



Serving the men and women of the Idaho National Guard THE REVELLER

Fall 2004

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The Reveller staff sends their best wishes to the men and women of the 116th Brigade Combat Team, currently training at Ft. Bliss, Texas for their upcoming, yearlong tour of duty in Iraq.

News from the 116th Brigade Combat Team is printed regularly in their command newsletter, the Snakebite. It can be found online at <http://www.idarng.com/SnakeBite.htm>



USAF photo by Staff Sgt. Christopher Campbell

Spc. Mike MacDonald checks a motorcycle rider's identification at Mountain Home Air Force Base's main gate. MacDonald and other Idaho Army National Guard soldiers were activated to augment Air Force and Air National Guard security forces personnel to alleviate manning shortfalls and high operations tempo caused by Sept. 11, 2001.

Soldiers' security duty set to end

By Lt. Col. Tim Marsano
Public Affairs Officer

The mission of the soldiers who have been augmenting USAF Security Police will soon come to an end at three facilities in Idaho and Utah. The soldiers were called upon more than a year and a half ago to work hand in hand with their blue-suited counterparts. This mission is expected to end this November.

Originally, Operation Armored Falcon (OAF) took in 196 Idaho Army Guardsmen at Gowen Field, Mountain Home AFB, Hill AFB, and Salt Lake Air Base. Soldiers came from Idaho Guard units in Post Falls, the Boise area and Preston.

The current operation, known as OAF 2, has kept 86 soldiers at 3 locations in two states working to keep airbases secure. Additionally, two others have been detailed to work at the battalion-level HQ at Dugway, Utah. Hill AFB was not on the list for Idaho soldiers as part of OAF 2.

From the beginning, the spirit of cooperation and teamwork was apparent at a time when it was needed most. With the heightened security posture at all U.S. military installations since 9/11, the need for more security was vital and Army Guardsmen from around the nation an-

swered the call to duty.

What did the extra manpower mean? At Gowen Field, the answer was simple: "It doubled the number of people and doubled the coverage on base," said Senior Master Sgt. Victor Higgins of the 124th Security Force Squadron.

At Mountain Home Air Force Base, Capt. Eric Springer, 366th Security Forces Squadron operations officer says "basically, we couldn't have done it without them. We were so heavily stressed with people deployed that we were unable to provide the security we needed for the force protection environment. These guys came in and did a spectacular job. They married up with our guys pretty seamlessly. You can't tell the difference between the Army Guard and the Air Force; we're all one team." With the Army Guard troops departing this fall, the void will be filled with 366th SFS personnel returning from overseas deployments, so the security posture at MHAFB will remain strong.

"The operation has gone smoothly and is still going smoothly," said the commander of Team Idaho (a company-sized unit), Capt. Mark Moeckli.

He's been based at Mountain Home AFB for the duration of OAF and has seen great cooperation de-

velop between his soldiers and the 366th Security Force Squadron there. He saw that his soldiers were especially valuable to the 366th Wing during incidents that could have stressed the wing's security posture had they not been there. The pride in his soldiers was obvious as he described several incidents and training events, including the crash of an F-16 and a major USAF operational readiness inspection, when the Army Guardsmen "stepped up, took the mission and did everything they needed to do. They did an outstanding job."

Capt. Jason MacKenzie, the 2nd Platoon team leader at Gowen Field, agreed. "We worked hard from the beginning to ensure that there was no problem" integrating with the Air Force security personnel. "It's a one-team concept. We do a lot of joint training and it's been a very cooperative, teamwork attitude. I think it's been an outstanding model of how the Army and the Air Force can work together."

But the military occupational specialty (MOS)-specific training for the MPs was not neglected. The soldiers usually perform training on Tuesdays at Gowen Field that keeps them sharp if they are called to further active duty with the Army.

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196 soldiers from POST FALLS, BOISE

and PRESTON helped secure four

bases in Idaho and Utah

NEWS

The Reveller is the official newspaper of the Idaho National Guard. It is published quarterly with a circulation of 5,500 copies. The opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Army, Air Force, Army National Guard, Air National Guard, or the Department of Defense.



Maj. Gen. Jack Kane
Commanding General

THE COMMANDER'S HOTLINE

The Commander's Hotline is your direct line to me. It's your opportunity to make the Idaho National Guard a better organization.

Questions, comments, praise or problems called into the Commander's Hotline at **(208) 422-6500** are brought to my attention. However, if you're calling about a problem, try to resolve it at the lowest level before you call. Most issues can be solved by the units involved, your First Sergeant or your commander. Unit commanders and shop chiefs want to help — let them try first.

If you have been unable to resolve your concerns through the proper channels, then I'll look into it for you. If you leave your name and phone number, I'll make sure you get a reply

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Photo by Lt. Col. Tim Marsano

116th Soldiers fresh off security duty heading to Fort Bliss: (from left to right) Staff Sgt. Gunnar Klautd, Sgt. Shawn Stewart, Sgt. James Carter Jr., and Spc. Michael Shriver.

Security from page 1

In fact, 14 of the soldiers recently volunteered for Contingency Operation Temporary Tours of Active Duty (COTTAD) and were selected to waive the federal restriction on having to serve more than two years on active duty. They have elected to serve with their fellow soldiers from the Idaho Army Guard's 116th Cavalry Brigade now training for a yearlong rotation to Operation Iraqi Freedom. Four of these MPs were tracked down recently as they were issued the body armor, sleeping pads and other equipment that will prepare them for training when they join their fellow Idahoans at Ft. Bliss, TX.

Ask them why they've volunteered to undergo this mission when they are not compelled by law to go and they don't even need to think it over. *(Their comments are shown in the box at right.)*

As the sun sets on this mission it would mean a lot to these Citizen Soldiers, men and women,

if they could hear it from those they've served at USAF bases for the better part of the last two years: "Thanks for a job well done." Let them hear it next time you see them at the gate.

Here's what some of the MPs who are set to join their fellow soldiers at Fort Bliss had to say:

- Staff Sgt. Gunnar Klautd: "The brigade has been my family for 14 years. They need me, so I'm going to go and be with my family."
- Sgt. Shawn Stewart: "I trained these guys and I owe it to them to finish what I started. This is my second time around; the first time was Desert Storm."
- Sgt. James Carter: "We trained as a team, we grew up as a team. It kind of seems out of place, not going over with them."
- Spc. Michael Shriver: "It's a family. I've been in the military for 13 years. It's a lifestyle, and I'm going to go with the brigade because that's who I'm with."



Photo by Lt Col Tim Marsano

Gowen Field's 'third runway' getting a workout

Since it was dedicated nearly two years ago, the 5,000-foot runway just across Gowen Road has seen its fair share of use from Idaho Air Guardsmen of the 189th Airlift Squadron. "It's a realistic training field," said Capt. Alex DeGracia, a pilot with the squadron. Landing and taking off from the short field simulates what Hercules aircrews face when deployed to such austere environments as Afghanistan and other places in Southwest Asia. Idaho's C-130 pilots have to qualify on the short-field techniques 6 times per half-year, and two of those sorties have to take place at night.

NEWS

Air Guard firefighters get taste of jet fuel

By Staff Sgt. Linda Clement
124th Wing Public Affairs

The Gowen Field Fire Department held a two-day training course for 31

military and civilian fire fighters from Kansas Sept. 10 and 11.

A firefighter from the Silver Lake Fire Department, two from the Roseville Fire Department and one

from the Soldier Township joined several members from the Kansas Air National Guard's 190th Air Refueling Wing to learn how to put out fires that involve jet fuel.

The training was conducted at the burn pit just east of the Boise airport runways on the corner of Production and Gowen Roads. The training facility is unique as it uses actual jet fuel to create the fires instead of propane, which is more common around the continental United States, said David Grimes, Assistant Chief of Training for Gowen Field.

"There are only four or five of these facilities left," said Grimes.

Having units or agencies from in or out of state come in to train with the Gowen Field Fire Department is also unique, but will become more routine as the program is publicized, added Grimes. Prior training sessions involved the 152nd Airlift Wing from Reno, Nev., and Boise National Forest Helitac crews.

The facility itself is set up for jet fuel fire training, vehicle extrication and confined space rescue training.

Senior Master Sgt. John Evans, fire chief for the 190th ARW was delighted at the chance to be present at this training and said that he found out about it while attending another course here three years ago.

Evans stressed the importance of being able to train in an actual jet fuel pit by specifying the difference between fighting jet fuel fires verses propane fires.

"Propane doesn't react the same," Evans said. "It won't go out with water."

Propane gas usually has to be turned off at the source, Evans continued, whereas jet fuel can be stopped when enough and the proper agent is applied.

The Kansas group also got to train in the dark on their first run, work-

ing until 10:30 p.m. Friday night. The flames, reaching heights of more than 50 feet, are much brighter at night, Grimes explained, and brought in several calls from concerned Boise citizens. Over 100 calls from people as far as the Boise State University football stadium called in the fire, believing it to be an airplane crash, said Grimes.

Although the night training may have been hair-raising for the general public, Evans believed it went well and found the night burn very different.

"There are a whole new set of things that you have to be aware of," said Evans.

Along with the fire training, the visiting firefighters also received instruction on vehicle extrication involving a two and a half hour in-class course on various vehicles and some hands-on time with some tools of destruction.

Kansas members used a Saws-All, a Hurst extrication tool, also known as the "jaws of life," a PowerHawk electric version of the Hurst and a ram tool used to push the vehicle in whatever direction the firefighters need it to go.

Participating members of the Gowen Field Fire Department were Fire Chief - Chief Master Sgt. William Mattravers; Assistant Fire Chiefs - David Grimes, Ronald Earl and Jay Hamann; Crew Chief - Stan Edwards, Firefighters - Master Sgt. Ryan York, Tech. Sgt. Craig Murdock, Tech. Sgt. Wayne Riley, Staff Sgt. Darby Hill, Staff Sgt. Marshall Holt, Senior Airman Martin McSherry, Airman 1st Class Damon Williams, Ralph Franckiewicz and George Thomas.

"It's very impressive," said Evans. "This department has just bent-over-backwards for us from the chief on down."



Two firefighters from the Kansas Air National Guard blast water on a raging jet fuel fire during training they received at the Gowen Field burn facility Sept. 10.

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Allen Pickert / 190 ARW

Guard remembers past commander-in-chief

A cannon rang out loudly in a 19-gun salute to Idaho's three-time governor, Robert Smylie in a memorial tribute at the State Capitol building. A combined Army/Air honor guard ensured the ceremony was dignified, and the Idaho National Guard paid its respects to a former commander in chief.

The two 75 mm ceremonial cannon were manned by men and women from the Combined Support Maintenance Shop and from Mobilization and Training Equipment Site.

Right: Members of the joint honor guard carry the casket of former Gov. Robert Smylie into the state capitol building July 19.



Photo by George Johnson

NEWS

Military division helps improve Idaho's emergency response

Reveller Staff Report

In Idaho, a key role assigned to the adjutant general is the Homeland Security director. Many members of the Idaho National Guard are not aware of this, but Maj. Gen. Jack Kane is the Governor's point of contact on matters dealing with man-made and natural disasters or hazardous materials incidents. For these matters, General Kane relies on the civilian organization within the State of Idaho Military Division now known as the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, headed by Bill Bishop.

A key task of the Idaho BHS is ensuring funding is available to agencies around the state to procure items such as chemical, biological and radiological detection equipment, communications devices and other equipment that will enhance first responders' ability to keep Idahoans safe. Much of this funding is made available by the federal government and administered in the Gem State by Idaho BHS.

Some agencies around the state are making do with outdated equipment, but with the hard work of the people who make up the Idaho BHS, that equipment is steadily being replaced or upgraded.

A prime example of this is the new truck specifically obtained for use in Hazardous Materials incidents in southwest Idaho, which now resides

in Caldwell's Fire Station # 2. A dedication ceremony was held in Caldwell on Aug. 16 and was attended by the mayor and fire chief of Caldwell and their counterparts from Nampa.

According to Caldwell Fire Chief Mark Wendelsdorf, the new \$200,000 truck considerably improves the Nampa/Caldwell team's ability to deal with significant hazardous materials incidents.

"The new truck gives us a mobile command center with radios and phone equipment, including a satellite phone we can use in remote areas. We will also have the ability to carry more of the equipment needed in hazardous materials incidents that affect public safety, such as fuel spills, illegal drug labs and chemical spills," Wendelsdorf said.

The vehicle was recently called out to a spill of some 2,000 gallons of jet fuel on Highway 55 in Boise County.

The vehicle gives responders the ability to sustain themselves at such incidents for longer periods of time than ever before. It can tow trailers with specialized equipment such as cleanup and decontamination materials, breathing apparatus and the specialized suits that responders wear over their clothing. The old vehicle had limitations, and was often out of service for maintenance and repair.

"The new vehicle will also allow us



Photo by Lt Col Tim Marsano

Maj. Gen. Jack Kane presents the ceremonial key to a new HAZMAT response truck to Nampa Fire Chief Ron Anderson. Caldwell Fire Chief Mark Wendelsdorf, Nampa Mayor Tom Dale and Caldwell Mayor Garret Nancolas look on.

to travel safely at highway speeds," added Wendelsdorf. "The last one had to be towed home from incidents several times."

Idaho's seven Regional Response Teams, equipped and operated with funding administered by the Idaho Bureau of Homeland Security, were designed as support units for hazmat incidents that exceed the resources of local response agencies. These specially trained teams are available to provide 24-hour cover-

age, seven days per week. The teams are hosted by Boise Fire Department, Nampa/Caldwell Fire Departments, Lewiston Fire Department, Pocatello Fire Department, Idaho Falls/Jefferson County Fire departments, Kootenai County Fire and Rescue and a variety of public safety agencies in the Magic Valley.

A similar truck, also obtained with funding procured by the Idaho BHS, is now stationed with the Idaho Falls Fire Department.

101st CST travels to McCall for interagency training

1st Lt Jeremy McLean 101st CST Science Officer

Members of the 101st Weapons of Mass Destruction Civil Support Team took part in a multi-agency training event designed to improve networking and response capabilities July 17 in McCall, Idaho.

Members of the 101st spend hundreds of hours each year training on collective and specialized individual tasks specific to their roles on the team. At least once a month the team is evaluated during an exercise. These exercises normally include participation from outside agencies and focus on cross training and the

exchange of information. The mission of the 101st CST is to provide assistance, advice, information and extended capabilities for the incident commander. During this exercise, the team worked directly for Chief Dave Sparks, fire chief for the McCall Fire Protection District.

The situation unfolded with the state communications conference call initiated by Chief Sparks. As information was exchanged between key local and state response agencies, it was determined that the capabilities of the CST were required. During a real world event, Maj. Brian Shields, CST commander, makes the initial assessment and then forwards the request through the joint chain of command to the commanding general for approval to deploy.

Upon arrival, the CST established its

area of operation and link-up between the incident and Major Shields. The cross leveling of information went smoothly due to pre-training on the part of McCall Fire and the CST. In addition, the Region 3 Response Team from Caldwell had already taken pictures of the site during a simulated hot zone entry earlier in the day. It appeared to be a clandestine chemistry lab in the process of producing a chemical weapons agent. The scenario grew more complex as operations continued.

Meanwhile, several suspicious patients exhibiting unusual symptoms had arrived at the local hospital at staggered intervals. Medical experts from the hospital, Jacque Cochran from local EMS and McCall Police made the connection between the patients and the incident. Ms. Cochran initiated contact with the CST medical leader, physician assistant Maj. Rebecca Goodspeed. Major Goodspeed advised local medical personnel and relayed information to Major Shields at the incident command post.

The CST Operations section was busy creating hazard modeling plumes and tracking the battle on scene.



Photo by Steve Williams

A member of the entry team discovers an Improvised Explosive Device.

NEWS



Revelleer file photo

IDAHO NATIONAL GUARD READY TO RESPOND

Revelleer staff report

The Idaho National Guard has spent much of the past year retooling its capability to respond to man-caused or nature-caused emergencies within the State of Idaho, or as seen in the case of the 116th Cavalry Brigade's approaching deployment to Iraq, to respond to calls to duty from the Department of Defense.

The Idaho National Guard has streamlined operations, improving DoD access and providing more rapid response in times of crisis. Responding to the governor when needed for domestic support within the State of Idaho and functioning as the reserve of the U.S. Military when called upon by federal authorities.

In response to a National Guard Bureau initiative in Washington, D.C., in October 2003 the Idaho National Guard consolidated its Army National Guard and Air National Guard headquarters into a standing Joint Force Headquarters. This streamlined our operations, improving Department of Defense access to our organization and providing for more rapid response in times of crisis within our state. "Our nation's military forces fight jointly, so it's important to train and operate each day in a joint environment," said Maj. Gen. Jack Kane, Commanding General of the Idaho National Guard. "With this joint force, we can respond better and faster to any emergency within our state."

The joint force concept also allows for better integration of National Guard assistance from neighboring states, if necessary, through existing emergency mutual assistance compacts. With some 40 percent of the Idaho National Guard's 4,500 citizen soldiers and citizen airmen now deployed in the Global War on Terrorism, it is also important to know our state's National Guard can be augmented when needed to deal with natural and manmade disasters such as fires, floods, winter emergencies and terrorist events.

According to Kane, "the National Guard is involved in the Global War on Terrorism at home and abroad and will support first responders throughout the state if a terrorist event happens here. We are prepared to protect our citizens, whether we're responding to natural disasters or to acts of terrorism. We're prepared and continue to hone our skills." With the prospect of natural or manmade disasters in mind, the Idaho National Guard's Joint Force recently exercised its Joint Operations Center as part of a national exercise to test its command, control and communications capabilities in support of civilian authorities.

The exercise showed the Idaho National Guard is ready to respond if called. "We learned what we're good at and what needs improvement," said Mr. Steven Hatch of the Idaho National Guard's Joint Operations Center. Having this force at the ready gives Idaho's governor leverage to deal with a wide range of domestic emergencies.

The Idaho National Guard is a full-spectrum force with a presence in 26 Idaho communities. Our citizen soldiers and citizen airmen are committed to the tradition of service to our nation and to our local communities.

Air Guardsmen awarded medals

By 2nd Lt Anthony Vincelli
Wing Public Affairs Officer

Three members of the 124th Wing were presented medals for outstanding achievements in combat during Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom Sept. 12 by Gov. Dirk Kempthorne.

A-10 pilots Maj. Tim Donnellan and Capt. Chad Crocker from the 190th Fighter Squadron are the first two Idaho Air National Guard members to receive the Distinguished Flying Cross during combat operations. Major Donnellan and Captain Crocker will be awarded the DFC for extraordinary achievements during major combat operations in Iraq in the Spring of 2003.



Maj. Donnellan

Tech. Sgt. Travis Weitzel, an enlisted terminal attack controller for the 124th Air Support Operations Squadron, will be presented the Bronze Star medal for combat actions in Afghanistan from January to August 2003.

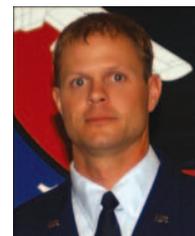
Major Donnellan led a close air support mission to aid an isolated U.S. Special Forces convoy that was taking heavy fire from the enemy. He used the A-10's 30-mm nose-



Capt. Crocker

mounted Gatling gun to engage enemy positions from altitudes as low as 500 ft to allow the convoy of 19 soldiers to rejoin friendly forces without sustaining any casualties.

Captain Crocker had to overcome an aircraft refueling problem to coordinate the safe extraction of a compromised Special Forces team. When his aircraft would not latch onto the refueling boom, he had to use brute force airborne refueling techniques to take in enough fuel to continue his mission. He successfully coordinated the life-saving pickup of the reconnaissance team and escorted the rescue helicopter during darkness and deteriorating weather.



Tech. Sgt. Weitzel

Sergeant Weitzel was recognized for meritorious achievement while engaged in more than 40 ground combat operations against enemy forces in Afghanistan. During one of those operations while under fire, he identified anti-coalition militia positions and controlled coalition aircraft to direct air strikes that resulted in confirmed enemy casualties and no friendly forces wounded.

The DFC and the Bronze Star are among the most prestigious medals any airman can be awarded. The DFC is worn after the Legion of Merit, but before the Airman's Medal followed by the Bronze Star, which is worn before the Purple Heart.

NEWS

Idaho stands up Quick Reaction Force

By 2d Lt Anthony Vincelli
Wing Public Affairs Officer

In response to the new reality of domestic terrorism and the National Guard's increasing role in national security, Lt. Gen. H. Steven Blum, di-

rector of the National Guard, mandated that all states stand-up a small cadre of personnel equipped and trained to handle a Sept. 11-type event or other situation that may arise.



Photo by Master Sgt. Tom Gloeckle

During the first of four training sessions, security forces member Master Sgt. James Brede demonstrates proper handcuffing techniques to fellow members of the QRF as Tech. Sgt. Eddie Buchanan plays along. QRF members took one afternoon per week to learn and practice the skills they'll need in a real-world situations.

Major Murphy and operations officer Army Guard Maj. Anthony McClure will lead the new force through an intense month of training in time to meet General Blum's October deadline.

Assisting Majors Murphy and McClure will be Air Guard security forces manager Chief Master Sgt. Terry Williams, who brings 24 years of law enforcement experience to the team, and Sgt. 1st Class David Henry,

former member of the Red Platoon's riot squad. They will be the detachment NCOs in charge of breaking the group of 80 airmen and soldiers into leaner forces specializing in certain types of incidents. Detachment 1, led

and civil engineering to a name a few. They will respond to incidents to establish an infrastructure and provide the team with multiple capabilities, Major Murphy said.

The team's training kicked off August 30 at Gowen Field with an in-

troductory briefing from Major Murphy



Photo by Master Sgt. Tom Gloeckle
Sgt. Robert McClure and Master Sgt. Bill Henschied go over the proper techniques to restrain a would-be offender, played in this case by Senior Airman Scott Hunter.

by Chief Williams, will consist of 30 Air Guard security forces personnel and 10 Army Guard military police-

men. Their primary responsibility will be law enforcement and security. SFC Henry's detachment 2 will consist of even blend of 20 Air and 20 Army Guard members with expertise in a wide variety of skills including communications, medical,

and civil engineering to a name a few. They will respond to incidents to establish an infrastructure and provide the team with multiple capabilities, Major Murphy said.

He identified several challenges that the team will face in preparing for this new mission. On the top of the list is getting the "days and dollars" so his team has the financial backing for the training and equipment they need.

"We'll work through joint force headquarters to make sure our people have everything they need to get the job done," Major Murphy said.

Another challenge he is looking forward to working through is the differences between the services.

"Both the Air and Army Guard need to set aside their differences in training, vocabulary and operations and focus on the QRF," he said.

To get the ball rolling, the QRF will focus on proficiency leading up to the deadline. The QRF members will spend the rest of this month practicing the tasks that they may be called in to perform. Major Murphy said this team will be ready in time to meet the general's Oct. 1 deadline.

The team can be called upon by the governor to respond to a variety of incidents and events.

"The QRF is yet another example of the National Guard's capability to respond to a crisis. We hope that we'll never need to respond to a 9/11-type event, but we'll be ready just in case," Major Murphy said.

CST from page 4

Modeler Master Sgt. Ed Boyd created plots showing response personnel which areas could likely be contaminated if a chemical, biological or radioactive agent had been released. Simultaneously, the survey team made their first entry into the hot zone. Capt. Pete Cast, survey team leader, controlled the down range operations that, on this day, included three RRT hazardous materials members and two CST members. These HAZMAT technicians worked jointly with the CST to produce a highly effective response. Survey Alpha Team Leader, Staff Sgt. Jeremy Hamrick led the initial mission into the contaminated area.

The first survey entry team completed their downrange mission, processed through decontamination and medical screening and prepared for a mission debriefing. Sergeant Hamrick delivered crucial information from his team's downrange photos in a well-articulated synopsis of the mission. From this information Sgt. 1st Class Jack Jensen, Medical NCO and backup Analytical Laboratory Systems operator Captain Cast and other key personnel put together the second entry mission. This second entry focused on sample attainment. The samples were carefully chosen to provide the most efficiency in analytical operations.

The combination of patient information and analytical data developed the bigger picture. All information gathered on scene was organized and presented by the CST commander to the incident commander. Chief Sparks then implemented his approach to mitigating the situation.

At the end of the exercise all parties involved met for an after action review. The training scenario was discussed in length and concluded to be a successful event. Everyone walked away having learned something valuable.

This exercise was just one of several exercises that the CST plans and participates in. During a typical training year the CST will execute an average of 12-15 situational training exercises in the field. The majority are in Idaho with a lesser amount in the Northwest region of the U.S. These events promote and educate civilian first responders and local populace about CST capabilities and assistance available to them during WMD responses.

The CST community continues to grow in ability and a spirit of partnership with local and state responders.

Together, the CST and the many first response agencies in Idaho improves the safety of our state and the nation.

NEWS

SINCE LATE 2002, the 189th Airlift Squadron has had at least a dozen of its 72 members and one of its C-130E Hercules aircraft deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom or Operation Iraqi Freedom. Recently, word came down that the unit's original one year mobilization would be doubled. Now, the squadron must maintain its commitment to the Global War on Terror while continuing to perform local training sorties and other important missions. Everyone knows of the 116th Brigade Combat Team's upcoming duty in Iraq, but how many know the 116th's sister unit has been there for months? But if you like to travel, there is no better unit to be a part of.

WORLD TRAVELERS



Photo by Lt. Col. Tom Shuler / 189 AS
Flight engineer Master Sgt. Kevin Kelly and pilot Capt. Bill Soper hold up a sign as they cross the equator.

A June winter

By Lt. Col. Tom Shuler
C-130 Navigator

As the 189th Airlift Squadron continues its two-year deployment to support Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom it also is being tasked from the Tactical Airlift Control Center. These missions are assigned because our unit is in a mobilized status.

The initial mission involved moving injured Marines returning from Iraq from Travis Air Force Base to Miramar Marine Corps Air Station. From there, the Marines were reunited with their families at Camp Pendleton. It is always sobering and very rewarding when we are able to help reunite an injured soldier and his family.

Next, we flew the aircraft to New Orleans in preparation for a long flight to South America. All the hotels near the airport were full so we were forced to stay downtown on some little alley called Bourbon Street. After a Cajun feast, a visit to the D-Day museum (established by Stephen Ambrose and Tom Hanks) and a lot of head shaking about the general insanity around us we were ready to head south.

From New Orleans we flew 10.5 hours to Lima, Peru. On the way there we crossed the equator over Ecuador and immediately noticed the toilet water flushing counter-clockwise. Just kidding, we don't have a toilet. A night landing down to near minimums in the Peruvian coastal fog was all pilot Capt. Bill Soper and the rest of us needed to get our blood pumping fast after the long flight.

The next day we had a down day, as our landing was too late for the early departure we would need for our next flight. After a long and fitful sleep, we returned to the airport to fuel the plane, file flight plans and coordinate a weather briefing for the next morning. As you might know it is winter south of the equator, so the temperature change was a blessing.

The next morning we and two other C-130's flying

out of Puerto Rico, as part of Coronet Oak, met our passengers: a group of 64 Marines from Chile and Argentina. All were participating in Operation Unitas. The operation involved soldiers from all over South and Central America training in two locations in Peru. Our loadmasters Senior Master Sgt. Keith Scherer and Tech. Sgt. Scott Hoak earned their pay by getting the pallets constructed and weighted in the chaos of 200 soldiers from four countries who were all trying to load their gear.

Our leg took us down the and Peruvian coast, past Nasca. Nasca is home to the famous Nasca lines, which are only visible from the air and are supposedly signs of alien intervention with ancient peoples.

Unfortunately, coastal fog prohibited us from seeing these amazing animal figures.

Just prior to the Chilean border we turned east and climbed up over the Andes Mountains. Our 42-year old plane lumbered up to 24,000 feet somehow and we enjoyed the sight of scattered, snow covered volcanic peaks. Even though it was the middle of winter the proximity of the region to the equator meant the snow line was around 18,000 feet. Crossing the high plateau or Alto Plano of Bolivia, which is above 12,000 feet, we could see Lake Titicaca from Inca fame, as well as the capital La Paz, home of El Alto International at 13,313 feet. Great home field advantage for the local soccer team I would imagine.

We were lucky in that the weather was clear, so our approach into the mountain-surrounded field at Cochabamba was uneventful. After dropping off our new Bolivian friends, filing a new flight plan and touring a Bolivian Air Force PC-7 we set off with our Paraguayan passengers. The mountains soon gave away to the vast rain forest, which covers all of central South America. This continued for several hours broken only by an occasional clearing or river. Finally we spotted Asuncion and made a nighttime landing after another long day.

In total we were gone ten days, flew 49.8 hours and ate a lot of spicy food. Co-pilot Lt. Chris Gries learned how to decipher Spanglish and Flight Engineer Master Sgt. Kevin Kelly fixed the many minor problems our old reliable plane had during the mission.

All in all, not a bad part-time job.

Dirt landings and body armor...

ALL IN A DAY'S WORK

By Capt. Alex DeGracia
C-130 Pilot

C-130s from the Idaho Air National Guard continued their flying operations over Afghanistan this summer with no limits to their calling. From combat insertion of Special

Forces teams into remote forward operating bases on dirt landing zones to transporting everyone from distinguished visitors to detained or repatriated prisoners – Idaho Herk crews rose to the highest standing of excellence.

Training operations here on Gowen Field's South runway also known as the Ryan assault strip prior to deploying to Afghanistan, gave aircrews some of the most realistic training they could achieve for the missions they were about to undertake.

Mission taskings included Army and Marine support of cargo and troop movement into some of the most remote and rugged areas in Afghanistan. This placed Idaho aircrews and her planes in front of every active war zone and makeshift landing zone in the combat theater. Operations into forward operating base Salerno southeast of Kabul and FOB Tarin Kowd north of Kandahar were two of the most challenging dirt landing zones in Afghanistan.

Idaho crews were tasked to deliver Special Forces teams and equipment into these remote locations via highly tactical mission planning and maneuvering of the aircraft. The teams, supporting Operation Linebacker, were being employed to provide protection to registering voters for the upcoming presidential elections in the Fall. Local Warlords had taken to killing these future voters in hopes of disrupting any potential for democratic elections — an unrecognized and unsupported event within the Taliban regime. Teams on the aircraft were fully donned in combat equipment to include body armor and advanced weapons for any immediate engagement upon landing. The teams were scheduled to remain at this location for 10 months.

Still, Idaho crews would not rest. Crews from the 189th would be called upon to regularly transport distinguished visitors to include Gen. John Abizad, commander of U.S. Central Command, Gen. John Handy, commander of Air Mobility Command and U.S. Transportation Command, U.S congressmen and foreign ambassadors to Afghanistan.

Transport tasking also included the sometimes dangerous duty of transporting detained prisoners under captivity and the easier missions of repatriating PUCs after questioning. PUCs were individuals suspected of having involvement in any attacks against coalition forces and/or ties to insurgent groups (Al Qaeda, Taliban, etc).

Summer operations for the 189th Airlift Squadron have moved from Afghanistan as the principal theater of operations to supporting Operation Iraqi Freedom.



Photo courtesy of Capt. Alex DeGracia, 189 AS
Idaho's C-130 crew prepares to land on a dirt runway in Afghanistan.

IN BRIEF

President wants better school benefits for Guard

The President announced that he wants to enhance the educational benefits for Reserve component members who have been called to service in support of the Global War on Terrorism in recognition of their sacrifices Aug. 19.

He reaffirmed that commitment on Sept. 14 in his speech before the National Guard Association of the United States Convention in Las Vegas. The administration sent proposed legislation to Congress that creates this new educational benefit Sept. 15.

Key elements of the new benefit include:

- The Reserve component member must have been called to active duty (voluntarily or involuntarily) in support of a contingency operation on or after September 11, 2001
- In the case of a National Guard member, he or she would also qualify if called to full-time National Guard duty when authorized by the President or Secretary of Defense for the purpose of responding to a national emergency and supported by Federal funds (i.e., airport security)
- The period of duty is for 90 consecutive days or more.

The monthly benefit level is based on a percent of the benefit level for a member who served three years on active duty (FY 2005 the full-time level is \$1,004) as follows:

- 90 days but less than one year of continuous duty: 40% (or \$402 for a full time student)
- One year but less than two years of continuous duty: 60% (or \$602 for a full time student)
- Two years or more of continuous duty: 80% (or \$803 for a full time student)
- These percentages are applied to other educational programs authorized under title 38.

To remain eligible for the benefit, the member must:

- Continue to serve in the Selected Reserve (in the case of a member who was serving in the Selected Reserve when called to duty)
- Continue to serve in the Ready Reserve (in the case of a member who was serving in the Ready Reserve when called to active duty)
- The benefit terminates when the member separates either from the Selected Reserve or Ready Reserve, as applicable
- A member who was ordered to duty for more than 90 days but becomes disabled before reaching the minimum 90 period is eligible for the benefit
- In the case of a disabled member, the benefit terminates after 10 years
- The same period of duty cannot be used to qualify for this new program and an active duty educational assistance program
- Cannot use the active duty educational assistance program or the Selected Reserve educational assistance program at the same time

Benefits may be used for up to 36 months
(Information provided by National Guard Bureau)



Jobs on line over 'partisan' e-mails

The U.S. Office of Special Counsel has filed complaints for disciplinary action against two federal employees for purportedly sending what OSC describes as politically partisan e-mail messages while on duty, in violation of the Hatch Act.

The complaints, filed last month with the Merit Systems Protection Board but made public this week, say the employees engaged in political activity while on duty directed toward the success or failure of a political party, candidate for a partisan political office, or partisan political group.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency employee Maureen Taylor-Glaze was accused of sending an e-mail message to 15 of her EPA co-workers while on duty in her federal office building.

According to the OSC, the message contained a picture of actress Jane Fonda and Democratic presidential nominee Sen. John Kerry speaking at an anti-war rally, under which were numerous negative statements about the Massachusetts senator, including one that said: "Please keep this going. We do not need this man as our president."

U.S. Air Force civilian employee Donald Thompson was accused of sending an e-mail message titled, "George W." to more than 70 recipients while he was on duty.

The OSC said the message contained a document mimicking President Bush's resume and is filled with accusations of incompetence and malfeasance specifically directed at Mr. Bush's defeat in the upcoming election. The agency also

said the message contained the phrases, "Please consider me when voting in 2004" and "Please send this to every voter you know."

"The use of Internet and electronic mail is second-nature to almost everyone, and has become a favorite and effective campaign tool, even more so perhaps, than four years ago," said Special Counsel Scott Bloch. "I want to remind federal employees to be vigilant about following the Hatch Act, because we will consider this activity a form of electronic leafleting, and thus a violation of the prohibition on partisan political activity in the workplace."

The Hatch Act prohibits federal executive branch employees from engaging in political activity while on duty, in any room or building occupied in the discharge of official duties by an individual employed or holding office in the U.S. government, wearing a uniform or official insignia identifying the office or position of the employee, or using any vehicle owned or leased by the government.

The OSC provides advisory opinions on the Hatch Act and also enforces the provisions by filing petitions for disciplinary action. Employees who are charged with violations are entitled to a hearing before the MSPB.

Under the act, the presumptive penalty for a violation is removal from federal employment. However, upon a unanimous vote of its members, the MSPB can mitigate the penalty to no less than a 30-day suspension without pay. Employees have the right to appeal the MSPB's decision to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

(Information provided by National Guard Bureau)

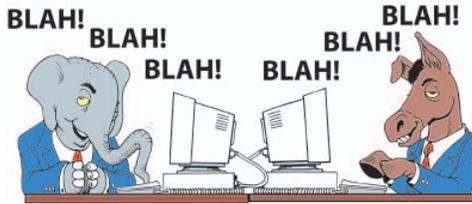


Illustration by Master Sgt. Tom Gloeckle

Gowen Field's updates continue

Gowen Field has undergone a series of changes over the years, all of which have functionally improved the facility and added to its presentation.

While much work is still being done, the two most significant recent additions were unveiled late this summer. They are the new Joint Force Headquarters Building and the new Base Chapel.

The new Joint Force Headquarters (JFHQ) building was unveiled in a tour conducted on 7 Aug by Col. Bill Shawver, JFHQ Chief of Staff. The 77,000 square foot building cost about \$9 million to complete. It will soon house the JFHQ's personnel, legal, communications and other directorates.

The Gowen Field Chapel was officially open for September drill, although the chapel had already seen two weddings in August. The 3900 sq. foot facility cost \$620,000. The new facility will have a full-time chaplain assigned, and will be available for classes, weddings

and memorials.

The chapel's new floor plan allows for more offices, a larger worship area and will serve LDS, Protestant and Catholic denominations. "We will have it open every day during work hours, and will have it open for prayer chapel 5-6 days a week," said Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Art Moore, Joint Force Headquarters Staff Chaplain.

(Reveller Staff Report)



Photos by Lt. Col. Tim Marsano

Gowen Field latest additions: The Joint Force Headquarters Building and the Base Chapel.

PEOPLE



A Little Wet

Rain doesn't dampen spirits during wing's annual Family Day

Story by 2nd Lt. Anthony Vincelli
Photos by Master Sgt. Tom Gloeckle
and Master Sgt. James Hansen



The lunch tables were in place. The food was prepared. The games had been delivered. The bleachers and performing stage were all ready to go. Everything that would be needed to make the 124th Wing Family Day 2004 a success was standing by.

And then the rain came.

The sky looked ominous the entire morning, but the weather forecast called for only a slight chance of showers in the morning and early afternoon. Holding an outdoor picnic on Sunday, Sept. 12 seemed like a safe bet. But at 10 a.m., just an hour before the day of fun for Air Guard members and their families was to begin, it started to pour.

What wing family program coordinator John Spurny saw then amazed him.

"I have been around the military for a long time, but I have never seen anything like what I saw that day," he said.

What he saw was people from all over the base coming out to the original site of the picnic to pitch in and help move everything over to the C-130 maintenance hangar.

"Nobody complained, they all just came

together and got it done. It was a sight to see and clear that the good of the many outweighed the inconvenience for a few," Spurny said.

In just over an hour from when the call came to move the picnic, the first of more than 2,000 barbecue beef sandwiches (donated to the wing by the Idaho Beef Council for the second year in a row) was served. The entire family day, which has been an outdoor staple every September, was now indoors.

Although no official count was taken, Spurny estimated that approximately 2,000 wing members, retirees and their families packed the hangar that day. They talked, relaxed, laughed with the clowns, saw the classic cars and motorcycles, ate plenty of beef sandwiches and ice cream bars donated by Meadow Gold Dairy, and listened to musicians from the bleachers in the quickly adapted confines of hangar 1530.

All in all, not a bad day even with the rain, and a great day when you consider the amount planning culminating with a burst of short-notice teamwork went into making the 2004 Family Day a success. But after all the Guard is a family...and that's what it is all about.



COMMUNITY

Army Guard hosts area high school interns

By *Reveller Staff*
& *Mary Knapp*

Boise Schools Industry Liaison

The Idaho Army Guard this summer continued its role in developing the skills of local teens interested in professional-technical education. The Boise School District's Dehryl A. Dennis Professional-Technical Center has worked with the Idaho Guard for the past five years to help a number of students prepare for careers in a variety of fields.

This year, seven students were brought on to work at Gowen Field's Combined Support Maintenance Shop under the supervision of Maj. Vince Budell. The program lasts 10 weeks.

"Kids come out and work with a mentor," said

Major Budell. "We pay them to work, but there's output." The Idaho Army Guard also gets some recruits from the partnership. About one intern a year joins up.

Budell's CSMS shop takes on a large number of engine and other refurbishment projects for the U.S. Army, and this year the shop was faced with new challenges as many of its personnel deployed with the 116th Cavalry Brigade. The vo-tech students helped this summer to fill that gap with engine rebuild, electrical, fuel systems and welding, so it's production as usual at CSMS.

"What this means to the Army



Maj. Vince Budell and Boise-area high school interns take time out of training and learning for a quick photo.

Guard is time saved and huge job orders completed on time," added Budell. "It was important to the Guard to continue the intern program, as interns do real work, allowing for our departments to maintain production and repair schedules."

The Idaho Army National Guard has demonstrated a significant commitment to trades and industry students by promoting greater educational opportunities for future careers. The students will continue their studies at the Professional-Technical Center this fall. Career counseling and guidance to continue studies in automotive or welding technologies at the postsecondary level will follow.

The Internship Worksite Program:

- Increases the validity of technical skills training
- Increases the relevance of the need to achieve academically
- Builds positive working relationships with industry partners
- Provides positive role models for students
- Provides valuable career track

experiences

- Creates a conduit for industry input into curriculum
- Strengthens professional-technical Advisory Board function
- Provides entry-level skilled labor for non-postsecondary bound students
- Increases the potential of students moving on to postsecondary training
- Increases transition to other non-educational training opportunities

Community Calendar

Combined Federal Campaign begins

The 2004-2005 Combined Federal Campaign began Sept. 1 and runs Oct. 1 through Dec. 15.

Last year, federal workers reached into their pockets to donate nearly \$250 million during the campaign.

On average, one in four federal employees or their family members will benefit from the CFC charities this year alone, according to officials.

Donors may designate which charity or charities, receives their money by filling out a pledge card. Contributions can be in cash, check or by payroll deduction.

The CFC Web site at www.opm.gov/cfc has more information. (Courtesy of AFPC News Service)

Assistance with TRICARE benefits

Recent visits by TRICARE and TriWest officials to Idaho showed there are Idaho National Guard family members who are having trouble using their TRICARE health benefits. Problems arise when there is either a lack of understanding about the program or a shortage of healthcare providers in the family member's region. Officials stress that the best way to resolve both problems is to call TriWest Healthcare Alliance at 1-888-874-9378 (1-888-TRIWEST). More info can also be found at www.triwest.com or www.tricare.osd.mil/reserve/

Bogus Basin offers military discount

Guard members and their families are eligible for half off on lift tickets, rentals and lesson. All discounts are valid with military ID anytime during the upcoming ski season. Season passes will be offered at the pre-season price of \$229 all season long with a military ID.

Boise's JROTC cadets learn life lessons at summer camp

By *Sgt 1st Class Rick Simmons*

Cadets of the Boise School District JROTC participated in the annual Joint Intermountain Summer Leadership Camp hosted at Camp Williams, Utah, June 6 through 10. They were joined by Sgt. 1st Class Rick Simmons of the 1-183 Aviation Battalion.

This was not the first activity in which cadets had the opportunity to work with members of the Idaho National Guard. During the previous school year, Gowen Field hosted cadets for an informational day of hands-on activities and more, including viewing of tanks, Air Guard fighter jets, and classroom work with members of the Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

Since the JROTC headquarters have been established at Gowen Field, cadets are visited regularly by recruiters and personnel, providing them not only information for possible future careers, but also guidance and training. To the enjoyment of the cadets, Sergeant Simmons was invited once again to serve as an assistant TAC on their Utah trip.

The five day training period tied cadets into a rigorous schedule of leadership courses and physical activity. Cadet eligibility to participate at summer camp was based on their classroom conduct, as well as their performance on the PT test. They also had the opportunity to apply for camp command and staff positions.

Upon arrival in Utah, another PT Test determined the top five male and female cadets of each company, who would then compete in a final test later in the week for first and second place medals. Evenings ended with softball and volleyball games amongst the companies of the Camp Bat-

talion. Cadets were required to prepare for daily barracks inspections.

Daily training included an orienteering course for both advanced and novice teams, the Leadership Reactionary Course which consisted of obstacles over land and water, as well as the confidence course. Team/Squad performance was mainly based on teamwork, effort, and enthusiasm, and overall mission accomplishment.

For the majority of the participants, the camp highlight was the repel and jump-tower, run by trained personnel of the Special Forces who walked cadets through different repel styles and the 38-foot jump. An unexpectedly fun science class taught cadets how to build a motor, concluding with the assembly and race of small motorized cars.

Overall Boise cadets, part of A. Co. were second in the competition for Honor Company, with first-place guidon streamers earned for barracks inspection (this included a final stand-by inspection and questioning by the camp commandant and command) and the science course; second place streamers were received for the orienteering course, physical training, LRC, and several others.

Every day started out at 5 a.m. and often lasted well past lights-out at 10 p.m. Cadets faced and overcame fears, formed new bonds, and gained indispensable experience and skills during camp. Successful mission accomplishment would not have been possible without the help of SFC Simmons.

The Boise Battalion is thankful for the support of the Idaho National Guard, and is looking forward to their continued involvement in the corps' activities.

COMMUNITY

Vets' dream is now a reality

By Lt. Col. Tim Marsano
Public Affairs Officer

Thousands of Idahoans turned out under sunny skies to take part in the dedication of Idaho's new veterans cemetery on 31 July. The dedication closed the door on the fact that Idaho had been the last state in the union without such a cemetery.

The day began at the Statehouse, where the POW/MIA flag was lowered from the Capitol Building's flagpole in a ceremony that would transport the flag to the new cemetery where it now holds a place of prominence. With Governor Kempthorne and Maj. Gen. Kane overseeing this ceremony, Capitol Mall Security personnel lowered the flag and then transported it down the building's elevator, where a waiting all-service honor guard presented it to a representative from the National League of POW/MIA Families. A unified law-enforcement motorcycle detail then escorted the HMMWV transporting the flag and the VIP party in a motorcade across town to the new cemetery for the dedication ceremony.

The Flag/VIP party was then greeted by the large crowd that braved the rising temperatures, made more bearable with the assistance of a small army of Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts and other volunteers who cheerfully passed out bottles of cold water.

The ceremony saw a number of speakers praise the contributions of Idaho's veterans and those currently serving in uniform. Governor Kempthorne commended these men and women as citizens "who knew their duty and had the courage to fulfill it." Maj. Gen. Kane noted that "our freedom must be protected whatever the cost." Idaho Division of Veterans Services Director Richard Jones laid out the timeline for the cemetery's major milestones, and saw it grow "from a dream to a reality." Other VIPs who came

to the podium included Medal of Honor recipient Bernard Fisher, Senator Mike Crapo and Col. Charles Shugg, Mountain Home AFB commander. The event's master of ceremonies, Mr. Larry Gebert, read remarks sent to the event from other dignitaries who could not attend.

Brig. Gen. (Ret.) John Nicholson, undersecretary for memorial affairs in the Department of Veteran's Affairs made the keynote address. He noted the fact that there are now more than 135,000 veterans in the State of Idaho and "when headstones reach across this hallowed ground, the gratitude of the American people will be apparent."

Members of the Idaho National Guard were out in full force during the dedication, assisting with innumerable responsibilities. With its usual professionalism, the 25th Army Band provided the ceremony's musical accompaniment, the combined Honor Guard performed crisply and competently and the Air Guard Chief's Group had its men and women leaders visible and providing support on more tasks than can be counted.

The huge undertaking that produced the cemetery and its dedication was the work of dozens of government agencies, private industry and an army of volunteers. All of these entities were brought together under the very capable and dedicated direction of USAF Col. (Ret.) Joe Bleymaier, Director, Idaho State Veterans Cemetery.

Funding for the Idaho State Veterans' Cemetery came from a variety of sources, including \$8.2 million from the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the State of Idaho, private contributions and the sale of medallions featuring the likenesses of members of all the services. Idaho Air Guard Lt. Col. Gregory Stone, who died in Operation Iraqi Freedom, is featured on the coin.



Photo by George Johnson



Photo by George Johnson

Air Force Honor Guard members from Mountain Home Air Force Base prepare to render a 21-gun salute during the dedication ceremony held July 31.

A final resting place for Idaho's veterans

By Gov. Dirk Kempthorne

I recently had the honor of taking part in the dedication of the new Idaho Veterans Cemetery in the rolling foothills rising above Boise.

Although Idaho is the last state to dedicate a veteran's cemetery, the Gem State has, without question, created one of the most impressive final resting places for its veterans — as it should be. For generations to come, this spectacular 76-acre site will inspire Idahoans to ponder the sacrifice of those who have worn the uniform of America's Armed Services and thank them for their willingness to lay down their life for Idaho and their nation.

Standing constant vigil over this hallowed ground will be the POW/MIA flag — the somber symbol of our gratitude to all men and women who are listed as missing in action, or who have been held as a prisoner of war by our enemies — ensuring that those who didn't make it home will never be forgotten.

From Idaho's earliest days, its men and women have served the United States in uniform. It was 106 years ago that Idahoans fought in the Spanish-American War. Since then, Idaho's sons and daughters have served in the Philippines, the First World War, the Second World War, Korea, Vietnam, the Cold War, the Gulf War and the War on Terror. The United States does not seek to produce more generations of war veterans. Yet, needs arise. And the brave men and women of this state always answer the call to service.

From Idaho Falls to Twin Falls, from Bonners Ferry to Glenns Ferry, and now from Fort Bliss, Texas, en route to Iraq, our men and women continue to fight for our values and freedoms around the world. Let us also remember that the families of these great patriots are sharing in this sacrifice.

As Governor, I have made the Idaho Veterans Cemetery a priority because our veterans deserve this. And I believe it will serve as a constant reminder of the price of liberty, the duty of our citizens, and the greatness of our state and nation.

The cemetery will be available for interring Idaho veterans and eligible family members in the fall. When it opens, I envision relatives visiting the cemetery, parents bringing their children, scout troops and members of community organizations, each inspired by the courage and the strength of those who have been laid to rest in this hallowed ground.

This will encourage citizens to remember that our democratic freedom has been maintained by men and women who knew their duty, and had the courage to fulfill it. This cemetery is the realization of a dream — but it is not the culmination. Those who visit, and walk down the cemetery paths, will have their hearts changed. They will not leave as the same person. They will come, and they will have a greater appreciation of the sacrifices made and the freedoms defended by those interred at this final resting place of honor.

Let this memorial to our veterans remind us to repay duty with duty and honor with honor. Let us resolve to fulfill our responsibilities as citizens. Let us serve honorably in our communities, giving freely of ourselves to our children, our friends and our fellow citizens, as the veterans of this state have served and given so freely of themselves.

May God bless this hallowed ground, just as He has blessed the veterans who will be laid to rest in this sacred place.

THE LAST WORD

ESGR sponsors Bosslift to Fort Bliss Employers, civic leaders, media get up close and personal

By Lt. Col. Tim Marsano
Public Affairs Officer

"This is an opportunity for us employers to see firsthand what they're doing, what they're going through," said Caldwell Mayor Garret Nancolas. "It's a great honor to see what they're going through on our behalf."

That was the general mood and the sentiment of more than 100 employers, elected officials and reporters from around Idaho who flew on two 189th Airlift Squadron C-130Es on a two-day trip to Ft. Bliss, Texas to see Idaho Army Guardsmen of the 116th Brigade Combat Team train for their upcoming deployment to Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The trip, sponsored by the Idaho Committee for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve, took place on Sept. 13-14. It offered participants a different view that they normally see on a BossLift, in that most of those trips take place in places like Gowen Field, where deployment to an active combat zone is not imminent. In this case, soldiers now at Ft. Bliss are expected to land 'in country' before winter.

Maj. Henrik Fast of the 145th Support Battalion was happy to see the group. "It's an opportunity for them to see what's going on here, to get a bird's eye view of the training, the life, the daily grind. I know the soldiers are glad that everybody back home has an opportunity to see" the training as a result of three dozen Idaho news media members being invited along.

The trip was carefully planned by Idaho ESGR Committee Chairman Kip Moggridge and members Sam Turner and Lt. Col. Dick Deam. Staff Sgt. Sharon Ujiye and a host of others played significant roles in the planning of this trip, which came off without a hitch. The goal was to give participants a flavor of what our soldiers were going through, as well as to let the travelers talk to Idaho soldiers.

Participants hit the ground running After an informative inbrief by Ft. Bliss staff members, the group trekked to Doña Ana Forwarding Operating Base, where they observed medics from C Com-



Photo by Lt. Col. Tim Marsano

Col. (Ret.) Jan Packwood is the CEO of IdaCorp, a strong supporter of ESGR and the Idaho National Guard. The company has sent more than a dozen employees or their family members on this deployment. Col. Packwood is also the father of Captains Lane and Cole Packwood, who are now training at Ft. Bliss. As a decorated U.S. Army Vietnam veteran, he knows about deployments. "It's easier to go and do it than it is to be left behind and worry about it."

pany, 145th Support Battalion undergoing realistic training in a scenario in which a mess hall was attacked by mortars. Soldiers operated under pressure, in darkness and with simulated gunfire going on all around them, but showed their proficiency to observers. Ft. Bliss trainers say the medics are being trained to the standards of emergency medical technicians.

The next day, BossLift participants took part in a convoy training exercise. During this training, participants were loaded into 2.5 ton transport trucks protected by soldiers of the 116th BCT and driven through the New Mexico desert. The convoy

was subject to several simulated attacks by snipers and improvised explosive devices (IEDs), and the BossLift participants had a chance to hear the trainers evaluate the convoy protectors in an after-action review.

Again, the group was impressed by what they saw and the level of intensity the trainers put our soldiers through, all in preparation for whatever challenges await them in Iraq.

"I'm just grateful there are people willing to do this, to protect all of us," said Michelle Cameron, general manager of Cable One. "It reminds me of what great lives we have back home."

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