

# ***VOLSTATE GUARD***

*Official Magazine of the Tennessee National Guard*

*September 2009*



**2 Soldiers Save Man  
From Burning Truck**

**Bulgarian Military  
Officers Visit Tenn.  
National Guard**

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VolState Guard is published to provide command and public information about Tennessee Guard Soldiers and Airmen deployed throughout the world. Views expressed herein are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official view of and it is not endorsed by the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense or the Departments of the Army and the Air Force. This publication does not supercede any information presented in any other official Air or Army publication. Articles, photos, artwork and letters are invited and should be addressed to: Editor, VolState Guard, 3041 Sidco Dr., Attn: TNPAO, Nashville, TN 37204.

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## On the Cover:

The 5th Annual Fallen Soldier March, which took place Aug. 21, in Lebanon. (Photo by John Evans.)

# Command Sgt. Maj. Billy Mosier, Army



The NCOER is the most important tool used by promotion boards for consideration in promotions. Because the NCOER is a permanent part of an NCOs' record, the overall quality of the NCOER is of the utmost importance, both in content and format. AR 623- 605, NCOER System should be the start point for any questions on the NCOER.

There is no magical formula for success. Success is a combination of competence, hard work and solid performance in the duty position and in sustaining this performance in each duty position. The soldier must become familiar with the recommended career pathways and general sequence of assignments, develop leadership and technical skills, complete the required schools, meet standards, use reenlistment windows to his advantage and continually perform to standard. The soldier who does all these things will be the modern, technically proficient, professional NCO who is taking charge of his or her career.

The NCOER tells the board what your job is and how well you do it. It relates your physical fitness as well as your potential for promotion and is probably the most critical document a board member reviews. Carefully review your NCOER. Ensure your rater has upheld his or her responsibility by wording the job description and bullets appropriately and identifying your most important accomplishments during that rating period.

If you are not counseled at least quarterly, then your rater has failed to provide you the tools necessary to become successful. Make sure you are counseled. It's your career; remind your raters when you are due a quarterly counseling.

It's all individual motivation that controls your career. What are you doing to increase your knowledge base that translates into usage by the Army? Are you working toward a college degree? Are you attending your career progression schools and using your time to its fullest? Do you look for the hard assignment that requires you to hone your basic skills and develop new skills? These are just a few of the questions that you must answer to see if you're doing all you can to prepare yourself for that next rank. A NCO shouldn't wait until three months before a selection board to start worrying about any of the issues that I've mentioned. Every day that you delay in preparing for a selection board is another day someone else might be preparing for that same board. So start today and ensure you are doing all the right things to prepare yourself for your next selection board.

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**Coming in the October issue:  
Pictures from the 131st NGAUS Conference**

# UPCOMING EVENTS



## 131st NGAUS Conference and Exhibition

Gaylord Opryland  
Resort and  
Convention Center

Sept. 9-13, 2009

Guestrooms and business sessions will be held at the Gaylord Opryland Resort and Convention Center. The resort boasts nine acres of indoor gardens, cascading waterfalls and an indoor river with its own Delta flatboat. Within this lush landscape, guests will have access to a variety of restaurants, shops, and a spa and fitness center.

Planned events as part of the conference include a golf tournament and a 5K run. The run will be held on Friday, Sept. 11.

POC for Golf Tournament:

Lt. Col. John Church  
johnchurch@tnnash.ang.  
af.mil  
(615) 399-5821  
DSN 778-6421

## Air National Guard Leadership Conference

Doubletree Hotel  
315 4th Ave.  
Downtown Nashville

Nov. 6-8, 2009

Conference and hotel registration information is available from the Tennessee ANG Strategic Vision CoP.

Conference theme is Future mission planning and capability integration. Simon Sinek is scheduled to be the guest speaker.

Registration deadlines and a list of planned attendees are included within the conference information.

There is a registration fee of \$100 per military member, \$50 per spouse/guest. The fee includes Friday dinner buffet, Saturday breakfast and Sunday coffee and pastries. Make checks payable to TNANG Headquarters Fund. All fees are due by Sept. 25.

Expected attire is business casual.

For more information visit <https://wwwd.my.af.mil/afknprod/DocView.asp?DocID=6476189>.

POC:

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## Army National Guard 19th Annual 5K Fun Run

AFRC Building 688  
VTS Smyrna

Sept. 4, 2009  
9:00 a.m.

Trophies and prizes will be awarded to the top runners. T-Shirts are guaranteed to the first 400 participants.

There is an entry fee of \$20. No checks please.

No one under the age of 18 will be permitted to register.

POC for JFHQ:  
Suzanne Mitchell  
(615) 313-0657

POC for VTS SMYRNA:  
Joan Goodrich  
(615) 267-7408

# Bulgarian Military Officers Visit Tennessee National Guard

Story by: Staff Sgt. Robin Olsen

On Aug. 19, five Bulgarian Army and Air officers met with Maj. Gen. Gus Hargett, the adjutant general for Tennessee. The Bulgarians visited TN as part of the National Guard State Partnership



Program. The General advised the visitors on military relations with the Red Cross and the relationship with the Bulgarian Government.

They also met with members of the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency to discuss responding to natural disasters and other incidents that may occur. The Bulgarians were able to view some of TEMA's communication assets and learn about their operational and communication capabilities.

The officers were in Tennessee from Aug. 17-21 to learn about disaster preparedness. During their visit, they also met with representatives of Homeland Security. The Tennessee National Guard first began relations with the Bulgarian military in 1993.

Above: Bulgarian Army 1st Lt. Milena Ruseva Kaslyovska, Deputy Commander of CIMIC Company, Sofia, Bulgaria, shakes hands with Maj. Gen. Gus Hargett, the Adjutant General, Tennessee National Guard. The visit included a brief meeting to compare military relations with the Red Cross and Government in Bulgaria with the same relations here in Tennessee.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Robin Olsen.)



Bulgarian Air Force Col. Vilia Miltchev Tzourov, Chief of CIMIC Section, Joint Operational Command, asks a TEMA member questions about the TEMA weather tracking and communication equipment inside one of the TEMA trailers.

(Photo by Staff Sgt. Robin Olsen.)

# Tennesseans honor fallen service-members in annual 9-mile march

Story by: Nate Crawford

LEBANON, Tenn. - The annual "Fallen Soldiers March," honoring Tennessee Soldiers who have died in the war on terror, took place Aug. 21, in Lebanon, marking the fifth consecutive year the march has been held.

The event was first organized by Tennessee National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Jim Williams in 2005, a year after he returned from deployment to Iraq. The nine-mile march, held each year during some of the roughest August heat, represents the first nine Tennessee Guardsmen who died in support of the war on terror.

Williams explained, however, that it is ultimately in honor of all who have made the ultimate

sacrifice for their country. "I feel very strongly about it," he said, "and it has grown every year to now include Soldiers, retirees and civilians who want to show their respect for those who gave their all."

"Previously we've had anywhere from 30 to 200 Soldiers, retirees and civilians participating," said Williams, now 1st Sergeant for the Guard's Joint Force Headquarters in Nashville. "I've pledged this year that if 200 people made the walk, I would march on Veterans Day from Lebanon to the Legislative Plaza in Nashville with a 45-pound rucksack." That's approximately 28 miles.

For the first time, donations from marchers and their sup-

porters were accepted this year for the National Guard Enlisted Association Auxiliary Relief Fund. "The relief fund provides one time grants for Soldiers who are having financial difficulty. It is dangerously low, which could be attributed to the tough economic times," said Williams.

"The march was held the first day of the Wilson County Fair because there is nothing more American than honoring Soldiers and the county fair," he said.

The marchers met at the Lebanon Armory, 1010 Leeville Pike, where a safety briefing was held and the nine-mile trek started promptly at 4:30 p.m. The march concluded at the Wilson County Fairgrounds.



Vehicles lead the way for Soldiers and Airmen during Tennessee's 5th Annual Fallen Soldier March that took place Aug. 21, in Lebanon. Military members, family, and friends walked nine miles to show their respect.

(Photo by John Evans.)

# Tenn. National Guard Units Arrive Trains With Romanian Soldiers

Story by: Joint Task Force East Public Affairs Office

MIHAIL KOGALNICEANU, ROMANIA – About 350 Tennessee National Guard Soldiers from units across the state arrived in Romania Aug. 4 and Aug. 5 to train with Romanian and Bulgarian land forces in the 2009 rotation of the U.S.-Romanian and U.S.-Bulgarian combined military exercise held this summer and fall in those two countries.

An opening ceremony was held Aug. 6 at Mihail Kogalniceanu Airfield, Romania, and another Aug. 7 in Sliven, Bulgaria as the kick-off event of this year's training rotation.

Tennessee units participating in Romania include the 176th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion headquartered out of Johnson City, Tenn., and the 1st Battalion, 181st Field Artillery Regiment headquartered out of Chattanooga, Tenn.

"It is important for our Soldiers to have a chance to interact with our allies and become familiar with the way they train and conduct business," said Maj. Alfred Fleming, executive officer of the 176th CSSB. "I think it is also important that our soldiers experience the culture of our NATO partners, so that when we find ourselves together in a theater of operations, we have some familiarity."

The intent of Joint Task Force - East is to build interoperability and develop relationships with other militaries in theater security cooperation, said

JTF-East commander Col. Gary Russ. Over 3,800 Romanian, Bulgarian, U.S. troops, and civilians will be supporting and participating in this year's rotation.

Tennessee National Guardsmen and Romanian and Bulgarian Soldiers will be training side-by-side on a variety of Army Warrior Tasks and small unit infantry tactics.

Aside from training, JTF-East Soldiers will have opportunities to interact outside of work. Events such as sports events, language classes and Morale and Welfare Recreation trips outside of the training area are available for all Soldiers to encourage cultural and social interaction.

For most National Guardsmen, this training exercise is vastly different from their regular two weeks of annual training.

"I've never been out of America before, or to any other country," said Pvt. 1st Class Virgil Belew, Heavy Construction Mechanic for the 771st Maintenance Company out of Centerville, Tenn. "This is my first time flying over the ocean, or even to see the ocean. I'm looking forward to experiencing the culture here (and) getting to know the people."

In addition to the Tennessee National Guard, the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment out of Vilseck, Germany will be training in Romania and Bulgaria as part of JTF-East until October 2009.



Soldiers of the Tennessee National Guard's 176th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion stand side-by-side with their Romanian Land Forces partners in formation during ceremonies held on the Mihail Kogalniceanu Airfield in Mihail Kogalniceanu, Romania.

(Photo by Sgt. Marla Keown, Joint Task Force East Public Affairs.)

# Guardsmen save man in burning vehicle

Story by: Nate Crawford

The quick actions of two young Tennessee National Guard Soldiers saved the life of a man who was trapped in his overturned truck with flames approaching his pinned legs.

Leonard Darby, of Covington, was traveling south along State Route 54 between Covington and Brownsville when his truck blew a right front tire, ran off the road, struck a tree, flipped over and caught fire.

Two Soldiers of the Tennessee National Guard were first on the scene, and according to State Trooper Billy Jackson, if the two Guardsmen hadn't been there "that man would have burned up -- no ifs, ands or buts about it." The near tragedy happened on August 4 along Highway 54 near Brownsville.

Sgt. Keith Lewis and Pvt. Anthony Billings, on temporary duty with the National Guard recruiting office in Covington, were on their way to Jackson to pick up an applicant to be tested for entry into the Guard when they saw smoke in the distance.

"We thought it was a brush fire but when we got close I could see a pickup turned over and smoke coming from the front," recounted Lewis. "As we ran to the truck we could hear a voice screaming 'Someone help me. Get me out!' and I could see a man pinned inside."

The two Guardsmen tried to open the truck's doors but they were jammed tight. Soon a passerby came running with a fire extinguisher, and Lewis broke the driver's window and cut away the shoulder belt as Billings continued to try to open the passenger door.

By this time, other passersby were bringing the Soldiers more extinguishers.

"Pvt. Billings kept trying to get him out and I was trying to put out the flames," Lewis said. "I used up that first extinguisher, then about six or seven more that people kept bringing me. Every time I thought the fire was out, it flared up again. And his legs were pinned.

"We knew we had to either put out the fire or get him out, or he was going to die right



Tennessee National Guard Soldiers, Sgt. Keith Lewis and Pvt. Anthony Billings, pulled a man from his burning truck Aug. 4.

there."

After the last extinguisher was used up, the flames continued to spread and the trapped driver began screaming, "My legs are burning!" Billings gave up on the passenger-side door and wedged himself in through the sliding window in the rear of the cab, continuing to try and free him. With the help of several civilians, they were finally able to extricate Leonard Darby from the burning vehicle.

"We pulled him a good ways off," Billings said. "His head was split open so I bandaged him and we just kept him calm." Authorities arrived a short while later and Darby was airlifted to a hospital in Memphis.

Sgt. Lewis said they never thought about the truck possibly exploding as they worked to free the trapped man.

"I guess our Guard training kicked in, Lewis said. "You step up and do what you have to do and don't think about it, just like you'd do for a buddy in combat."

Both Soldiers said they don't deserve all of the credit for saving the man's life.

"Others helped, too," Lewis quickly pointed out. "We were blessed that we were in the right place at the right time. It was about 3:00 in the afternoon. If it had been 3:00 in the morning, Mr. Darby would have died."

# 118th AW helps Nigerian C-130 fly again

Story by: Tech. Sgt. Alec Lloyd, 17th Air Force Public Affairs

RAMSTEIN AIR BASE, Germany -- A group of Tennessee Air National Guardsmen recently helped restore one of Nigeria's C-130 transport aircraft to flying condition as part of an ongoing military-to-military engagement between 17th Air Force (U.S. Air Forces Africa) and the West African nation.

From Aug. 16-29, Lt. Col. David MacKenzie, deputy director of 17th Air Forces plans and programs directorate, partnered with a team of 12 maintainers from the 118th Airlift Wing in Nashville, Tenn., to help demonstrate and familiarize the Nigerian air force maintainers with evaluating and repairing one of Nigeria's C-130H transport aircraft. Currently, only one out of eight C-130s is available for service.

"The 118th has done a terrific job in helping us partner with this key African nation to build capacity to support African Union and United Nations peacekeeping transport capabilities," MacKenzie said. "This is the biggest military-to-military exchange event we've done in 2009, and we couldn't have done it had the 118th not stepped up."

The mission was primarily to demonstrate propeller and engine change procedures in order to render the C-130 airworthy enough to fly to an aircraft repair depot in Europe for a more extensive overhaul.

The Nigerians took advantage of the opportunity to learn as much as they could from the 118th demonstrations.

"The 118th was perfect for this task as they are developing into an international training unit," MacKenzie said.

The Nigerians' drive to learn impressed Senior Master Sgt. David West, a flightline supervisor with the 118th AW. "They want to know everything we can teach them. They want to learn and they want to work."

The Nigerian C-130 fleet has not been upgraded since the mid 1980s. West said that this is where the continuity of the Air National Guard really comes in handy. "There's hardly anyone here with less than 20 years experience, which means you can always ask one of the guys 'remember when we had a problem like this?'

and odds are you've experienced it, either on the military or civilian side. Someone who had only worked on one model would be completely lost on this."

Chief Master Sgt. Tony Jeanette, also of the 118th AW, said that their Nigerian hosts have been excellent. "They welcomed us with open arms, very cordial and polite. Their problem is that they need some formal training and tools. Without tools, you can't fix anything."

1st Lt. Dan Wilkenson, an aerospace composites engineer, 330th Aircraft Sustainment Group, Robbins Air Force Base, Ga., said there was a shortage of safety equipment and larger tools such as engine stands, making what would otherwise be fairly simple repairs much more complex.

Despite the obstacles, the event has been so successful that the Nigerian chief of air staff initiated talks during the event to repair a second aircraft as soon as possible.

"This has been a good experience for both sides and we hope to come back again when they launch this aircraft to fly to the depot and start work on the second one," Jeanette said.



Master Sgt. Jim Goostree of the Tennessee Air National Guard's 118th Airlift Wing examines the engine of a Nigerian C-130 as part of an effort to restore the aircraft to flying condition.

(Photo by Lt. Col. David MacKenzie.)

# 119th CACS gains Platinum status honoring those who have served

Story by: Staff Sgt. Robin Olsen

The 119<sup>th</sup> Command and Control Squadron headquartered in Knoxville, is now a platinum donor to HonorAir Knoxville, which provides free trips for veterans to see the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C.

"I am very proud of this effort," said Lt. Col. David Evans, 199<sup>th</sup> CACS commander. "We are planning our next fundraising events now."

So far, HonorAir Knoxville has flown almost 550 WWII veterans from Knoxville, Anderson and Blount counties to see the memorial with all expenses paid. Soon, veterans from Sevier County will also be included.

Veterans who have not yet seen the Memorial can apply online, or have a guardian apply for them through the HonorAir Web site, to have their name



added to the list for the next flight or a future flight to see it.

HonorAir Knoxville needs help to fly as many East Tennessee veterans as possible to the WWII Memorial. All funds for all trips come from donations.

Each trip costs \$500 per veteran. All administrative expenses are already paid for by Prestige Cleaners in Knoxville, so every dollar goes directly to the cost of the trip.

The next flight is scheduled for Oct. 17. Each flight can take 103 veterans.

All donors are listed in a commemorative book received by each veteran. The veterans also receive a HonorAir lapel pin with the book. Other donor levels include gold and silver.

For more information about HonorAir Knoxville, visit the Web site, <http://honorairknoxville.com> or call Rebecca Large at \*865) 938-7701, ext. 0.

The Rotary Club of Knoxville has partnered with HonorAir Knoxville to assist in collecting and recognizing as many donors as possible.

More than 16 million Americans served in WWII, and about three million are still living.



Left: A group of Veterans sponsored by HonorAir Knoxville stands at the base of the WWII Memorial Monument in D.C.

# Guardsmen awarded Purple Hearts

Story by: Capt. Darrin Haas

**MOSUL, Iraq** – Two Soldiers from Murfreesboro's 269th Military Police Company were awarded Purple Hearts during a ceremony at Forward Operating Base Mosul on July 21 for injuries sustained while serving in Iraq.

Spec. Caleb Dutton of Mt. Juliet and Spec. Robert Fletcher of Rogersville were both injured when a 55 gallon drum filled with explosives detonated near their patrol on March 25 of this year. Dutton received a concussion and a ruptured eardrum. Fletcher also suffered a concussion as well as a contusion to his chest, when shrapnel hit and embedded into his protective vest.

Both Soldiers were presented their awards by Lt. Col. Efrin Delacruz, commander of the 607th Military Police Battalion, to which the 269th is assigned. During the ceremony, Delacruz thanked the two



Spec. Robert Fletcher is awarded the Purple Heart on July 21 by Lt. Col. Efrin Delacruz at a ceremony in Mosul, Iraq, for injuries sustained in combat. (Photo by Staff Sgt. Michael Loyd, 269th Military Police Company.)



Spec. Caleb Dutton poses with Lt. Col. Efrin Delacruz at a ceremony in Mosul, Iraq, after being awarded the Purple Heart on July 21 for injuries sustained in combat.

(Photo By Staff Sgt. Michael Loyd, 269th Military Police Company.)

guardsmen for their bravery, courage, and service. He also explained that the Purple Heart is one of the oldest and most prestigious awards, established by Gen. George Washington during the Revolutionary War.

The ceremony brought the total number of Purple Hearts awarded to members of the 269th Military Police Company during this deployment to six. The four previous awards were given to soldiers attacked by gunmen while inspecting an Iraqi Police Station in Mosul at the end of February.

The unit is scheduled to return to Tennessee in November 2009.

# ***Tennessee Army National Guard contributes to American chestnut restoration effort***

*Story by: Janie Becker, Environmental Biologist*

In cooperation with the American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), the Tennessee Army National Guard has established an experimental American chestnut test orchard at its training site in Lavinia, Tenn., also known as Volunteer Training Site-Milan.

Over 500 chestnuts were planted April 18 at the orchard in Lavinia. They have been selected for blight resistance over several generations through an intensive back-crossbreeding program initiated by the foundation over 20 years ago. The resulting trees will be used to further select for resistance and to provide pollen and seeds to be used in producing an even more highly resistant generation of trees.

The American chestnut was

all but wiped out by an imported fungal blight during the first half of the 20th century. Aside from a small number of anomalous “mother trees,” these chestnuts today exist in the wild only as root sprouts and are killed by the blight long before they reach reproductive age.

Prior to this devastating blight, the American chestnut was the dominant timber species in the eastern portion of the United States, in many areas comprising over 25% of the canopy trees in eastern forests. American chestnut wood was fast growing, strong, rot resistant, and its nutritious nuts provided a vital food source for wildlife, livestock and humans alike.

In addition to the Lavinia orchard, the Tennessee

National Guard has established a back-cross nursery at its training facility in Catoosa County, Georgia. About 760 seeds have been planted at these Guard sites this year.

This project is funded by the Department of Defense Legacy Resource Management Program, dedicated to preserving and enhancing the natural and cultural heritage of DoD facilities while maintaining military readiness.

Partnerships such as this between the National Guard and TACF are making great strides in the effort to restore the species to its former range. For additional information about this endeavor, persons may contact the Tennessee Guard Natural Resources Office at 615-313-0603 or [Janie.Becker@tn.gov](mailto:Janie.Becker@tn.gov).



Volunteers plant American chestnuts at the Tennessee Army National Guard’s Volunteer Training Site in Milan.

# ADT delivers books to Paktya Univ.

Story and photos provided by: Sgt. 1st Class Mike Winters, ADT Public Affairs Officer

The Tennessee Agribusiness Development Team delivered textbooks to Paktya Agricultural University on Aug. 6. The books were donated by Central Texas College faculty members and students.

Many challenges faced Paktya Agricultural University when they first met with the Tennessee ADT in March. Among these challenges was the lack of English language college level textbooks. Central Texas College volunteered to meet part of the need with a collection of agriculture textbooks.

The original contact by Central Texas College for the donation was set up with United States Agency of International Development. In turn, USAID then contacted the ADT to make arrangements with Paktya University for delivery of the books.

The ADT, along with Mr. John Koogler from USAID, presented the textbooks on behalf of Central Texas College. These textbooks meet one of the university's major needs. Some of the faculty said they also need textbooks with CDs so that they may teach some the courses through computer based classrooms.

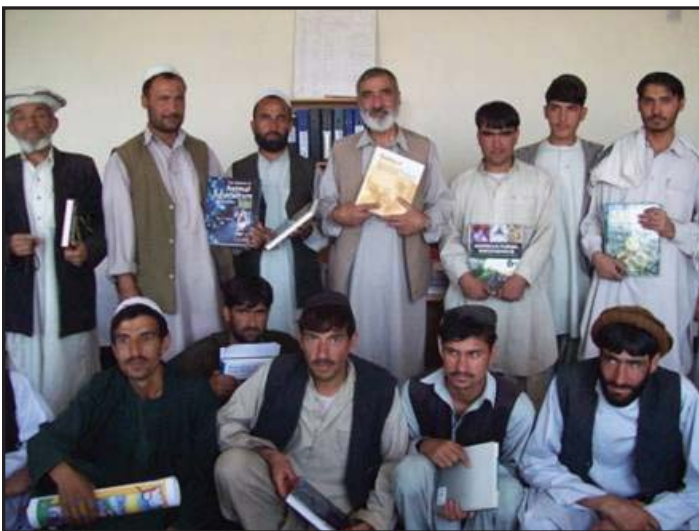


Dr. Muhammad Fahad, Dean of Engineering at Paktya Agricultural University, greets members of the ADT and John Koogler, USAID, outside the university.

Reviewing the progress of the construction at the university with Dr. Muhammad Fahad, Dean of Engineering at Paktya Agricultural University, the ADT and Koogler were briefed on what had happened since the ADT's last meeting at the university and they discussed future plans. The grounds have been leveled and construction is almost completed on the first phase, consisting of the first two buildings. Fahad and the team compared the university's master plan with the present stage of construction. Plans call for the student housing to be at one end of the campus and the administration building and classrooms to be on the opposite end. The student union will be in the center of campus with a restaurant and large meeting room located inside the restaurant.

Progress is being made at Paktya Agricultural University. The ADT recognizes that helping the University make its master plan a reality will be a multi-year task. The timeline for completion is far longer than the tenure of this first ADT. The projects that the ADT already has in the works, such as more books, classroom and dormitory furniture, will make a few more steps towards the end goals.

USAID is an independent federal agency that provides humanitarian assistance worldwide.



Faculty members and students of Paktya University hold some of the new agricultural textbooks donated by Central Texas College.