

# The First Friday Briefing

Serving the National Guard and State Defense Force of Georgia

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June 2008

## Savannah's 165th build in Isreal



*Photo by Senior Master Sgt. Edward E. Snyder*

An engineer from Savannah's 165th Civil Engineering Squadron cuts a metal attachment for a 4,600 square foot facility which will be used in the construction of a munitions maintenance facility at Nevatim Air Force Base in Israel. The 165th spent 17 days in Israel helping to build facilities for visiting American Troops.

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## Waynesboro artillerymen honored for Service

By Staff Sgt. Roy Henry  
Public Affairs Office

FORT STEWART – More than 130 Soldiers of Waynesboro's Battery C, 1st Battalion, 214th Field Artillery, were honored, Monday, June 2, 2008, during a Freedom Award ceremony at the post's main chapel.

The unit recently returned from a year supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.

After spending about four days processing off active-duty at the Georgia National Guard Training Center, the battery is about to return to home station; and its members back into their roles as traditional Guardsmen.

An estimated 300 family members, unit supporters and fellow Soldiers showered the returning Guardsmen with praise and applause as they crossed the chapel stage to receive encased American flags and other honors. Major Gen. Terry Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General, enthusiastically shook their hands and thanked each one personally for their service.

"As artilleryman doing the job of military police, you took up a difficult mission and pulled it off with great success," Nesbitt told Capt. Jeremy Johnson, Battery C's commander, and his troops.

See FREEDOM, page 15

# Middle Schools Students learn to Stay on Track

By Spc. Amanda Kenny  
Public Affairs Office

LITHIA SPRINGS, Ga. -- The Counter Drug Task Force welcomed their first class of graduates from the "Stay on Track" program at Colonial Hills Christian School where 12 middle school students graduated the pilot program.

"This is a great day for us as American Soldiers to be standing in front of you," said Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Hurndon, command sergeant major of the 48th Infantry Combat Brigade and the Governor's Counter Drug Task Force.

"This is a nationally recognized program," he continued. "We met with the governor last week to try and implement the program throughout the state."

Students learned different skills including how to deal with peer pressure, conflict resolution and drug resistance. Hurndon told the students that these were skills the students could take with



photo by Spc. Amanda Kenny

**The 12 students from Colonial Hills Christian School stand in front of a counter drug helicopter with Task Force commander Lt. Col. Brock Gaston, Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Herndon, instructors, pilots and crew members.**

them for the rest of their lives.

"Soldiers have to keep their skills honed and polished," he told them. "These are skills you can take with you to high school and beyond."

Hurndon also spoke to the students about how their attitude can affect anything they do, and how a positive attitude is continuous.

"We are all faced with things we

don't want to do, but we have to do them," he explained. "Next time your parents ask you to take out the trash or you have homework, instead of hanging your head and grumbling about it, grab that trash bag and run outside yelling HOO-AH!"

While "Stay on Track" teaches about not giving into peer pressure, it's not always negative, said Hurndon. Students can pressure friends to do good things like get good grades, or to stay away from drugs.

The students were given a chance to see a helicopter used by the task force, that was landed on the back field of the school.

## Command Changes

2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry's change of command, May 30, 2008.

Incoming: Maj. Louis (Kenny) Payne

Outgoing: Lt. Col. Mark London

### Upcoming:

170th Military Police Battalion change of command. June 14, 2008.

Incoming: Lt. Col. Lutalo Olutosin

Outgoing: Lt. Col. Joe Hoffman

48th Brigade Special Troops Battalion change of command, June 13, 2008

Incoming: Lt. Col. Thomas Bright

Outgoing: Lt. Col. Raymond Bossert, Jr.

Don't see your units change of command? E-mail Spc. Amanda Kenny at amanda.luksic@ga.ngb.army.mil or Staff Sgt. Roy Henry at roy.henry@ga.ngb.army.mil

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# Savannah's 165th Civil Engineering Squadron are ... **AIRMEN IN ISRAEL**

By Dave Simons  
165th Air Control Wing

In the middle of Israel, a desolate region plays host to Nevatim Air Force Base, an Israeli Defense Force fighter base. As daylight breaks, a small contingent of Georgia's 165th Civil Engineering Squadron prepares for another day of work. Their mission: to upgrade Nevatim's American facilities.

A little know fact is that Nevatim houses an American Air Force training facility for U.S. Air Force fighters. The 165th's mission involves three significant projects during their 17-day mission to Israel.

The first is the construction of aircraft shades for visiting American fighters. The second is the construction of a munitions maintenance facility, while the third is the improvement of the heating, ventilation and air conditioning systems; electrical systems; fire detection systems; and sheetrock and painting inside the American living quarters.

As the sun beats down on the arid Israeli airfield, American Air Force Capt.

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***"It makes a difference for the visiting units. We wouldn't have the facilities for the American without the INCA project."***

*Meir Gur  
Base liaison*

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Jake Salmond led his team in constructing the K-Span facility, one of many that are being built in the upcoming years as these INCA teams, named after the first group of North Carolina engineers who joined with the Israelis to create the Israeli-North Carolina Agreement, rotate in and out of the Israeli air base. Using an Automatic Building Machine, sheet metal is formed and reformed to create the roofing that is attached to

a concrete foundation. The cost for a facility to protect American fighters is inexpensive but the results are priceless for the airmen who have to fix and fly the fighters, said Salmond.

American Air Force Lt. Col. Todd Freeseemann, the mission commander said "This is a great opportunity for our "Prime Beef" team to deploy to a foreign country and to work with the local air base officials. The Israeli personnel have been a pleasure to work with, and more importantly, we have learned about their way of doing things."

Freeseemann's comments were echoed by Meir Gur, the base liaison for the INCA teams. "It makes a difference for the visiting units," Gur explained. "We wouldn't have the facilities for the American without the INCA project."

The fighter units deployed to Israel for training are allowed to carry live ammunition on their aircraft thus providing a real world training environment, a rarity in training exercises hosted in the United States. American Air Force Maj. Frank Orellana, who serves as the operations commander for this deployment, goes through the schedule of daily events, completion time tables and progress reports every day to plan for the next day's activities. Through these meetings, Orellana can guide this group of 53 Guardsmen to the projects that need the most attention.

As the sun sets on Nevatim Air Base, the munitions maintenance facility team worked several projects simultaneously. The 4,600 square foot elongated brick and concrete building has a



*Photo by 165th Air Control Wing Public Affairs Office*  
**Staff Sgt. Randy Ellis a member of the 165th Civil Engineering Squadron deployed for 17 day to Nevatim Air Force Base in Israel, carefully uses a binding machine in the construction of the aircraft hangar. The squadron constructed meta aircraft shades for visiting American fighters.**

team dedicated to placing and leveling a soffit for the yet, not in place, roof. Another small team of Airmen, led by Chief Master Sgt. Richard Dallow, put their arms and backs into cranking down nuts and bolts to fasten the ceiling beams into place.

For many of the Airmen, like Staff Sgt. Kelsey Besse, a civil engineering assistant, it is their first deployment with the squadron.

A former active duty Airman, Besse is a student at Valdosta State University in Valdosta, Ga. She liked the shorter durations for the deployments allowing her to be a student and still serve her country. "I had the unique experience to do a lot of projects here in Israel including working on the sunshades and working with the local Israelis painting their dorms."

For Airman 1st Class Karonda Ivetry, a first year power projection specialist with the 165th, this was her first deployment and her experiences were exciting.

"I never thought I would be over here in Israel helping to renovate dorms in which our troops will sleep in," she said.

# Air Guard 'stands up' first unit in 30 years

Georgia's newest Air National Guard unit, the 139th Intelligence Squadron was officially activated on May 29th at Fort Gordon, Ga., becoming the ninth Air Guard unit in the state and the first new Georgia Air Guard unit in more than 30 years.

The mission of the new unit is the executing of cryptologic intelligence operations to satisfy strategic, operations and tactical intelligence requirements of national decision makers, combatant commanders and combat operations. In addition, the 139th IS has an important state mission of providing a trained and equipped force to assist the citizens of Georgia in times of emergency.

The unit fits the classic associate squadron model in the Air Force by working side-by-side with the 31st Intelligence Squadron at Fort Gordon .

The commander of the 44-member intelligence squadron is Lt. Col. Kimberly Chatfield, and the detachment commander is Lt. Col. Jeff L. Thetford,

both former members of the 116th ACW. The unit will employ 37 traditional and seven full time Guardsmen.

"This is an exciting day for the Georgia Air Guard with this being the first new Air Guard unit in 32 years with a new mission which we've started from scratch," said Maj. Gen. Scott Hammond, Commander of the Georgia Air National Guard. "I feel that we have the right mission, with the right people, in the right place, at the right time," continued Hammond.

More than 100 dignitaries, special guests, and Air Guard members from throughout the state attended the activation and assumption of command ceremony at Fort Gordon , near Augusta.

"I am honored to be the first commander of the 139th," said Lt. Col. Chatfield, an Air Force Academy graduate and currently a civilian senior intelligence officer at the Warner Robins Air Logistics Center .

See 139TH, page 5



*Georgia Air National Guard photo*  
**Major General Scott Hammond prepares to present the guidon of command to Lt Col Kimberly Chatfield during the formal activation of the 139th IS at Fort Gordon, GA. The new ANG unit will be an associate unit to the 31st Intelligence Squadron of the USAF.**

## 117th celebrates 60 years of service

Sixty years ago in the afterglow of winning the "war to end all wars", storm clouds gathered over the Shosin Reservoir in Korea . During the spring of 1948 when America was ending one war yet preparing for another conflict on the Korean peninsula, 23 airmen and four officers came together at Travis Field to form the 117th aircraft warning squadron, the precursor of the 117th Air Control Squadron of the Georgia Air National Guard.

The unit recently celebrated its 60th anniversary on the weekend of May 2-3 with an open house at the unit, a golf tournament and a gala banquet at the Mighty Eighth Air Force Museum in Pooler with Maj. Gen. Nesbitt as the featured speaker.

Unit historians' note that more than 1,300 men and women have served as part of Savannah 's 117th ACS since it was formed in 1948. The unit is cur-

rently based at Hunter Army Airfield.

"Over the past 60 years," said Nesbitt before more than 200 unit members and guests. "The number of officers and airman has multiplied but so has the complexities and demands of the missions. But what remains a constant, said Nesbitt is the dedication, the duty and the patriotism of the men and women of the 117th who have made an impact on this unit."

During its sixty years of service, the 117th deployed on more than fifty occasions to locations around the world including the Arctic Circle and the Bahamas . In 2005, the unit deployed to Balad Air Base, Iraq for four months and was the only Air National Guard Control and Reporting Center to deploy and control all air traffic in the 270,000 square miles of Iraqi airspace. The unit controlled more than 350 troops in contact offensive air-support missions

and more than 3,600 air refueling missions.

The unit was also one of the only Air Guard control units to be tasked to provide air control security for the Shuttle Space Launches.



**Former 117th leaders gather at the unit's 60th anniversary. Front row: Lt. Col. (Ret) Robert Miller and Lt. Col. Joe Ferrero. Back row(L-R): Lt. Col. Kevin Alwood, Lt. Col. (Ret) Cary Downing, Lt. Col. (Ret) Wallace Moody, Lt. Col. (Ret) Anthony D'Aguillo.**

# This Month in History

## More Guardsmen qualify for HERO scholarships

Governor Sonny Perdue has given his OK to a new law that expands the benefits for many Georgia National Guard members and their families. The bill, which was passed by the state legislature this spring and signed by the Governor in May, extends the eligibility for the Georgia HERO Scholarship Program.

The Helping Educate Reservists and their Offspring (HERO) program, provides educational assistance to members of the Georgia National Guard and U.S. military reservists who have served in combat zones as well as to their offspring. The new law rolls back the eligibility date of deployment from May 3, 2005 to Feb. 1, 2003.

Additionally, the law changed the eligibility to include the cumulative total of all days deployed. Previously, a Soldier or Airman had to serve 181 consecutive days to be eligible. The new provision will allow many Air National Guard members, who have served on numerous shorter rotations, to take advantage of the benefit.

The HERO program provides up to \$2,000 per academic school year for each qualifying term of service of 181 days for a maximum of \$8,000 -- the equivalent of four years of study.



**June 1950** – Saint Simons Island near Brunswick was chosen as the location for a new Air National Guard radar warning squadron. The 129th Aircraft Control and Warning Squadron, was fully organized, according to ANG officials, would be comprised of 19 officers and 155 airmen. The unit’s mission is to provide a part of a radar screen being established for the protection of the United States. Instrumental in securing the unit for Georgia were Maj. Gen. George F. Finch, chief of the National Guard Bureau for Air, and Col. James C. Grizzard, president of the National Guard Association of Georgia.

**June 1952**—Atlanta’s WSB radio launched a new program called “Guard Reports.” Sponsored by the Military Division of the Department of Defense, the program was a public service broadcast featuring the outstanding contribution of Guardsmen. Staff Sgt. Carlton Morrison was the sole announcer, producer and director of the broadcast. According to published reports, Morrison traveled with a tape recorder tucked under his arm “almost constantly.” Some of his recordings, the report added, “have been made on the firing line at Camp Stewart, or near the blast of jet aircraft.” The program aired every Sunday at 1 p.m.

**June 1954** – the 48th Infantry Division spent two grueling weeks in the hills of Eastern Alabama during its annual summer encampment. The division trained jointly with Florida National Guardsmen. A highlight of the encampment was the division review on Governor’s Day when Gov. Herman Talmadge made his sixth consecutive visit with his Georgia troops. The governor was presented with a silver service in recognition his loyalty to the Georgia National Guard.

## A new chapter opens in Air Guard history

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“We will move the unit forward under the basic concepts of persistence, teamwork, and family.”

The 139th IS compliments Fort Gordon as home of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, the largest communications electronics facility in the world. The Distributed Common Ground Systems (DCGS) for the Air Force is also located at Ft. Gordon. The original idea for an intelligence squadron in the Georgia Air Guard was initially proposed by Maj. Gen. Wick Searcy, former commander of the Georgia Air Guard.

Originally activated in February 1942 as the 139th Signal Radio Intelligence Company with a cadre of 13 intercept and traffic analysis operators, the unit was designated as the 2nd Radio Signal Mobile in 1944, and a year later deployed to France with the 9th Air Force. The unit was later transferred to the Department of the Army where it operated under the Army Security Agency (ASA) while in Germany . In 1983, the unit was called to duty again during the Cold War and combined with the 6911th Electronic Security Squadron and redesignated as the 402nd Intelligence Squadron. In 2000, the 402nd was deactivated until it was reactivated as part of the Georgia Air National Guard.

# Honoring Georgia's Fallen

*State Memorial Day service honors Georgians who have fallen in the line of duty.*

**Georgia National Guard  
Public Affairs Office**

**S**peaking on behalf of all Georgians, Governor Sonny Perdue honored the state's fallen service members May 22 as he hosted a Memorial Day service in Atlanta.

Some 137 Georgia Soldiers, Airmen, Marines and Sailors who gave the ultimate sacrifice in the War on Terror were honored by name during the ceremony.

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**“On this day we pause to recognize the contributions of your loved ones and also some one million men and women who have given their lives in defense of this country.”**

*Lt. Gen. Russel Honore, Retired*

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Among them were 28 Georgia Guardsmen.

“We have a long history of sacrifice and a distinguished legacy of service in our nation's military,” said the Governor. “Every fallen warrior in more than two centuries of history is part of that tradition including the 137 service members we... honor today.”

Governor Perdue, who has a long history of remembering Georgia's fallen, hosted a statewide memorial service and moment of silence at the State Capitol in 2005 shortly after Georgia's 48th Brigade Combat Team suffered several casualties.

“We are a state and a people who understand that liberty and life are not without sacrifice. And as a people we are willing to defend the call of freedom here, and around the world,” he said.

Major General Terry Nesbitt, Georgia's Adjutant General, had the honor to introduce retired Lt. Gen. Russel Honore who was guest speaker for the event.

“Though he's been compared to a movie he-man, General Honore is also a man of compassion – one who respects and remembers the men and women in uniform who have given the ultimate sac-

rifice” said General Nesbitt. “It is an honor to have him with us today.”

During his remarks, Honore paid special honor to the more than 200 family members of Georgia's fallen warriors who were the special guests in attendance.

“On this day we pause to recognize the contributions of your loved ones and also some one million men and women who have given their lives in defense of this country,” Honore told the families, friends and loved ones. “We share all of their pain and we share your pain.”

In a solemn tribute to the fallen heroes, each fallen service members name was read aloud with their photos shown on the giant TV screens flanking the podium. Among those reading the names were 1st Lt. Lisa Williamson, Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Russell and Maj. Jacqueline Jackson, all Georgia Guard members

Chaplain Colonel John Owing, the Georgia Guard's State Chaplain, provided the benediction.

The service was streamed live on Georgia Public Broadcasting's website (gptv.org) and will be televised on GPB at 7:30 pm on Sunday, May 25. GPB's statewide radio network will carry excerpts of the ceremony during the broadcast of Georgia Gazette at 6 pm on Memorial Day. That same evening at 8 pm, GPB Radio will broadcast an hour special dedicated to the ceremony.



*Photo by Staff Sgt. Roy Henry*  
**First Lieutenant Lisa Williamson reads a list of names of fallen Soldiers during the Governor's Memorial Day ceremony at the Mt. Paran Church of God in Atlanta.**

# Winder's 'Gladiators' honored

By Staff Sgt. Roy Henry  
Public Affairs Office

**WINDER, Ga.** – Six months after their return, flight crews and ground personnel assigned to Detachment 1, 185th Aviation Company were honored for their service in support of the NATO stabilization and peacekeeping mission in Kosovo.

Family members, unit supporters and fellow Guardsmen gathered here, Saturday, May 3, 2008, to pay homage to the Soldiers of what was once the 148th Air Ambulance Company. Among those congratulating the aviators for a job well-done, was Brig. Gen. Maria Britt, Georgia Army Guard commander.

"We're finally home," said Sgt. Robert Kirkham, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crew chief who made the deployment. "Yeah, we've been back for quite a while now, back with our families and friends, but this...this really brings closure to the year that we were away.

"It's great to finally be home," he said, smiling as he looked out over the crowd. "It's great to finally be home."

The 148th was the only Georgia Army aviation unit still flying the Vietnam War era UH-1 "Huey" helicopter.

It was July 2006, not long after its re-designation to the 185th, that it got the call to deploy.

Another unit had been alerted to deploy, but declined the opportunity, said Col. Brent Bracewell, 171st Aviation Group commander. The Marietta-based 171st is the 185th's parent headquarters.

When the active Army and National Guard Bureau asked if the Georgia unit was up to the task, he told them that the unit was ready. He also reminded them that 185th would be doing that job with Hueys.

"The powers-that-be at the time, then asked if our fliers and ground crews could still do the job if given the UH-60s with which to do it," Bracewell explained. "Again, we let them know that would not be a problem."

And apparently it wasn't.

During its time assigned to Task Force Eagle with Michigan's 1st Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment, the 185th completed more than 4,200 flying hours, with no major accidents or incidents, according to unit statistics. Quite an accomplishment by anyone's standards, said Sgt. 1st Class Tim Loveless,



*Photo by Staff Sgt. Roy Henry*  
**Members of Det. 1, 185th Aviation Company, show respect for the posting of the colors as the ceremony welcoming them home from deployment begins. Holding the unit guidon is Sgt. Robert Kirkham, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter crew chief.**

another Black Hawk crew chief who went with the detachment.

"An even greater accomplishment is the fact everyone came home," said the commander, 1st Lt. Austin Allen. "The missions were good, the fact that we got to work alongside our allies, was great and the flight hours are certainly impressive, but more important – to me, to us all – is that 19 of us came home."

# Allies at home and abroad

By Maj. Renee Massey  
116th Public Affairs

What does the rock band Def Leppard and an Airborne Intelligence Officer in the 16th Airborne Command and Control Squadron have in common? They both call Yorkshire, England their home.

Squadron Leader (equivalent to the rank of major) David 'Barney' Barnes is a Joint STARS foreign exchange officer from the United Kingdom and has been assigned to the 116th Air Control Wing for the past two years. The exchange program began eight years ago as a result of the Royal Air Force's Airborne Stand-Off Radar (ASTOR) aircraft program.

The British ASTOR system includes five Global Express business jet aircraft fitted with a radar. The mission is similar



**Squadron Leader David 'Barney' Barnes**

to Joint STARS. It is an airborne battlefield ground surveillance radar system for operations with the RAF and the British Army. The Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) provides photographic quality images of the area being surveyed and a Moving Target Indicator (MTI radar) tracks moving vehicles over wide ranges.

"The exchange program was a way for the Royal Air Force to identify lessons learned over the past 10 years flying Joint STARS," said Barnes. "Another benefit is that we can learn about each other's capabilities and cross-cue potential with using a UK asset."

Barnes grew up in Yorkshire which is in central England. Located on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales.

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Photo by Pvt. 1st Class Glenn Schley, GaSDF

**United States Congressman Tom Price presents the President's Volunteer Service Award to Capt. Amie Toole, commander of 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade, Georgia State Defense Force, following the Memorial Day service at the Marietta National Cemetery.**

## SDF Unit receives President's Volunteer Service Award

**MARIETTA, Ga.** – The Georgia State Defense Force 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade has been awarded the 2007 President's Volunteer Service Award.

United States Congressman Tom Price presented the prestigious honor to Capt. Amie Toole, the unit's commander, following the Memorial Day service at the Marietta National Cemetery during which the battalion handled security and traffic control.

The State Defense Force's 2nd Battalion, 1st Brigade has a long history of volunteer service on behalf of the citizens of Georgia. In 2007 the unit logged nearly 15,000 hours of volunteer service.

"In his 2002 State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush created the USA Freedom Corps, and called on every American to make a lifelong commitment to volunteer services" explained Price. "The President's Volunteer Service Award recognizes individuals, families, and groups who have answered that call.

"America's volunteers work to make our communities stronger and safer. GA State Defense Force should be especially proud of their volunteers who have made volunteer service a central part of their lives."

The Award is issued by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation, a group created by President Bush to recognize the valuable contributions volunteers are making to our Nation. Chaired by two-time Super Bowl Champion Darrell Green, with former U.S. Senators Bob Dole and John Glenn as honorary co-chairs, the Council comprises leaders in government, media, entertainment, business, education, nonprofits and volunteer service organizations, and community volunteering.

## Georgia State Patrol Post 9 Leaves Kennesaw Armory



Contributed photo

**Pictured are from left to right: Brigadier Gen. Lawrence Dudney, Jana Galloway, Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Newman, and Maj. Jeff Carlyle**

After sharing a space for more than 13 years at the Kennesaw Armory, Post 9 of the Georgia State Patrol moves to their new Post in Marietta. The long term tenant relationship ended on Friday, May 9 as the GSP moved their final belongings out of the Kennesaw Armory on to their new Marietta Post.

Post Commander Sgt. 1st Class Ryan Newman stated that he will miss the Kennesaw Armory but looks forward to their new Post. Major Jeff Carlyle, executive officer of Joint Task Force 781st CERFP, stated that the National Guard – Georgia State Patrol relationship was wonderful and hates to see them leave.

"Ryan and his team were great tenants and partners of the facility," said Brig. Gen. Lawrence Dudney, 78th Troop Command Commanding General, presented Newman and Jana Galloway a plaque and coin for their long term partnership at the Kennesaw Armory.

## Master sergeant remembered at funeral



Army Master Sgt. Davy N. Weaver, 39, of Barnesville, Ga.; assigned to the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Georgia Army National Guard, Macon Ga.; died May 18 in Qalat, Afghanistan, of wounds sustained when his vehicle encountered an improvised explosive device.

# News from the 48th IBCT

## 121st Warriors Prepare for Afghanistan

Spc. Tracy J. Smith  
48<sup>th</sup> IBCT PAO

**FORT BENNING, Ga.** - The well-aligned row of tents encased by concrete barriers, bunkers and guard towers and, oh yes, the telling aroma of port-a-lets baking in the bruising sun brought back memories. Sergeant Ron Williams gave a smile, peppered with bewilderment, as he took it all in after arriving at his battalion's temporary home.

"It looks a lot like Iraq," Williams, a chef with Fort Benning's Martin Army Hospital said. He brings those special skills to his job as a Company F, 148th Brigade Support Battalion food service noncommissioned officer. He's presently attached to 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry regiment. "The difference is

this mission is only for 72 hours instead of a year."

Welcome to the Home of the Infantry's immersion living environment, Forward Operating Base Voyager.

Williams was non-plus but his attitude remained positive about the time he would spend at Ft. Benning as the battalion continued its drive towards pre-certification prior to the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team's Afghanistan mission. During his tour of combat in Iraq he was assigned as a team member at Lutifiyah, one of the provinces South of Baghdad that comprised what was known as the "Triangle-of-Death." He and a small cadre of chefs prepared meals for the Iraqi Army military training team in a small "outhouse" kitchen

amidst the sounds of mortar fire and mounds of moon dust-like sand.

Lots of sand. Williams wants to share his experiences, the good and the not-so-good, with his 'new guys' as he calls them.

"My goal is to keep my new Soldiers engaged and get them acclimated to what it's like in a combat environment," Williams continued. "Just because you're slinging a pot doesn't mean you won't have to pick up your rifle."

His attitude is mirrored by his fellow veterans, most notably the battalion's new commander, Major Kenny Payne. Payne accepted com-

mand of the battalion from Lt. Col. Mark London at the start of the intense three-day training schedule, and his plan is simple; build on the successes of his predecessor.

"A great deal has changed in how we conduct business as we gear up for the brigade's new mission," Payne explained. "The transformation has brought us back to basics as Soldiers. This training, and the environment, means we don't have to give lip service to the risk assessment because we are meeting and exceeding the standards AND we have brought it home to Benning. That's important. Everything you need to be successful is here, and our guys are just bringing the initiative and the motivation."

The training schedule was filled with the expected - rifle range and weapons familiarization, land navigation, drivers training and other basic Soldier tasks. It is the unexpected that got their attention most.

A pre-ranger obstacle course gave the Soldiers a confidence boost and team building momentum, running ammo drills through red clay mud gullies and, with a nod to the fictitious MacGyver, there was a moment to indulge in creative communication courtesy of a dare.

First Lt. Andre' Bridges is the communications officer for the battalion and a carpenter by trade who admits to being very creative. With strategically placed plastic spoons, CAT-5 wire, 5-50 cord and bits of wood he constructed a makeshift patrol antenna, or long wire, that could be used in place of the issued field radio antenna if the situation presented itself.

"Often the sixes (an endearing reference for a communications officer) get teased a little because we are looked at as the technical gurus," Bridges admitted.

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*Photo by Spc. Tracy J. Smith*  
**First Lt. Andre Bridges, (foreground) 2/121 Signal Officer listens to a question during a course on constructing a long wire, or patrol antenna, from plastic spoons, 5-50 cord and cat 5 wire. It was part of the battalion's pre-deployment training weekend. Sgt. D'mitri Rybakov, (background), a company C squad leader and senior at Georgia State, inspects the lieutenant's handy work.**

# 121st performs live fire training for Afghanistan

TRAIN from page 9

“When our new commander asked me if I knew what a patrol antenna was and if I would give an impromptu class, well, I thought it would be more an opportunity to challenge the Soldiers than a challenge to me. After all, when ammo is all setup my job is supervising maintenance, and when I get the chance, improve on it.”

That attitude to enhance on lessons learned, coupled with training designed to exceed the standards ranked high with the non-commissioned officers and team leaders.

Specialist Terry Stokes knew this was a starting point to get acquainted with their new charges and relate their challenges during combat. He was a Bradley driver during his tour with company A, 1st Battalion, 121st Infantry Regiment.

“I was hit (a euphemism for encountering an IED –improvised explosive device- or VB – vehicle borne -IED), four times,” Stokes, now a team leader with Company A, 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry recalled of his year at Camp Liberty, Iraq. “By explaining what I experienced, I feel like I’m doing my job in training them for the fight. If you’re not well trained and ready to do the job, you’re a non-functioning team member. What I learn from my experience, good or bad, will help them stay safe.”

Soldiers, like Stokes, will make the training experience substantial, Payne stated. He puts a solid level of confidence in what the Warriors are capable of as he noted, key leaders can be out of the way but it is the NCO Corps that makes it happen.

“Leaders come and go but the NCOs make the morale and drive home the

discipline for these Soldiers to be effective on the battlefield,” said Payne. “We don’t assume things in our line of work. These men have what it takes to get the job done, and as their new commander they have charged me with ensuring they have the tools to do the job and I’m going to live up to their expectations.”

Stokes knows the weight of responsibility as a team leader and future NCO. With the transition from mechanized to light infantry, he had no problem preparing these Soldiers for their new roles as basic infantrymen. Working with his guys he followed the mandate to ‘not let up’ and had his new Soldiers “plum wore out” by the end of the day.

As for his four previous “hits” he also made a promise to his Team he knew he could keep. “It will be very different in Afghanistan,” Stokes said.

## Payne takes command 2nd Bn., 121st Inf. Regiment

Spc. Tracy J. Smith  
48<sup>th</sup> IBCT PAO

**FORT BENNING, Ga.** –The change in leadership, May 30, for the Soldiers of 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry Regiment was bittersweet for outgoing commander, Lieutenant Colonel Mark London, as he fought back a flood of emotions.

“It has been an honor to serve as your commander,” London told the Soldiers formed at Forward Operating Base Voyager, an environmentally and aesthetically correct version of in-theatre living for pre-deployment training at Ft. Benning, Ga. “My regret is that I will not have the honor of fighting beside you as the brigade deploys to Afghanistan, but my heart and spirit will always be with you.”

The change of command between London and Major (P) Kenny Payne was preceded by unit awards and individual company change of commands. All but one company within the newly named ‘Warrior’ battalion gained new senior leadership.

London, who served as brigade operations officer during 48th IBCT’s Iraq deployment, moves forward in his Georgia Army National Guard career as the Deputy Director for Domestic Support, Joint Forces Headquarters.

Payne, also a veteran of the brigade’s OIF deployment, is no stranger to battlefield operations. He served as the battalion executive officer for 1-108th Armor Regiment in the ‘Triangle of Death’ under the brigade’s current deputy com-



Photo by Spc. Tracy J. Smith  
**Major Kenny Payne accepts the responsibility as senior leader for 2nd Battalion, 121st Infantry Regiment, from Colonel Lee Durham, 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team (L) commander at Ft. Benning, Ga.**

mander, Colonel John King.

“I am the luckiest guy in the world,” Payne commented during an interview. “I have been looking forward to this day for so long and now that it is here I want to do right by these Warriors. My hope is to live up to their expectations and be the leader that reflects their initiative and motivation.”

# 48th IBCT Hall of Fame:

*Homage to the Past Celebrates the Future of the Macon Volunteers*

By Spc. Tracy J. Smith  
48th IBCT PAO

Many march to the tune of a different drummer but it is the cadence of those that marched before that shaped the 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team Soldier of today. The introduction of the 48th IBCT Hall of Fame pays homage to the standards of bravery and honor set by the fearless Volunteer Soldiers of Georgia and the pure grit of the 48th's Warfighter legacy.

The first induction ceremony presented the Class of 2008 during the Georgia Volunteers Infantry Ball, April 12, 2008, at the Lake Blackshear Resort.

The celebration of the history of the brigade incorporated a formality that encouraged camaraderie, and recognized the challenges of duality of purpose as Soldiers and Patriot Citizens dating back to 1825, and the creation of the Macon Volunteers Georgia Militia.

Colonel Lee Durham, the 48th IBCT commander, introduced the first inductee, a former mayor of Macon and the Macon Volunteers founder, Isaac G. Seymour, with 48th IBCT (L) Command Sgt. Maj. Michael Hurndon, brigade command sergeant major, assisting with the introduction honors.

Hurndon personally honored the contributions of his predecessor, Command Sgt. Maj. James Nelson who led the brigade during a tour of combat operations in Iraq, 2005-2006, with the presentation of the Order of Volunteers Medallion.

"The patch on the left shoulder of our 48th Soldier represents a commitment to the embodiment of our Soldier Values," Hurndon said of the patch's creation. "Many of our Soldiers are privileged to wear the lightning bolt as their combat patch. I look forward to the day I, and all our brigade Soldiers, can proudly place it on our right shoulder, as well, showing a commitment to sustainment of a tradition honoring those who set the standard on the battlefield."

Governor Sonny Perdue was presented the distinguished Order of the Volunteers Medallion and a certificate of acceptance as an inaugural honorary inductee.

The private presentation ceremony, in the office of the state of Georgia's 81st governor, recognized Perdue's contributions to the Brigade, not only as the state Department of Defense's commander-in-chief, but as a friend and supporter



*Photo by Spc. Tracy J. Smith*

**In an emotional exchange, the current 48th IBCT (L) Command Sergeant Major Michael Hurndon inducts and congratulates his predecessor, James Nelson, into the inaugural 48th Infantry Hall of Fame, April 12. Nelson led the brigade as senior enlisted leadership during Operation Iraqi Freedom.**

of the men and women who volunteer as Patriots for freedom. Perdue made a personal commitment to ensure each Soldier was given their benefits as combat veterans upon their return from Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2006 and he made good on his promise during visits to the Soldier's in Iraq that each would have a job, if desired, upon their return home.

Joking that his nomination must have been by secret ballot, Perdue's prideful expression spoke volumes as he accepted the award making him part of Macon Volunteers history.

"I will treasure this, and I am very proud of this award," Perdue said to the small assemblage. "It is an honor."

Nominees are selected impartially, according to the Order of the Volunteers by-laws, and will be based solely on contributions and affiliations to the 48th Brigade and its mission.

## *48th IBCT Class of 2008*

*Isaac G. Seymour*

*Staff Sgt. Thomas Wier*

*General George Pierce Doles*

*Staff Sgt. John W. Winick*

*Brig. Gen. Terrell Reddick*

*Maj. Gen. James 'Don' Davis*

*Maj. Gen. William T. Nesbitt*

*Col. (Ret.) Ricky Nessmith*

*Command Sgt. Maj. James Nelson*

*Governor Sonny Perdue*

# LRS company recertifies as Paratroopers

The paratroopers of Company H, 121st Infantry Battalion, Long Range Surveillance Team, have once again distinguished themselves by successfully bringing the unit back on active jump status. The company last performed an airborne operation May of 2006, prior to their deployment to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

More than two years later, the company completed their Basic Airborne Refresher and Jump course.

The refresher consists of several different stations, including the suspended harness, Parachute Landing Fall pit, and the 34 Foot tower, that the paratroopers must complete before they are certified to jump again.

At the first formation, the 560th Battle Field Surveillance Brigade commander recognized one of the Soldiers from Company H, Spec. Christopher Tucker, as the first ever Soldier of the Year for the 560th BFSB.

As the paratroopers strapped on their chutes and were checked by the jump masters, Capt. Will Parker, the LRS commander, addressed the group saying, "We're at the crawl phase right now. Anytime you execute an operation as complicated as a jump you want to start out slow then build up. As we progress the Airborne Operations will become complex."

Also joining the Soldiers of the LRS company were their brigade commander and members of his staff, the 3rd Battalion, 108th Cavalry commander, several members of Company B, 4th Marine Recon, and also members of 982nd Combat Camera from the Army Reserves who provided coverage



*Contribute photo*  
**With a stick of jumpers descending in the background, Command and Staff of 560th Battle Field Surveillance Brigade pose for a quick picture. From left to right Maj. Jose Fernandez, 560th BFSB, assistant S3, Command Sgt. Maj. Lance Rygmyr, 560th BFFSB command sergeant major, Maj. Matthew Saxton, 3rd Battalion, 108th Cavalry commander, Col. Peter Vanambaugh, 560th BFSB commander, Maj. Robert Lazenby, 560th BFSB judge advocate, and Cpt. Will Parker, LRS Company commander.**

both in the aircraft and on the ground.

"Overall it was a very successful weekend," said Parker. "When everyone walks away from the drop zone, it's a successful jump. Now that we are qualified as a company we can start building more and more on our individual skills so we'll be at our peak performance the next time we deploy."

# Mechanics ready heavy haulers for convoy

**By Staff Sgt. Roy Henry  
Public Affairs Office**

**FORT GORDON, AUGUSTA** – When truck drivers of the 1148th Transportation Company, stationed here, don their helmets and hit the road in mid-July, they'll be hauling a sizeable number of light and heavy wheeled vehicles to Fort McCoy, Wisc., for Macon's 48th Infantry Brigade Combat Team to use during exercise Patriot 2008.

To get that equipment there, and on time, those truckers will be using the 1148th's 80 semi tractor-trailer rigs to get the job done.

That means Army Guard mechanics have to inspect the big haulers from front to back –from the tractor's front grill and to the end of the trailer bed.

"Every thing has to work...from lights to tires to brakes to the engine

to the fifth-wheel that locks the trailer to the tractor," said Staff Sgt. Gary Levant, assistant shop supervisor at the 201st Regional Support Group motor pool.

That's where the 1148th, which is part of the 201st, keeps its vehicles.

They've even replaced the wooden inlays on the trailer beds. "No one who climbs into one of these rigs will take it on the road or haul anything on a trailer if that piece of equipment isn't safe. And I mean nobody," he strongly re-emphasized.

Work on the big rigs began in April and will continue, most likely, to the end of May, Levant said. Getting that work done isn't something two, four or even five "mechs" can accomplish, not in a short period of time, he explained.

See TRANS, page 14



*Photo by Staff Sgt. Roy Henry*  
**Sergeant 1st Class Junior Hazelwood (left) and fellow mechanic Staff Sgt. Garye Ware, talk over progress being made on adjusting the newly replaced front brakes of an 1148th Transportation Company semi tractor.**

# Guard officer defeats a menacing enemy: the cockroach

Georgia National Guard  
Public Affairs Office

**T**hey were certainly here when dinosaurs walked the earth, and they will be here long after humankind departs the planet. What are they? Cockroaches, a name that elicits universal reaction of loathing, fear and disgust, and a “plain old hatred.”

Yet for Capt. Karen Corsetti, a Georgia Army National Guard environmental officer and trained entomologist, the annoying bugs are fascinating, and she has made the humane and effective eradication of the pest into an award winning control treatment program that has saved the National Guard millions.

Recently, Corsetti’s Invasive Species Management program was proclaimed the best environmental pest control treatment in the National Guard at the National Guard Environmental Workshop held April 28, 2008, in Orlando Fla.

“Whenever we substitute organic pesticides, we protect our environment,” said the 18-year Guard veteran. “We also save money by eliminating the need for licensed technicians to apply hazardous chemical pesticides for common pests.”

Corsetti’s interest in entomology began during her college career in Statesboro when her fencing instructor at Georgia Southern University, also a biologist/entomologist, asked if she would be interested in assisting him in research. She went on to conduct independent research on spiders which

led her to a three-year study of ticks and Lyme disease.

“I suppose ticks led to me to a career in medical entomology,” said Corsetti.

The cornerstone of her cockroach extermination program is the discovery of the organic pesticide “Orange Guard,”

“It’s as simple as it is effective,” admits Corsetti. A non-toxic, organic pesticide that is not harmful to humans or the environment, but extremely effective against insects.

According to Corsetti, “It works by dissolving a cockroach’s exoskeletons, thus starving the insect of air.” Corsetti conducted her own laboratory research with the organic pesticide and found the treatment more effective than chemicals, with far less harmful side effects. The active ingredient, she said, is actually orange peel extract.

Under Corsetti’s guidance, the Army Guard’s pest management program is now conducted state wide entirely in-house, forgoing all costs and fees associated with administering expensive pest management contracts.

“Rather than having 17 separate contractors servicing Army Guard facilities, we train our Soldiers who occupy our buildings to oversee routine pest management.

“It all starts with good basic housekeeping, cleaning and maintenance principles,” admits Corsetti. She also maintains up-to-date, five-year treatment schedules for each of the more than 50 National Guard armories or installations around the state. She routinely visits armories to check on problem areas.

“In the past, the Guard signed pest control contracts with commercial exterminators amounting to as much as \$40,000 per facility,” explained Corsetti. “There was little accountability and even less documentation to determine pesticide usage rates.”

Under Corsetti’s management techniques, these costs and gaps in data collection have been virtually eliminated, she added.

Corsetti’s “do-it-yourself” pest control protocol has already captured the interest of several other states.

While the menacing cockroach has survived since the beginning of time, their future in Georgia may have hit an unlikely stumbling block to their existence at doors of the local National Guard armories.

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**“It all starts with good basic housekeeping, cleaning and maintenance principles.”**

*Captain Karen Corsetti  
Environmental Officer*

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***Captain Karen Corsetti, a Georgia Army National Guard environmental officer and trained entomologist, shows how her eco-friendly insect trap help to trap and kill cockroaches with out harming the environment and saving the Guard millions of dollars.***

# Exchange program brings British officer to Georgia

BRITISH, from page 7

Yorkshire Dales is an area of great natural beauty and a large portion is a protected national park of England and Wales. He left school at 16 years old, which is not uncommon in the UK.

“I wanted to get involved in some type of communications,” said Barnes. “I saw an advertisement for the Royal Air Force and thought this sounded ideal.”

Just before his 18th birthday, he joined the RAF as a communications operator. He spent several years working in ground communications and was stationed in Scotland, the Falkland Islands and Central America

Next, he flew as an air electronics operator enlisted aircrew onboard the UK NIMROD maritime patrol aircraft. Then, he spent time with a C-130 Hercules RAF unit as a communication

and console specialist with the Hercules simulator.

After earning his commission as an intelligence officer, Barnes served in several ground intelligence positions to include tactical air director in the UK’s Air Support Operations Center (ASOC).

Wanting to return to flying, he heard about the Joint STARS exchange program. He applied and was selected based on his extensive communications and intelligence background.

Like other Airborne Intelligence Officers (AIO) in the wing, Barnes began his training in the 330th Combat Training Squadron. He left an endearing footprint on the squadron-- the building of a Tiki Bar which is the squadron’s outside lounge.

“Barney suggested to me the building of a Tiki Bar like the ‘Brits’ build

at their FOLs,” said Lt. Col. Pat Taylor, former commander of the 330th CTS. “In the end, we all can thank Barney for his awesome Tiki bar on the patio, a place where we in the CTS can call home.”

Now assigned to the 16th ACCS, Barnes has deployed twice to the FOL and once to exercise Red Flag. He will remain here for another year and looks forward to his next assignment hopefully with the ASTOR aircraft at RAF Waddington in the UK.

He lives in off-base housing with his wife, three children and two dogs. When he is not working or deploying, this continental traveler enjoys fishing, shotgun shooting and walking with his dogs. It was surprising to hear that he enjoys American football over soccer-- a sure sign he has adapted to the American South.

## Mechanics prepare for upcoming convoy

TRANS, from page 12

Work that can’t be accomplished on site is sent out to the various field maintenance shops and maintenance units around the state.

“It takes all the help we can muster,” Levant said with a serious look on his face and leaning back in his office chair.”

Since April, two shifts of 12 mechanics, all of them full-timers with the Mobilization and Training Equipment Site (MATES) at the National Guard Training Center have worked five day work weeks, doing 10-hour days, sometimes longer. Levant said Chief Warrant Officer 5 Leslie Groover at MATES OKd weekends off so the crews could go home and spend time with their families.

On the M-Day side, the mechanics drill with units such as Kennesaw’s 277th Maintenance Company or Company B, 348th Brigade Support Battalion

“By the end of the week, everyone has earned that much needed rest,” Levant added. “We wanted to make sure they got it.”

Sergeant 1st Class Junior Hazelwood is one of the team that its shift Friday, May 2, to him the long hours and sometimes tedious work really is necessary. Why send a driver out on the road in a rig that only half-way meets safety standards or will leave him and badly needed

equipment stranded.

“I’m not gonna’ let anything get out of here without it having what it needs replaced or tuned up and running the way it should,” Hazelwood said. “Once we’ve done every tractor, every trailer, I know Staff Sgt. Levant intends to call in outside inspectors to go over each and every vehicle.”

The more eyes there are looking for things missed, the better chance of getting them corrected before July, Levant added.

When the 1148th’s convoy does move to Fort McCoy, its drivers won’t be just doing their jobs, so to speak. The trip, said Staff Sgt. Garye Ware, one of Hazelwood’s fellow mechanics, is a trial run to ready the heavy haulers for deployment to Afghanistan next year with the 48th IBCT.

“What better way to find out whether our hard work and long hours have been in vane, or if the efforts our crews have made have put safe rigs in the hands of capable drivers,” Ware said.

The July convoy, he said, will certainly tell the tale.

*Editor’s Note: At the time this story was reported, crews working on the semi tractor-trailer rigs mentioned here had switched out, and the mechanics were well on their way to completing the work for which they’d been placed on orders.*

# 214th Soldiers honored for time deployed overseas

FREEDOM, from front page

“Your professionalism and dedication toward getting the mission done, and then getting home again, is a testament to who you are and the uniform you wear. We’re all proud of you. God bless you, and welcome home,” he added.

During its deployment, Battery C had the mission of dealing with detainees held at the detention and rehabilitation facility at military’s Camp Bucca in Southern Iraq. The unit, the first unit Guard wise to take on such a mission, according to Nesbitt, moved from its traditional wartime mission of providing artillery fire support to becoming MPs during train-up at Fort Bliss, Texas.

Once at the Bucca facility, they worked 6 days-a-week, 12 hours-a-day, Johnson said. Long, hard days that could try anyone’s patience, he explained. But despite constant harassment from outside, as well as inside the facility walls, his Soldiers brought their deployment to a successful conclusion.

“Like all artillerymen, our guys found it difficult, at first, not to be carrying out their usual mission,” Johnson said. “But as the training progressed, they made the change and took up the new mission with enthusiasm. And they carried that enthusiasm through into the actual task.

“I couldn’t have asked for a better group of Soldiers to command,” he continued. “I’m really proud of each and everyone.”



*Photo by Staff Sgt. Roy Henry*  
Specialist Eliecer Amaya (left) of Btry C, 1st Bn, 214th FA, receives an encased American flag and thanks for a job “well done” from Maj. Gen. Terry Nesbitt, Georgia’s Adjutant General, during the Waynesboro unit’s Freedom Award ceremony at Fort Stewart’s main chapel.

The best thing about having “been there and back,” though, Johnson said, is that every Soldier came home.

For, at least 58 of Battery C’s Soldiers, this was their first deployment. For the other 74, it was their second or even third. All seemed to agree that, as much as they were glad to have gone, it is good to be home again.

Some, like Spc. Rasheeda Barringer of Columbus, it’s the opportunity to pick up where she left off in raising her now 18-month-old daughter. Barringer, a supply specialist with the Guard’s 82nd Maintenance Company at Fort Benning, volunteered to go with Battery C.

“I didn’t have to leave, and I hated leaving my little girl,” she said,

“but I’m a Soldier, and it’s my job to go where the need is; no matter what.”

Others, like Sgt. 1st Class Kenneth Crew, a platoon sergeant for the Waynesboro battery, go back, not only to pickup where they left off with their families, but also their civilian careers. Crew, for example, left behind his lawn-care business to answer the call to duty.

He now has to step back into that business, and just as he has must get reacquainted with his wife, Jackie, and their four daughters, has to re-familiarize himself with his business and employees.

## Cobb County Community Leaders Welcome to Ga Guard

By Seth Stuck  
Public Affairs Office

A group of Cobb County business and civic leaders gathered this week to welcome the Georgia Guard to the area and honor Brigadier General Maria Britt, commander of the Georgia Army National Guard.

The luncheon was hosted by United Community Bank in Marietta and the bank’s senior vice president, Joe Daniell, to express the community’s overall excitement about the Georgia Department of Defense and National Guard moving its headquarters into Cobb County.

“Cobb County has always been very good to the military, and we’re excited

about the partnership that this move of headquarters entails,” said General Britt, referring to the community’s warm welcome and profound patriotism. “It’s always helpful to be immersed in a friendly and supportive environment.”

Attendees honoring General Britt and the Georgia Guard included Cobb Sheriff Neil Warren, Cobb Superior Court Interim Administrator Tom Charon, superintendents, commissioners, educators, retired and current military personnel, and United Bank employees.

Bob Ormsby, of Marietta’s Aviation Museum, used the occasion to thank the Soldiers and Airmen in the room.

“I just want to thank every single one of you for everything you do to keep us safe,” he said. “You’ve kept us alive and free and I personally salute you.”



*Photo by Seth Stuck*  
Brigadier General Maria Britt, commander of the Georgia Army National Guard, is welcomed by Joe Daniell, senior vice president of the United Community Bank in Marietta.

# Georgia's 283rd Aids in Capitol's Defense Preparation

By Lt. Col. Ken Baldowski  
Public Affairs Office

**F**orty-five Georgia Air National Guardsmen of the 283rd Combat Communications Squadron deployed in May to Gulfport, MS for Exercise America's Shield. This two week exercise is designed to train Army and Air Force personnel to operate the integrated Air Defense System which monitors and protects the airspace around the nation's capital.

During the two week deployment, 283rd personnel provided satellite and gateway access for voice, data and video

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**“Since 2006, the 283rd CBCS has partnered with the 263rd Army Air Missile Defense Command from Anderson, S.C., to satisfy this important need,”**

*Lt. Col. Tom Dixon  
Commander 283rd CBCS.*

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communications capabilities as well as coordinated with the Western Air Defense sectors and North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) for Command and Control (C2) requirements and radar integration.

The terrorist attacks in America on 9/11, led military officials to institute a robust integrated air defense system providing an umbrella of enhanced protection and defense over the nation's capital. In 2003, a tactical Joint Air Defense Operation Center (JADOC) was established at Bolling AFB combining all the radar, communications, command and control and defense capabilities operating together. Army Air Defense and C2 personnel deploy to the nation's capital annually for this requirement.

“Since 2006, the 283rd CBCS has partnered with the 263rd Army Air Missile Defense Command from Anderson, S.C., to satisfy this important need,” said Lt. Col. Tom Dixon,

Commander 283rd CBCS.

“Exercise America's Shield serves as a venue to satisfy three essential mission requirements,” Dixon explained. It provides an opportunity to train personnel rotating into the nation's capital every year to support the Integrated Air Defense System, and secondly, we are able to practice a deployable version of this system. Finally Dixon says it allows the unit to test and integrate new technology.

“I am quite proud of the many successes resulting from this exercise and especially proud that the 283rd is directly involved with our nation's number one priority – Homeland Defense.

While deployed to Gulfport the Dobbins-based Airmen were visited by Major General Scott Hammond, Commander Georgia Air National Guard, Major General Tom Lynn, National Guard Advisor to the Commander Air Education and Training Command, and Brigadier General Tom Moore, Commander 116th Air Control Wing and numerous other senior leaders from NORAD and Northern Command.

The 283rd Combat Communications Squadron is an integral part of a three-year Joint Test and Evaluation that will formalize a deployable homeland and air cruise missile defense capability.



Georgia Air National Guard photo

**Air Guardsmen of the 283rd set up satellite communications links at Tactical Joint Air Defense Operations Center for voice, data and video services during Exercise America's Shield.**