale more than poor food. This competition enables a commander ... to demonstrate unequivocally how good a food service section you have."



Pfc. Edward Hutwagner adds a touch of class to the serving line.

# Hail!



Photos by Lt. Col. Mike Cadle, JFHQ PAO

Members of the West Virginia National Guard's 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron are greeted by excited family and friends during their recent welcome home ceremonies in Charleston. The Bluefield, W.Va.-based unit spent the last year deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.



# ...and farewell



Soldiers with the 1092nd Engineer Battalion spend time with their families during a deployment ceremony Feb. 25 in Parkersburg, W.Va. The unit is headed to Fort McCoy, Wis., for training before departing to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



Photo by Sgt. Jason Means, 151st Military Police Company

Spc. Joseph Clark, suspended 165 feet above ground, reaches for a tool while dismantling the communications tower at Camp Al-Taqaddum, Iraq.

## **MP troops perform unique mission:** *Dismantle communications tower before transfer of authority*

by Sgt. Jason Means  
151st Military Police Company

**CAMP AL-TAQADDUM, Iraq**  
(January 2010) -- The tower swayed in a gentle breeze as Spc. Joseph Clark climbed nearly 165 feet to reach the communications dish.

Clark, a Soldier in the West Virginia National Guard's 151st Military Police Battalion, was tasked to remove the dish on a communications tower as part of the battle hand-off from U.S. Marine forces to the Army. The base was to be turned over to the government of Iraq.

The main dish at the top of the tower was the largest and most complicated piece of equipment to be removed, and it was to be taken down just days before the base was handed over.

Guard Soldiers had to improvise to get the job done. "Thankfully, one of the beauties about being a

Citizen-Soldier is that you bring a lot of different skill sets to the table," noted Sgt. Jared Major, a non-commissioned officer in the information technology and communications (S-6) section.

"One of our Soldiers has years of experience working on and around structural steel and another has spent time guiding rock climbing, which brings the unique skill sets of knowledgeable rope work and increased safety measures," Major said.

As Clark spun the final nut off the mount, the dish broke free and swung away from the tower. Rigging installed by the motor pool the previous day kept the dish from crashing into the tower, which could have damaged equipment or injured Soldiers involved in the dismantling effort.

Now, with the full weight of the

dish on the lowering rope, Major began letting rope pass around the rigging and through his hands. Soldiers on the ground tugged lightly on guide lines to keep the dish away from the swell at the base of the tower. After a few moments, the dish was on the ground and all involved gave a collective sigh of relief.

As Clark and Major climbed down the tower, the satisfaction of a job well done was evident on the faces of 151st Soldiers involved. The communications tower that had been a static part of the Taqaddum skyline for years seemed to be missing something. Its silhouette on the horizon just didn't look the same. More so, from a visual perspective, it seemed to close the book on a unique chapter in the first deployment of the 151st Military Police Battalion.

# Civil Support Team participates in multi-state training event

by Spc. Anna-Marie Hizer  
JFHQ Public Affairs Office

**CHRISTIANSTED, St. Croix** -- When disaster strikes and homeland security is threatened, members of the West Virginia National Guard's 35th Civil Support Team stand ready to assess, assist and advise local authorities anytime, anywhere they are needed.

Shortly before Christmas, while others were preparing for holiday celebrations, 35th CST members were on the move; mobilized to assist in several mock terrorist training events that took place on the U.S. Virgin Islands of St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas.

The mission began when members of the 23rd CST, U.S. Virgin Islands, were called to assist with a situation at the governor's home on St. Thomas. Additional attacks prompted the mobilization of West Virginia's CST to the airport on St. Croix.

Upon arrival, team leaders were informed that a black computer case onboard an airplane had been identified as a suspicious item.



Members of the 35th CST's Survey Team take readings and retrieve a suspicious computer case onboard an airplane during their exercise. The team members took samples, photos and video to send back to the 'cold zone' for analysis.

Fortunately for citizens and tourists on the islands, the terrorist attacks were not real and any chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear devices found were merely props. However, preparing for disasters gives the CST an edge should something occur in real life.

"There could be a [weapons of mass destruction] attack anywhere in the U.S.," said Maj. Darin Willard, 35th CST commander, "and our ability to get there quickly could save lives."

Willard added that the team has three hours to depart their location after receiving a call.

In addition to testing their day-to-day skills, a trip to the islands offered the team a chance to do something they don't always have the opportunity to experience -- airlift training.

Team members, along with assistance from loadmasters at the 167th Airlift Wing, Martinsburg, W.Va., loaded almost every vehicle and piece of equipment they would need into a C-5 Galaxy aircraft. Then, personnel, vehicles and gear took off

for the flight to St. Croix.

Within 24 hours of arriving on the island, the team's command received a call that problems were arising on all three islands. Team members reported to the airport in Christiansted where an airplane had crashed into a bus. An unidentified package had



Photos by Spc. Anna-Marie Hizer, JFHQ PAO  
Air Force Capt. Mark Beck helps Spc. James Reynolds don his protective gear before heading into an airplane at the St. Croix airport. The aircraft had been reported as a possible contaminated zone by local authorities.

been reported onboard the aircraft.

Tents popped up, decontamination lines rolled out, medical stations were set up, and survey team members donned hazard suits so they could evaluate the situation.

Members took readings to check for contamination and relayed information and video back to the command center before gathering samples to be evaluated in the team's mobile laboratory.

Missions continued well into the night with teams rotating in and out of the "hot zone." Upon their return, each member went through a thorough decontamination before resting and preparing to re-enter the scene. "You typically can't knock it out in just one entry," said Sgt. 1st Class Brian Burns, 35th CST. "You have to have at least two or three [scene entries]."

The team ended their mission successfully, with potential terrorist attacks averted, lives and property saved, and a unique training experience had by all.



photos by Tech. Sgt. Bryan Stevens, 130th

# West Virginia Soldiers, Airmen pl

by Staff Sgt. Sherree Grebenstein  
167th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

**MARTINSBURG, W.Va.** -- Soldiers and Airmen with the West Virginia National Guard provided critical support to several counties in the Mountain State pummeled by back-to-back blizzards in February.

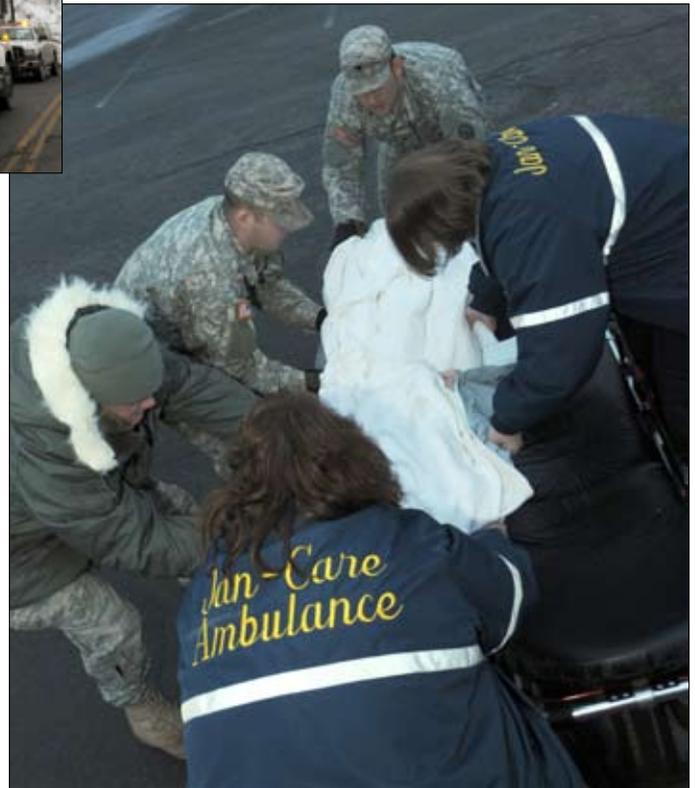
Hundreds of Guard members were deployed in support of Operation February Snowstorm 2010 with task forces positioned in both the Eastern and Northern Panhandles of the state to assist first responders in affected communities. Whether leading the way for emergency medical services personnel responding to a crisis, helping to clear roadways, or conducting health and welfare checks on those stranded by the blizzards, Soldiers and Airmen worked

around the clock to ensure citizens' safety. Task Force Sapper members assisted with operations in the Eastern Panhandle counties of Morgan, Berkeley, Jefferson, Pendleton, Grant, Hardy, Mineral and Hampshire. Guard members assigned to Task Force Thunder focused on operations in snowbound counties in West Virginia's Northern Panhandle. Maj. Brent Schultz, commander of Task Force Sapper, said the Guard played an instrumental role in helping West Virginia communities paralyzed by the two snowstorms, which combined dumped more than three feet of snow in some areas. "We have brought in all of the equipment that the West Virginia National Guard has that we have operators for," Schultz noted, of the

heavy equipment vehicles and clear roadways on snow and ice. "We are running statewide," he said. Sgt. 1st Class Michael Roby, sergeant with Task Force assets -- everything from -- have been spread throughout the Panhandle to help the Transportation clear roads. "We are using all of our assets," Roby said. According to the Civil Engineer Brigade base, the unit is responsible for directing the Task Force Sapper and



Airlift Wing PAO



# ... vital role during blizzard relief

...icles used to open up  
...ce impassable from the

...at maximum capacity

...IC. Roby, an operations  
...ce Sapper, said engineer  
...m plows to dump trucks  
...throughout the Eastern  
...state's Department of  
...adways.

...f the assets available,"

...Guardsmen, the 111th  
...ed in Eleanor, W.Va.,  
...cting missions for both  
...Task Force Thunder.

"They send elements where they are needed," Roby noted.

Military liaison officers based in the different communities worked with local officials from the Division of Highways and Office of Emergency Services to address problems created by the pair of powerful snowstorms.

In Jefferson and Berkeley counties, Guard members were assigned to various fire stations with Humvees at the ready. The Guard contingent assigned to Morgan County was based out of the local emergency services complex off U.S. 522.

"They are up for the challenge," said Air Force Capt. Shawn E. Hutzler of the 167th Airlift Wing, referring to Guard members activated for this state mission. Hutzler,

stationed at Jefferson County's emergency operations center in Kearneysville, W.Va., was among the Airmen from the 167th Airlift Wing in Martinsburg who acted as liaison officers in the various communities.

First Sgt. Chad Money Penny, the non-commissioned officer in charge of Task Force Sapper, said flood duty and overseas deployments have helped Guard members tackle the difficulties presented by the aftermath of the recent blizzards.

"That's experience they have been able to ride on," Money Penny said.

Despite the long days, he said Soldier and Airmen morale is high.

"They have a sense of duty to West Virginia," he said.

# 150th mechanics help keep Iraqi Army running

by Sgt. Joshua Risner  
Multi-National Division-Baghdad Public Affairs

**BAGHDAD** (Sept. 25, 2009) -- Iraqi mechanics were given the chance to work and train alongside their U.S. counterparts during a Humvee maintenance course at Camp Stryker recently.

The course is run by Soldiers of Troop D, 1st Battalion, 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron of the West Virginia National Guard, and has thus far trained five Iraqi Army units, said Sgt. Frank Smith, assigned to Troop D.

"They usually only work on their vehicles when they break down," said Smith, a native of St. Augustine, Fla. "We're teaching them scheduled maintenance, which will hopefully further the life of their vehicles."

The course teaches Iraqi mechanics the ins and outs of maintenance for the Humvee, which includes primary maintenance and service checks, wiring schematics and troubleshooting problems, Smith said.

"We set up faults in our vehicles and have them find and repair them," he said. "We also go through service checks on their vehicles, and we'll help them repair any safety issues



photo by Sgt. Joshua Risner, MND-B

Spc. Stephen Smith (right), from Pineville, W.Va., assigned to Troop D, 1st Battalion, 150th Armored Reconnaissance Squadron, 30th Heavy Brigade Combat Team, observes as an Iraqi mechanic with 2nd Battalion, 23rd Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division, performs hub service on a Humvee. The Iraqi mechanics are attending a two-week course offered by 150th Soldiers, which teaches preventative maintenance on the Humvee.

that we find."

For the Iraqis, a chance to work with American mechanics is a valuable educational experience, said 1st Sgt. Mohammed Hamza, 2nd Battalion, 23rd Brigade, 17th Iraqi Army Division.

"I'm learning things I didn't know about fixing Humvees," he said. "These new things I am learning I will teach to my crew when I get

back to them so when we encounter problems we can fix them."

In addition to training, the Iraqi mechanics are given copies of U.S. Humvee maintenance manuals, written in Arabic, for distribution to their units.

"Now, the American Soldiers can show me something in their manual and I can find it in mine," Hamza said.

---

## 167th Airlift Wing honors hometown heroes

by Staff Sgt. Sherree Grebenstein  
167th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

**MARTINSBURG, W.Va.** (Dec. 6, 2009) -- The 167th Airlift Wing honored more than 400 Airmen at its first-ever Hometown Heroes Salute during December's drill weekend.

The Air National Guard's Hometown Heroes Salute is designed to honor Airmen who served more than 30 days deployed since Sept. 11, 2001. The program also recognizes family members, significant others and centers of influence that contributed to Airmen success.

The first wave of recipients was honored during De-

cember's ceremony, with more Airmen from the 167th Airlift Wing slated to be recognized in the future.

Col. Roger Nye, commander of the 167th Airlift Wing, and Command Chief Master Sgt. John Alderton, presented awards to the Airmen.

Nye lauded the efforts of those who deployed and served selflessly in defense of their country. The Wing commander thanked family members and loved ones who helped Airmen stay focused on the mission abroad. He noted their support at home was key to a successful deployment.

In August 2008, Gen. Craig R. McKinley, Chief of the

National Guard Bureau, sanctioned the ANG Hometown Heroes Salute program. The purpose of this program is to celebrate and honor Airmen, families, communities and those special supporters who have significantly contributed to supporting our Airmen and ANG's mission.

Airmen honored by the Hometown Heroes Salute received a framed HHS coin and a letter of appreciation for their service. Spouses and significant others received an engraved pen and pencil set, with children given unique HHS dog tags.

Airmen also received a "center of influence" medallion that they could give to any person or organization that helped Airmen or their families during the deployment.



photo by Master Sgt. Emily Beightol-Deyerle, 167th AW PAO

Staff Sgt. Troy Baker is presented with a framed letter and coin by Col. Roger Nye, 167th Airlift Wing commander, during the unit's first Hometown Hero Salute program.

## Hercules gets a bath

by Tech. Sgt. Phyllis Keith  
130th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** (Jan. 9, 2010) -- The C-130 Hercules is often described as the workhorse of the airlift fleet.

Its uses include gunship, tanker, bomber, drone mothership, psychological warfare, special operations, electronic intelligence and humanitarian support.

Occasionally, it needs a bath.

"Every 180 days," said Tech. Sgt. Adam Mace, an aircraft mechanic with the 130th Maintenance Squadron at Yeager Airport. "We do this right before every ISO inspection."

ISO, or isochronal inspection, is a phase of aircraft maintenance based on calendar days.

"Right before every ISO inspection, it [plane] comes in and gets washed, and then halfway through this phase, before the next ISO, it gets washed again. So it gets two washes a year," Mace said.

Washing a C-130 is almost the same as washing a car, except the crew uses a heavy industrial soap that is mildly corrosive.

"There's soot from the running of

the engines. On the flap wells you'll have greases, oils, and hydraulic fluids," said Master Sgt. Kraig Thomas, the inspection element supervisor for the 130th Maintenance Squadron.

Maintenance crews use a low pressure spray gun that foams the soap so it clings to the surface of the aircraft and has a longer hang time.

"We start at the bottom and wash our way to the top," Mace said. "We get the landing gear, then we get the wing and the tail, and then we get on top of the wings."



photo by Tech. Sgt. Phyllis Keith, 130th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

The inner structure of a C-130 Hercules is washed during January's drill weekend at the 130th Airlift Wing. This C-130 belongs to the Florida Air National Guard and frequently flies over corrosive salt water, making a thorough cleaning that much more important.

The C-130 being washed belongs to the 125th Fighter Wing, Florida Air National Guard.

"This plane...flies over salt water. Salt water's real corrosive, so it's important that we get it cleaned," Mace said.

The 18-year Air Force veteran said washing an aircraft is just like washing your personal vehicle. He said maintenance crews take a great deal of pride when the water is shut off and they can step back to view the freshly scrubbed airplane.

They just hope it doesn't rain on their clean Hercules, Mace said with a chuckle.

# 167th Airlift Wing aids Haiti relief efforts

by Staff Sgt. Sherree Grebenstein  
167th Airlift Wing Public Affairs Office

**MARTINSBURG, W.Va.** (Jan. 14, 2010) -- Airmen with the West Virginia Air National Guard's 167th Airlift Wing were responsible for ensuring that 385,000 pounds of critical life-saving supplies were delivered to Haiti's earthquake victims via military and civilian aircraft.

On Jan. 14, the air base in Martinsburg, W.Va., was transformed into a staging area for supplies bound for earthquake victims. Over the next few days, hundreds of Airmen from the 167th worked around-the-clock in an effort to load aircraft quickly and safely for humanitarian flights to the airport in Port-au-Prince.

Late on the night of Jan. 13, 16 tractor trailers and eight box trucks full of life-saving supplies were delivered from the Department of Health and Human Services warehouse in Frederick, Md., to the Martins-

burg base, said Jerry Hill, logistics manager for HHS.

The cargo, comprised of medical supplies and equipment, generators, air conditioning units, tents, food and water, was loaded onto aircraft bound for Haiti's capital.

A DC-8, which had made a previous supply run to Haiti from the Martinsburg base, was expected to deliver 43,000 pounds to the airport in Port-au-Prince Tuesday night, Hill said.

In total, 115 aircraft pallets stacked with cargo were loaded onto four aircraft during five flights, he said.

"The support that we have received here from the base was overwhelming," Hill noted.

Hill credits the 167th Airlift Wing with helping to make the humanitarian flights to Haiti so successful.

"[They] should be proud of their accomplishments in supporting this world-wide effort," he said.



photo by Tech. Sgt. Eugene Crist, 130th Airlift Wing PAO

Master Sgt. Michael Rice of the 167th Airlift Wing Maintenance Group adjusts cargo netting on a pallet of medical supplies and equipment to be loaded aboard a C-17 aircraft bound for Port-au-Prince, Haiti. The air base in Martinsburg, W.Va., was transformed Jan. 14 into a staging area for more than 385,000 pounds of relief supplies.

## ARNG aviators participate in South Bound Trooper

story courtesy of  
Company C, 2-104th Aviation

West Virginia Army Guard aviators participated recently in South Bound Trooper Exercise, a multinational joint readiness exercise, at Fort Pickett, Va. Soldiers of Company C, 2-104th Aviation (Witch Doctors) conducted static medical evacuation and nine-line training for more than 300 ground troops.

Witch Doctors then assumed 24-hour real time medical evacuation for the post and conducted tactical medical evacuation scenarios

as part of the exercise. Soldiers evacuated one real-world patient from the post and conducted 35 medical evacuations, responding to five remote village locations similar to those found in Afghanistan, as part of the exercise.

Commander of Canadian Forces, Lt. Col. Knapp, visited the Witch Doctors and thanked them for participating. "I greatly appreciated the medical evacuation support and training," the commander said.

The Canadian Forces operations officer also commented on West

Virginia aviation support. "If the only training that had been conducted was medical evacuation training, then the trip would have been worth it," said Maj. Graham. The major also conveyed how heavily Canadian Forces rely on U.S. medical evacuation units in Afghanistan.

South Bound Trooper exercise is a train-up for duty in Afghanistan. The exercise was attended by all branches of U.S. armed forces, as well as elements of the Canadian and British militaries.

# HAMMER TIME!

## WV engineers improve quality of life for U.S. forces

by Lt. Col. Mike Cadle  
JFHQ Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON** (March 2010) -- As U.S. forces work hand-in-hand with their Iraqi counterparts, sharing training experiences and tactics, the need for more living, recreational, and mess facilities has increased greatly. Enter the West Virginia Army National Guard's 115th Vertical Construction Company.

The Clarksburg-based unit is working hard to improve living conditions for Soldiers based at many austere locations within the unit's area of operations. A recent mission found West Virginia engineers constructing four buildings to house Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry Regiment, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division from Fort Riley, Kan.

Capt. Todd Justice, 115th commander, said his Soldiers are doing great work. "I feel we have represented the West Virginia Army National Guard and the great people of West Virginia proudly," Justice said. "Being in command for nearly four years, I can tell you I am truly blessed to have the soldiers that are in the 115th."

The 115th has constructed huts and improved living conditions at more than 15 combat outposts and forward operating bases in United States Division-North area of operations, and built the first four indirect fire protection huts in Iraq.

Officers in the 115th's higher headquarters heaped high praise on the unit.

"Soldiers of the 115th are doing



courtesy photo

Soldiers with the 115th Vertical Construction Company, West Virginia National Guard, work on a project in Iraq. The unit is deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and members are working to improve living conditions for service members based at remote locations throughout the Area of Operations.

extremely professional work," said Maj. Aaron W. Reisinger, operations officer for the 65th Engineer Battalion. "They have a tremendous level of pride and commitment to providing the highest quality of workmanship possible for the Soldiers they are supporting."

115th Soldiers are nearing the end of their Operation Iraqi Freedom deployment and at one time were the only vertical construction company in the USD-North region. Soldiers are based at Contingency Operating Base Marez in Mosul, Iraq, and have worked to the Syrian border in the west and from Mosul in the north to Balad in the south.

Justice told of a chance meeting between one of his Soldiers, Capt. Shaun Kuhn, 38, of Littleton, W.Va., and Lt. Gen. Charles Jacoby, com-

mander of United States Corps-Iraq, which illustrates the scope of the unit's mission.

"Lieutenant General Jacoby ran into Captain Shaun Kuhn a couple months ago while Kuhn was working at an outpost near Balad. The general had seen Kuhn only a month earlier in Sinjar. General Jacoby laughingly asked Kuhn just how far the unit would go for work."

Justice added, "Lieutenant General Jacoby has handed out [more than] 15 coins to 115th Soldiers, which means a lot to them considering most Soldiers go a lifetime without ever meeting a lieutenant general."

The unit is scheduled to return from Iraq later this year.

*Editor's note: Spc. Jared Sollars, 145th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, contributed to this article.*

# EOD soldiers work, train with foreign troops in Kosovo

by Capt. Gina Jenkins  
Commander, 753rd Ordnance Company

**CAMP BONDSTEEL, Kosovo** (December 2009) -- The Kingwood-based 753rd Ordnance Company Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) is currently deployed to Camp Bondsteel, Kosovo. The unit's mission is to minimize hazards of unexploded ordnance, UXO awareness training and force protection.

During the deployment, 753rd members got the unique experience of working with their counterparts from all over the world. West Virginia Soldiers appreciated the op-

portunity to interact with other EOD units from Ireland, Sweden, France, Italy, and Germany.

"Spending the time working and training with the other foreign EOD units is one of the biggest advantages of being deployed here in Kosovo," said Spc. Casey Myers. "It's a great opportunity to see how other nations operate and a great chance to see other tools, equipment, and procedures in action."

Recently, the 753rd assisted the Irish contingent in destroying ammunition and explosives ordnance that they could not transport back



photos courtesy of 753rd EOD

to their home country. It took the entire day to destroy 2,500 pounds of ammunition and explosives ordnance, but it was an enjoyable day for all who participated.

Mountain State Soldiers also conduct regular training with their international counterparts in order to keep their skills sharp and to learn different techniques. While some of this training is serious, much of it culminates in contests between the various groups, either in the form of robot obstacle courses or hook and line races where operators have to race to be the fastest to remotely move an item properly.

The 753rd recently hosted European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo EOD, which is a European law enforcement group made up of different nationalities. On this day, the group had members from Italy, Poland and Finland participating. The EULEX team leader, Vili-Sakari Monkare of Finland, said, "It was very nice and important to get together and have joint training, to share information and technical things."



Soldiers with the 753rd Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company work with their counterparts from across the globe during their deployment to Kosovo. The unit also recently hosted the European Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo EOD. The exercise included members from Italy, Poland and Finland.

## OCS graduates pin on new rank

(Clockwise from left) Officer Candidate Jared Lanham receives his branch pinning from his uncle, Lt. Cmdr. (Ret.) Larry Collins. Maj. Gen. John Barnette, Land Component Commander, passes out coins to the five graduating officer candidates. Officer Candidate Ryan Radcliff receives his branch pin from his daughter, Abigail, and wife, Letosha, during his Officer Candidate School Graduation at Camp Dawson in October.



Graduating candidates faced many physical and mental challenges during their time at the W.Va. National Guard Officer Candidate School. According to school leaders, the course is now more focused on mentoring and leadership with an emphasis on time management. Speakers during the graduation ceremony noted the current operational climate that the new second lieutenants are entering.

"This is the best time for you to serve, but it is also the worst," Barnette said. "You are going to be leading men and women into combat ... you will make a difference."



photos by Spc. Anna-Marie Hizer, JFHQ PAO

# In history: West Virginia Guardsmen have grand past

by Dr. Kenneth Bailey  
National Guard Historian

*Editor's note: The following is Part 1 of a multi-article series on the history of the West Virginia National Guard.*

Current members of the West Virginia National Guard are continuing a tradition of service that dates to 1735.

The first militia company formed in what is now West Virginia was organized by Morgan Morgan in Frederick (now Berkeley) County in February 1735, when Morgan received a commission as captain of militia from the Governor of Virginia.

Frederick County was the frontier -- the first line of protection for eastern Virginia from Native Americans, who resisted encroachment on hunting lands, and the French, who had laid claim to the Mississippi and Ohio River Valleys.

The concept of a militia came to

the New World from England with the first English settlers. English monarchs had depended on the ability to create armies using a cadre of professional soldiers as trainers and leaders. The concept of using volunteer/part-time soldiers fit well with a frontier environment considering the cost of maintaining full-time soldiers in widely dispersed areas.

Militiamen staffed frontier forts, built to provide refuge for settlers and their families, and were frequently called on to repel Indian raids.

During the French and Indian War, militiamen from present day West Virginia twice served under George Washington. In the first instance they were with him when he had to surrender at Fort Necessity after failing to dislodge the French from Fort Duquesne. They later were under Washington again as "colonial" forces assigned to English General Edward Braddock's army.

Braddock also failed in his attempt to capture Fort Duquesne and nearly lost his army to an enemy whose frontier fighting tactics decimated his European style battle formations.

Washington's troops, who were adept at frontier combat, were credited with keeping Braddock's British Regulars from being destroyed by French and Indian forces.

During the Revolutionary War, militia units from what is now West Virginia's eastern panhandle engaged in many battles, including the Battle of Quebec where they fought under Benedict Arnold.

Others were with George Washington in action in New York and Pennsylvania; George Rogers Clark in the Illinois Territory at Kaskaskia, Vincennes and Cahokia; and were engaged in repelling Indian raids at Fort Randolph, Fort Henry and Fort Donnally.

# Guard finds downed Navy helicopter, helps rescue all 17 passengers

by Lt. Col. Mike Cadle  
JFHQ Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON** (March 22, 2010) -- Adjutant General Allen Tackett said the National Guard's work to rescue 17 survivors of a Navy helicopter that crashed in remote Pocahontas County on Feb. 17 is "something I thought I'd see as a story on television someday."

The MH-60S Knighthawk helicopter was involved in an international training exercise and flying a mission from Fort Pickett, Va., to Camp Dawson, W.Va., when it went down in rugged, snow-covered terrain about three miles northwest of Snowshoe Mountain Resort.

The rescue was made possible when a W.Va. Air Guard C-130 Hercules aircraft was diverted from

its original flight plan to look for the helicopter. The C-130 located the downed helicopter after picking up a distress signal on the helicopter's emergency radio frequency. "We kept calling out the helicopter's call sign, and it was really exciting when they finally answered us. We didn't know if we were going to find anything," said Lt. Col. Brian Preece, pilot of the C-130.

C-130 crew members were able to direct a W.Va. Army Guard Blackhawk helicopter through deteriorating weather to the site. Once on site, flight medics from the Williamstown-based 2nd Battalion, 104th Aviation were hoisted to the ground and worked through the night to stabilize injured survivors and coordinate rescue efforts.

The Blackhawk, running low on

fuel and operating in minimum flight conditions, was forced to leave the medics behind and flew to the National Radio Astronomy Observatory at Green Bank, W.Va., to coordinate ground rescue efforts.

Spc. Casey Dunfee was the first medic to be hoisted, but the young soldier didn't have a smooth ride to the ground. "My foot got caught in the trees and I went inverted and landed in the snow on my back," Dunfee said. "I sank about eight inches in the soft snow, but when I stood up I sank up to my chest."

After the second medic, Staff Sgt. Nicole Hopkins, was lowered, it took the Soldiers nearly two hours to reach the site, even though they had been lowered only 200 yards from the wreckage. "We were in chest deep snow and on about a 50



to 60 degree incline. "Somebody threw us a rope to help us get to the top of the hill."

Hopkins said the survivors had done a good job of basic first aid, but there was plenty of work for the flight medics.

"There were plenty of scrapes and bruises and broken bones consistent with this type of crash," Hopkins said. "Some survivors had more serious injuries. Two of the most seriously injured had a broken back and crushed pelvis and were kept in the helicopter's fuselage," she said. Hopkins lay between these survivors through the night to keep them warm and alert.

National Guard rescuers and local emergency responders from Shavers Fork Volunteer Fire Dept. and

Snowshoe Mountain Resort used a grader to cut a makeshift road through the deep snow, but they had to go the last few miles on Arctic Snowcat vehicles and snow mobiles. They were finally able to reach the crash site about 11 hours after the helicopter went down. It took another 10 hours to get all survivors off the crash site and transported to Davis Memorial Hospital in Elkins, W.Va, for treatment.

Capt. Steve Schreiber, commodore of the Navy's Helicopter Sea Combat Wing Atlantic, lavished great praise on those involved in rescue efforts. "I'd like to thank the West Virginia National Guard and local responders for their heroic work," Schreiber said. Their efforts were extraordinary and took place

under the most difficult of situations. The rescuers had to traverse more than three miles from the nearest road through heavily wooded and mountainous terrain to reach the crash site."

Schreiber and other Navy officials recognized rescuers at a ceremony in Elkins on March 10. At the ceremony, Schreiber said, "I truly don't have words that can express how thankful I am and the Navy is for what everyone in this room, and those who couldn't make it here today, have done for all 17 of our crew to get them off that mountain."

West Virginia Governor Joe Manchin III and members of the State Senate also recognized National Guard rescuers during a ceremony at the State Capitol on March 12.

## Army Guard soldiers survive crash, aid others on board

by Lt. Col. Mike Cadle  
JFHQ Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** -- Three West Virginia Army Guard soldiers had no idea the Navy helicopter carrying them from Fort Pickett, Va., to Camp Dawson, W.Va., on Feb. 17 was about to crash on a remote, snow-covered mountain in Pocahontas County.

Staff Sgt. Jeremy Middleton told the Charleston Gazette that "the aircrew was pretty poker-faced. We felt it flare and, almost at the same time, heard it hitting the trees," Middleton said, describing the crash.

Middleton, Sgt. 1st Class Josh Flesher and Spc. Ian Jenkins were participating in Operation Southbound Trooper, an international training exercise involving U.S. and North Atlantic Treaty Organization military forces. Seventeen Soldiers, Sailors and Marines were aboard the MH-60S Nighthawk helicopter when it went down just north of Snowshoe Mountain resort near Davis, W.Va.

None of the West Virginia Soldiers were seriously injured in the crash, although Middleton received a cut on the jaw from a rifle butt that was jarred loose during the crash.

Realizing that survivors needed help, Mountain State Soldiers began helping the injured and built a warming fire to keep survivors from freezing to death on the rugged mountain.

Flesher told the Gazette, "It all happened so fast, and there was so much to do, you didn't have much time to think about what had just happened. The training kicked in, and everybody started working together. Nobody was sitting around saying, 'Oh my God, we're gonna die,' or anything."

Jenkins, Flesher and Middleton quickly decided they had to get help for the injured survivors, including two that were pinned beneath the helicopter's fuselage, which, miraculously, was mostly in tact.

The Mountain State Guardsmen began a slow trek down the mountain through four to five foot snow. It took the Soldiers about two hours to go one mile.

Middleton said as day turned to night the Soldiers tired and didn't know exactly where they were and how far they had to go for help. The group built a snow cave, using spruce branches for insulation, and waited for rescue.

Rescue came several hours later when Army Guard medics from Flesher's and Jenkins' unit, the "Witch Doctors" of C Company, 2/104th Aviation, accompanied by first responders from Snowshoe Mountain resort and several local emergency management agencies, used the Soldiers' tracks in the snow to locate the trio and evacuate them to safety.

# News You Can Use

---

## **Walt Disney Orlando tickets for military members, retirees**

From Jan. 3 to July 31, 2010, active and retired U.S. military, National Guard or Reserves, may purchase four-day Walt Disney World Armed Forces Salute tickets for themselves and up to five family members or friends for \$99 per individual.

For more information, visit <http://www.shadesofgreen.org/4day.PNG>.

## **HooahMail tested in Afghanistan**

The Army is introducing a new way for families and friends to communicate with loved ones deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Beginning Dec. 1, 2009, the Army launched "HooahMail" as a program for correspondence to OEF Soldiers.

For more information, visit <https://forums.bcks.army.mil/CommunityBrowser.aspx?id=947099>.

## **Text messaging while driving**

Federal employees shall not engage in text messaging (a) when driving GOV, or when driving POV while on official Government business.

## **Home buyer credit extended**

The National Association of Home Builders wants members of the military to know they may have an additional year to buy a home and claim the home buyer tax credit.

Service members who served on official extended duty outside of the United States for 90 days or more any time between Jan. 1, 2009, to April 30, 2010, are eligible.

For more information, please visit [www.FederalHousingTaxCredit.com](http://www.FederalHousingTaxCredit.com).

## **WV Veterans' Education Benefits**

West Virginia Legislature renewed its allocation of \$270,000 in grant monies for veterans' pursuit of education.

For more information, contact Capt. Jason Webb, 304-561-6366.

## **JSS Web site provides valuable info**

Warrior and family support are top priorities for state leadership. To aid in achieving these priorities, NGB established the Joint Services Support Web site.

The site provides a suite of tools that deliver program services to the National Guard community.

Visit [www.jointsservicesupport.com](http://www.jointsservicesupport.com).

## **Motorcycle training course schedule**

June 12: Experienced Riders Course; Summersville

June 26-27: Basic Rider Course; Eleanor

June 26: Experienced Riders Course; Williamstown (AASF1)

July 17-18: Basic Rider Course; Wheeling (AASF2)

July 17: Experienced Riders Course; Wheeling (AASF2)

July 17: Military Sports Bike Rider Course; Summersville

August 7-8: Basic Rider Course; Williamstown (AASF1)

August 15-22: Rider Coach Prep; Elkins

August 21-22: Basic Rider Course; Elkins

August 21-22: Basic Rider Course; 130th Airlift Wing

August 28-29: Basic Rider Course; Eleanor

September 11-12: Basic Rider Course; 130th Airlift Wing

September 11-12: Basic Rider Course; Eleanor

September 24-26: Military Sports Bike Rider Coach Course; 130th Airlift Wing

September 26: Military Sports Bike Rider Course; 130th Airlift Wing