

THE VOLUNTEER STATE GUARD

M A G A Z I N E

WHAT IT TAKES
TO BECOME THE
BEST WARRIOR
IN TENN.

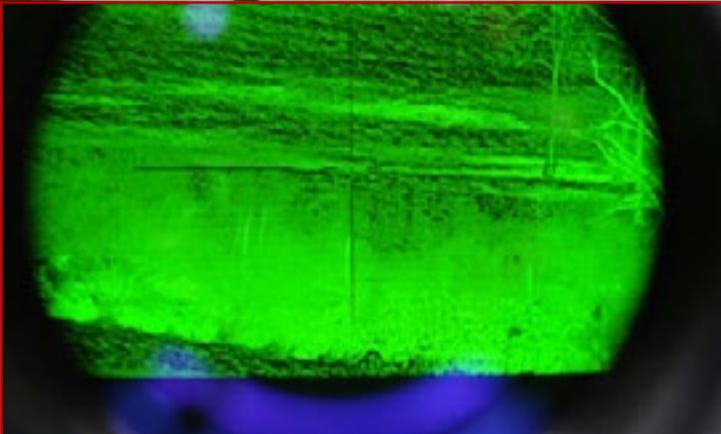
WE GO INSIDE THE
2014 BEST WARRIOR
COMPETITION TO
FIND OUT
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SEARCH &
RECOVERY

TN GUARD ASSISTS
IN LINCOLN COUNTY
AFTER DEVASTAT-
ING TORNADOES

HIGH TECH
VIRTUAL
TRAINING IN
CATOOSA

THE VOLUNTEER STATE GUARD MAGAZINE



HAVE A STORY TO SHARE?

If you have an idea for a story let us know!

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TENNESSEE
SNAPSHOT

230th DEPLOYMENT

Tennessee Army National Guard Soldiers from the 1/230th Air Cavalry Squadron, based in Louisville, (Knoxville) departed on Feb. 15 and 16, for a yearlong deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

PHOTO BY: LT COL (Ret.) Niki Gentry



TENNESSEE
SNAPSHOT

JACKSON'S 247TH BIRTHDAY

An actor portrays Andrew Jackson at the 247th Birthday Celebration of our seventh President. The Tennessee National Guard participated in the annual wreath laying ceremony at the Presidents home "The Hermitage."

PHOTO BY: MAJ (Ret.) Randy Harris



TENNESSEE
SNAPSHOT

BACK ON TENNESSEE SOIL

Soldiers from the Tennessee National Guard's 251st Military Police Company return from their nearly yearlong deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

PHOTO BY: SSG Melissa Wood

2014 BEST WARRIOR COMPETITION

Story and Photos by
SFC Matthew Zier

Spc. Burton Holloway of the 278th won the title "Soldier of the Year"



TAKE A LOOK AT WHAT IT TAKES TO BE CROWNED THE BEST WARRIOR IN TENNESSEE.

SMYRNA, Tenn. – For every soldier, there comes a time where they have to prove their knowledge and skill. For most, this comes at a schoolhouse, learning a specific task to complete their mission. For a select few, this test came in the form of a competition against the best of the best. It is the annual Best Warrior Competition, where each major command sends their best junior enlisted soldier and noncommissioned officer through a series of rigorous challenges based on common soldier tasks.

The competition was overseen by the State Command Sergeant Major for the Army National Guard, Command Sgt. Maj. Daniel Jennings. He along with each major command's command sergeants major judged each competitor on their performance of written, physical and mental exams to determine who the best junior enlisted and NCO were within the state of Tennessee to compete in the National Guard's upcoming Region III Best Warrior Competition later this spring.

The four-day event was hosted by the 117th Regiment, Regional Training Institute, headquartered at the Volunteer Training Site in Smyrna, Tenn. This was the first year the RTI has hosted such an event and is expected to host several more, including

a Regional Competition, in the upcoming years. The training site not only had the logistic facilities necessary to hold the event, they also served as a non-bias group of cadre as the 117th will never have any competitors in this competition. The RTI cadre created events centered on basic soldier skills: physical fitness, military bearing and courtesies, weapon systems and land navigation. Every soldier in today's Army knows these tasks from Basic Training, where they were given the conditions and standards. It's here at the competition where the soldiers' mastery of these tasks and skills are tested to their limits.

WE WERE GIVEN THE CONCEPT

"We were given the concept. We went out and did a lot of research studying the [Active] Army's best warrior's comp seeing what the standards were, trying to make a mirror image," said Command Sgt. Maj. Devin Rodgers, command sergeant major for the 117th Regiment. "We also went out and looked at the next level, being the Regional competition," continued Rodgers, "We looked at their past criteria to make

Above: Holloway, an Infantryman with Detachment 1, Troop B, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Springfield, Tenn. competed against three other junior enlisted soldiers from across the state in a grueling contest of wits, skill, and physical prowess. Holloway will continue on to the Region III competition to be held at Camp Blanding, Fla. later this April.

SKILLS



WEAPON SYSTEMS

familiarize yourself with your weapon inside and out



PHYSICAL FITNESS

better have your body in tip top shape



LAND NAVIGATION

sorry no google maps here - leave your gps at home



MILITARY BEARING AND COURTESIES

know when, what and where to do it

Below: Staff Sgt. Michael Gentry, Jr. won the "NCO of the Year" for the Tennessee Army National Guard



sure we were preparing our soldiers to compete at the next level."

This competition is both physically and mentally challenging, but it can also provide very positive experiences. Staff Sgt. Michael Gentry, Jr. was a previous competitor in 2011 Best Warrior event for the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment. His loss was a driving factor in making him compete again. "My best

"Just the thrill of being a competitor motivates me to push myself to the next level"

- SSG Gentry

friend won the competition that next year and that pushed my game up to the next level to put me where I am now," recalled Gentry. "Just the thrill of being a competitor motivates me to push myself to the next level," said Gentry.

Gentry, currently serving as a Military Intelligence Systems Maintainer with Troop A, Regimental Troops Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Nashville, Tenn., came from a very competitive upbringing. "I

thought I was going to go far because of my family because of their competitiveness. I knew from a sophomore in high school that I would make a great soldier, since I didn't make it in competitive sports" said Gentry.

"Though when I joined, I never expected to be competing at an event like this."

Gentry won the title of NCO of the Year for the Tennessee Army National Guard by only a small margin. The entire competition was very close, with only a few points between first and second place in either category. Spc. Burton Holloway, currently assigned to Det. 1, Troop B, 1/278th ACR in Springfield, Tenn., stood above the other junior enlisted competitors from the beginning, but barely earned the title of Soldier of the Year for the TNARNG by mere single digits.

Gentry and Holloway will move on to the Region III competition at Camp Blanding, Fla. in mid-April.

Both Gentry and Holloway, along with every soldier that made it to this level, show the strength, integrity and constitution that Tennessee Guardsmen are known for throughout history, continuing the legacy of the Volunteer Spirit.



V I R T U A L

TRAINING WITH 278th's 3rd SQUADRON

“The great thing the simulators bring is the ability to practice gunnery skills when we can’t fire live rounds.”

- SSG Michael Metcalf

CATOOSA, Ga. – The Tennessee National Guard’s 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment recently took to the field for a landmark training exercise combining traditional military muscle with cutting-edge virtual technology.

Each frigid weekend this January, soldiers from the 278th’s 3rd Squadron surged onto the maneuver area at Volunteer Training Site–Catoosa in northwest Georgia, equipped with Bradley Fighting Vehicles and heavily-armored Humvees. As one platoon of scouts positioned their tanks along the hillside watching over the terrain below, another occupied a state-of-the-art virtual battle space meticulously designed to simulate a maneuver area 300 times its size.

The Guard debuted the Combined Arms Virtual Training concept Jan. 11, during its inaugural virtual-meets-live-fire training

exercise. The CAV-T concept leverages multiple virtual simulators to replicate heavy equipment and remote training sites that are often difficult to reach and expensive to maintain.

While the physical maneuver area at VTS-Catoosa offers only 10 square kilometers of actual terrain, the CAV-T interface occupies 3,000 square virtual kilometers of the Mojave Desert, all tucked inside what appears to be a simple semi-trailer parked on an unassuming lot.

Despite its modest appearance, one look inside reveals a video-gamer’s dream – an intricate fusion of digital technology and advanced military communication networks fit for a futuristic sci-fi thriller. The resulting visual impact is meant to immerse the cavalry scouts into a 360-degree combat environment capable of producing realistic

Story and Photos by SSG Melissa Wood

war-fighting scenarios limited only by their commander's imagination. Meanwhile, armed with machine guns and long-range surveillance systems, their sister platoon conducts comparable maneuvers as they fight through the inclement Georgia weather.

The ability to marry virtual training with actual live-fire exercises has a number of advantages. "Nothing will ever replace putting boots on ground," Staff Sgt. Michael Metcalf, the squadron's master gunner emphasizes, "but the great thing the simulators bring is the ability to practice gunnery skills when we can't fire live rounds."

Metcalf explained that the expansive safety radius needed to fire their actual weapons just isn't available locally. "A scout troop would take ten to fifteen kilometers," he noted. "There's nowhere in Tennessee we can find that. Even on the top gunnery ranges in the world, there are still limitations," he said. "With the simulators, there are none."

In addition to the virtual training they receive on their real-world weapon systems, Capt. Stephen Allred, 3rd Squadron's L Troop commander, said the increased maneuver space CAV-T affords his soldiers is just as important. "Being able to complete our training on the simulators has been extremely beneficial to us as far as being able to maneuver our elements," he said.

Allred stated the ability to familiarize his new soldiers on virtual vehicles before they step into their physical ones, also helps lessen their learning curve and makes their precious time in the field all the more valuable. "The time spent in the Bradley is priceless," he said emphatically.

1st Lt. Bradley McMahan, the Tennessee Army National Guard's training specialist and a cavalry scout himself, echoed Allred's sentiment. "Doing this on the ground we have available is a little like playing football on a pool table," he said. McMahan, who facilitated the training, also explained that increased maneuver space and freedom to fire weren't the only factors at play when he coordinated this exercise.

"I can move three Bradleys, five Humvees, two support vehicles and necessary personnel down the highway for a little under nineteen thousand dollars," he said. "In comparison, after about eighteen

gallons of diesel fuel, I can run the trailer-based training over the course of the entire weekend for around one hundred ninety eight dollars." That's a significant savings for the Tennessee National Guard and ultimately the tax payer.

"There is no substitute for live training," McMahan added, "so each platoon is given the opportunity to operate their own equipment as well as the simulated equipment. Simulators help us make the most of that most important resource."

AN IMPRESSIVE TRAINING TOOL

Overall, Allred said he was impressed with the value virtual training added to his soldiers' time in the field, which is vital to the operation of their highly technical equipment. "This is the best gunnery I've ever had in my seventeen years of doing this," he said. "The things our soldiers have now are all the things us old scouts wish we'd had. It was excellent."

CATOOSA, GEORGIA



The IGT, Individual Gunnery Trainer trains and sustains individual gunnery skills for employing the M2 .50 cal, MK-19, M240B and M249 SAW machine guns from the gunner's position of selectable vehicles.



Story and Photos by SSG Melissa Wood

SEARCH & RECOVERY



South Lincoln Elementary School (shown right) was used as a storm shelter during the first round of storms. Luckily no one was at the school at the time of the tornadoes.



FAYETTEVILLE, Tenn. – Soldiers from the Tennessee National Guard’s 253rd Military Police Company assisted local authorities across storm stricken areas of Lincoln County, Tenn., after a powerful tornado devastated the region on the evening of April 28. Local responders requested support from the Guard through the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency with Soldiers on site by 4 a.m. on April 29.

“We are assisting in search and recovery efforts by conducting door to door checks of residents in the damaged area. Our role is to provide local responders with additional manpower to aid victims of this tragedy,” said the Tennessee Guard’s Noncommissioned Officer in Charge of the mission, Sgt. 1st Class Bryan Graves. “We will be here for as long as we’re needed.”

“One of the missions of the Tennes-

see Military Department is our domestic obligation of saving lives and mitigating the losses to the citizens of our state during events such as the Lincoln County tornado,” said Maj. Gen Max Haston, Tennessee Adjutant General. “The seamless operation between the Tennessee Emergency Management Agency and the Tennessee National Guard gives us a distinct advantage in response operations not enjoyed by some states. I am very proud of the men and women who serve and demonstrate the professionalism I witnessed during my visit to the disaster site today.”

Haston and Governor Bill Haslam visited the disaster site on April 30, to obtain an aerial and ground perspective of the damage inflicted in southern Tennessee.

Staff Sgt. Eric Heitz, a team leader with the 253rd, coordinated efforts with Graves

and emergency management personnel to provide a thoroughly planned search pattern of areas where the storm damage was most extreme. The teams were well prepared to remain self sufficient for upwards of three days and traverse the dangerous debris ravaged area using Humvees to reach citizens and homes in the tornado’s path.

Radio communications were established among the supporting National Guard personnel as well as with civilian emergency responders in the incident area established by Lincoln County officials. Cooperation between the military personnel and multiple response agencies from across the region was quickly established and even as threatening weather conditions continued

to plague the area, search and rescue operations and wellness checks continued into the late afternoon of the first day following the storm.

The mission of the Tennessee soldiers was conducted over a widespread area. Based upon the size of the tornado and the distance it traveled, many damaged or destroyed homes needed to be reached to ensure the welfare of those living in the area. Beyond the requirements of the mission, National Guard members often spoke of bringing a sense of hope to the area by their contribution. Although military members knew they could not fully ease the massive loss to members impacted in the community, they all desired to do their best to ease the suffering of their fellow Tennesseans with their sense of duty in this vital mission. - **LT COL (RET) NIKI GENTRY**



Members of the Tennessee National Guard's 253rd Military Police Company assist in motor vehicle traffic control on April 29, 2014 in areas impacted by a deadly EF-3 tornado that devastated southern portions of Lincoln County, Tenn., on the evening of 28 April 2014.



Left: Governor Bill Haslam and Maj. Gen Max Haston arrive to assess the damage inflicted by the storms.



An aerial shot of South Lincoln Elementary School. The school took a direct hit from the storm.

STORY BY: LT COL (RET) NIKI GENTRY PHOTOS BY: MAJ (RET) RANDY HARRIS, CW4 NICK ATWOOD & LT COL (RET) NIKI GENTRY

A man with a goatee, wearing a black baseball cap and a black t-shirt, is holding two large black dumbbells. He is looking directly at the camera with a slight smile. The background is a blurred gym setting with various pieces of equipment.

FIT TO **FIGHT**

Step inside the gym
with National Middle-
Weight Champion
PFC Thomas Anderson

Story and Photos by SSG Melissa Wood

This Tennessee Guardsman shows us what it takes
to join the ranks of professional body building



Anderson devoted six years of exhaustive training and dedication to earn his IFBB Pro status.

Step inside Clarksville's Anytime Fitness, and you will be greeted by a mural-sized homage paying tribute to one of the gym's own – personal fitness trainer Thomas Anderson, who was recently crowned NPC's (National Physique Committee) National Middleweight Champion, a feat which earned him a coveted place among the world's top body building professionals.

Outside the gym, Pvt. 1st Class Anderson spends his time with the Tennessee Army National Guard's 230th Signal Battalion, where he serves as a Radio Communications Security Repairman.

"Any kind of ground or radio equipment, we troubleshoot it, find out what the problem is, and then we repair it accordingly," he explained.

Anderson said his military training has significantly contributed to his training methodology inside the gym.

"It's actually given me a sense of discipline," he said. "It has given me a sense of structure."

"When I first started working out, I actually had a lot of problems coming up with different exercises and routines to maxi-

mize my workouts whenever I went to the gym," he said. "The National Guard provided that structure, so it carried over to where I could actually sit down and evaluate what I wanted to do in the gym; making lists and different routines, making sure everything coincided with what I was looking to do as

"My parents are both retired military, so physical fitness has always been a big part of my life."

- PFC Anderson

far as my fitness related goals. It provided me the foundation to really take off with my body building and pretty much my overall fitness," he continued.

"My parents are both retired military, so physical fitness has always been a big part of my life," he said. Even so, Anderson explained that although he has always been naturally lean, until he started working out

in 2004, he had never carried much weight on his relatively small frame.

All that changed in 2007, when another athlete approached him in the gym and asked if he had ever considered entering the highly competitive world of body building. He accepted that challenge, and in July 2007, Anderson won the novice overall class in his first competition.

"That's pretty much when it took off for me," he said. "I've been competing ever since."

Anderson can now approach every challenge confident that he can push himself well past his perceived mental and physical limitations, an attitude that has served him well in the six years he's grown from a novice into a newly-anointed professional.

"As far as going from novice to professional level, it really took a lot of hard work. There would be days when I would be overly sore in muscles I didn't even know I had. But from my understanding, that was just one of the things I was going to have to learn to deal with and then continue to build on top of that," he said. "The idea was to always try to get better in any way possi-

ble.”

Hard work, however, is not without its downfalls. After a disappointing performance in 2009, Anderson resigned himself to push his body – and his mind – further than he ever had before.

“In 2009, I competed at the NPC Nationals as well, but sadly I didn’t place very well,” he said. “It took me four years to build my body up to the point where I could do

the basis for his win.

“It was a big surprise,” he said, “especially considering my history in that competition. For someone to come from placing dead last in the competition and then coming back years later and just completely destroying the competition, that says a lot about what you did as far as preparing yourself within those four years.”

Photos from the contests in between



the same show here last year in 2013 and actually win my class to give me my IFBB [International Federation of BodyBuilders] Professional status. That just kind of gives you an idea of what kind of time it takes to take yourself from not winning or placing at all to actually winning your class and gaining that top honor.”

FLEX magazine called Anderson the biggest surprise of the contest, citing his crisp conditioning and distinctive muscle tone as

offer a clear illustration of Anderson’s fierce determination to return to the same stage and finally claim his victory.

“If you would ever see the pictures that were placed from that first competition all the way up to the one I recently won, you can definitely see my work ethic – in every way imaginable,” he said.

Anderson said that being featured in FLEX Magazine was an achievement in and of itself.

“The effect it had on me was just happiness... like just incredibly overjoyed,” he said with a smile. “Even though I had been featured times before in other magazines, just to see the changes and the hardships I had to overcome to build myself up to that point physically; to see those achievements, it really made me feel proud to actually be in this sport. Seeing that in the magazine just confirmed even more for me that I really have a future in the sport of bodybuilding.”

Anderson’s next challenge? His first IFBB competition, which will pit him against some of the world’s best athletes. Until then, he plans to spend the rest of the year preparing to enter his first professional competition sporting his best possible physique.

“What I plan to do as far as taking it to the next level is to sit down and evaluate what I need to do as far as any specific areas that I need to improve upon,” he said. “In the IFBB ranks, you’re going to have a lot of other guys that are going to be in better shape just because of the fact that they have more time in and they have more experience,” Anderson explained. “One thing that I wanted to do is sit down to evaluate, study, and do my homework on what I need to do to fix my weaknesses so I can make those my strengths and I can be a better opponent when I do step onstage with these other competitors.”

After all, he said – success in bodybuilding, just like any tactical endeavor, is all about the preparation. - **SSG MELISSA WOOD**

EAT LIKE A CHAMPION

When it comes to his competition diet, Anderson says simplicity is key.



CUT THE CARBS:

Concentrating on lean protein and veggies builds muscle, increases energy, and in the end delivers better overall performance.



DRINK UP:

Ample water consumption ensures adequate hydration during intense workouts and flushes out excess sodium so the muscle can be presented at its best.

PROTEIN ~~POWDER~~:

Protein derived from fish, chicken, and other lean meats packs a more powerful punch than any manufactured powder.

Building A Tradition of Assisting Veterans in Tennessee

Below: Numerous academic institutions and other specialized groups were available to answer questions and provide guidance to veterans attending the workshop.



The State of Tennessee has long been known for its tradition of providing volunteers both in war and peace to aid its citizens. Thousands of men and women have answered the call to duty without hesitation, often placing themselves in harm's way and in many cases sacrificing their very lives for the sake of their fellow countrymen.

The veterans in the state hold a proud tradition of helping others, yet often these brave defenders fail to take full advantage of the benefits and opportunities for the part they played in their service. On May 13, the Fourth Annual Veterans Workshop sponsored by U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper, was held at Tennessee National Guard Headquarters in Nashville. Vendors from

numerous veteran support agencies were on hand to answer questions and provide critical information concerning the many services and benefits available to those who serve our nation.

"Tennessee is the Volunteer State, and we are here to help the veterans. This is the Fourth Annual Veteran's Workshop. We're proud it's here at the Guard Armory...we're

here to help all Tennessee veterans,” said Congressman Cooper.

“We’ve had hundreds show up in past

academic institutions and other specialized groups were available to answer questions and provide guidance to attendees.

bureaucracy as a hindrance to requesting assistance. During the Workshop each vendor attempts to sort through the unique challenges that impact each participant and resolve them while the veteran is present and has time to work through their problems individually.

Following years of combat across the Middle East and the globe, supporting veterans has become a priority for not only the U.S. government but the American citizens these men and women swore an oath to defend.

The Fourth Annual Veteran’s Workshop proved to be a very beneficial event for those in need. As Maj. Gen. Haston said, “The Workshops are now an institution,” and with more veterans returning from



Above: U.S. Rep. Jim Cooper speaks to veterans at the Fourth Annual Veterans Workshop

Below: A representative from the DAV Booth with a workshop attendee

years. I think we’re going to have a good crowd this year because we have fifty booths; all sorts of services here for veterans. So hopefully people have a good time and also get the services they have earned and deserve, because America, Tennessee in particular, is thankful,” he said.

Maj. Gen. Max Haston, the Adjutant General of Tennessee welcomed the veterans and vendors to Tennessee National Guard Headquarters. Haston, a veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom knows firsthand the trials many Soldiers face upon their return home from combat or military retirement.

“The Veteran’s event that we do here annually in Nashville has become an institution. It is an event that produces results that help veterans and their families immediately. It’s not a promise or a ‘we’ll get back with you later,” said Haston. “It’s an event that provides assistance immediately which makes a huge difference.”

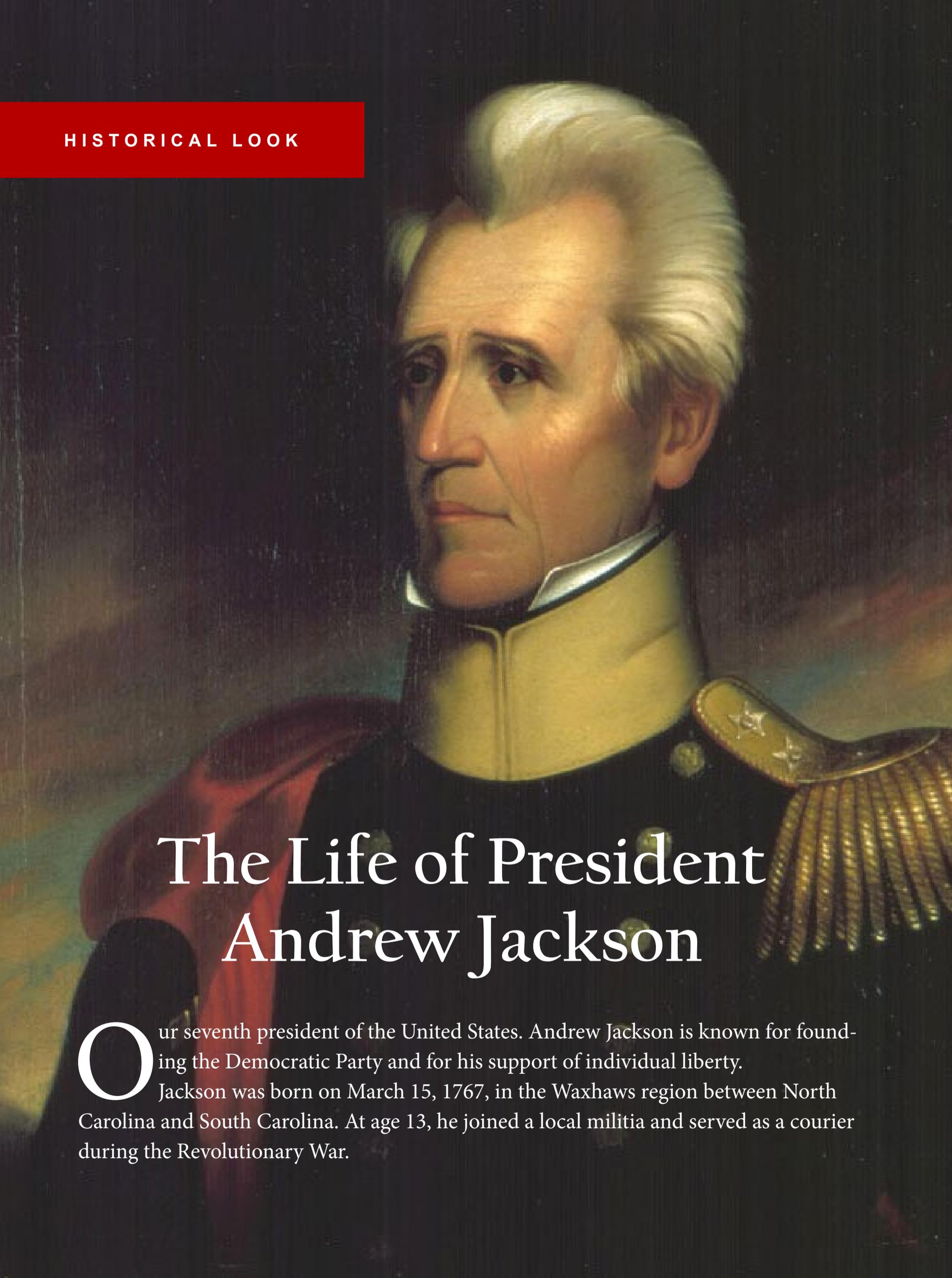
Throughout the day, the crowd continued to grow in attendance with veterans of numerous wartime missions as well as those who served strictly in peacetime. Vendors from the Veteran’s Administration, Humana Health Care, Tennessee Army and Air National Guard recruiting, numerous



Many of the veterans participating in the event were able to ask vital questions concerning the range of benefits available to them and the significant changes that impact their health care, their monetary and educational benefits.

Many veterans said they often see the maze of programs available and resulting

the rigors of combat and military missions around the world, the need to explain and understand their available benefits is more critical than nearly any period in America’s post war environments. - **LT COL (RET) NIKI GENTRY**

A detailed oil painting of Andrew Jackson, the seventh President of the United States. He is depicted from the chest up, wearing a dark military-style coat with a high, buff-colored collar and a red sash. His hair is white and styled in a high, swept-back fashion. He has a serious, contemplative expression, looking slightly to the left of the viewer. The background is dark and indistinct.

HISTORICAL LOOK

The Life of President Andrew Jackson

Our seventh president of the United States. Andrew Jackson is known for founding the Democratic Party and for his support of individual liberty. Jackson was born on March 15, 1767, in the Waxhaws region between North Carolina and South Carolina. At age 13, he joined a local militia and served as a courier during the Revolutionary War.

RESUME



PATH TO THE PRESIDENCY

1780

Jackson is an orderly in the Revolutionary War

1783

Jackson is a teacher at a school in Waxhaw

1787

Jackson admitted to the bar

1788

Jackson appointed solicitor or attorney general for what is now Tennessee

1796

Elected to U.S. House of Representatives

1797

Elected to U.S. Senate

1821

Appointed provisional governor of Florida

1823

Elected to U.S. Senate

1828

Elected President of U.S.

1832

Re-elected President of U.S.



Jackson refuses to clean the boots of a British officer.

His older brother, Hugh, died in the Battle of Stono Ferry in 1779, Jackson and his brother Robert were captured by the British and held as prisoners; they nearly starved to death in captivity. When Jackson refused to clean the boots of a British officer, the officer slashed at the youth with a sword, leaving Jackson with scars on his left hand and head, as well as an intense hatred for the British. While in captivity the brothers contracted smallpox, from which Robert did not recover. A few days after the brothers were released by British authorities, Robert died. Not long after his brother's death, in November 1779, Jackson's mother died of cholera. At the age of 14, he was orphaned.

Raised by his uncles, Jackson began

studying law in Salisbury, North Carolina, in his late teens. In 1787, he was admitted to the bar and became a lawyer in Jonesborough, an area that is now the county seat of Tennessee's Washington County.

When Jackson arrived in Nashville in 1788, he met Rachel Donelson Robards, who, at the time, was unhappily married to but separated from Captain Lewis Robards. Rachel and Jackson married before her divorce was officially complete—a fact that was later brought to light during Jackson's first presidential campaign, garnering accusations of bigamy by the press. Jackson's willingness to engage his and his wife's many attackers earned him a reputation as a quarrelsome man. During one incident, Jackson even challenged one accuser,



Jackson's Victory over the British at New Orleans - 1815



Left: Enormous crowd in front of the White House for Jackson's inaugural reception - 1829

Below: Portrait of First Lady Rachel Jackson



Charles Dickinson, to a duel, and won.

In 1796, Jackson was a member of the convention that established the Tennessee Constitution and, that same year, was elected Tennessee's first representative in the U.S. House of Representative. He was elected to the Senate the following year, but resigned after serving only eight months. In 1798, Jackson was elected a judge of the Tennessee Supreme Court, serving in that position until 1804. That same year, Jackson acquired an expansive plantation in Davidson County, Tennessee, called the Hermitage, where he grew cotton, and soon became a member of the planting elite.

Jackson was appointed commander of the Tennessee militia in 1801. During the War of 1812 he led his troops to victory against the Creek Indians at Horseshoe Bend, killing some 800 warriors and procuring 20 million acres of land in present-day Georgia and Alabama. After this military success, Jackson was appointed major general.

After leading 5,000 soldiers in the defeat of 7,500 British in New Orleans, on January 8, 1815, Jackson was dubbed a national hero. He received the thanks of Congress and a gold medal. He was also popular among his troops, who said that Jackson was "as tough as old hickory wood" on the battlefield, earning him the nickname "Old Hickory."

During the First Seminole War, in 1817, Jackson and his troops captured Pensacola,

Florida (then a Spanish territory), and overthrew West Florida Governor José Masot, who had been secretly assisting the Indians in the war. Spain later ceded Florida to the United States by the Adams-Onís Treaty, and Jackson was named Florida's military governor, a post that he held from March 1821 to December 1821.

In 1822, Jackson was re-elected to the U.S. Senate, and in 1824, state factions rallied around him and a Pennsylvania convention nominated him for the U.S. presidency. Though Jackson was the most popular candidate, he lost the election when the House of Representatives chose his opponent, John Quincy Adams. The decision, an alleged deal to give Adams the election in exchange for Henry Clay's secretary of state seat, became known as the Corrupt Bargain. The negative reaction to the House's decision resulted in Jackson's renomination for the presidency in 1825, three years before the next election. It also split the Democratic-Republican Party in two.

Jackson won the presidential election of 1828 by a landslide, with John C. Calhoun as his vice-presidential running mate. Jackson's opponents nicknamed him "jackass," a moniker that Jackson took a liking to—so much that he decided to use the symbol of a donkey to represent himself. Though the use of that symbol died out, it would later become the emblem of the new Democratic Party.

But Jackson moved into the White House alone. On December 22, 1828, two months before Jackson's presidential inauguration, his beloved Rachel died of a heart attack. She was buried two days later, on Christmas Eve.

Jackson was the first president to invite the public to attend the inauguration ball at the White House, which quickly earned him popularity. The crowd that arrived was so large that furniture and dishes were broken as people jostled one another to get a look at the president.

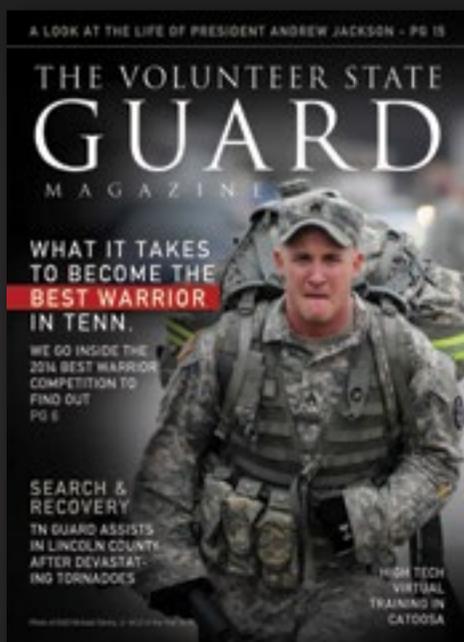
Perhaps in his greatest feat as president, Jackson became involved in a battle with the Second Bank of the United States, a theoretically private corporation that actually served as a government-sponsored monopoly. Jackson openly displayed his hostility toward the bank, vetoing its re-charter bill and charging it with disproportionate economic privilege. The American public supported his views on the issue, and in 1832, catapulted Jackson's re-election campaign against Henry Clay; he won his second term with 56 percent of the popular vote, and nearly five times as many electoral votes.

After completing his second term in the White House, Jackson returned to the Hermitage, where he died on June 8, 1845, at the age of 78, of lead poisoning caused by two bullets that had remained in his chest for several years. - **MAJ (RET) RANDY HARRIS**

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