

VOLSTATE GUARD

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JULY 2010

278th ACS Returns Home Early

Member of 164th AW honored as National Guard Dental Officer of the Year



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On the Cover:

A group of motor transportation drivers and mechanics from the Royal Moroccan Army participate in a Heavy Equipment Transport System course led by U.S. soldiers with the Tennessee Army National Guard’s 1175th Transportation Company, May 6, 2010. The course was part of AFRICAN LION ‘10, an annually-scheduled, joint, combined U.S.-Moroccan exercise. It brings together more than 1,000 members of the Moroccan military and nearly 1,000 U.S. service members from 16 locations throughout Europe and North America.

(Photo by Sergeant Lydia M. Davey, U.S. Marine Forces Africa)

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278th ACS Returns Home Early

Photos By: Capt. Darrin Haas



Above: The first Soldiers of the Tennessee National Guard's returning 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment step off a C-130 Transport Wednesday at the Guard's Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna. Maj. Gen. Max Haston, the Adjutant General, announced that the regiment's 3,400 soldiers are coming home from Iraq five to six months earlier than expected, with units arriving in increments from June through August.

Left: A Soldier of the 278th ACS hugs his wife after being apart for about six months.

164th Airman receives Dental Officer of the Year

Story By: Staff Sgt. Robin Olsen

A Nashville native and member of the Tennessee Air National Guard's 164th Airlift Wing, out of Memphis, will be awarded as Dental Officer of the Year for the entire Air National Guard, June 19 at the Readiness Frontiers Awards Banquet in Minneapolis.

Lt. Col. Suzanne Hayes, 164th AW Medical Group, also serves as the Director of Oral Health Services for the Tennessee Department of Health and is an adjunct faculty member of the University of Tennessee.

She has been a member of the TN National Guard since 2006, after completing Reserve Commissioned Officer Training as a distinguished graduate.

"Dr. Hayes exemplifies the volunteer spirit for which Tennessee is known and we're thrilled to celebrate these honors with her," said Tennessee Health Commissioner Susan R. Cooper, MSN, RN. "We're very proud of her achievements and her service with both the Department of Health and the National Guard."

"I was overwhelmed at just being nominated, but to have won the award is such an honor," Hayes said, "I'm humbled by this and appreciate it more than I can express."



Two widows of Korean War veterans were presented a rose to represent their sacrifice and their deceased spouses during a reunion on June 19.

Korean War Veterans Hold 60-year Reunion

Story and Photos By: Capt. Darrin Haas

Milan's North Side Baptist Church was the scene for the Tennessee Army National Guard's 2998th Engineer Treadway Bridge Company's 60-year reunion on June 19, commemorating their mobilization for the Korean War.

Fourteen Veterans and four widows gathered in Tennessee, some from as far away as Maple Grove, Minn., and Port Isabel, Texas, to reunite and celebrate the many years that have passed since they served in what's often called America's "Forgotten War."

"I can't believe it's been so long," said Billy F. McLean, a former private with the unit and the event organizer. "It's

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good to see my old buddies again.”

The 2998th, a National Guard company stationed in Milan, was federalized at noon on Aug. 19, 1950 to deploy to Korea. Seventy-one Guardsmen from Milan were ordered to report to the National Guard Armory, at that time located inside the Milan Arsenal.

“I can remember, like it was yesterday, that I was being sent to Korea,” McLean said. “I was just 17 and getting ready to start my senior year in high school. There were four of us in the same situation. We earned our GEDs while training before being shipped to Korea. That was 60 years ago.”

“We worked hard at every job we were given,” McLean said. “Many of us built bridges north of the 38th Parallel, which was in North Korea.”

Throughout the year, the Soldiers repaired the battle damaged Hwanchon Dam and performed other tasks like welding, construction and transporting supplies.

In January 1954, the 2998th guidon returned to the Tennessee National Guard and the unit was deactivated.

The Veterans spent Saturday afternoon reminiscing and celebrating their service, catching up with old friends and honoring their dead comrades.

During the reunion, every veteran’s widow who was present received a single red rose in a glass vase. Each veteran was presented a National Guard baseball hat, mug and a music CD with songs they heard when deployed overseas.

Many spoke to the group about memories they shared and how happy they were to see each other again. One veteran said, “I want to take this moment to remember my brother, also a Korean veteran, who is no longer with us.”

John Fuqua, a platoon leader during the unit’s deployment, presented a slide show of their deployment photos.

“Some of the guys look exactly the same, just a few more wrinkles,” McLean said. “Some of my old buddies here I haven’t seen since our last reunion in 2006. I cherish the times we can get together.”

This was the third reunion the 2998th has had since the end of the war.

“Many of the members couldn’t make it,” McLean said. “The few of us that remain are scattered across the country and some of their health isn’t good.” Of the original 71 Soldiers who deployed to Korea, 21 are still living; 10 of them in West Tennessee.

Korean War Veterans pose for a picture.



Tenn. Guardsmen train British Soldiers

Story and Photo By: Sgt. David Fisher

Five members from United Kingdom's Territory Army recently trained alongside local Tennessee Army National Guard Soldiers May 8 to May 22. The UKTA is the equivalent to our United States Army National Guard.

The purpose was for both nations Reserve Forces to understand one another's processes and procedures as our forces work side by side in areas throughout the world; more recent examples are Afghanistan and Iraq.

The British Soldiers trained with members of Trenton's 230th Engineer Battalion at Ft. Campbell, Ky. and Lavinia, Tn. They received hands-on experience operating weapons and equipment used by the U.S. military to better understand how the Army prepares itself for combat and to perform engineer operations.

Staff Sgt. Michael McClain of Clarksville, who works as supply sergeant for the 255th Engineers at Tennessee Ridge, said, "I think it's a unique and challenging experience to work with our British counterparts - to learn their traits compared to ours, and how they all intermingle into one."

Lt. Col. Robey D. Brantley, commander of the 230th Engineer Battalion, gave Capt. Neal Archer, 135th Independent Geographic Squadron, Royal Engineers, a tour of the areas utilized during this year's annual training period.

The British Soldiers received

classroom instruction involving improvised explosive device recognition, computer simulated battlefield training, proper use of electronic jamming equipment in a hostile military environment and other training exercises.

A 24-year Veteran whose military career includes a tour in northern Kuwait, Archer's responsibilities include recruiting and serving as commander of a technical troop that produces mapping and geographic assets to both Active and Reserve Units in Britain. During his deployment to Kuwait, Archer was responsible for all mapping information for military operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Coordinated efforts between U.S. and British military forces are very effective.

"It was very beneficial to understanding the effort it takes from all components of the military coupled with multiple nations," said Archer.

Unlike some of the other allied forces operating jointly in Kuwait, Iraq and Afghanistan, there is no language barrier to overcome between U.S. and British troops.

"Something that seems absolutely fascinating, is how the National Guard operates at the state level and national level, especially when you add in all of the relief operations you do as well," said Archer.

British Territorial Army Soldiers are not typically activated to assist in emergencies such as floods or other natural disasters.

Although Archer has visited the United States several times on business and while on vacation, this is his first visit to Tennessee.

Commenting on his reception in the Volunteer State, he said, "Everyone's been really friendly. We've been very warmly taken in. American Soldiers are basically the same in that you've got to have a good laugh and a joke."

When Tennessee Army National Guard Soldiers travel to Great Britain later this year, they will gain first-hand experience with British military training techniques, and have a chance to see what everyday life is like for the average British citizen.

Wherever Guardsmen train, they serve as ambassadors representing not only their home state, but also their country.



A group of visiting British Soldiers trained alongside local members of the Tennessee Army National Guard during their two week annual training period in May. British Soldiers in front, Tenn. Army Nat. Guard Soldiers in the back.

Tennessee National Guard “Family” helps Flood Victim

Story By: Staff Sgt. Robin Olsen

The month of May started with what is now being referred to as the historical 1000-year flood. More than 15 inches of rain fell in many areas of middle Tennessee creating flood water that left the destruction of several homes in its path and completely inundated Ashland City and most of Cheatham County.

For one Ashland City resident, Jim Johnson, the entire first floor and four feet of the second story of his home were completely submerged in water. The one-story home next door to his was entirely engulfed.

Johnson is a Senior Master Sergeant with the Tennessee Air National Guard’s 118th Airlift Wing who serves as the Aircrew Flight Equipment Superintendent for the unit, and is one of many Cheatham County residents to be affected by the storms, but he is thankful. He had his “Guard Family” behind him during the terrible crisis he and his wife, Jennie, and their two youngest sons now face.

“We were evacuated Sunday at three in the morning and we weren’t allowed to go back until Friday,” said his wife, Jennie.

“When I went outside that morning, I knew something wasn’t right,” Jim said.

After his wife and two sons evacuated from the home, Jim stayed behind to move things upstairs. He tried to save anything in the house that he could, but in the end, only one television was salvageable. It was mounted on the wall and the bottom of it came within inches of the water level upstairs.

“The water rose to about 4-feet high within an hour. When I heard that there were tornado warnings and hail along with the flood around me, that’s when I decided to get out,” he said. “More distant neighbors who were higher up on top of hills said they could see the lights on in our house under the water at night.”

Finally able to get back into their home on Friday was a life changing event.



Jim and Jennie Johnson.
(Photo Provided by SMSgt Jim Johnson.)

“When we walked in, I just broke down,” said Jennie. “It was like someone took the house, turned it upside down and shook it, and then put it back.”

“There was mud everywhere and the smell was nauseating,” Jim added. “You could smell the stench left behind as your started driving into town.”

One of the many things lost was a meat freezer the family kept in their garage. It was knocked over and left opened by the rapid flood waters, adding to the already pungent smell around the city.

“What made me almost cry was opening the garage and seeing our motorcycles,” he added.

Inside their home, the damage was just as horrifying.

“I was overwhelmed with grief and hopelessness. There was mold all the way up to the ceiling on the second floor,” Jim explained. “The house is a total loss.”

In the midst of all the devastation, something unexpected happened for the Johnson’s the next morning. About ten members of his Air National

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Guard unit showed up to help clean out his flooded home. They also showed up the next weekend, that time bringing their family and friends making the number more than 20.

Many were co-workers that he saw every day, but some were Airmen he didn't even know.

"They showed up with tools in hand, ready to help with the clean-up effort," Jim said.

"They brought food and gift cards to help us out, as well," added Jennie.

Maj. Jonathan Walsh, a navigator at the 118th AW, was one of the people who came to help at the Johnson home. He also coordinated the two groups that showed up during those two weekends.

"My church started helping people affected by the flood, so I started asking questions to find out who needed help at

the Guard base," said Walsh. "I sent out e-mails and started talking to people face-to-face to see who could help. I also got help finding people through Sherri Weathers, our Family Readiness Coordinator."

"It's good to help someone you know who really needs something," Walsh added.

The Johnsons cannot rebuild their home, which was originally built in the 70s.

"We had just remodeled both bathrooms, and the living room just had new carpet and new furniture put in. The entire first floor foundation needs to come out and if it were to be put back, it would need to be built higher. The cost just isn't worth it." Jim said. "As long as I've lived there, water has never gotten in."

Having their home flooded has been an emotionally draining experience for the couple, who just married in 2006.

"You think it's a bad dream," Jennie said.

Jim refers to Walsh and the other National Guard members of the 118th AW as his family.

"Here at the unit, we always talk about how the Guard is one big family, and it really is," he said.

For the Johnsons just being a co-worker in the Guard is not the only reason they consider the Guard to be family. Jim's brother and oldest son are also part of the 118th AW. "My Dad used to be in this unit, too," he said.

"What many of those who came to help may not have realized was the view of everything from our perspective," Jim explained. "As Jennie and I went through one of the hardest days of our lives that first day, we saw my fellow Guard members standing there supporting us and helping in ways that only close friends and families can."



Jessica Armocida and Stephanie Moyer assist Senior Master Sgt. Jim Johnson in cleaning out his garage after his home was flooded May 2. Johnson and his family were evacuated from their home and were not able to return for nearly a week. (Photo Provided By SMSgt Jim Johnson.)

Tennessee National Guardsmen Provide Heavy Equipment Transport System Course to Royal Moroccan Army

By U.S. Marine Sergeant Lydia M. Davey, U.S. Marine Forces Africa



A Soldier from the Royal Moroccan Army translates course material about the Heavy Equipment Transport System in Agadir, Morocco, as a U.S. Soldier with the Tennessee Army National Guard's 1175th Transportation Company looks on, May 6, 2010. (Photo by Sergeant Lydia M. Davey, U.S. Marine Forces Africa)

A class of 22 Royal Moroccan Army motor transportation drivers and mechanics participated in a course on Heavy Equipment Transport Systems during exercise AFRICAN LION, May 6, 2010.

The course was part of AFRICAN LION '10, an annually-scheduled, joint, combined U.S.-Moroccan exercise.

Currently, the Moroccan military has a slightly older version of the Heavy Equipment Transport System, which can transport payloads up to 70 tons. However, with new vehicles on the way, the Moroccan military requested a brief course from U.S. forces.

"We already have a general knowledge of the vehicles, and are familiar with the technology," said Royal Moroccan Army Lieutenant Mohammed El Moutaouakkil, transportation officer with the RMA 3rd Transportation Group. "However, this is a good opportunity for us to stay current in our knowledge."

The seven-day course provided a comprehensive look at vehicle maintenance, driving techniques and loading and operating procedures, according to U.S. Army Staff Sergeant William Rose, a heavy equipment operator with the Tennessee National Guard's 1175th Transportation Company.

"We are reviewing all the functions of the trucks," Rose said. "From cab controls to winches, to the coupling and uncoupling of the trailers as well as basic maintenance, we're reviewing it."

The students and instructors spent about 40 percent of their time in the classroom, and 60 percent involved in practical application of the new material.

"So far, our main challenge has been the language barrier," Rose noted. "However, several of the Moroccan officers speak English, and we have a Moroccan-born U.S. Soldier translating to French for the students, so it's not too much of an issue."

The students praised the enthusiasm of the instructors.

"Interested teachers make for interested students," said one Moroccan soldier. "This experience is of great benefit to our forces."

The HETS is valuable because of its versatility, according to Rose.

"We've used them to transport Humvees, shipping containers, and bulldozers," Rose said. "If it'll fit on the [trailer] bed, we'll haul it."

AFRICAN LION '10 is a U.S. Africa Command-sponsored exercise that includes various types of military training to include a command post exercise, intelligence capacity building, a field training exercise with live-fire, peace operations training, aviation training, medical exchange training, as well as humanitarian civic assistance progress.

164th Airman Manages Mobility Material in Southwest Asia

Story By: Master Sgt. Scott Sturkol, 380th Air Expeditionary Wing

When deployed personnel need to pick up individual personal protective equipment for deployed operations in the 380th Air Expeditionary Wing, Staff Sgt. Tamarcus "Shaun" Talbert is one of the first people they are going to see when it is issued.

Talbert is a material management craftsman and the non-commissioned officer in charge of the mobility section at the base service store -- the "Desert Depot" -- at a non-disclosed base in Southwest Asia. He described how his work affects the deployed wing.

"I provide customer service to our customers by meeting their needs on demand, exemplifying two of our core values of the Air Force with service before self and excellence in all we do," said Talbert, who serves with the 380th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron. "By being in charge of the mobility section, I ensure base personnel obtain individual protective equipment, inspect mobility property to determine serviceability, keep account of inventories loaded in our computer-based system and enhances the operational appearance of the mobility warehouse section by redesign."

As a material management craftsman, he's required to maintain qualification in preparing and maintaining documentation and records associated with inventory management actions, his official Air Force job description shows. Talbert's job skills also include issuing and transferring property, conducting inventories and segregating and preparing property for storage as well as identifying items and condition of property.

Material management Airmen like Talbert also have to maintain mandatory knowledge in basic mathematics, supply policies and procedures, Air Force property accounting, stock and inventory control, accountability and responsibility, principles of property accounting through manual or automated data processing, storage methods, warehouse control (receipt, issue, and disposal) and materiel handling techniques. They also must know methods of preparing and maintaining supply records, manual and automated supply accounting systems, logistics principles and interactions (supply, maintenance, transportation, and procurement), hazardous material and waste procedures; and supply management for contingency operations.

"What we do is very important because my career field supports the mission in so many ways,"



Staff Sgt. Tamarcus "Shaun" Talbert, Tennessee Air National Guard, 164th Airlift Wing out of Memphis, inspects mobility items during operations at the 380th Expeditionary Logistics Readiness Squadron's base service store April 7.

said Talbert, who is deployed from the Tennessee Air National Guard's 164th Airlift Wing at Memphis. "In other words, you can't fly without supply."

Just over nine and a half years ago, Talbert joined the military and the Air National Guard. He said he is proud to serve and do his part on a deployment.

"I am proud to serve in one of our nation's elite and distinguished military branches of the armed forces in the Air Force," said Talbert, whose hometown is Little Rock, Ark. "It brings me great honor to represent the U.S. with pride and dignity of the Air Force military -- especially on deployment. This being my second deployment, I think this time has been a continued learning cycle of personal growth earned with commitment and dedication."

Three Tennessee Army National Guard Soldiers re-enlist while serving in Iraq

Story and Photo By: David Patton, Herald Courier

Three Tennessee Army National Guard Soldiers now serving in the Iraqi desert made the commitment to continue their service.

Spc. Rant Saylor, Staff Sgt. Kenneth Cross and Staff Sgt. James Humphrey raised their right hands and recited the Soldier's oath of enlistment.

"I'll stay as long as they will have me," said Humphrey, a 28-year veteran of the Guard who is serving his second Middle East deployment.

He is assigned to the 776th Maintenance Co., 230 Sustainment Brigade, Tennessee Army National Guard, based in Chattanooga, and is now attached to the 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment based in Kingsport. The unit was deployed to Iraq in March and is now stationed at Contingency Operating Base Speicher, about 100 miles north of Baghdad.

"I am a full-time Soldier," Humphrey said. "I work as a mechanic at the armory back home in Chattanooga."

Cross, a part-time mechanic, said the "re-up" was a career move.

"I already have 18 years in, so it made sense to stay in," he said. "This is my third deployment over here."

A painting contractor by trade, Cross is a part-time Soldier with the Guard. His brother, Billy Cross, also is serving with the 3rd Squadron Troop R, in Iraq.

"We both have served in Iraq before but this is the first time we have deployed together," Cross said. "Not only are we in the same troop but we also live in the same building together here on COB Speicher."

The two brothers also have a reputation on base – as top-notch horseshoe players who often go undefeated for long periods.

Saylor, who previously served 3 1/2 years in the military and was a civilian for 17 years, said he decided to re-enlist this week to help finance his children's education.

Although currently attached to the 3rd Squadron, Saylor is assigned to the 230th Sustainment Headquarters Brigade of the 278th Tennessee Army National Guard based in Chattanooga, Tenn. He is a human resource manager in civilian life, and said he liked the Guard enough to stay for another six years. He also likes the benefits.

"Both my son and daughter



1st Lt. Rufus Marye, left, R Troop Executive Officer with the 181st Tennessee Army National Guard of Chattanooga, Tenn., salutes Staff Sgt. James Humphrey of the 776 Maintenance Company, 230 Sustainment Brigade of Chattanooga, Tenn., upon completion of Humphrey's Oath of Enlistment for another six years.

each now qualify for an 18-month financial entitlement program under the Post 9-11 G.I. Bill," Saylor said. "The enlistment bonus will also come in handy for their school expenses."

Under guidelines of the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Post 9-11 G.I. Bill, for the first time in history, a veteran currently serving in the armed services and meeting guidelines set forth by the Department of Veterans Affairs, can transfer up to 36 months of their unused educational benefits to their spouses and children.

"Having children is the focal point of a family," Saylor said. "I want to do everything to ensure my family is well taken care of."

Tenn. Father and son serve together in Iraq

Story and Photo By: David Patton, Herald Courier

Tennessee Army National Guard Spc. Steven Farley of Abingdon, Va., finds his job exciting. As a machine gunner aboard a mine-resistant, ambush-protected vehicle – known as an MRAP – he provides protection for convoys of supplies and Soldiers in Iraq.

Before each mission, as his team prepares the vehicles near the entrance to the base that is now their home, Farley, 19, gets a bit of fatherly advice.

“Although Steven finds outside missions exciting, I constantly remind him to always be aware, and to keep his head on a swivel at all times,” Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Farley said while watching his son’s team prepare.

Father and son are attached to the 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment of the Tennessee Army National Guard, headquartered in Kingsport. Now, both are stationed with their regiment at Contingency Operating Base Speicher in the Iraqi desert, about 100 miles north of Baghdad.

Serving his third combat tour, Farley the father is proud of his son, who he said has been doing a good job on the convoy missions.

A freshman at East Tennessee State University who is enrolled in the Reserve Officer Training Corps program, Farley the son is on his first tour and said he plans to make the military his career.

“I grew up in a military family, and dad was a big influence on me joining the National Guard,” Steven Farley said. “While it was my decision alone, I did ask my dad questions about the service. However, I wasn’t pressured to join the National Guard.”

While enlisted in the Guard, Steven Farley’s educational expenses are covered by the military. And when he finishes his ETSU studies, he will graduate from the ROTC program as a second lieutenant – an officer.

Stacey Farley grinned when asked about the prospect of his son outranking his father. “By that time, I hope to be promoted to sergeant major,” the father said.



Sgt. 1st Class Stacey Farley and his son Spc. Steven Farley. They are serving in Iraq.

When their duty schedules permit, they can be found enjoying meals together in the base dining facility and checking in before and after missions.

“Sure, I worry about Steven when he goes out on a mission, but he always checks in with me right after his return, from every mission,” Stacey Farley said.

However, that doesn’t mean the younger Farley gets any special treatment from his father, or from any other officers in the squadron.

“Steven and I are in different platoons in the unit, and that reduces the view of favoritism,” Stacey Farley said. “I may be a little harder on him than the other Soldiers in my unit, and I expect him to do his job just like everyone else. We have to stay professional.”

“My friends back home and at school think I am crazy for being in Iraq, but they still send me letters and care packages,” Steven Farley said. “They all support me.”

Friends and family also worry, the father and son acknowledge.

“My wife, Tanya, is proud of Steven being in the military, but she still doesn’t like the idea of both Steven and me being here together,” Stacey Farley said. “Steven has all the proper training and the maturity to do a good job for us. I am proud of his accomplishments.”