

UTAH MINUTEMAN

Utah Air and Army National Guard

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Summer 2013



Det. 50 and 19th Special Forces Deploy to Afghanistan
204th Engineers Deploy to Afghanistan and Kosovo
624th Returns Home From Afghanistan



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The Adjutant General

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Berg



*The Adjutant General
Major General
Jefferson S. Burton*

DRAPER, Utah — **A**s the weather changes and flowers begin to bloom, we are reminded of new opportunities and endless possibilities that await us. So it is in these times of change and budget uncertainty. As we look ahead to the future, we should develop an attitude of expectation and possibility. When one door closes, another one opens. Those who

embrace change will find opportunity in it, while those who resist change ultimately wither away. As an organization, we have always thrived while operating in challenging conditions. Indeed, our institutional schools train us to survive and thrive in volatile, uncertain, chaotic and ambiguous environments. Since our inception, we have done just that. I am incredibly proud of the reputation you have earned over the past 12 years of conflict. The Utah Guard is synonymous around the globe with excellence.

I recently returned from Morocco, where I conducted some high-level meetings with the Inspector General of the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces (the equivalent of our Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff). In spite of some political challenges our two nations have faced, he expressed heartfelt appreciation for the Soldiers and Airmen of the Utah National Guard. Over the course of a 10-year State Partnership Program relationship, you have won his nation's respect as honorable professionals who keep your commitments and always perform above expectation.



Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton, left, meets with members of the Moroccan Armed Forces in Rabat, Morocco, May 9.

On the return trip I stopped off at AFRICOM Headquarters for a briefing. I was again reminded by U.S. high-level leaders of your excellence. Your quality is known across the entire Department of Defense establishment. Reputations cannot be bought, they have to be earned. You do that every day, both here at home and in remote locations all over the world.

As we continue to draw down in conflicts abroad, it's time to reconnect with our communities. Seek opportunities to serve our citizens and remind them of the capabilities and excellence that reside in their own National Guard. Be civic-minded and get involved in worthy causes. Be a part of solutions to difficult community challenges and make a real difference in the lives of real people. Capitalize on the strengths you have developed over more than a decade of engagement and multiple deployments to make our communities, our State and our Nation the greatest places on earth!

As we move into the coming year, we will see a great deal of change in the Department of Defense. These changes will most assuredly affect the Utah National Guard. Remember to look for opportunities in the change. I challenge leadership to be visionary as we seek for new niches or capabilities we can fill. Capitalize on our strengths and focus on areas where we can grow. I challenge all Soldiers and Airmen to move forward and face the future with confidence. There is power in positive expectation and deliberate action, and there will always be room for outstanding Servicemembers.

I am confident as we face the future together, the Utah National Guard will be ready for any challenge. We will face what lies ahead with the resiliency of our pioneer heritage and with a commitment to the excellence that is Utah! 🇺🇸



Returning members of the 624th Engineer Company are greeted by Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton at the Utah Air National Guard Base April 25.

UTAH MINUTEMAN

Thrice-yearly magazine for members of the Utah National Guard

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Cover Photo by Ileen Kennedy

Cover Photo:
25 new fathers with the 624th Engineer Company see their babies for the first time April 25 and pose on the steps of the aircraft that flew them home from their yearlong deployment to Afghanistan.



Joint Forces and Army Enlisted Comments

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Berg



*Michael Miller
Command Sergeant Major
Utah Army National Guard*

DRAPER, Utah — **O**ne of the biggest advantages of living in the great State of Utah is the ability to enjoy all four seasons: spring, summer, winter and fall. After what seemed like an extra-long winter, spring is upon us. Along with the change of season, we also welcome the opportunity for training. Spring and summer are primarily the times when our units conduct their collective, field-training

events, as well as a time when families get together and spend time at home, in the mountains, or on vacation. In either case, we build upon the foundations that have been created to come together as leaders, Soldiers, Airmen, and families to sustain and improve overall readiness and cohesion.

The readiness of our Army and Air units is remarkable. The enabling force that contributes to this success is the high caliber of Servicemembers and families that we are fortunate to have in Utah. As our leaders and I travel across the world, we hear firsthand from other commands on how professional and trained our Guardmembers are; this respect does not come easily. It is due largely to first-line leaders, the pride in organization and support of our families. We go into every mission or assignment knowing we have support within the unit, as well as the support of our families and employers.

Last quarter The Adjutant General (TAG) held his annual TAG symposium. The event was centered on the

Comprehensive Soldier/Airmen and Family Fitness (CSF2). This program is essential to commanders and NCOs as they lead their force into the future. The CSF2 program focuses on increasing fitness, health and resiliency of Soldiers, Airmen and our families. It has five pillars: social, emotional, family, spiritual, and physical.

As National Guard members and families, we are all faced with different challenges, some more difficult than others, but nonetheless, stress is relevant in all our lives. The five pillars of the CSF2 program provide us tools, education and the ability to deal with these challenges. I wholeheartedly believe in this program and challenge you to become familiar with each pillar. It is a resource that was established to sustain a prepared force. In addition, when they added families and DA civilians it only strengthened the bond we share as a team.

Recently our team has seen units return from deployments and others preparing to leave on various missions. The 624th Engineer Company returned from their successful tour in Afghanistan. Yet, as they return home to their families, we said goodbye to elements of the 204th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade. These elements are smaller teams that will serve in Kosovo and Afghanistan. The Air National Guard continues to serve abroad with numerous teams serving around the globe. We welcome home those returning, but also wish those leaving the success and pray for their safe return and that their families will be comforted.

I am humbled and grateful to wake up each day and don this remarkable uniform and have the ability to serve alongside the finest citizens in the world. I encourage you to remember how great it is to be a Citizen-Soldier or Airman and witness the ongoing support of our communities and our loving families. Competence, Character and Commitment. 🇺🇸



Region VII Best Warrior competitors at Fort Carson, Colo., with mentors and state leadership.



Sgt. First Class Jerrid Floyd and Staff Sgt. Mark Chamberlain, JFHQ, perform weapons familiarization training on the M240B.



Four pilots and two crewmembers with Detachment 50, Operational Support Airlift deploy to Afghanistan in their C-12 aircraft Feb. 23.

Detachment 50, Operational Support Airlift, Departs for Afghanistan Deployment

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Hank McIntire

SALT LAKE CITY — **S**oldiers and families trickled into a small, out-of-the-way hangar near Salt Lake International Airport on a cold Feb. 23 day to spend a few last moments together before the six members of the Utah Army National Guard's Detachment 50, Operational Support Airlift, departed on the first leg of their nine-month deployment to Afghanistan.

Det. 50, as it is called, is one of the smallest units in the Utah Guard, but it has a critical mission to transport specialized intelligence-gathering equipment in a C-12 aircraft in the U.S. Central Command area of operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The four pilots and two crewmembers of Det. 50 gave a brief tour of the aircraft to show where their fathers, sons, or brothers will spend much of their time during deployment. Soldiers will spend several weeks at Camp Atterbury, Ind., for deployment-specific training before heading to Afghanistan.

Sgt. Chris Beckstrand, of Sandy, enlisted in the Utah Guard more than four years ago. He is heading out on his first overseas mission.

"We've been planning this deployment for over a year now," said Beckstrand. "I'm confident and excited."

Standing nearby was Beckstrand's grandfather, Thane Beckstrand, who served in the U.S. Army in the 1950s as a radio operator in Germany.



Soldiers with Detachment 50, Operational Support Airlift say their goodbyes to family and friends at their hangar just east of Salt Lake International Airport. A Soldier with Det. 50 signs for his assigned weapon prior to deploying to Afghanistan.

“I’m proud of him,” said the elder Beckstrand. “It’s a privilege and an obligation to serve your country. I’m glad to see that there are still people out there who are willing to do this.”

Going on his second deployment is Sgt. Shea Gillies, of Layton. His first combat tour was in Iraq, and he will serve as an aerial-surveillance observer for Det. 50 in Afghanistan.

“It’s just as hard [to leave] this time as it was last time,” said Gillies, comparing his last deployment day to this one. “I know what to expect, and I feel a little more prepared.”

“I love having everyone here, it’s good to see them one last time,” he continued. “They’re all crying, which makes it a little bit hard. But it’s what I signed up for, to serve my country.”

Among those holding back tears was Lorrie Gillies, Shea’s mother, who was there when he left for Iraq and there again to see him off this day.

“It’s harder this time because I know what it’s going to be like,” she said, explaining that she was very proud of her oldest son. “It’s important to serve our country, so we can have our freedoms and privileges. It’s a sacrifice.”



Family and friends wave goodbye as the six Detachment 50, Operational Support Airlift Soldiers begin their journey first to Camp Atterbury, Ind., and then to Afghanistan in their C-12 aircraft Feb. 23.



27 New Babies Welcome Home the 624th Engineer

Story by Spc. Ariel Solomon

SALT LAKE CITY — Soldiers of the 624th Engineer Company (Vertical) stepped off the plane April 25 after a yearlong deployment. Twenty-seven babies, born after their fathers were deployed, were there with friends and family to welcome their fathers home.

The crowd cheered as fire trucks poured a curtain of water over the plane to wash off the dust of deployment. The first Soldier off the plane carried the company guidon and excitedly waved it high in the air as he stepped off the ramp. Not far behind him Soldiers flowed off the plane and toward the crowd.

The reunion of loved ones after a year brought many people to tears. Excited children cheered and jumped into their fathers' arms. The crowd pushed past the caution tape barricade, enveloping returning Soldiers with cheers, hugs and welcomes home. In the background the 23rd Army Rock Band played rock and roll.

Photos by Spc. Ariel Solomon, Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Berg, Staff Sgt. Joseph Davis and Ileen Kennedy

Many of the families who had babies born since the deployment waved signs and banners reading "I've been waiting my whole life for this day." New fathers hurried off the plane to reach their families and hold their children for the first time.

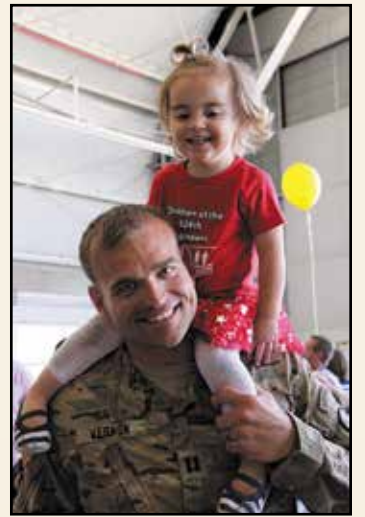
"Excited, anxious, happy," said Sgt. Brodie McLeod of the 624th, trying to find the words to describe how he felt after the reunion with his wife and new baby. "I don't know what to say. I'm glad to be home!"

Sgt. Philippe Basset, of Payson, went straight to his wife and twins as soon as he was free of the boarding ramp.

His wife, Kristina Bassett, said, "He didn't even look at me—he looked at our babies."

Bassett held his twin boys Noelan and Hudson for the first time on the Air Guard base's tarmac. Bassett had been able to watch as his boys were born Sept. 6 via the Internet.

"I wanted to be there," said Bassett. "I missed the whole newborn stage when they snuggle and lay on your chest."



After missing the first months of their children's lives, many new fathers were eager to get home away from the crowd, filtering out of the hangar with their families.

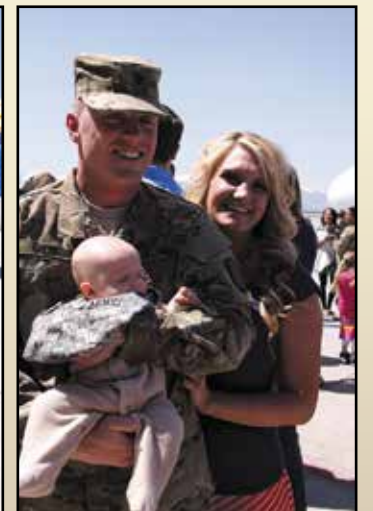
The 624th is based in Springville, but, has detachments in Price and Vernal and has approximately 140 Soldiers in its ranks.

The 624th deployed to Afghanistan with the mission of constructing buildings, primarily building base

camp, internment camps and repairing and maintaining infrastructure.

Bassett said they did plenty of construction over there and their efforts helped build the Afghan economy.

Now that they are home, the 25 new fathers will have a different kind of building and construction to do. At home they're building their families, dedicating their time and hard work to their children. 🇺🇸



Members of the 624th Engineer Company return from deployment, some 25 father-Soldiers seeing their babies for the first time.



Seventeen members of the 204th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade pose for a group photo at Salt Lake International Airport as they begin their yearlong deployment to Afghanistan.

204th MEB will Conduct Base Protection During Afghanistan Deployment

Story and photos by Ileen Kennedy

SALT LAKE CITY — Soldiers deploying with the 204th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade gathered March 26 at Camp Williams, Utah, for a ceremony and some final moments with loved ones before saying their goodbyes as they began their yearlong deployment to Afghanistan.

“I feel like we have great support from the community and our families,” said Lt. Col. Paul Rodgers, officer in charge of the deploying Soldiers of the 204th. “I was surprised. All my deployments before this were active duty, [where] you just go down to the airfield, say goodbye to your family, but there’s not the same kind of support.”

“Last night was amazing,” he added. “It was just overflowing with so many family members and people [who] came out. It really meant a lot to me, and I know it really meant a lot to these guys.”

Soldiers with the 204th were housed for the night at Camp Williams, and the following morning they were bused to Salt Lake International Airport to travel to Camp Shelby, Miss., for several weeks of deployment-specific training before heading overseas to Afghanistan.

“I feel like we have had some really good training over the past month,” said Rodgers. “As a team we all know each other really well. I feel really confident about the focus we have going and what we’re ready to do.”

“We have some excellent leadership,” said Maj. Dan Morken, a Park City resident and deploying member of the 204th. “Lt. Col. Rodgers has 16 years experience and Command Sgt. Maj. Thalman is excellent.”

Their mission will be to conduct base operations and base defense for U.S. military installations in Northern Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“Our job is to secure and run the base,” said Rodgers. “It’s almost like being a city mayor. We have the police force, entrance and exiting the base and then everything else from food, housing, engineering, public works, facilities maintenance—everything.”

To prepare for deployment, 204th Soldiers participated in extensive training at Camp Williams. Many of the instructors had firsthand knowledge of the conditions the unit would be facing, pulling from experiences of their own deployments to Afghanistan.

“We had some really good training at Camp Williams—it was very valuable,” said Morken.

During weapons training, two instructors from the 19th Special Forces Group taught Soldiers of the 204th how to transition from the M-4 rifle to the M-9 pistol, helping them feel comfortable and confident with their weapon. Soldiers had to load their own ammo, fix weapon malfunctions, load the weapon and fire it, explained Maj. Gloria Parks, resident of Lehi, Utah.

“We have never done stuff like that before, so it made it realistic,” said Parks. “Usually we go down to the ammo shed and they issue us our ammo already loaded in the magazine.”



Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton shakes hands with Maj. Dan Morken as Morken leaves with his unit to Afghanistan.

This time they didn't have us do that. They had us putting those rounds in the magazines ourselves, which is way more realistic to what you are going to do in a situation, so it gave you more confidence."

Special Forces Soldiers attend many training exercises and practice specialized weapons training so they are very confident with their weapons. As instructors they were able



to pass this confidence and knowledge onto the deploying 204th Soldiers.

"The SF go to a lot of weapons training," said Parks. "They touch their weapon probably 10 times more than the average Soldier. I touch my weapon once or twice a year, if that. We spent a whole day training and went through a lot of rounds. We shot more in one day than I have in 13 years.

That's the kind of training we need with our weapons all the time."

"I've been through the training six times," continued Parks. "By far this year was the best. The instructors were very knowledgeable; they didn't rely on PowerPoint. It was hands-on realistic and it was awesome. It's the best training I've had."


Maj. Gloria Parks shows her dog-tag picture of her children she will carry with her during her deployment to Afghanistan. Soldiers with the 204th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade arrive at Salt Lake International Airport March 27.

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Utah Guard Soldiers Deploy to Kosovo

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Hank McIntire

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah — **T**he April 2013 deployment of the 40 Soldiers of the 204th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade for a one-year assignment in Kosovo did not follow the usual script that has been acted out over and over since 9/11 in the Utah Army National Guard.

Typically, a unit will deploy in uniform from the Utah Air National Guard Base on a charter aircraft, with hundreds of well-wishers on hand to see them off. These Soldiers, who left in small groups on different days, gathered in civilian attire with their families and friends at Salt Lake International Airport April 7 and 26 as they headed to either Camp Atterbury, Ind., or Fort Benning, Ga., for training before heading overseas to Kosovo.

The mission of the 204th, in support of NATO Kosovo Force (KFOR) 17, will be to provide a safe and secure environment in Kosovo as a third responder behind the Kosovo Police and the EULEX (European Rule of Law in Kosovo).

Dressed as civilians, Soldiers blended in with other travelers, making it difficult for the local news media to find them in order to tell their story. But this anonymity also gave Soldiers some private moments with their loved ones that they may not have had otherwise.

Many of these Kosovo-bound Soldiers are longtime members of the Utah Guard, but they are first-time deployers. Maj. Annette Barnes, with 27 years in the military, is among this unique group. Her children are older, but that doesn't make it easier for her to leave.

"Even when your kids are grown up, it gets to you," said Barnes, of Pleasant Grove, who will be a Civil Affairs officer, working with local governments and populations in Kosovo.

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Berg and Sgt. Chloe Barnes

"We just sent off a missionary to New Zealand, so it's been a very spiritual time for us. [Our faith] is going to get us through."

Barnes' husband Kelly, who is Youth Programs coordinator for the Utah National Guard, has seen many units deploy, but sending his wife on one of them is a first.

"I've always been sympathetic but not empathetic," he said, knowing that being a single dad for a year will add a new dimension to his ability to serve the children of Utah Guard families. "Saying our goodbyes this morning was tough. The hardest thing is just going to be the day-to-day, the cooking the cleaning, the stuff we partner on. And now my partner's gone."

Another first-timer is Lt. Col. Coy Bryant, of Draper, who also has a couple of decades under his military belt. A single dad with three children, Bryant's mother Diane will take care of the kids for the next year while he serves on the KFOR brigade staff.

"It's hard to see my dad go," said Carter Bryant, a tenth-grader at a local high school. "But I support him because he keeps our country and other countries safe."

Diane Bryant agreed that the coming year will be tough, but son Coy is committed to the mission.

"He said, 'This is what I signed up for,'" Diane recalled. "It's not going to be easy, but we'll do it."

Bryant will play a role in helping to make sure the UN peacekeeping mission is successful, coordinating operations and talking to local leaders. With a well-established infrastructure in Kosovo for hundreds of U.S. military members there, Bryant knows that keeping touch with home will be easy.





“Going to Kosovo is good because I’ll have good communication back to the states,” he said.

For Maj. Steve Jarvis, of La Verkin, this is his second long-term deployment. He will serve as the KFOR provost marshal, the equivalent of a chief of police. As with many Guardmembers, his civilian experience enhances his ability to do his military job, having served as a town marshal, deputy sheriff, detective, patrol officer and evidence technician.

Serving his country is in Jarvis’s blood, having come from a long line of military members dating back to the Revolutionary War. He has 20-plus years in the military, including a few years in the Marine Corps. He has two sons in the Army and a daughter who is married to a West Point graduate.

“I just love my country, and we’ve all taken the oath,” said Jarvis, referring to his ancestors, himself, his sons, and his son-in-law. “We couldn’t do it without our families. It’s a team effort.”

Airport officials allowed loved ones to accompany their Soldiers to the departure gate. After spending some private time together, families heard the call for Soldiers’ flights, and some posed for a last group photo before separating.

“We’re just going to be a scaled-down model of Team Awesome,” quipped Kelly Barnes as he and his children anticipated those final moments together. “I see so many strong people in the Guard do it, so I know I can do it. And if I can’t, I’ve got tons of support.”

Soldiers of the 204th depart from Salt Lake International Airport to Camp Atterberry, Ind or Fort Benning, Ga. and then on to Kosovo.



Left: Members of the 204th meet with family and friends at Camp Williams, Utah, prior to leaving for Salt Lake International Airport to begin their yearlong deployment to Kosovo.

19th Special Forces Travel to Thailand for Cobra Gold 13

Story by Lt. Col. Paul Peters

CHIANG MAI, Thailand — **M**aj. Gen. Jeff Burton, Utah National Guard Adjutant General (TAG), and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller (CSM), visited leaders and troops of 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces Group (Airborne) Feb. 2-26, during exercise Cobra Gold 13 in Thailand.

The exercise is a multinational, Joint Chiefs of Staff exercise held annually throughout the country, involving more than 8,000 U.S. troops. First Battalion deployed 150 to Thailand for the exercise, where they were joined by approximately 100 Thai and 20 Japanese Special Operations forces.

“We were able to do training during this exercise that we haven’t been able to do in the United States,” said Maj. Robert Nesbit, executive officer of 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces.

During the visit, the TAG and CSM were included in several key events with the unit. After a quick in-brief and tour of the Joint Special Operations Task Force area, TAG and CSM moved to the range complex



Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton (center) and Chief Warrant Officer 2 Hicks discuss ambush techniques with the Thai team commander.

to observe Operational Detachment Alpha 9123 conduct aerial-platform shooting. This is something that can only be done on a few ranges in the U.S.

“It was good to see our Special Forces train with Coalition forces; there were both Thai and Japanese forces training collectively as one team in the exercise,” said Miller. “They built lifelong partnerships as they trained with each other day in and day out.”

Next, the Command Team moved to visit Operational Detachment Alpha 9126 as they conducted small-unit tactics in the jungle environment with their Thai and Japanese counterparts. This event culminated in a raid on a small compound.

“That environment we can’t get anywhere else other than the Asian continent,” said Miller. “You can’t simulate 95 degrees, with 95 percent humidity, and thick, thick vegetation. You can’t do that in the States, let alone have partnership countries there training side by side with you.”

Finally, TAG and CSM moved to the flat range where Operational Detachment Alpha 9121 was working with its Thai and Japanese counterparts on close-quarters battle and combat marksmanship.

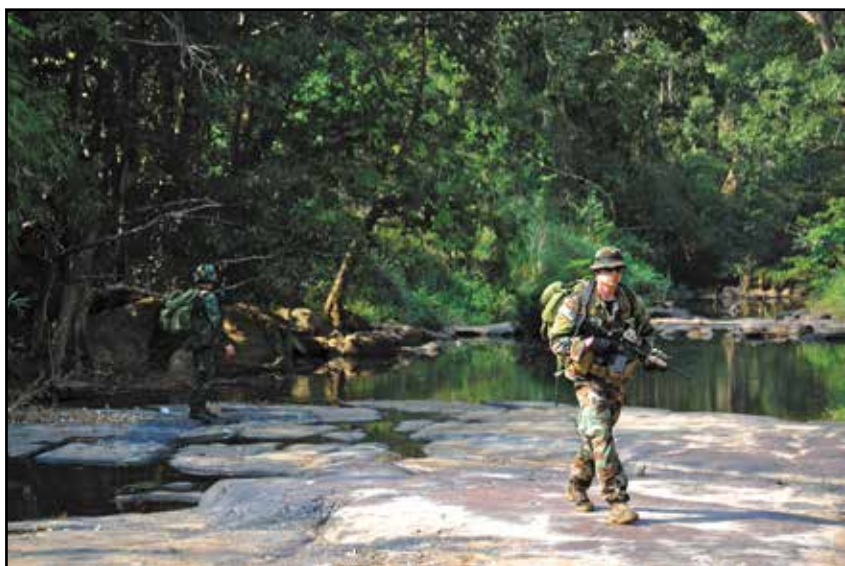
The following day, TAG and CSM met the 1st Battalion command team at the helicopter landing zone where they were picked up by a Navy HH-60 helicopter and flown to conduct an aerial reconnaissance of the locations the Operational Detachment Alphas will be working in during the mission-readiness exercise.

Upon landing, TAG and CSM were able to prepare to move to altitude where they witnessed a military free-fall jump—this time not from the ground level. 🇺🇸

Top down:

Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton, Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller and members of 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces with their Thai and Japanese counterparts. Members of 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces, train with Thai and Japanese Soldiers in the jungles at Chiang Mai, Thailand, during exercise Cobra Gold 13.

Photos by Command Sgt. Maj. Gary Barnes and Master Sgt. Doug Bernard



130th EIS Members Awarded 2 Bronze Stars, 28 Additional Medals

Story by Staff Sgt. Lillian Harnden

SALT LAKE CITY — **T**wo Bronze Stars and 28 additional medals were awarded to 18 members of the 130th Engineering Installation Squadron in a ceremony at the Utah Air National Guard Base Jan. 6.

The two Bronze Star medals, 11 Army Commendation Medals, three Army Achievement Medals, two Air Force Achievement Medals (with oak-leaf cluster) and 12 United States Afghanistan Campaign Medals were awarded for deployment achievements supporting Operation Enduring Freedom during 2011 and 2012.

By executive order from the President of the United States of America, the Bronze Star was awarded to Master Sergeants Scott Prows and Vince Tanner. Brig. Gen. David Fountain, Assistant Adjutant General for Air, presented the medals to the two Guardsmen during the ceremony.

Though his own life was at risk while performing missions of “national significance” for Special Operations Command, Prows gave credit to those he worked alongside who didn’t make it home.

“It was very humbling when they told me I was being nominated for this award,” said Prows. “I’d definitely give this award back for anybody who can’t come home from that theater, and for the personnel who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the same areas that I was involved in. I’m very humbled by their service and their sacrifice. I feel very fortunate that I didn’t have to pay that price, but it’s always in the back of my mind, especially since those who didn’t come home make it possible for those of us who did to get recognized.”

On a couple of occasions during Prows’ deployment his company took direct fire. One incident he described as a “bombardment” of mortar shells, “a close call that left my ears ringing for about four days.”

Tanner said he initially didn’t want to accept the award, but later decided to accept it for his team. Tanner attributed

the Bronze Star as belonging to the entire six-man team of the 130th EIS, which he was charged with while on deployment.

“I never believed in awards. I guess because I’ve been around too long—I’ve seen a lot of lives lost. They deserve it more than I do. The award belongs to the whole team, not me.”

Tanner explained the nature of their deployment and the intense danger they faced on a regular basis.


“I’ve lost count of how many convoys and Blackhawk operations we did,” said Tanner. “We saved a lot of lives by fixing downed communication systems. We were very busy ‘cable dogs,’ as they called us. We worked lots of late nights in rough areas. We often used the cover of night to minimize risk. We were constantly going out in the middle of harm’s way to make repairs, and we never knew if we were going to come back.”

As the team chief, Tanner stated he was responsible for the lives of the people on his team, and their missions required a lot of coordination with security teams to ensure their survival.

“They all came back alive and that’s what counts to me,” said Tanner. “However, I never breathed a sigh of relief until I landed back in the United States.”

Tanner also confessed that, on this deployment, one of the security trucks in their convoy was hit by an Improvised Explosive Device. Injured Soldiers were medically evacuated and their lives were saved.

At the closing of the awards ceremony the commander of the 130th EIS, Lt. Col. Kevin Tobias, expressed appreciation for award recipients.

“They performed a good service for their country—a big sacrifice—and we appreciate it,” said Tobias. “It’s a good day, to be able to have an awards ceremony like this.” 

Master Sgt. Vince Tanner (left photo) and Master Sgt. Scott Prows (center photo) are presented the Bronze Star by Brig. Gen. David Fountain. An additional 28 medals were awarded to 18 members of the 130th EIS.



Soldiers from the 19th Special Forces Group Depart for Afghanistan

Story and photos by Capt. Ryan Sutherland

SALT LAKE CITY — A small but unmistakable send-off ceremony was held April 4 at Salt Lake International Airport, as approximately 50 Soldiers of the Utah Army National Guard's 19th Special Forces Group departed on a 12-month deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

While members of the 19th expressed their excitement and enthusiasm for the upcoming mission, the overall climate was subdued as Soldiers and family members said their goodbyes.

There was a clear sense of patriotism throughout the airport as curious onlookers gathered nearby to catch a glimpse of Soldiers and their families sharing their tear-filled goodbyes.

Speaking with individual members of the 19th, it was clear they were confident in their abilities and looked forward to the mission they were about to embark on.

"The Soldiers here have worked hard, the families have supported us and we feel that we are prepared for this mission," said Master Sgt. Doyle Buchanan.

"We've been preparing here for the last two months at Camp Williams, where we've done a lot of shooting, driving and medical training," said Buchanan. "We are confident in our abilities and are ready to assist 3rd Group in whatever the support roles that they will need while in Afghanistan."


After gathering with family for much of the morning, Soldiers held a formation as Brig. Gen. Dallen Atack addressed them, referencing a speech by Theodore Roosevelt.

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs, who comes short again and again, but who does actually strive to do the deeds, who at best knows in the end the triumph of high achievement, and who at the worst, if he fails, at least fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who neither know victory nor defeat," said Atack.

Soldiers from the 19th will first travel to Fort Bragg, N.C., for several weeks of deployment-specific training before heading overseas to Afghanistan, where they will perform support missions under 3rd Special Forces Group. 🇺🇸



Members of the 19th Special Forces hold a formation at Salt Lake International Airport April 4, before departing on a 12-month deployment to Afghanistan, where they will serve under 3rd Special Forces Group in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.



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Former Utah Guard Adjutant General John L. Matthews Laid to Rest



John Matthews' wife Janice, is presented the ceremonial flag by recently retired Utah Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Brian Tarbet. The Utah National Guard performed full military honors for John L. Matthews at the Provo Cemetery May 6.

Story by Lt. Col. Hank McIntire

Photos by Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Berg and Ileen Kennedy

PROVO, Utah — **F**ormer Utah National Guard adjutant general Maj. Gen. John L. Matthews, passed away April 30, 2013. Matthews served as adjutant general from 1982 to 1994, overseeing Utah Guard operations during Operation Desert Storm.

Matthews was remembered as a “gentleman from head to toe,” by current Utah Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton.

“His style was one of mentorship,” said Burton. “General Matthews was a charismatic leader who made you want to do the best you could for the organization. He led in a kind way; it was leadership by inspiration and not by fear. He connected with all people at all levels.”

Matthews enrolled in Air Force ROTC at Brigham Young University, graduating in 1955. He completed fighter-pilot training the following year and joined the Utah Air National Guard. An educator in his civilian career, he served as principal of Dixon Junior High and Timview High School in the Provo School District.

He was appointed adjutant general of the Utah National Guard by Governor Scott Matheson in 1982. During his tenure he served as president of The Adjutant Generals Association and the National Guard Association of the United States.

He was also the catalyst behind the acquisition of the expansive facility where the headquarters of the Utah National Guard is located today.

“I respected the way he worked so well with the Army and Air National Guards,” recalled Patti Griffith, who served as Matthews’ administrative assistant for five years. “He cared as much about Army issues as he did the Air, and he brought the joint forces together.”

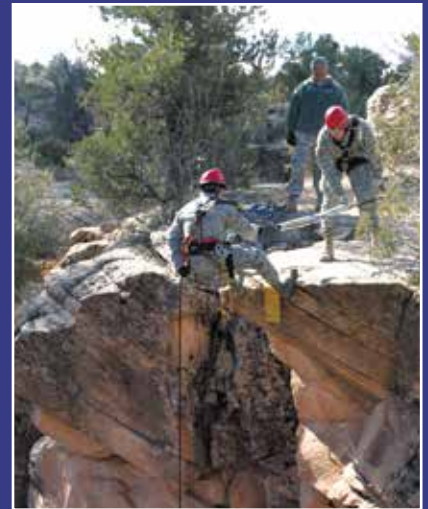
Burton was invited to speak at Matthews’ funeral, held May 6 in Sandy. He recounted meeting Matthews when Burton, as a young boy, accompanied his father to see Principal Matthews, who had just hired the senior Burton for a teaching position at Dixon Junior High.

“Even little six-year-old boys can sense things about people,” said Burton. “Despite his interesting crew cut, I immediately knew that this was a good guy. And my interactions with him since have not changed that opinion.”

Following the funeral Matthews was buried with full military honors at Provo Cemetery, which included a KC-135 Stratotanker flyover, cannon salute, rifle volleys, a riderless horse, brass band and presentation of ceremonial flags to Matthews’ wife Janice, his daughter Steffany and son Craig by recently retired Utah Guard Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Brian Tarbet.

“He was very involved nationally; all over the country his opinion was highly valued,” Griffith added. “But his family was super important to him. He absolutely adored his wife, and he didn’t want to waste a day not being happy.”





Members of the National Guard's 85th Civil Support Team and the St. George Fire Department engaged in WMD response and rescue training in St. George from Feb. 20 to 24 in St. George, Utah.

St. George Fire Department, National Guard Hold WMD Response Exercise for Civil Support Teams

Story by Mori Kessler

ST. GEORGE — **F**or five days, the St. George Fire Department and the Utah National Guard's 85th Civil Support Team and others held Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) response exercises in the area Feb. 20-24.

At least once a year, the 85th Civil Support Team comes to St. George to either help train or participate in exercises with the St. George Fire Department. These exercises primarily focus on dealing with response to situations involving hazardous WMD in a suburban setting, and also deal with aspects of search and rescue.

Capt. Jason Whipple of the St. George Fire Department said the exercises began Wednesday and continued through Sunday. The exercises have taken place at the old St. George Airport, Dixie State University and water-treatment plants in Hurricane and St. George.

Saturday morning the Civil Support Teams (CST) and St. George Bomb Squad ran an exercise involving EOD, or explosive ordnance. In the afternoon they practiced transporting people across "high lines" from the top of the floor of the parking complex by Main Street.

Lt. Col. Ken Verboncoeur, commander of the 85th CST, said dealing with emergency situations—particularly those of a biological, chemical and radioactive nature—in a suburban setting is the team's primary goal. However, they also engage in search and rescue and extraction actions.

"Those are our core missions, the suburban functions,"

Photos by Capt. Spencer Marsh and Staff Sgt. Adam Gatherum

Verboncoeur said. "But we also have the ability to do rope rescue, confined space, search and extraction, trench rescue—those are kind of secondary missions for us."

On Sunday, the training was taken to nearby canyons where the five day's worth of exercises concluded with canyoneering.

Whipple said the fire department and 85th CST weren't the only parties participating in the exercises. Members of National Guard Civil Support Teams from Nevada, New Mexico and Alaska were also involved.

Each state and territory has its own CST, Verboncoeur said. However, three states—California, Florida and New York—each have two teams because of their size and populations. There are 57 CSTs total, nationwide.

National Guard CSTs are also more specialized in what they do than regular hazard-response teams employed by municipal agencies.


"One of the things that we bring that most agencies don't have in a hazmat-type response is that we have a portable lab that comes with us," Verboncoeur said.

If a local agency is unsure concerning the nature of a substance or material its people encounter, the CST lab can be rolled out and a "presumptive analysis" can be done in order to get a basic idea of what the local agency is dealing with. Once that is done, they can begin to determine how the situation may impact the civilian populace and plan accordingly.

“We’re lucky enough to have a Ph.D. biologist on our team,” he said. “That lends a lot of credibility to our team when we show up on the scene.”

The 85th CST consists of 22 members who are what the Army calls “AGRs,” or Active Guard and Reserve—they are on call 24/7. Members of the CST are also nondeployable, meaning they cannot be sent overseas. They can be sent anywhere within the continental United States, but must first

receive permission from the governor who is considered the Guard’s commander in chief.

The 85th CST itself trains as a unit at least once a month, with exercises and trainings involving other agencies at least three to four times a month. 

Story printed courtesy of St. George News, STGnews.com. First published Feb. 23, 2013.



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Members of the Utah National Guard's 128th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment train with their Korean counterparts as part of exercise Key Resolve 2013 in Seoul, Korea.

Key Resolve - Utah Guard in Korea

Story by Staff Sgt. Shana Hutchins

SEOUL, Korea — **K**ey Resolve 2013 started in March at Yongsan, South Korea, with different military services from many countries. The annual exercise covers the various capabilities of South Korea and Allied Forces in the event of a confrontation with hostile forces.

Utah Army National Guard members from the 300th Military Intelligence Brigade and 128th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment participated in the exercise in different capacities to mentor our South Korean counterparts.

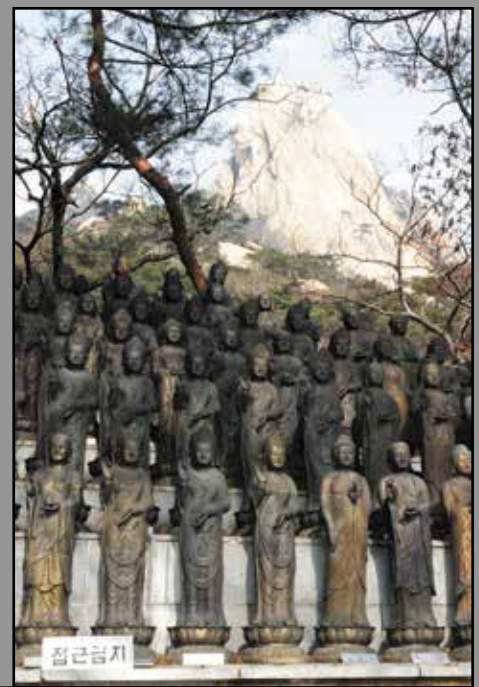
“This was a positive experience in that my troops were able to train and work with their South Korean counterparts in their skill set,” said 1st Sgt. April Rylander,

128th MPAD first sergeant. “Being able to train others allows a Soldier to dust off some of their skills they may have forgotten and become more proficient. Learning from other cultures and other military services will also aid in the development of our future leaders.”

The 300th assisted with linguists, intelligence and exercise-scenario screening. The 128th operated as oversight in the areas of international press and engaged the participants in the exercise as the press.

“This exercise is a great opportunity to come together with our counterparts, the Koreans, and work together to make sure that Korea is able to defend itself against North





Korea,” said Sgt. Chad Powell, 300th MI. “I think it’s a wonderful exercise, and it gives us a chance to work, teach, and make good friends with them.”

“The importance of the exercise and our presence here became clear with North Korea’s threat to tear up the armistice agreement and nuke South Korea,” said 1st Sgt. April Rylander, 128th MPAD.

This year’s exercise ran a little differently than last year’s. It was completely under the purview of the Republic of Korea’s military. The U.S. Forces were there in a supporting and training role.

“I am impressed by the depth and detail of the exercise,” said Spc. Ariel Solomon, 128th MPAD public affairs journalist. “The Koreans really took the lead in this exercise.”

Still, the training opportunity for the Utah Soldiers was a good one because it prepared them for different cultures, languages and situations.

“I think one of the real challenges with being in the National Guard is that you’re not a Soldier 24/7 like in the active-duty realm,” said Powell. “What an overseas duty tour does is it gives you that wonderful opportunity to get out there and even surpass what the active duty does. It’s a great opportunity that Guard Soldiers have to do whatever job you’re supposed to do downrange on deployment.”

Powell said, “I’m learning a massive amount of information, as well as being able to share it and really help those people I am working with. It’s a blast; there is a lot of stuff you can do when you are working with the 300th or even in the Utah Guard. There’s a lot of stuff to go and do and awesome places to see.”

The Utah National Guard Soldiers approached the exercise with their professionalism and expertise and walked away with new skills, knowledge and friends. 🇺🇸



85th CST Secures Local Marathons After Boston Bombings

Story by Ileen Kennedy

SALT LAKE CITY — **T**he Salt Lake Marathon, on April 20, was the first marathon in a major city since the two bombs exploded at the Boston Marathon on April 15. Utah National Guard's 85th Civil Support Team, (Weapons of Mass Destruction) Commander, Lt. Col. Ken Verboncoeur, along with his team members, watched the footage after the bombings in Boston and recognized the CSTs from Massachusetts and New York rendering aid.

"We could see the CSTs from the footage," said Verboncoeur. "We were standing around watching the events happen; we all wished we could be there. When you see another CST doing a real-world mission, you wish you could be there to provide assistance."

Most members on the CST team know that if something big happens in Utah, as part of the CST, they will have some part to play in providing direct support to local first responders.

"That's why they are on the team," said Verboncoeur. "They want to help."

The Salt Lake Marathon was placed on high alert in the shadow of the Boston bombings and intense manhunt that followed. Salt Lake City Police Chief Chris Burbank requested support from the 85th. The heightened security was bolstered by more than 500 officers from several jurisdictions, and the 85th CST sent 20 members to operate their specialized mobile equipment that can be utilized to support local first responders.

"We didn't want it to be a security event; we wanted it to be a marathon, the way it should be," said Burbank. "And I think we accomplished that today."

The CST brings expertise with them because they work with their equipment full time. The air monitoring can provide



A large banner was up for people to come together and sign words of encouragement for the people of Boston. Lt. Col. Ken Verboncoeur signs "God Bless America, 85th CST" at the Salt Lake Marathon April 20.

Photo courtesy Lt. Col. Ken Verboncoeur

an indication of any chemical warfare materials or detection of radiation. With their mobile lab, anything unknown or suspicious can be identified on location.

"I saw a lot of camaraderie—people running the race for those people in Boston," said Maj. Christina Lock, operations officer for the 85th, who led a smaller team in support of the Provo Marathon May 4. "I felt proud to be a part of it, to be able to assist and to be able to provide the air monitoring we could provide, to make them feel safer and give them that sense of security."

The 85th set up monitoring equipment at the University of Utah starting point and Liberty Park finish line. Sugarhouse

Photos by Lt. Col. Hank McIntire



Maj. Christina Lock, right, updates a Provo police officer during the 85th CST's air monitoring of the Provo Marathon May 4.



CST members work inside their mobile command trailer at the Provo City Marathon May 4.

Park had a two-man team patrolling the park, on Segways, with monitoring equipment.

“We had our footprint set up right inside Liberty Park,” said Lock. “We had our survey guys roaming around the park.”

At the University of Utah starting area marathon organizers erected a large banner with the words “Remembering Boston 2013” printed across the top. Marathoners, volunteers and supporters reflected for a moment on the tragedy before signing the banner.

“It was pretty neat to have all those signatures,” said Verboncoeur. “It was for people to make a note on history where you can express some individual solidarity with the people who were going through all the pain and difficulty in Massachusetts.”

Many marathoners planned to cross the finish line at the same time the first bomb exploded in Boston—4 hours 9 minutes.

“It was very touching to listen to some of the runners who had actually run the Boston Marathon,” said Lock. “There main goal was to cross at that same time, that four hour mark.”

“It was very patriotic. One of the neat things about the U.S. is in the midst of tragedy how we always come together,” said Verboncoeur. “The marathoners that ran together to come across the finish line at 4:09 and carry the American flag—it was very patriotic and a touching moment to be a part of.”

Members of the 85th were proud to be able to provide a more secure venue for the marathon and relieved that they didn’t detect anything with the air monitors at any of the three locations.

“Within one week of the Boston Marathon and the tragedy there, it was amazing how these people were going out to run this race,” said Capt. Spencer Marsh, 85th Survey Team Leader. “It was impressive. The lack of fear and their resolve to do it is what sets us apart as Americans. 🇺🇸

TAG Symposium *Weather the Storm* 2013

Story and photos by Sherri Workman

DRAPER, Utah — **T**he 2013 TAG Symposium was held at the Utah National Guard’s Draper Headquarters March 16, 2013. This annual event is attended by Army and Air commanders or their representatives and volunteers who are officially appointed to support the men, women and families of the Utah National Guard (UTNG). The main purpose of the symposium is to enhance relationships between volunteers and commanders, and this year’s overriding theme was resiliency: Weather the Storm.

In support of Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton’s directive to integrate resilience training in all aspects of military training, volunteers and commanders were introduced to the Army’s Comprehensive Soldier’s Fitness Resiliency program. The mental and emotional strength of Servicemembers and their families were key discussion points.

For more than 12 years the stress of war has taken its toll on those in the UTNG and their families. Family Readiness Groups (FRG) continue to play a major role in maintaining unit readiness. When Servicemembers are performing their military duties, FRGs are the support organization for family members left behind. Many family members turn to FRGs to strengthen one another and ask for help in troubled times. It is a great reassurance to know there are many caring individuals within our families dedicating their own time to guide and help families confronted with similar circumstances.

The TAG Symposium began with opening remarks by Burton and Brig. Gen. Ken Gammon. Charn Burton, wife of Maj. Gen. Burton, along with other guest speakers, presented messages regarding family readiness, fundraising, operational security, family readiness goal-setting and resilience skills. Local artist Mikalene Ipson sang a very touching and appropriate performance of “God Bless the Military Wife” from her *Pixie Dust* album.

Recognition and awards were presented by Burton, Gammon, Lt. Col. Brent Baxter, and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller to all volunteer attendees who in the words of Burton are “instrumental in successful mobilizations, maintaining unit strength, and reinforcing solid Guard families.” 🇺🇸



Utah National Guard senior leaders and the officially appointed Family Readiness Group volunteers, representing all major commands within the Utah National Guard.

WARRIORS

Story by Sgt. Ian Kummer and Pfc. Brianne Roudebush

CAMP WILLIAMS, Utah — **T**he Army National Guard's newest generation of trained junior enlisted leaders returned home April 26 from their first level of instruction as noncommissioned officers: the Warrior Leader Course.

The 17-day course held at Camp Williams, Utah, by the Utah Army Guard's 640th Regional Training Institute, not only gave Soldiers from around the nation the skills needed to be more effective leaders, but the tools to help their home units maintain Army standards.

"Coming through WLC [shows students] the way things should be done, but it's up to them to use these tools and resources and apply them to their units when they get back," said Staff Sgt. Jeff Jones, a WLC instructor at the 640th RTI. "Hopefully they're taking what they've learned here back and applying it at the unit."

The students learned a variety of tactical skills like land navigation and squad movements, but they also learned many administrative tasks like how to give a counseling statement, draft an award recommendation and write a memorandum for record.

Like every other Army course, WLC has minimum standards that need to be achieved in order to graduate, but in the end, how much the students get out of the course is entirely dependent on individual effort.

"You only get out of it what you put into it," said Jones. "Some people put more effort into this than others, and those are the ones who go back home and apply it."

"I think I will be able to pass a lot of this knowledge on to other Soldiers," said Spc. Nick Lebeau, a signal support systems specialist with the 132nd Engineer Company, 579th Engineer Battalion, California Army National Guard, out of Redding, Calif. "I want to teach people how to motivate Soldiers, to care about Soldiers, to listen to Soldiers, to mentor them and teach them how to progress in their careers in the Army."

While many of the more senior sergeants attending the course were already familiar with most of the topics covered, WLC provides a strong foundation of knowledge for junior Soldiers and newly promoted sergeants to learn the roles they may find themselves in a combat zone or in their units.

"[WLC] gives me a heads up so when I get to be [sergeant] I will already have that knowledge," said Lebeau. Unlike in previous years, the distance learning-based Structured Self Development level 1 [SSD-1] is now a prerequisite for Soldiers to complete prior to attending WLC. This helps better prepare them for the material presented during the courses, particularly students from units that do not have any peers who have attended WLC recently to help them prepare.

"Now that SSD-1 is a requirement, there are a lot more people picking up and understanding what they are going into, versus people who would just show up without SSD-1 and couldn't get any feedback from anyone at their unit," said Jones. "It gives them the information that will be covered a lot more in depth here."

Communication is a two-way street, and the WLC staff encourages input from the student Soldiers about ways to improve the curriculum.

"Without finding out what went well and things that need to be improved, we don't really know what is going to work the best," said Jones.

At the end of the day, the true beneficiaries of WLC are not the noncommissioned officers who form their leadership skills, but the Soldiers under their charge.

"As a leader, your success is based on how well your subordinates do," said Jones. ■



A new class of enlisted leaders graduates from the Warrior Leader Course at Camp Williams, Utah, April 25. WLC is the first step in professional development of Army noncommissioned officers.

Photo Sgt. Ian Kummer

Geologists take to the Air for Utah ShakeOut

Story and photos by Sgt. Nicolas Cloward

WEST JORDAN, Utah — Soldiers and geologists from the Utah Geological Survey boarded a UH-60 Blackhawk April 18 to gather information about the Wasatch fault line during the annual Utah ShakeOut.

The UGS's role was to run a rehearsal of aerial documentation of surface faulting along the Salt Lake City segment of the Wasatch fault line and test communications. This way the National Guard, Emergency Operation Center and UGS can maintain synchronization in the event of an actual earthquake. The flight also gave them a chance to get information on the current state of the fault line.

“What we learn from the scientific investigations factors into how much effort and how much money is put into how to mitigate the hazard and the risk,” said Mike Hylland, UGS senior geologist. 🇺🇸



Mike Hylland and 1st Lt. Patrick Barrington go over the flight route so he and his team can document the Wasatch fault line. Adam Hiscock takes pictures out of the UH-60 Blackhawk during the 2013 Utah ShakeOut.

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Former Miss Uintah Basin on Target at Biathlon Competitions

VERNAL, Utah — U.S. Army National Guard Private 1st Class Ty'lene Puro, former Miss Uintah Basin, represented the Utah National Guard as a junior-division competitor on the Utah Biathlon Team at the Chief National Guard Bureau Biathlon Championships at Camp Ripley, Minn. Feb. 26.

In November 2012, Capt. Dan Morken stopped by her desk at the Utah National Guard Headquarters in Draper and suggested she try biathlon and join the Utah Guard Biathlon team.

"I had never cross-country skied before and had no idea what that was going to be like, but I earned my sharpshooter qualification at Basic Combat Training at Fort Jackson, S.C., and felt excited to continue my rifle training," Puro said.

Puro started getting on skis at an open training day at Soldier Hollow near Heber. Morken gave her guidance and coaching during that first day on the skis.

Then came the time to begin training with her weapon and learn the structure of biathlon competition.

"In biathlon competitions you cross-country ski to a shooting range, skiing as fast as you can," Puro said. "In sprint, you shoot first in the prone position. For each target you miss, you ski a special penalty lap, which, of course, puts you behind in the field of competitors. You shoot the next time, in standing position."

At her first regional meet, her goals were simple: don't fall down and to shoot the best she could at that point in her training.

"Pfc. Ty Puro did an outstanding job in her first biathlon race ever," Chief Warrant Officer 5 Gary Wallin said. "She shot 50 percent and successfully completed the 7.5 kilometer sprint race."

With one race under her belt, Puro signed up for the 10K Women's Pursuit race.

"She did the same thing, shooting 60 percent and not falling," Wallin said. "She is a good shot. She understands shooting fundamentals. Her skiing is improving."

Being a beginner, she competed in the Novice division and brought home second-place medals in both events. Then, after a three-week round of practice, she represented the Utah National Guard Biathlon Team at the national competition.

"In my first event I improved 10 percent in my shooting and knocked 25 minutes off of my ski time," Puro said.

At the end of her final race at the national event, a women's relay, Puro skied the 6K course and cleaned the target range by knocking down all targets while shooting in both positions.

"I still have a long way to go to be competitive at the highest levels," Puro said. "But, I think I have found a sport I enjoy, and I am committed to improving each time I go out." 🇺🇸

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Ogden's Browning Armory Reopens After Remodel



The Utah National Guard reopens the Browning Armory in Ogden at a ribbon-cutting ceremony March 6.

Right: Two 19th Special Forces Soldiers arrange a parachute display. Below: A Soldier demonstrates the parachute-packing facility, a new addition at the armory. The kitchen, office space and conference rooms received a complete renovation.



Story and photos by Ileen Kennedy

OGDEN, Utah — **T**he Utah Army National Guard hosted a ribbon-cutting ceremony, reopening the John M. Browning Armory in Ogden, Utah, March 6.

At the ceremony, Adjutant General Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton officially cut the ribbon marking the opening of the Browning Armory.

Dignitaries in attendance at the event included Burton; James Minster, South Ogden mayor; Lt. Col. Jay McNeil, commander of Group Support Battalion, 19th Special Forces (Airborne); Col. Randy Watt, 19th Special Forces Group commander; Lt. Col. Paul Peters, commander of 1st Battalion, 19th Special Forces; Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller; and Lt. Col. Matt Price, director of facilities for the Utah Guard.

The Browning Armory was first opened in 1959, originally housing field artillery units. Currently, the armory is home to Group Support Battalion, 19th Special Forces.

“What a privilege it is to have this facility in our community,” said Mayor Minster. “As a city we are grateful to have you here. The armory here in South Ogden is an icon to our city.”

Browning Armory has undergone a yearlong, \$1.1 million remodeling project, which includes new paint, carpet, heating and cooling-system upgrades, landscaping, electrical wiring, complete kitchen renovation, office space and conference rooms, new unisex restrooms to meet ADA requirements, communication and data-system infrastructure, parachute-packing facility addition, lighting and energy-efficient improvements that will reduce electricity costs by 20 percent.

“We have comfortable quarters that allow us to be more efficient in our work,” said Capt. Thomas Ashton, commander of Alpha Company, Group Support Battalion, 19th Special Forces. “As a citizen it’s great to see a local landmark remain in the community, and as a Guardsman it’s awesome to see the history of the building continue.” 🇺🇸



Morocco Hosts Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton

Story by Lt. Col. Lisa Olsen and Capt. Chris Tarbet

RABAT, Morocco — **M**aj. Gen. Jeff Burton, the adjutant general (TAG) of the Utah National Guard, and six Utah Army and Air National Guardmembers traveled to Rabat, Morocco, April 16-21 as members of a senior-leader delegation for the Utah State Partnership Program (SPP).

This was Burton's first visit as TAG and the 10-year anniversary of the SPP with Morocco. The TAG's trip is an annual event, allowing Utah Guard leaders to discuss the future of the partnership with Royal Moroccan Armed Forces senior leaders.

"May 2013 commemorates the 10th anniversary of our relationship with the kingdom of Morocco," said Burton. "Over the years this relationship has flourished because of mutual trust and respect between the state of Utah and the kingdom, a trust that was really strengthened in 2008 when Morocco suffered a serious earthquake."

The SPP partnership has resulted in more than 120 events in the past ten years, ranging from artillery, engineering, and medical-training contact teams to non-SPP events such as the Marrakech Air Show, African Lion and Majestic Eagle. The SPP program has been so successful that youth exchanges and support to a Moroccan orphanage are now an annual occurrence.

"I see good years ahead for the State Partnership Program with Utah and the Kingdom of Morocco," said Burton.

Burton met with Samuel Kaplan, U.S. ambassador to the Kingdom of Morocco, April 18 during Ambassador Kaplan's



Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton, center, with senior leaders from the Utah National Guard and Royal Moroccan Armed Forces at Rabat, Morocco April 18.

Photos by Capt. Chris Tarbet

final week in office. The delegation also met with the Chief of Royal Moroccan Social Services, Brig. Gen. Mohammed Brouk, and Inspector of Royal Moroccan Medical Services, Brig. Gen. Ali Abrouq, to discuss the future expansion of training. Abrouq provided the Utah delegation with a very impressive tour of the newly remodeled Moroccan military hospital.

Senior-leader discussions continued April 19 with Maj. Gen. Ahmed Boutaleb, Inspector of Royal Air Force on finding opportunities for exchanges with the Utah Air National Guard to include familiarization with the KC-135 tanker.

A significant moment for the delegation came when Burton and Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller met with the top Moroccan military officer, Inspector General of the Royal Moroccan Armed Forces General Abdelaziz Bennani, the equivalent of the Chief of Joint Staff for U.S. Forces. Bennani



expressed support for the SPP program and interest in additional exchanges.

“Great trust has been developed so much so that even during recent political tensions between the United States and the Kingdom,” said Burton, “Utah National Guard delegates were welcomed with opened arms,” said Burton. “We were treated very respectfully and kindly and were encouraged in our endeavors to build trust and capacity in the Moroccan military and the Utah National Guard.”

The day continued with the deputy inspector of 3rd Bureau and the Moroccan Auxiliary Forces, who emphasized continued focus on disaster-response exchanges, similar to the March SPP event involving a two-week exchange centered on earthquake and radiological disaster response.

“The Utah delegation was able to visit and conduct a pass and review of the Morocco Auxiliary Force,” said Miller. “This force is similar to our own Utah Homeland Response Force, specifically in the area of protecting, securing and recovery for their civilian population.”

On the final day of the visit, Burton observed a comprehensive display of 5th Engineering Battalion’s operational capabilities, based in Kenitra. Not only did the event include a briefing and discussions among senior leaders, but it featured a full-spectrum exercise demonstrating firefighting, personnel rescue, medical and chemical response.

“The Morocco force had dedicated and trained professionals,” said Miller. “They are steadfast in their commitment to protect and serve their country and are always seeking ways to sustain and improve their unit and individual skill set. One of the means they accomplish their proficiency is the bilateral training with our Utah National Guard force. As a combined force, we train and learn from one another which enhances each other’s capabilities, while building a solid relationship.”

The Utah delegation carried more than 250 pounds of school supplies to the Le Nid orphanage and spent the evening on April 18 interacting with the children.

“The orphanage visit was a humbling highlight to the trip,” said Capt. Chris Tarbet, Utah National Guard aide-de-camp. “As a Soldier, I traditionally focus on training and execution when participating in an exercise. It was a great experience to meet and interact with orphaned Moroccan youth. It reminded me that our service in the Utah National Guard often extends beyond the scope of military operations.”



Members of Morocco’s 5th Engineering Battalion, located in Kenitra, Morocco, demonstrate their disaster-response capabilities to Utah National Guard senior leaders.

Utah ANG Commemorates Women's History Month

Story by Staff Sgt. Lillian Harnden

SALT LAKE CITY — **T**he Utah Air National Guard (UTANG) commemorated Women's History Month on base March 3.

The event included speeches by Assistant Adjutant General for Air, Brig. Gen. David Fountain; Director of Joint Staff, Brig. Gen. Kenneth Gammon; and a presentation by vice wing commander of the 151st Air Refueling Wing, Col. Christine Burckle.

"Women's History Month is a time to celebrate and honor the contribution, sacrifices and accomplishments of women who not only shaped our military, but America as well," said Gammon. "Across many years of cultures, women have fought to be educated, empowered and treated as equal to their male counterparts."

In Burckle's presentation, she highlighted women's roles throughout military history and offered advice to women who currently serve.

"I believe that those who aspire to achieve higher levels of leadership should do the best possible job in the assignment they are given; prepare themselves mentally, physically and emotionally; accomplish the mission; take care of Airmen; and lastly, mentor and be mentored," said Burckle.

Burckle showcased a recent study done on U.S. Army women general officers and their "Strategies for Ascension." The study revealed seven overarching themes consistently mentioned during the interviews by study participants.

Those themes included the following:

- professional competency and doing a good job
- interpersonal skills, including good communication and taking care of people
- being known by your good reputation
- taking on and doing well in tough jobs like command
- luck and/or timing
- not aspiring to make general officer
- mentoring

"Doing most or all of these things will surely provide a great strategic road map toward advancement for senior leaders in the military, no matter what gender," said Burckle.

Burckle then mentioned that mentoring might be the most important of the seven themes.

"Many of these women believed that because of their mentoring relationships, they were more likely to take on tough assignments, or assignments they had not considered, and these assignments played a major role in their career ascension," said Burckle.

Currently, 169 female enlisted Airmen and 29 female officer Airmen serve in the UTANG. Burckle concluded her speech by acknowledging their contributions and role in strengthening the UTANG.

The event also highlighted advice from five other senior officers and enlisted women who worked their way to the top of the ranks within the UTANG.

"My advice starts with quality training," said Lt. Col. Julie Anderson, a Military Personnel Officer with Headquarters

Photo by TSgt. Jeremy Giacoletto-Stegall

The keynote speaker at the Utah Air National Guard's Women's History Month celebration, Col. Christine Burckle, (front row, left side) poses with Brig. Gen. Kenneth Gammon (left front) and some audience members after her presentation March 3. Burckle highlighted women's roles throughout military history and offered advice to women who currently serve.



UTANG. "Become as knowledgeable as possible in your career field. Don't be lazy and rely on others to know what you should know. Constantly learn about your job."


"Always be ready for the next promotion or position," advised Lt. Col. Linda Robles, the 151st Comptroller Flight commander. "I can give numerous examples where I was promoted or given a job because I was ready and prepared and had done all the necessary requirements to be considered for that position."

"It really helps if you enjoy the work you do," offered Senior Master Sgt. Patti Cook, Aerospace Maintenance superintendent. "Make sure you are in a job that you love to do and that you respond to others the way you would like to be treated."

"Keep your eyes and ears open, not necessarily for advancement, but for CHANGE in your career," recommended Master Sgt. Joan Cornell. "Do not allow yourself to become stagnant in your position, and thus become bored or restless, as well as ineffective."

"It is important to find your individual strengths and further develop them, as well as to continually, candidly identify your weak points and learn to improve them," suggested Master Sgt. Vallaree McArthur, first sergeant for the 151st Maintenance Group.

More than 50 Guardmembers attended the event. Senior Master Sgt. Burke Baker, Human Resource Advisor for the 151st Air Refueling Wing, who helped to organize the event, indicated that he chose to focus on Women's History Month since women comprise the largest minority within the UTANG.

"I was extremely pleased with the turnout we had this morning and look forward to future observances that highlight the diversity of our unit members," said Baker. "This was an outstanding event to celebrate the diversity of our unit members and to observe the significant contributions of women to our country, our Air National Guard and specifically this organization." 



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Utah Guard Soldier Takes **Top Honors** at Regional Best Warrior Event



Left to right: Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton, Sgt. Conlee Luke, Command Sgts. Maj. Michael Miller and Rick Brown attend the awards ceremony where Sgt. Conlee Luke won top honors for the noncommissioned officer category at Region VII Best Warrior Competition in Fort Carson, Colo. April 5-7.



Sgt. John Christiansen, left and Sgt. Conlee Luke participate in the Region VII Best Warrior Competition at Fort Carson, Colo.

Story by Lt. Col. Hank McIntire

DRAPER, Utah — **S**gt. Conlee Luke, a Cedar City, Utah, resident and member of the Utah Army Guard's 116th Engineer Company, 1457th Engineer Battalion, took top honors in the Noncommissioned Officer category at the Region VII Best Warrior Competition April 5-7 at Fort Carson, Colo.

The intense, three-day, regional competition featured Soldiers from Arizona, California, Colorado, Guam, Hawaii, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah. Each state or territory sent its very best representatives to compete in two categories: Soldier and Noncommissioned Officer.

Along with his peers, Luke completed a number of tests to include obstacle course, physical fitness, road march with 85 lbs. of gear and equipment, weapons expertise and shooting accuracy, land navigation, tactical communication, a graded media interview, written examination, review board in front of four sergeants major and a mystery event that involved problem solving, outdoor survival and a helicopter rescue.

Luke achieved the highest score in four of the events: obstacle course, road march, weapons accuracy and written examination. With his first-place overall finish, he will advance to the Army National Guard Best Warrior event and compete with other regional winners in his category.

Photos by Staff Sgt. Aubry Hill

"It was a great experience; I loved every minute of it," said Luke. "It was physically challenging and stressful, and I learned more in the last three or four months than in the last three or four years.

"I was confident that I would do well, but it was pretty humbling that I won among so many other Soldiers," Luke continued. "It's definitely changed the rest of my military career, giving me a jump-start on stuff I don't normally get to do as a heavy-equipment operator. I'll be a better leader in the future."

Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Miller, Senior Enlisted Advisor for the Utah Army Guard, was present at the competition and was very impressed with Luke and Christiansen.

"These Soldiers trained hard for the past month to get ready," he said. "Their character and commitment were above reproach as they competed. They never quit and gave it their all, no matter what the task."

Sgt. John Christiansen, of Centerfield, Utah, a member of Bravo Battery, 1-145th Field Artillery, represented the Utah Guard in the Soldier category, making a strong showing overall and achieving the highest score in the mystery event. 🇺🇸



Some of the events participants were tested on during the competition included an 85-pound rucksack march, weapons qualification, land navigation, obstacle course, physical fitness test, inspections and interview.

Best Warriors Named in the State Best Warrior Competition for the Utah Army National Guard

The following is a list of the 2013 award recipients:

- Soldier of the Year: Spc. John Christiansen, Bravo Battery, 145th Field Artillery
- Noncommissioned Officer of the Year: Sgt. Conlee Luke, 116th Engineer Company
- First Sergeant of the Year: 1st Sgt. Lawrence Lopez, Bravo Company, 142nd Military Intelligence Battalion

Airman of the Year in the State Airman Competition Awarded to Five Utah Air National Guardmembers

The following is a list of the 2013 award recipients:

- Airman of the Year: Senior Airman Rebecca Bagley, 130th Engineering & Installation Squadron
- Noncommissioned Officer of the Year: Staff Sgt. Alisa Stanley, 151st Comptroller Flight
- Senior Noncommissioned Officer of the Year: Master Sgt. Mitchell Hooper, 151st Security Forces Squadron
- First Sergeant of the Year: 1st Sgt. Vallaree McArthur, 151st Maintenance Squadron
- Honor Guard Member of the Year: Airman 1st Class Colton Elliott, 151st Force Support Squadron

Military Engagement Team Participates in Bilateral Disaster Response in Morocco

Story and photos by Maj. Robert Warden



KENITRA, Morocco — **T**he Utah National Guard and Moroccan Royal Armed Forces took part in a bilateral, disaster-response exchange March 15-30, 2013, in Kenitra, Morocco. The exercise, part of the State Partnership Program (SPP), allowed 97th Troop Command to develop as a Military Engagement Team (MET), which is a new mission it will have starting in 2014.

The delegation from Utah received a warm welcome in which the Moroccan garrison commander, Col. Maj. Zhribi, personally greeted each member. The Utah Guard team, headed by 97th Troop Command, consisted of 22 Soldiers and Airmen with expertise in various areas of emergency incident response. The team included Soldiers and Airmen from the Homeland Response Force, 85th Civil Support Team (CST) and linguists from the 300th Military Intelligence Brigade. The Royal Armed Forces of Morocco provided 70 participants.

The two weeks were spent exchanging best practices on incident mission command, logistics, communications, search and extraction, decontamination and emergency medical treatment. The exchange concluded with a full-scale, hands-on demonstration; functional exercise; tabletop exercise; after-action review; and awards ceremony.

At the start of the first week, overview presentations were given by both countries on the way each responds to a mass-emergency incident. By midweek, participants separated into smaller focus groups, where specific information was exchanged for various areas of expertise.

“The MET was a good opportunity to get exposure on how another nation responds to natural disasters and CBRN [Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear] incidents,” said Sgt. Maj. Spencer Nielsen, noncommissioned officer in charge of the exercise. “There was an excellent exchange of techniques and ideas between the Moroccans and the Utah MET team, and the event was mutually beneficial.”

“These co-military exercises seem to bring out the positive in all participants,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Conder, a linguist. “Everybody seems excited to share and learn with each other.”

Utah Soldiers and Airmen were constantly seen interacting with Moroccan soldiers, learning new phrases in French and Arabic, the official languages of Morocco. “The only difficulty came from the literal translation of technical aspects of briefings and instruction,” said Capt. Spencer Marsh, 85th CST about dealing with the language barrier. “But through hands-on opportunities and assistance from our linguists, things progressed extremely well.”

“Our ongoing relationship with SPP and now with the MET program serves to continue the official relationship that began when Morocco recognized the United States in 1777,” said Lt. Col. Ken Verboncoeur, 85th CST commander.

During the second week, exercise “Kenitra Salt Shake” began. It was based on the scenario of a 6.0-magnitude earthquake that evolved into a CBRN incident, causing a need

for specialized, disaster-response capabilities. The exercise tested existing plans, participants' actions and problem-solving abilities.

“Working with our Moroccan partners in exercises like Kenitra Salt Shake will enhance our ability to assist them in the future,” said Marsh. “While conducting training for the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces, I was able to identify areas of improvement in my own area of responsibility.”

Utah National Guard Assistant Adjutant General Brig. Gen. Dallen Attack and Command Sgt. Maj. Rick Brown visited during the second week of the exercise. They expressed their appreciation to Brig. Gen. Moafi, Chief Royal Armed Forces engineering officer, for the hospitality shown to the delegation from Utah and how important this exchange continues to be. They also witnessed an impressive demonstration of the Moroccan emergency response.

Col. Brad Fuller, commander of 97th Troop Command and the Homeland Response Force, whose background is in firefighting and emergency response, was happy with the exercise overall.

“It was great interacting with the Moroccans, seeing how they function in the areas of emergency response,” said Fuller. “Sharing what we know and do was good for both countries.”

At the concluding awards ceremony, Lt. Col. El Mrani thanked Fuller and all Utah personnel and said, “They are welcome here in their second country anytime.”

Lt. Col. Chris Caldwell, 97th Troop Command, and officer in charge of the exercise, was given specific praise from the Moroccan leadership for his hard work, patience and professionalism. Caldwell described the exchange as “very successful” and repeatedly thanked all the participants for helping to make this exercise an extraordinary event.

Col. El Attar, of the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces Engineer headquarters, said, “Although we come from different countries with different experiences, we ultimately share many of the same values, to include a love for our country, our families and our desire to be of service to the citizens we support. These are the things that unite people.”

Col. Bouha, also of the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces Engineer headquarters, said how pleased he was with the exercise and how much he looked forward to future exercises, building on the things the two militaries learned together.

2013 marks the tenth anniversary of the Utah National Guard's State Partnership Program with Morocco, and both partners look forward to many more years of cooperation, future engagements and to continue their relationship well into the future. 🇺🇸



Members of 97th Troop Command and the Moroccan Royal Armed Forces train during exercise Kenitra Salt Shake. The exercise was based on a 6.0-magnitude earthquake scenario, testing disaster-response plans. Brig. Gen. Dallen Attack visited the exercise during its second week.

Workout Video Creates ‘Soldiers of Steel’



Mark Twight, private trainer, center, works with National Guard Soldiers for the video, *Soldiers of Steel*, at the Utah National Guard Headquarters, Draper, Utah. Feb. 6.

Story and photos by Ileen Kennedy

DRAPER, Utah — Coinciding with the June 14 release date of *Man of Steel*, National Guard Bureau is releasing its own video, *Soldiers of Steel*. The workout video, which consists of four webisodes, individual how-to videos and a fitness plan, will be available to the public at soldierofsteel.com from May 10 through July 31. Filmed in part at the Utah National Guard Headquarters building in Draper, Utah, the video will be used to help transform new recruits into stronger Soldiers prior to their leaving for Basic Training.

Casting directors scoured National Guard units across the U.S., searching for the ideal Soldiers to appear in their video. Selectees come from Maryland, Colorado, Alabama and Utah. Spc. Ryan Newbold, Forward Support Company, 1457th Engineer Battalion, of Fruit Heights, said he was attending his unit’s change-of-command ceremony at drill when he was pulled aside and asked about participating in the project.

“I’ve always tried to stay active,” said Newbold. “You feel better about yourself when you’re physically fit.”

One aspect that intrigued Soldiers to participate in the project was working with Mark Twight, a Utah resident and private trainer who trains Hollywood stars to help them get ready for TV and movie roles.

“I think it’s a really cool opportunity to meet the guy who trained all the people for the movie *300* and the new Superman

movie, *Man of Steel*,” said Newbold. “He’s a genius with exercise.”

People come from all over the world to train with Twight. His gym, Gym Jones, is not open to the public; people have to apply for and be accepted to train there. One of the reasons Twight’s gym is so effective is that he closely manages the environment and who trains there.

“In the gym we impose very high standards on people, no matter who they are,” said Twight. “When you train someone to a really high level of fitness, it shows in the way they carry themselves. So if a guy needs to portray a Soldier, for example, you want to make him as capable as possible so he actually believes it and doesn’t have to pretend.”

At Gym Jones they hold trainees to very high standards, which Twight believes are consistent with the values instilled in Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines.

“One of the outcomes of training in the gym is the development of values, and these are very similar to military values in the sense that we are looking for people with integrity, who will do what they say they are going to do when we assign them homework,” he said. “We are looking for people who are courageous and confront things they might be afraid of.”

A big part of the training at Gym Jones is training military members, as the gym has done for the last 14 years. The



Eric Matthies, the director (bottom left) and film crew shoot footage for the video Soldiers of Steel. Spc. Ryan Newbold, 1457th Engineer Battalion, demonstrates how building upper-body strength in the gym transfers to performing skills needed as a Soldier.

National Guard group being filmed is one of the youngest groups they have worked with, but it has brought a good mix of Soldiers from all over the U.S., full of enthusiasm and a willingness to learn.

“There were some exercises that taught proper form on squats—I’ve been doing them wrong,” said Newbold. “I’m definitely going to incorporate in my workout all the exercises he instructed and showed us for the workout video we are filming.”

Twight’s special form of training is functional or transferable to tasks at hand. For a Soldier on the battlefield, this transferable training could prevent injury and save lives. If a Soldier is in a combat zone wearing full gear and carrying his weapon, and his buddy is suddenly wounded, that Soldier needs to sprint forward, grab his wounded buddy and drag him back to cover.

On the other hand, sitting on a bench and doing quad extensions is not transferable, but Twight incorporates strategies in his training that teach Soldiers how, after that same sprint forward, to have their muscles recover as quickly as possible

and be able to perform complex tasks that may require fine motor skills.

“One of the most important characteristics in training is functional training,” said Twight. “By functional I mean transferable. That means that the artificial training you do in the gym has to be transferable to an actual task.”

“I want to be a paramedic and work with the Davis County Sheriff,” said Newbold. “It will help me with that because you have to pass a fitness test to get on with the sheriff’s department and pass a PT test in the Guard. It will help me with that also.”

Twight’s video will have many uses for the National Guard, one of which will be for those in the Guard’s Recruit Sustainment Program, which prepares Soldiers for Basic Training.

“I’m excited to see the video, and I’m glad you guys came out here,” said Lt. Col. Michael Turley, Recruiting and Retention Battalion commander. “It’s an honor that Utah was selected to help out because it really could have been anywhere. The one important lesson here is that fitness, no matter what job you do in the Service, will help you be good to go.”



Lt. Col. Michael Turley, Recruiting and Retention Battalion commander, coins Eric Matthies, the director of the video Soldiers of Steel. Filming Soldiers of Steel at the Utah National Guard Draper, Utah headquarters building Feb. 6.

Utah Guard Supports Scouting for Food for 27th Year

Story and photos by Lt. Col. Hank McIntire

DRAPER, Utah — **F**or the 27th consecutive year, the Utah National Guard provided personnel and equipment support to the annual Scouting for Food effort March 23 in various locations throughout Utah.

Maj. Gen. Jefferson S. Burton, adjutant general of the Utah National Guard, was this year's honorary chair for Utah's Scouting for Food.

Approximately 100 Airmen and Soldiers and more than 20 Utah National Guard vehicles assisted Boy Scouts, who went house to house to gather donated food items for local food banks.

Guardmembers helped oversee drop-off sites across Utah and assisted in transporting food items to the Ogden, Salt Lake, St. George, and Provo food banks. 🇺🇸

Airmen and Soldiers with the Utah National Guard transfer donated food from drop-off locations to food banks across the state as part of their support for Scouting of Food March 23.



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Lt. Col. Brad Fuller Promoted to Full Bird



Above: Members of the Utah National Guard, Col. Brad Fuller's wife and daughters attend his promotion ceremony April 20. Left: Col. Brad Fuller's wife Jodi replaces his lieutenant colonel rank with that of colonel.




Story by Lt. Col. Hank McIntire


DRAPER, Utah — Lt. Col. Bradley S. Fuller, of Hurricane, commander of the Utah National Guard's 97th Troop Command, was promoted to colonel in a ceremony April 20 at the Guard's Draper headquarters.

Fuller, a 27-year veteran of the military, was joined by family and fellow Soldiers for this signal event in an officer's career. His wife Jodi did the honors by replacing his lieutenant colonel oak-leaf rank for an eagle-with-outstretched-wings insignia on the front of his uniform.

A retired deputy chief of operations with the Las Vegas Fire Department, Fuller commanded the 2-222nd Field Artillery from 2010 to 2012, including its deployment to Iraq in 2011 during the closing months of Operation New Dawn. Currently, in addition to serving as commander of the 97th, he also leads the Utah Guard's Homeland Response Force, a contingent trained and equipped to respond locally and regionally in support of civil authorities for large-scale emergencies.

Fuller thanked his family and his military colleagues for the support they have given him over the years.


"The reason I'm here is because of the amazing people around me," he said. "I now have an opportunity to serve more, and I look forward to facilitating the development of 97th Troop Command and Homeland Response Force." 



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Utah Guard Linguists Contribute Unique Skills During African Exercises

Story and photos by Staff Sgt. Amy Wieser Willson

DOUALA, Cameroon — Sweat rolls down Sgt. Chason Parker's face as he speaks in French to an attentive audience of Cameroon Army paratroopers. There's barely any air movement in the steamy basement classroom at the Regiment du Genie Headquarters outside of Douala, Cameroon. Parker, a Soldier with the Utah Army National Guard's 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, isn't the teacher, but the eager students perceive him as such.

"Being a linguist isn't just being an interpreter or a translator, but learning the material—the trick being to learn it, and being a teacher, too," Parker said.

Staff Sgt. Ray Novak, with the 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, Georgia Army National Guard, teaches in English. Parker listens, translates the message into French, and mimics the instructor's motions while varying his tone to maintain the audience's interest.

It's part of an eight-hour block of instruction for Central Accord 2013, which is enhancing Central African militaries' abilities to conduct aerial resupply and provide patient treatment and evacuation. Simply repeating the message in French for the class would have the warm students nodding off quickly.

"You have to learn to control the crowd, not just translate," said Parker.

Parker and his fellow Utah Guardmembers—six French linguists and one Portuguese linguist—find themselves almost constantly at work in this environment. The 10-day, U.S. Army Africa exercise brings together 160 U.S. Servicemembers with about 600 Central African soldiers and airmen, primarily from Cameroon.

Even the Cameroonians who speak English find occasional challenges in communicating with the Americans.

"The pronunciation is a bit different," said Staff Sgt. Julius Mkong, a Cameroon army paratrooper.

Beyond the actual words, the linguists need to understand the concepts since military terms and training concepts can vary broadly. When the discussion concerns dropping supplies from airplanes and loading patients onto helicopters, there's little room for errors in communication.

"Not knowing what they're asking, and how the interpreter is interpreting what they're asking, is confusing. But at the end of the day, everyone goes away with the



Spc. Alan Darger, a linguist from Sandy, Utah, with the 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, holds the Republic of Congo flag while Louika Parfait, a paratrooper from the Republic of Congo army ties it down for the opening ceremony of exercise Central Accord 2013 Feb. 20.

concept," said Staff Sgt. Michael Quinn, 560th Battlefield Surveillance Brigade.

It's an especially challenging mission for Spc. Ashley Lytle, who joined the 300th three years ago and, despite regularly translating documents and phrases, learned new content on aerial delivery while having linguist services in constant demand.

"This is the first time I've been an interpreter," Lytle said during a break from class. "I research a lot, but this is my first real-time mission."

It's also Lytle's first time out of the United States, which adds another level to the challenges young Soldiers face upon arrival, but Lytle soon felt comfortable with the Central African soldiers, though.

"What I'm really enjoying is hanging out with the Cameroonian soldiers, asking what they do at night and what they do for fun," Lytle said.

There's little time for entertainment in the evenings for the linguists. When the training day ends, their mission often continues—whether it's helping connect a couple of senior leaders with different language backgrounds or coordinating an issue with hotel staff members.

On a recent evening, Spc. Tysic Cummings, also with the 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, found himself standing in front of a crowded room filled with officers as Col. Giselle Wilz, Task Force Central commander from the North Dakota Army National Guard, received updates from officers in units throughout the task force. Partner nations had representatives in the meeting and Cummings, who has served nearly five years in the Army National Guard, found himself the focus



Sgt. Chason Parker, a French linguist with the 300th Military Intelligence Brigade, stands with his Cameroon counterpart during Central Accord 2013, a 10-day exercise where Soldiers were able to hone aerial-resupply and medical-evacuation skills at the Regiment du Genie Headquarters outside of Douala, Cameroon.

of senior leaders' attention as he interpreted all of their comments for African partner leaders.

It can be an incredibly intimidating situation for any young Soldier, but Cummings says his first military job—serving as a paralegal—prepared him.

“Your job as a paralegal is not to be intimidated by rank,” he said. “In front of that room, I was just thinking it was such a long day.”

After all, he added, he often works one-on-one with colonels who need translation assistance.

Parker said the varying requirements the linguists face forces them to adapt their personalities. One day, they might be working one-on-one with a senior leader and the next they could be in front of dozens of people helping to teach a class.

While it's exciting to visit new places—this is the fifth overseas mission for both Parker and Cummings in the past two years—the days leave them “mentally tired,” Parker says.

“I feel like a better linguist now that I've actually done the job,” Lytle said. “I've already gotten better in my communication skills. I definitely want to do this again.”

The Central Accord 2013 closing ceremony on March 1 concluded a weeklong event with 10 days of classes, practical exercises and field training designed to enhance aerial resupply, patient treatment and medical readiness for Central African militaries. 🇺🇸

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Charitable Trust Recognizes Contributors

Story by Sgt. Nicolas Cloward

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Berg

DRAPER, Utah — **S**oldiers and community members affiliated with the Utah Guard Charitable Trust gathered for an award ceremony and open house at the Draper Headquarters auditorium, March 13.

The ceremony honored corporate and individual community members for their generous donations to the organization. The Trust was established in 2005 to assist Utah military families with medical, home, or property emergencies, lost wages, travel expenses of wounded Guardmembers' families or other unexpected financial needs.

Maj. Gen. Jeff Burton, adjutant general of the Utah National Guard, was there to personally thank every person for their donations and present them with tokens of appreciation. He explained that even though it's primarily a National Guard service, it's not exclusive to the National Guard.


"We've helped Servicemembers from every single branch, and that's the whole idea," said Burton. The purpose is to help Servicemembers and their families, and provide them assistance when they face a difficult time."

During the ceremony a Soldier and his wife, Pfc. Joseph and Sara Booth of Layton, shared their story of hardship and told how the Charitable Trust helped them save their home during trying times. Funds from the Trust helped pay mortgage and utility bills and acted as the bridge they needed when they were trying to get back on their feet.

"We're just so thankful," said Booth.


Paul Hitzelberger, president of Utah Del, Inc., and one of the largest contributors was present during the ceremony. This is Hitzelberger's fifth year donating to the Charitable Trust.

"We're just here to help out in any way we can, in a small way, compared to what [National Guardmembers] are doing," he explained.


Four National Guard units and 65 local businesses, organizations and individual community members were recognized for their contributions. 



Donning their red coats, members of the Honorary Colonels Corps along with many local business representatives, individuals and members of the Utah National Guard attend the 2013 Utah Guard Charitable Trust Awards Ceremony held in the Guard's Draper headquarters auditorium March 13.



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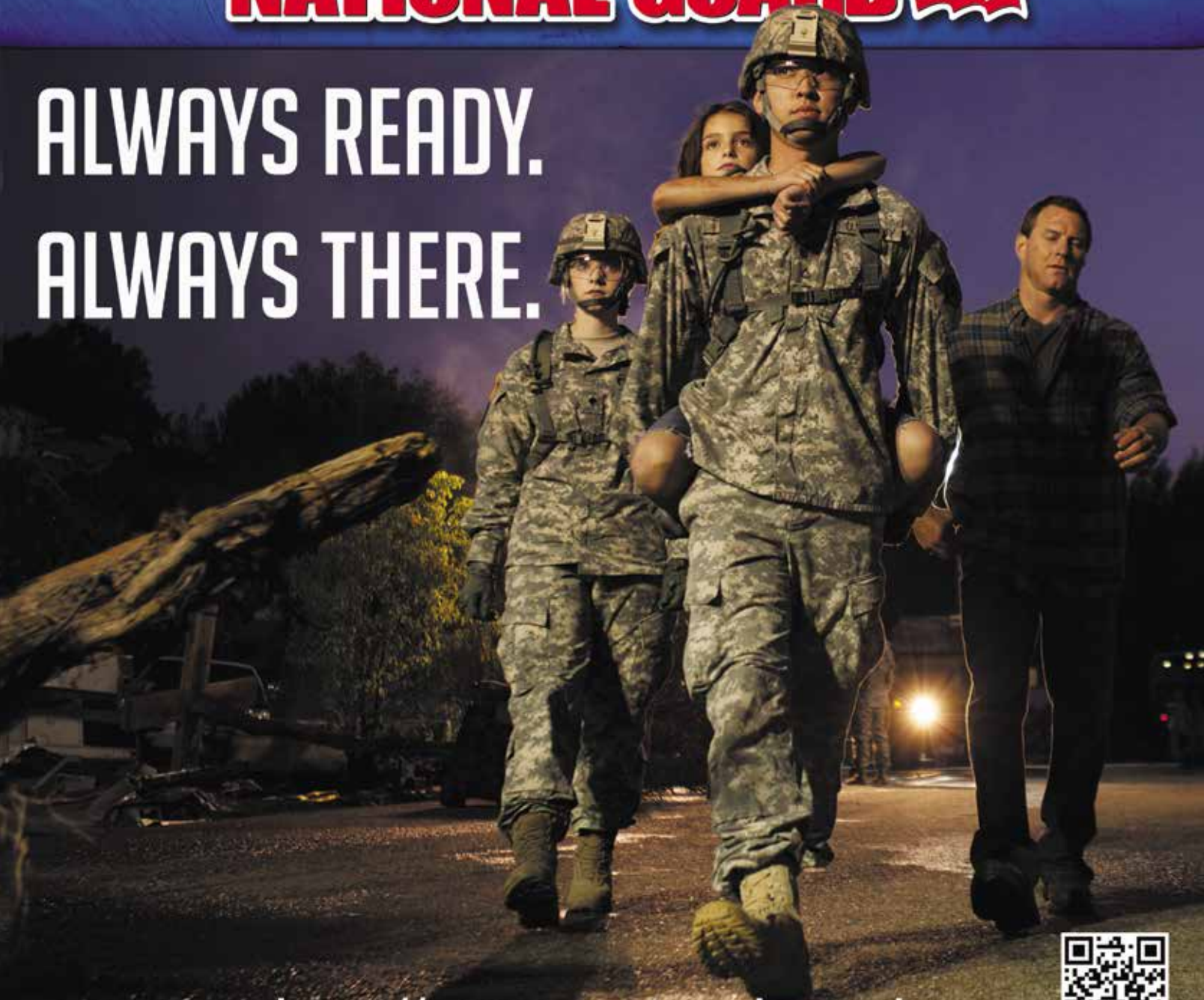
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