



# MOUNTAINEER **DEFENDER**

Magazine of the West Virginia National Guard



**WVNG Soldiers, Airmen  
aid tornado victims**

**Technology works for  
State Duty missions**

**Bringing relief to flood  
ravaged communities**

**Soldiers return to  
Mountain State**

**SPRING 2012**

# MOUNTAINEER DEFENDER

Magazine of the  
West Virginia National Guard  
Spring 2012

Command Messages	3
Making time for your health	4
Guard members aid tornado victim	5
WVNG uses technology for State Duty	6
167th Airlift Wing receives new fire truck	7
Around the West Virginia National Guard	8
WVNG members aid flood victims in Logan County	10
Flight Medic honored for heroic actions	11
Airman steps up to honor veteran	12
130th Airlift Wing welcomes new commander	13
Family, friends welcome home West Virginia Soldiers	14
New armories to be constructed across the state	15

Page  
5



Page  
6



Page  
7

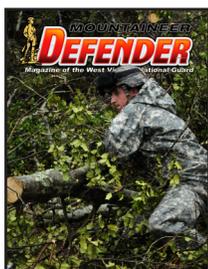


Page  
11



### We're online!

Access this and previous issues of Defender Magazine! Use your iPhone or Android app to scan the QR Code to the right.



### On the cover:

Spc. Stephen McDaniel, assigned to 1/201 Field Artillery Headquarters from Fairmont, W.Va., pulls tree limbs out of a flooded creek bed in Khaisville, W.Va., March 8. McDaniel and other Soldiers work in conjunction with the Department of Highway to prevent future flooding from clogged runoff drains and rivers.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Debra Richardson, 153rd Public Affairs Detachment



**Adjutant General**  
Maj. Gen. James A. Hoyer

**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. David Lester

**Design & Layout**  
Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward

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  
1703 Coonskin Drive  
Charleston, WV 25311

or

MountaineerDefender@ng.army.mil  
visit us on Facebook  
[www.facebook.com/WV.NationalGuard](http://www.facebook.com/WV.NationalGuard)



## The Adjutant General

The West Virginia National Guard is doing great things for our state and our Nation.

We have Airmen in Afghanistan and Soldiers performing missions in Africa.

We responded earlier this year to tornados and floods in southern West Virginia and provided our citizens much needed assistance and relief.

I am humbled each day knowing that I have the best job in America, "taking care of West Virginia Soldiers and Airmen." I can think of no higher honor than to serve you.

Recently I distributed my priorities as your Adjutant General. These priorities go right to the heart of treating people with dignity and respect.

### *TAG Priorities*

- *Support and Care for the WVNG Family*
- *Maintain Values, Integrity and Character.*
- *Maintain Individual and Unit Readiness*



**Maj. Gen. James A. Hoyer**

- *Tell our Story Through our People*
- *Do Business the Right Way*

- *Demonstrate and Enhance Relevance*
  - *Tie our units and missions to national strategies and requirements*
  - *Support national strategies with WV unique capabilities*
- *Develop the Next Generation of WV Leaders*
- *Maximize Innovation and Technology*

I will always adhere to these priorities and I expect no less from each one of you.

The one thing we "do right" in the WVNG is take care of our people. One young Soldier recently fell on hard times as she was transitioning from another state to the WVNG. During this time, she was without a place to stay and her Senior NCOs found out. They requested help from the West Virginia National Guard Foundation and found her lodging within a day.

Thanks to all for helping her out and showing Mountaineer Pride Worldwide!

## The State Senior Enlisted Leader

Will I be selected for retention in the West Virginia National Guard by the Enlisted Qualitative Retention Board this year? This is one of the many questions I'm asked by our seasoned Soldiers. Without a doubt, the standards of being qualified for retention have increased. Becoming an operational force has added more responsibilities and demands a higher degree of commitment to duty as well as a higher standard of personal readiness to our Soldiers and Airmen.

The question; "Will I be retained?" can sometimes be answered by reviewing our own records. Some questions to ask are: Have I completed my military education requirements to be selected to next higher grade? Do my NCOERs reflect my duty performance as a quality Soldier? Do I review my military records on a regular basis to ensure they're up to date with all pertinent data? Did my last APFT and weigh-in reflect the best

qualified and motivated Soldier? These are just a few questions we need to be asking ourselves once we reach a point in our career in which the EQRB will be deciding if we should be recommended for retention in the WVNG.

Some ask the question: How do I improve my retention possibilities? Keep yourself relevant; ensure you're always in a promotable status, keep fit and within the height and weight standards, seek self improvement by enrolling in and attending training. If you're a senior grade NCO, consider attending the First Sergeant or Command Sergeant Major Selection Board, always ensure your records reflect a relevant soldier.

To meet the missions and challenges in the future, the WVNG must retain the "Best Qualified" to be successful. We must be committed, relevant, and steadfast in supporting our communities, state and nation today and in the future.



**Command Sgt. Maj. Vance**

EQRB; take it seriously, be prepared, and ensure your records reflect the best qualified for retention! Remember, your family, state and nation depend on you!

The West Virginia National Guard; Always ready and always there!

## The State Command Chief Master Sergeant



**Command Chief Master Sgt. Bowe**

My last six years as your Command Chief have been both challenging and rewarding. The best part of my job is seeing the great things our people are accomplishing. I'm constantly amazed by your selfless dedication and ceaseless efforts,

and I brag about you to whoever will listen.

While we have accomplished great things, new challenges are on the horizon. It should be apparent that the high operations tempo is not going away soon. Constant change is going to be with us from now on and we must stay focused to meet these challenges.

Senior leadership knows how hard you are working. You are our first priority.

I believe the enlisted force will shape the way the Air National Guard meets the challenges of the future. Of the approximately 106,000 people in the Air National Guard, about 2,058 proudly wear stripes for the state of West Virginia.

Airmen -- we need your enthusiasm, energy and technological expertise focused on the mission every day. Remember that being a good follower is a prerequisite to being a good leader.

Be proud of what you do and the contributions you're making to keep our nation free.

Junior NCOs -- we are depending on you to shape our Airmen and give them the tools they need. No one knows your people like you do. Train them, care about them, hold them accountable, reward them, then sit back and watch them soar.

Senior NCOs -- take your experience and focus it toward your people. Move obstacles that keep them from efficiency, listen to their ideas, be their advocate. Make those that come behind you better NCOs than you and I are today.

The role of the enlisted force is more important now than ever. Our Air National Guard will continue to transform. New technologies and joint operations are on the horizon. The one constant will be our nation's reliance on you to make the mission happen every day.

# Thank you ...

*It's truly an honor to serve as the Governor of the Great State of West Virginia. Every day is filled with opportunity to showcase all that is good about the Mountain State -- including the men and women of the West Virginia National Guard.*

*I'm always amazed by the diverse group of professionals who make up the West Virginia National Guard. And although I've always been a devoted supporter of our Guardsmen and women, I had the recent opportunity to witness firsthand the commitment, hard work and selfless service that makes these men and women remarkable.*

*In early March, tornadoes, strong winds and torrential rains devastated many West Virginia communities. With the assistance of the WVNG, I was able to get into the affected communities, assess the damage firsthand and talk to West Virginians shaken by the storms. Although the damage to businesses and homes was heartbreaking; I saw a tremendous outpouring of aid from first responders, churches, the West Virginia Department of Highways and various community groups. And in each community, I saw the comforting uniforms of the WVNG.*

*You may not believe your uniform is comforting. But believe me, when West Virginians see you, our Guardsmen and women, they see someone who will always answer the call for help -- whether it's down the street or halfway around the world. They see instant relief and understand they are not alone because you stand beside them, providing aid and comfort, pulling debris out of their yards, removing mud from their homes and making the roadways and hillsides safe. And when you're halfway around the world, you always ensure our safety and defend our freedom, so that we can enjoy our wonderful quality of life. Whether in Afghanistan or the hills of West Virginia, you stand straight and tall and we know that you are there.*

*Far too often we've wished our Guard members well, with heavy hearts as they depart for tours half-way around the world. I understand deployments are tough on Guard members and often just as difficult for the families who must wait at home. I've seen the grief and anxiety on their faces as you leave on a mission and I've been witness to the sheer joy and happiness expressed when you return home. I extend my sincerest appreciation to your families who remain strong and patiently await your return.*

*I'm honored to be your Governor. And I'm proud that West Virginia has the best National Guard in the United States of America.*

*God Bless you! And God Bless the Great State of West Virginia!*

*Best regards,  
Earl Ray Tomblin  
Governor*

## News You Can Use

### **Blog offers tips, ideas for families of deployed servicemembers**

While You Were Away is committed to providing resources and training to develop resiliency and strengthen families. Our primary aim is to provide products, resources and services that not only support children, teens and families but strengthen and give them resiliency skills that will last a lifetime.

Megan Egerton Graham is the author and creator of the While You Were Away series of books. Her husband continues to be

an active member of the Canadian armed forces.

For information and tips, please visit <http://blog.whileyouwereaway.org>.

### **Program offers healing for wounded warriors**

The mission of Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing is to assist in the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active duty military personnel and veterans through fly fishing and fly tying education and outings.

For more information, please visit [www.projecthealingwaters.org](http://www.projecthealingwaters.org).

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

### **Website offers tutor services for military families**

The Defense Department offers military families access to free, online tutoring at Tutor.com. The site offers professional tutors who can assist with homework, studying and test preparation. Services are available to students of any age -- from kindergartners to high school seniors -- with help offered in more than 16 subjects.

For more information, please visit <http://www.tutor.com/military>.

# Guard members help rescue tornado victim

by Staff Sgt. Debra Richardson  
153rd Public Affairs Detachment

## KIAHSVILLE, W.Va. (March 7, 2012)

-- On the evening of March 2, Janet Lynn Porterfield, 55, of Kiahsville, W.Va., was doing something most of the state was doing: watching the development of a tornado on TV.

But unlike most of the state, as she



Spc. Timothy Copley, an infantryman with the West Virginia Army National Guard, picks up an unscathed picture from the ruins of Kiahsville resident Janet Porterfield's home March 5. Porterfield was trapped in her house for three days as National Guard Soldiers and Department of Highway workers struggled to clear fallen trees and debris out of the road. Porterfield, 55, suffers from arthritis and was unable to make the two-mile hike from her tornado-damaged house to the main highway to seek help. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debra Richardson, 153rd Public Affairs Detachment)

watched the hook of the tornado begin to develop on the television screen, Porterfield heard the roar of the tornado as it approached her house.

"I told my nephew to grab the kids and I ran into the bedroom, pulled a mattress off the bed, and pulled it over top us as we crouched underneath the stairs," Porterfield said.

The tornado hovered over Porterfield's house for a mere minute and -- in the first few seconds of the aftermath -- it appeared that nothing had been damaged.

"I walked to the front door and my mouth dropped open," Porterfield said. "All the beautiful, strong trees were gone. Even in the dark, I knew the tornado had wiped out the entire valley."

The tin roof was stripped from the house and one of the bedroom walls was carried away like feathers on the wind. After the wind subsided, the rain began and as the night drew on, the rain turned into snow.

"It was the worst minute of my life," Porterfield exclaimed. "I wondered whether March was going to come in as a lamb or

a lion and on the second day, it came in roaring."

The following morning, Porterfield's nephew began the long hike out of the devastated valley with his wife and two children to seek help. Porterfield, suffering from arthritis, was unable to make the trek. She remained in her home without food, water or power.

"A few department of highway guys told us that an elderly woman was stranded in her house," explained Spc. Shaun Olds, a heavy equipment operator with the 821st Engineer Company, Summersville, W.Va.

After two days of clearing trees out of the road, Olds was able to drive a humvee all the way down to the house to pick up Porterfield and bring her to safety.

"She was very excited when she saw the humvee," Olds said. "She thanked us repeatedly but we were just glad to see she was okay and in good spirits."

Porterfield and her nephew are currently in the process of acquiring materials to rebuild the roof. While the task of cleaning up the downed trees and strewn materials is overwhelming, Porterfield keeps a smile on her face as she cleans up the yard, one artifact after another.

"There's nothing left to do but smile and get on with the work," she said.

# Engineer Soldiers help clear debris after storms

by Staff Sgt. Debra Richardson  
153rd Public Affairs Detachment

## DUNLOW, W.Va. (March 7, 2012) --

Members of the 601st Engineer Company from Buckhannon, W.Va., have been working in conjunction with the state Department of Forestry to clear fallen trees and debris from roads following a tornado that ripped through the area late last week.

"We were originally on duty in Marion County but they still needed help down here in Dunlow so we came down to help," said Sgt. Joe Johnson, a horizontal construction engineer.

The first day on the job for 601st Eng. Co. members consisted of using loaders to pick up large trees to be carried to dump sites by Army five-ton trucks.

"If there were more forestry guys we'd ask them to saw these trees a little smaller so instead of using the loader, we could throw them in the truck by hand," said Spc. Chad Ruggles. "It's tedious work to use the loader and although it requires more physical work on our part, it would make the job quicker."

Ruggles and others wanted to speed up the process of clearing the trees due to the

amount of vehicle traffic using the road. While using the loader, traffic was backed up for nearly a mile and Soldiers had to work in 10-minute increments to allow for proper flow of traffic.

"We're mainly focused on clearing the main roads right now," Ruggles said. "We have to ensure the power companies have access to the town so they can begin working on restoring power."

A few minutes before work, Chaplain (Capt.) Joe Ward with the 1092nd Engineer Battalion arrived on sight to offer praise and support to the servicemembers.

"My mission is Soldiers first so I came down here to check on the Soldiers," Ward said.

Ward spoke to the Soldiers as they prepared to take a lunch break, shaking hands and giving air high-fives to those still in the loaders.

"It's a moral booster to have Chaplain Ward here and it's really encouraging when people drive by and give us a thumbs-up and the kids give us mock-salutes," Ruggles said. "We're happy to be here, helping the residents, and it feels good to know we're making an impact after so many people lost so much."



Sgt. Joe Johnson operates a loader in Dunlow, W.Va., Wednesday March 7. Johnson's mission is to remove the large trees and debris from the main highway. The W.Va. Department of Forestry aids by cutting up any large trees with chainsaws so the pieces will fit inside five-ton trucks. (U.S. Army photo by Staff Sgt. Debra Richardson, 153rd Public Affairs Detachment)

# WVNG members use technology to aid relief efforts

by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward  
JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** (March 12, 2012) -- March roared into the Mountain State with a tornado that devastated parts of West Virginia's southwestern counties and flooding in one central county.

Members of the West Virginia National Guard deployed to these areas with water, food, dump trucks and other life-saving equipment. In addition, some Soldiers carried a new piece of technology to assist

them in their disaster relief efforts ... an iPad.

Apple's popular device is just one piece of a larger technological advancement that allows the West Virginia National Guard and other state agencies such as the Department of Highways and Department of Transportation to maintain a common operational picture.

The network program, West Virginia Common Operating Picture, provides real-time access to critical information, through custom web-accessible alert and analytical

tools, reducing emergency response time and improving coordination efforts. The system enables statewide access to information sharing and coordination between senior leadership, National Guard forces, emergency first responders, law enforcement agencies and the general public.

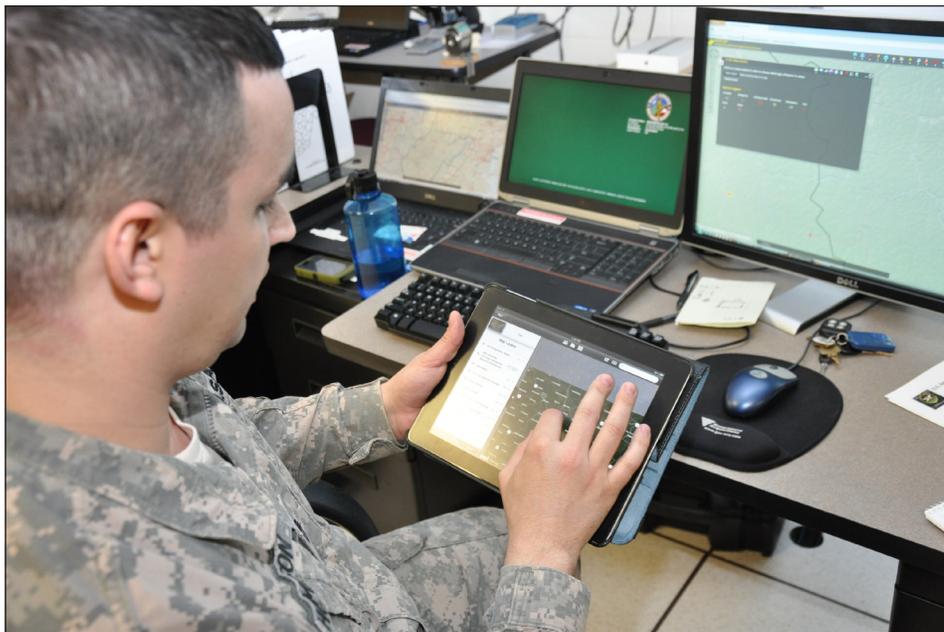
"[The program] makes sure all of our interagency partners have a common operational picture and that everyone is on the same page," said Staff Sgt. Timmy L. Thompson, Joint Operations Center noncommissioned officer in charge. "It eliminates overtaking of efforts."

In addition to streamlining efforts, the new program also helps provide a clearer picture of what is going on during the chaos of a disaster relief scenario.

This allows multiple users at both desktop stations and mobile locations, to use the latest geospatial technologies to aid in relief efforts.

"[WVCOP] contains maps with layers and data on the common operating picture. The system can also show current weather conditions and the status of rivers," Thompson said. "It also contains infrastructure data. That is one of our biggest concerns during a flood -- what's going on with the power, water, schools, police stations ... all of this information is collected by multiple state agencies."

West Virginia was one of a handful of states to integrate this type of technology package into their interagency operation system. WVCOP can be used for any scenario that would require multiple agencies to work together toward a common goal.



Staff Sgt. Timmy L. Thompson, Joint Operations Center noncommissioned officer in charge, demonstrates the West Virginia Common Operating Picture program on an iPad. The new system, used by multiple state agencies as well as the WV National Guard, streamlines efforts and provides a clearer "snapshot" of what is happening during a disaster relief effort. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward, JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Office)

## Service members recognize Day of Prayer

by Sgt. Sara Yoke  
153rd Public Affairs Detachment

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** (May 3, 2012) -- The sun peaked over the West Virginia mountain when members of the West Virginia Army and Air National Guard gathered outside the Joint Headquarters flagpole today to recognize the National Day of Prayer.

The National Day of Prayer is an annual observance held the first Thursday of May. It invites people of all faiths to pray for the nation.

After a moving prayer at the flagpole, participants moved inside. Donated food, including biscuits and gravy, fresh fruit,

donuts, bagels, juice and coffee, was provided by the West Virginia National Guard Family Support Group. Everyone settled in to have breakfast and converse.

Maj. Gen. James Hoyer, West Virginia's Adjutant General, addressed those in attendance. He spoke about the importance of our right to pray and speak openly about faith in the United States as other nations do not value that right.

Following Hoyer's remarks, a single candle was lit to represent those West Virginia service members who passed away in the past year. The candle was back-dropped by a colorful vase of flowers, the American flag and the West Virginia state flag.

Command Sgt. Maj. Kevin Harry, com-

mand sergeant major, WV Army National Guard, said it is important that family members still feel like they have a connection with the West Virginia National Guard even after their loved one's death.

After the lighting of the candle and his memorial remarks, Harry slowly read off the names of those who lost their lives in the past year, pausing between each name.

Chaplain (Col.) Bruce Reed concluded the ceremony by asking those in attendance to take the time later to look at the names on the back of the memorial brochure and reflect on their memory. After a moment of silence, everyone was dismissed from the room, moving quietly while the memorial flame still flickered.

# 167th Fire Department receives multi-purpose truck

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

**MARTINSBURG, W.Va.** (April 16, 2012)

-- The 167th Airlift Wing's Fire Department recently took possession of a ladder/pumper combination fire truck.

Like with any new vehicle, the Wing's firefighters checked the newest addition to the fleet from top to bottom: turning knobs, flipping switches, and even stretching the truck's 75-foot aluminum ladder to its maximum height.

Joseph Cederroth, a field representative from E-ONE, Inc. based in Ocala, Fla., was on hand to answer questions and offer advice as the Wing's firefighters from all three shifts became familiarized with the HP 75 quint fire truck.

Senior Master Sgt. Jeffrey Gengler, fire chief for the 167th Airlift Wing, said the base received the truck in early March because the National Guard Bureau had requested the C-5 unit receive one.

The HP 75 is a multi-purpose fire truck that can transport a crew of five. Currently eight of the Wing's firefighters are licensed to drive it.

"It's pretty much everything in one package," Cederroth said. "It's a very popular truck because of the size and that it can be used for multi-purposes."

"My job is to make sure that everyone is comfortable using it," he added.

Master Sgt. Bruce Chrisman, assistant chief of training for the Wing's Fire Department, said the HP 75 is limited in numbers so he's happy one could find a home at the base's Fire Department.

"It's the same type of truck that you would see in your local community fire department," Chrisman noted.



An HP 75 quint fire truck, a ladder/pumper combination, was recently added to the 167th Fire Departments equipment inventory. (Air National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Sherree Grebenstein)

E-ONE, Inc. built the quint fire truck in sections over six months and then assembled it into a first response vehicle, Cederroth said.

This is the first time the Wing's Fire Department has counted a ladder truck among its inventory, said Master Sgt. Travis Horne, an assistant chief of operations.

In his 16 years serving at the 167th Airlift Wing, firefighters have used JLG lifts or cherry pickers.

"We've never had a ladder," Horne said. "We have always relied on mutual aid from the city of Martinsburg for ladder truck operations."

Staff Sgt. Brandon Evans, a full-time fire fighter with the base's fire department, liked the opportunity to get familiarized with the new emergency response vehicle.

"It will be an asset to the Wing," he said.

Staff Sgt. Jason Smith agreed with Evans but noted that it would also be an asset in serving the community off base when needed.

"It will allow for better operations all around," Smith said.

The HP 75's unique features include: an aerial hose capable of pumping 1,250 gallons of water per minute; a water flow of 75 feet in the air from the aerial device and foam capabilities to combat both aircraft and structure fires.

Once all three shifts and the traditional guardsmen assigned to the Fire Department are trained on the new HP 75 fire truck an exercise will be planned to test its mettle, the fire chief said.

Adding: "It's pretty sweet."

## Aircraft change proposed for Martinsburg Airlift Wing

by Master Sgt. Emily Beightol-Deyerle  
167th Airlift Wing Public Affairs

**MARTINSBURG, W.Va.** (February 3, 2012) -- Eight C-17 Globemaster aircraft will replace the 167th Airlift Wing's current fleet of eleven C-5 aircraft, according to the Force Structure Overview released today by the Secretary of the Air Force.

Numerous changes are planned throughout the Active and Reserve components to align with new strategic guidance in the

Air Force's FY13 budget submission.

According to Secretary of the Air Force Michael Donley and Air Force Chief of Staff General Norton Schwartz, the Air Force will be "a smaller but superb force that maintains the agility, flexibility, and readiness to engage a full range of contingencies and threats." No details are available on the impact the aircraft change will have on the force structure at this time.

"We are prepared to continue doing our nation's work in the aircraft we are cur-

rently assigned and will move forward into the C-17 with the same pride, dedication and outstanding service," said Col. Roger Nye, commander of the 167th Airlift Wing.

Aircraft changes are expected to take place in fiscal year 2014 and 2015.

The C-17 Globemaster is the newest, most flexible cargo aircraft to enter the airlift force. It is capable of rapid strategic delivery of troops and all types of cargo to main operating bases or directly to forward bases in the deployment area.

# AROUND THE WEST VIRGINIA NATIONAL GUARD

## SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN AT THEIR BEST



(Above) A competitor in the 2012 Best Warrior Competition demonstrates his first aid abilities during the Warrior Task portion of the competition. (Right) A Soldier with the West Virginia National guard decontaminates his equipment during the Best Warrior Competition held at Camp Dawson April 13-15. Soldiers competed in a number of events including physical fitness, Soldier tasks and land navigation. Winners of the state competition will go on to represent West Virginia at the Region II Best Warrior Challenge. (U.S. Army photos by Staff Sgt. Lolen A Everett)



Staff Sgt Mike Heerd and Staff Sgt J... a Hazardous Materials scenario. The... 12 - March 23, 2012. The course e... requirement for 7 level upgrade train...

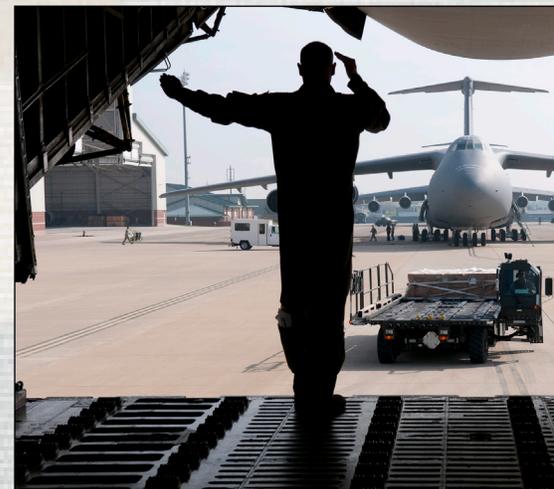
Maj. Gen. James A H... of Charleston followi... new scholarship for me... Guard. The Golden E... an additional \$9,000 in... (U.S. Army photo by S... WV Public Affairs Offic...

SPRING  
2012



Members of the West Virginia National Guard recently participated in a Civil-Military Emergency Preparedness mission to Moldova. The workshop brought together experts from both countries to exchange ideas and experiences in flood detection and response. Bob Yingling, US Army J-7 staff member, discusses the workshop with members of the Moldovan Department of Emergency Situations as Senior Master Sergeant David Stevens, 167th Airlift Wing Civil Engineering Squadron, looks on. (U.S. Army photo by Lt. Col. David Lester, JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Officer)

Airman 1st class Jeremy Barr directs the operator of a K loader aircraft at the 167th Airlift Wing, Shepherd Field, Martinsburg WV. Airmen assigned to the 2T2X1, air transportation career field, passenger and cargo movement functions on a variety of aircraft know weight and balance factors, airlift transportation directives, cargo securing techniques, border clearance requirements, off-handling and other types of loading equipment or devices and flight. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt Emily Beightol-Deyerle)





arrad Winman, of the 167th AW Fire Department, inspect open containers during the HazMat Technician class held at the Air National Guard Base from March 2012. The course encompassed both classroom lectures and hands on practicals. The course is a 40-hour course. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech Sgt Michael Dickson)



Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force James A. Roy is greeted by Major General James A. Hoyer, Adjutant General for West Virginia, Sunday March 4, 2012, during his visit to the 167th Airlift Wing, Martinsburg, WV. Chief Roy also met with the active duty maintenance personnel and security forces personnel, had lunch with the 167th Airlift Wing Airmen of the Year and had a town hall meeting with enlisted members in the afternoon. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt Emily Beightol-Deyerle)

oyler speaks at the University of Charleston during the announcement of the members of the W.Va. National Eagle Scholarship will provide funding for Guard members. Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward, JFHQ-WV (e)



to the back of a C-5 Galaxy, on March 23 2012. The crew members are responsible for loading and unloading cargo. They must also ensure proper documentation, handling and operation of materials and equipment to meet service functions.



A local television news station interviews Tech. Sgt. James Providenti, a Cyber Transport Specialist, 130th Communications Flight, 130th Airlift Wing, Charleston, W.Va., about his deployment to Southwest Asia, Jan. 1, 2012. Tech. Sgt. Providenti was one of the last West Virginia National Guard members to leave Iraq. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Phyllis E. Keith)



Members of the Dunbar Middle School Show Choir perform at the 2012 Black History Month celebration at the Joint Forces Headquarters Army in Charleston. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward, JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Office)





Soldiers with the 150th ARS take water and supplies to victims of a flood that swept through Logan County March 15. Residents of small communities along Mud Fork were stranded after roads and bridges washed away. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward, JFHQ Public Affairs Office)

# WVNG Soldiers aid flood victims in Logan County

by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward  
JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Office

**LOGAN COUNTY, W.Va.** (March 16, 2012) -- As cleanup efforts for tornado damage in Wayne County were winding down, heavy rains in Logan County brought sweeping floods and a new community in need of assistance.

Members of the West Virginia National Guard's 150th ARS, aided by West Virginia State Police officers, traveled the washed-out roads to bring cleaning supplies, water and food to residents along Mud Fork. Many of these families were unable to reach the main road -- only feet from their homes -- because small bridges and paths had been destroyed.

Citizens of the small community walked to the military vehicles and even helped Soldiers carry supplies to other neighbors who were in need.

"Take some extra to that house," said one woman who was helping her husband clean out their garage. "They have a brand new baby and no water."

The house she directed Soldiers to had significantly less damage than her own, but concern for the young family and their infant child was evident.

Other families could be seen sweeping mud out of their homes and trying to dry out as many of their belongings as Guard members continued to pass out bleach.

"Everybody is saying thank you and glad to see us," said Staff Sgt. Kellie Hicks.

Hicks added that he feels it is important for Guard members to respond to a disaster situation quickly and get help to those in the community who need it most.

"It gives them a sense that everything is going to be okay," he said. "[Us] being here lets them know people care about them."



(Above) Spc. Dwane Auville passes out cleaning supplies to a Logan county resident March 16. Families could be seen sweeping mud and water from their homes following a flood that swept through the county the previous day. (Left) One citizen directs Soldiers and State Police officers to homes in need of supplies and assistance. Other people offered use of their vehicles and volunteered to carry supplies to neighbors who were unable to leave their homes.

# WV flight medic honored for bravery in Afghanistan

by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward  
JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** (December 15, 2011) -- Staff Sgt. Nicole Hopkins, a flight medic with Company C, 1-104th General Support Aviation Battalion, was honored with the Bronze Star with Valor device today for her actions while deployed to Afghanistan.

Hopkins's unit -- approximately 30 Soldiers -- deployed to Salerno, Afghanistan in late 2010. Pilots and medics conducted more than 500 missions and completed the tactical medical evacuation of more than 800 patients; five of which were hoist missions, the most dangerous rescue situation there is. The team cared for U.S., Coalition and Afghan Forces during the highest casualty period of the war to date.

On July 17, Hopkins' crew, DUSTOFF 16, was called out to provide medical evacuation for Soldiers injured by land mines.

"Based on where we were, it only took a few minutes to get there and land the Blackhawk," she said. "While we were there, we heard a secondary explosion up on a ridge overlooking where we were."

Three U.S. Soldiers had been injured by land mines. DUSTOFF 16 launched to their location. Once on the ground at the POI site, Hopkins left the aircraft to assess the injured. She was informed that there was only one survivor. She then directed the loading of the one Soldier still alive.

As this was going on, DUSTOFF 16 was alerted to two critically wounded U.S. Soldiers on top of the nearby mined ridge. The unit commander on the ground was informed of the situation and immediately sent five Soldiers up the steep ridge. In addition DUSTOFF 16's second medic, Sgt. Pedro Lopez, a member of the 3rd Infantry Division, was going to be dropped on the ridge to render medical aid while the first Soldier was evacuated for further medical treatment.

The Soldier was loaded onto the aircraft and Hopkins continued to render medical aid. Lopez was informed of his mission and that a second helicopter would pick



Staff Sgt. Nicole Hopkins, a flight medic with Company C 2-104th General Support Aviation Battalion, West Virginia National Guard, was awarded the Bronze Star with Valor device December 15. While on a rescue mission in Afghanistan on July 17, 2010, Hopkins' team was alerted to another injured Soldier nearby. She entered a known minefield via hoist, treated the wounded Soldier and moved him to safety. (U.S. Army photos by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward, JFHQ Public Affairs Office)

him up with the injured Soldier. Once in position, Lopez opened DUSTOFF 16's cabin door and jumped about five feet to the ridge top. He then assessed and rendered aid to the injured Soldier.

After evacuating the first Soldier, DUSTOFF 16 returned to the mined ridge to assist with the second injured Soldier. Lopez loaded the injured Soldier on another Blackhawk helicopter and departed. DUSTOFF 16 approached and used the same spot for a two-wheel landing. Hopkins jumped from the aircraft to treat and load the second injured Soldier. Hopkins and SGT Timothy Curry performed CPR on the Soldier until DUSTOFF 16 landed.

Several days following the incident on the mined ridge, Hopkins was injured during a rescue mission.

She was being hoisted to a Soldier who had been injured in a Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle rollover. While suspended from the aircraft, a shift in winds and problems with the aircraft caused Hopkins to be slammed into the cliff.

"[The helicopter] had to take off. It flew with me still hanging there and I slammed into a rise in the terrain," she said.

When she was finally hoisted back to the aircraft, Hopkins was semi-conscious and had sustained a severe compound fracture to her femur. The other medic onboard the aircraft tended to her wounds as the crew immediately evacuated her to Salerno. The trail aircraft flown by Chief Warrant Officer Robert McClure stayed on scene and completed the Medevac mission without support from any other aircraft and in dramatically worsening weather.

Following treatment in Afghanistan, Hopkins was evacuated to a military hospital in Germany. Doctors placed a rod in her femur to hold the bone in place. Soon after, Hopkins returned to the United States to continue her recovery.

"I wouldn't say I'm a 100 percent now," she said. "I had a limp for a long time. I can walk fine and run on the treadmill for a period of time. Some days I can run one mile and a half and other days, one mile before the pain starts to bother me."

Hopkins was attending a welcome home ceremony in Wheeling for Soldiers with Co. C, 1-150th Aviation when Maj. Kevin Hazuka asked her to travel to Charleston for a meeting. She was unaware of Hazuka's ulterior motive.

Tears filled her eyes as Maj. Gen. James A. Hoyer, W.Va. Adjutant General, spoke of her actions in country and how proud he is of her continued service.

Due to the unique qualification of the pilots and medics on the W.Va. aircraft, the Army commissioned a study to see why there was a markedly higher survival rate from National Guard crews versus Active Duty crews.

"The crew members with us were emergency room Registered Nurses and flight medics during their normal jobs," Hazuka said. "And the pilots in command were high-time pilots who had flown multiple missions training and actual rescues in the mountains of W.Va., thus giving them the added knowledge, experience, and confidence needed to perform in the harsh environments of the Afghanistan theater of operations."

# Airman steps up, honors veteran after electronic bugle falls silent

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

**MARTINSBURG, W.Va.** (March 16, 2012) -- Rendering Taps at military funerals is a way to pay tribute to veterans who have served their country. But what happens when a bugle falls silent?

An Airman with the West Virginia Air National Guard's 167th Airlift Wing found out firsthand.

Senior Master Sgt. Todd Kirkwood, the Wing's avionics supervisor, was augmenting a veterans' color guard team at a funeral earlier this month in Martinsburg for an Air Force veteran who had served in three wars - World War II, Korea and Vietnam.

"Taps was to sound while we were holding the American flag over the casket, but there was just silence," Kirkwood said.

A member of the local veterans' color guard team was using a Ceremonial Bugle to perform Taps when the electronic device inserted in the instrument malfunctioned. In September 2003, the Department of Defense approved use of the bugle which allows a member of the military honor guard to "symbolically" play Taps when a live bugler is not available. In the past, a recorded version of Taps has also been played on a compact disc or cassette player during military funerals.

"We were just standing fast," Kirkwood said. "I heard the funeral director come from behind my shoulder and explain to the family that there was a technical difficulty and that we would not be able to offer Taps and he asked us to proceed with the flag fold."

At that time Kirkwood and Senior Airman Ben Smith stepped away from the casket with the American flag in their hands and proceeded to perform the 13 steps required to fold the colors so it could be presented to the family of the veteran.

"I took the flag and presented it to the family and when I heard the words that we weren't going to offer Taps - obviously I didn't say anything - but I knew what I was going to do," he said.

As he prepared to exit the tent after

presenting the American flag to one of the veteran's daughters, Kirkwood stopped in front of the funeral director and asked him to request that the family remain seated.

"We are going to offer this veteran Taps," Kirkwood remembers telling him.

The Greencastle, Pa., resident then proceeded to march over to where the bugler was standing and requested the brass Ceremonial Bugle.

"I said sir in a respectful way, 'Will you remove the electronic device from your bugle.'"

After removing the electronic device, the man offered Kirkwood the bugle without hesitation.

"I marched back into position and faced our fallen American hero and his family and sounded Taps," the senior master sergeant said.

"I could see within the first two notes coming out of the horn the emotional reaction (from the family)," Kirkwood said. "Some members of the family stood and placed their hands over the heart."

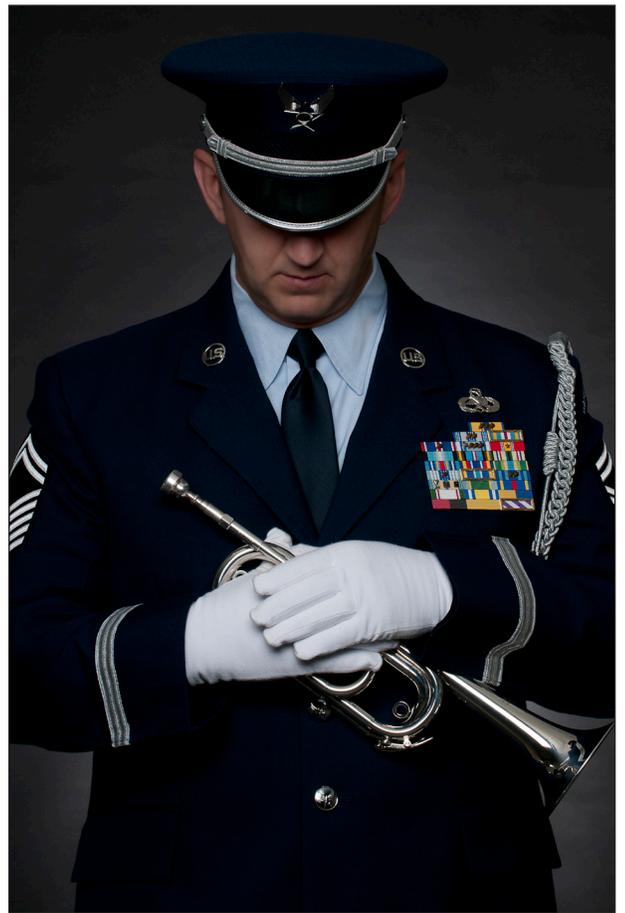
"As always after the final note of Taps we render the final salute," he said, after which he returned the bugle to the member of the veterans group and attempted to march back into place alongside Senior Airman Smith.

But he didn't get far.

"The family intercepted me as I passed the tent and shook my hand and thanked me," he said "I simply told them that that veteran deserved to have Taps sounded."

Prior to his rendering of Taps, Kirkwood had only played the 24 notes a handful of times.

Chief Master Sgt. Ron Glazer Sr. recruited Kirkwood to learn to play the notes. Kirkwood is no stranger to the horn after learning how to play the trumpet



Senior Master Sgt Todd Kirkwood, 167th Airlift Wing avionics supervisor and base honor guard member, recently stepped up to play Taps at a funeral when the electronic device in the Ceremonial Bugle being used by the civilian color guard team failed to sound. Kirkwood and one other member of the unit's honor guard were tasked to fold the flag and present it to the family, but when the bugle failed Kirkwood was able to remove the electronic device from the instrument and sound Taps, which he only recently learned to play. (U.S. Air Force photo by Master Sgt. Emily Beightol-Deyerle)

in elementary school, a talent he honed through junior high.

"That's going to be the last tangible memory that the family will have of their loved one and you don't want to mess it up," Kirkwood said. "You want to offer your best."

Kirkwood has been with the Wing's Base Honor Guard, an all-volunteer organization, for nearly a year. He has been a member of the 167th Airlift Wing for more than 26 years.

"It's a way of offering back to our fellow veterans," he said of being a member of the Honor Guard.

"I feel that the good Lord had me at the right place at the right time to be able to do the right thing for that veteran," Kirkwood said.

On his Facebook page, Kirkwood wrote of the experience: "I sounded Taps robustly and from my heart. Our mission to 'Honor with Dignity' for someone who truly deserved it was accomplished."

# Safety corner: Kick off the season with a healthier

## Army Safety Gram

It's pretty hard to do your job well if you are at home sick in bed. Doing your best to stay healthy is an important part of producing good quality work and conducting it safely.

Making time for wellness won't necessarily add more years to your life, but it could add more life to your years. Taking good care of yourself can help you avoid or at least delay chronic illnesses such as heart disease, cancer, diabetes and others. Good health practices can also boost your energy so you get more enjoyment out of life.

Consider these ideas for improving your health:

Eat regular, nutritious meals. Start your day with a good breakfast such as whole-grain fruit and whole-grain cereal or toast. A breakfast of a sweet roll and coffee might perk you up at first, but you'll be dragging later in the morning when your blood sugar drops. The traditional hearty breakfast of bacon, eggs and fried hashbrowns can contribute to illnesses such as heart disease and cancer.

Eat a variety of healthy foods. Throughout the day, eat a variety of fresh vegetables, fruits, bean dishes and whole grains such as rice and pasta. Every day have some citrus fruit or another food high in vitamin C. Get a variety of vitamins in your diet by choosing fruits and vegetables of different types and colors. Be sure to



include some dark yellow and dark green vegetables for important nutrients. High-fiber vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower and cabbage are highly recommended.

Hydrate. Drink plenty of water, especially in hot weather or dry environments. Other beverages such as coffee and soft drinks are not a substitute.

Exercise regularly. You need three kinds of exercise. You need some type of activity which will raise your heart rate for at least 20 minutes, several times a week. A brisk walk or bike ride would accomplish this. Swimming, dancing, hiking and aerobics are also activities to improve the capacity of your heart and lungs.

Strengthen your muscles. You need to keep your muscles strong. Aerobic routines, certain sports and weight training

can all contribute to muscle strength.

Increase your flexibility. You also need exercise which keeps your muscles and ligaments flexible. Yoga routines and stretching exercises before and after a workout are examples.

Get enough sleep. Studies have shown North Americans are chronically deprived of sleep and the result is decreased productivity as well as increased illness and accidents. You need enough sleep to do your job well. Adequate sleep is needed to keep your body's immune system in good working order.

Learn to handle stress. Everyone has things which go wrong in their lives; how we accept and handle these problems can sometimes make the difference between illness and health.

Have regular medical and dental checkups. Follow the advice of health professionals. Take your doctor's advice for treating high blood pressure, a common cause of heart attacks.

Don't smoke. Quitting can add years of good health to your life.

Take it easy on alcohol. Excessive consumption affects your health, safety and your ability to do your work well.

Avoid sunburn and excessive exposure to the sun. Wear protective clothing and use sunblock to help prevent skin cancer.

Your health is an important part of your ability to do your work safely and do it well. Follow these guidelines to help you stay well.

## 130th Airlift Wing welcomes new commander

by Lt. Col. David Lester  
JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Officer

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** -- Col. Gerome "Jerry" Gouhin assumed command of the West Virginia Air National Guard's 130th Airlift Wing during a change of command ceremony in December at the Charleston Air National Guard base.

Gouhin accepted the 130th AW guidon from Maj. Gen. James A. Hoyer, Adjutant General of the West Virginia National Guard, as unit members and family and friends looked on.

Gouhin replaced Col. Timothy Frye who moved on to become Chief of Staff of the West Virginia Air National Guard.

Gouhin's main job will be to ensure his



**Col. Jerry Gouhin**

people are trained and equipped to go to war, defend the Homeland and be ready for

any emergency state duty. His experience as the 130th AW Vice Wing Commander has prepared him for the unit's top post.

"I look forward for the opportunity to lead this great group of American patriots," Gouhin said. "We have quite a bit on our plate, a reduced budget and an unclear picture of how our Air Force will look in the future. With that in mind, we will take the initiative and continue to be innovative to ensure the 130th AW is recognized as one of the premier airlift Wings in the United States Air Force."

The 130th Airlift Wing currently has approximately 100 Airmen and several C-130 Hercules aircraft deployed to Afghanistan. They should be returning sometime this summer.

# 156th Military Police Detachment comes home

by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward  
JFHQ Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** (January 27, 2012) -- Members of the West Virginia National Guard's 156th Military Police Detachment returned to Charleston after a year-long deployment to Afghanistan.

Senior leaders from the WVNG were on hand to welcome home the approximately 45 Soldiers from the Monaville-based unit

While in country, members of the 156th conducted more than 2,000 enrollments of individuals using biometric equipment, helping to establish an identification database for locals and prisoners. During the enrollment process, 15 high value targets were identified through the work of the 156th.

The 156th Female Engagement Team conducted drivers training for female Afghan Border Police officers, and the Military Police Investigations section of the 156th worked closely with the Army Criminal Investigation Division to provide assistance during investigations.

Law and Order operations conducted by the 156th ranged from accident investigations to confiscation of alcohol and narcotics from civilians. All of these efforts helped ensure the safety and security across the Area of Operations.

In addition to conducting their typical law and order operations, several Soldiers designed and constructed a new U.S. Army Military Police station at Kunduz.



## Aviation unit back in WV

by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward  
JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Office

**WHEELING, W.Va.** (December 15, 2011) -- Family members and friends were on hand to welcome home Soldiers from Company C, 1st Battalion, 150th Aviation, following a deployment to Kosovo today.

In Kosovo, the unit was responsible for all aerial operations within their area of responsibility. Soldiers logged 2,714 flight hours while in country. They also ran multiple mechanical inspections and refueling missions.

In addition to aerial support, troops raised more than \$15,000 through a fundraiser known as the "Waffle House." The funds raised were used for projects throughout the deployment such as the purchase of educational materials, field trips, and the Test of English as a Foreign Language enrollment fee for 24 advanced English as a Second Language students. Additionally, Chief Warrant Officer



Prosser spearheaded "Acts of Kindness" activities and used funds to purchase items for an orphanage in Pristina and needy families in the local community.

Several Soldiers also served as ESL instructors to more than 120 students in the local community.

# WVNG announces Tire Rebuild Center grand opening

by Lt. Col. David Lester  
JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Officer

**KANAWHA CITY, W.Va.** -- The West Virginia National Guard announced the opening of a tire rebuild program in Kanawha City that will save the U.S. Army millions of dollars.

The facility will receive tires that have been used on United States Army vehicles around the world. The tires will be inspected, refurbished and then introduced back into the Army inventory. The Kanawha City location has already saved the Army over \$7 million.

“We are excited that the Army Material Command decided to put this program in place in West Virginia,” said Major General James A. Hoyer, West Virginia Adjutant General. “In this time of shrinking budgets in the military everyone is taking a hard look at the bottom line when it comes to projects. We worked with the Army to show them the cost savings that West Virginia ingenuity could provide them and we have been delivering that savings ever since.”

The current project phase employs 40 employees and that number is expected to increase to 150 as the project matures.

Governor Earl Ray Tomblin cited this as an example of West Virginia leading the way in preserving defense capability “The men and women of the West Virginia



1st Sgt. Ryan Powers, a special projects analyst with the West Virginia National Guard, explains how the Tire Rebuild Facility, located in Kanawha City, is able to save the Army millions of dollars while providing troops across the globe with a safe, reliable product. The new facility is projected to employ up to 150 people in the Kanawha Valley. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Anna-Marie Ward, JFHQ-WV Public Affairs Office)

National Guard continue to prove their effective and efficient service providing both stability and security for us and our country. The work completed at this Tire Rebuild Facility has a lasting impact on our defense operations and I commend the Guard for continuing to be a shining example of what West Virginians do for our fellow countrymen,” he said.

The program is one of several that make up the Joint Base West Virginia concept of the West Virginia National Guard. The vision is to provide relevant and capable

assets for the broad spectrum of operations in support of homeland defense/security, overseas national security objectives and state emergency response.

“As our vision continues to grow we will be creating opportunities for men and women to work, live and raise their families in West Virginia and serve a National mission,” Hoyer said. “We are identifying gaps in National Defense and Homeland security areas and then providing cost effective and timely solutions to address them.”

## New Armory, storage facility locations dedicated across state

from staff reports  
JFHQ Public Affairs Office

**CHARLESTON, W.Va.** (March 19, 2012) -- Joint Base West Virginia is growing again.

Today marked a busy day for senior leaders of the West Virginia National Guard as well as community and civic leaders in Morgantown and Moorefield as ground was broken for two new armories. In addition, a historic building was dedicated as a storage center in Martinsburg.

### *Moorefield Armed Forces Readiness Center*

Constructed in coordination with the Hardy County Rural Development Author-

ity, the \$20.5 million Moorefield Armed Forces Readiness Center is scheduled to be completed next spring.

This Center will house the Hardy County 911 Emergency Call Center as well as the West Virginia National Guard’s 157th Military Police Battalion.

### *The Roundhouse*

The National Guard will dedicate the Roundhouse as a new long-term storage facility for a variety of military equipment.

The close proximity of the Roundhouse to the 167th Airlift Wing provides the opportunity for quick airlift of the material when needed. To operate the Roundhouse, about 10 individuals will be hired with the potential for more in the future.

### *Morgantown Armed Forces Readiness Center*

Construction of the \$20.5 million Morgantown Readiness Center is scheduled to be completed by next spring.

The Center will primarily house elements of the West Virginia Army National Guard’s 249th Army Band including specially-designed practice rooms and a full-size auditorium. The armory will also house the Headquarters for the 1/201st Field Artillery Battalion.

This development will include the construction of a roadway and establish utilities in a remote area of the Morgantown Municipal Airport property; thereby, preparing the property for future airport expansion projects.

