

Guardlife

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE NEW JERSEY NATIONAL GUARD



One Toy At A Time

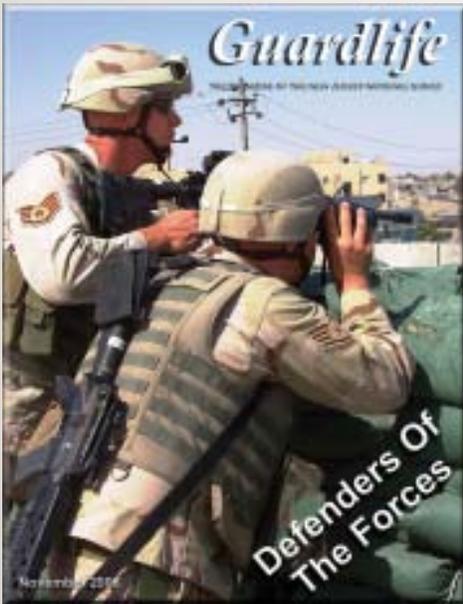


Photo by Master Sgt. Joseph Iacovone Jr.,
177FW/SF

Guardlife

took first place in the Magazine Format
category in the
National Guard Bureau
2006 Air Force Media Contest

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Guardlife

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Cover: New Friends

Senior Airman Tara Cullen, a member of the 177th Security Forces deployed to Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq, gives a toy to a child during a recent patrol along the base perimeter. The items given out were donated by friends and family members from back home. Turn to page 6 for the story and more photos. Photo by Master Sgt. Joseph Iacovone Jr., 177FW/SF.

Inside Cover: Ghost Warthogs

KC-135E Stratotankers from the 108th Air Refueling Wing prepare to refuel A-10 Warthogs during their deployment to Southwest Asia. The refuelers are part of the North East Tanker Task Force, which is part of the airbridge that supports Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom. For the rest of the story about the 108th's involvement in the airbridge turn to page 7. Photo by Lt. Col. Edward Burke 108ARW/OPS

The resiliency of the modern Minuteman

By Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General - New Jersey

It never ceases to amaze me...the resilience of the New Jersey National Guard Soldier or Airman. Recently, however, I had a chance to witness this resilience firsthand and up close.

This past February, State Command Sgt. Maj. Jerome Jenkins and I traveled to Iraq to visit our Soldiers in the 117th Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Targeting and Acquisition and the 250th Brigade Support Battalion, deployed in theater since March 2006. Recently extended, they were originally due to return home this March...now they will be coming back in July or August 2007. Our visit followed hard on the heels of this news, so we didn't know what kind of a reception to expect.

As we met and spoke with our Soldiers, however, it became apparent that, while very disappointed, these men and women were not deterred. This is an exemplary model of "can do" attitude. One thing kept popping into my head: where do we get these dedicated and loyal Citizen-Soldiers?

It seems like there aren't many folks around these days that would accept a 125-day extension in Iraq – tacked onto a 12-month boots-on-ground deployment – with as much calm and resolve.

Having seen and spoken to our Soldiers in Iraq and feeling confident that they will complete the work that they've been asked to do, I turn to the subjects of those left behind, the family members and friends; and our returning Guardsmen. As long as we continue to have deployed Soldiers and Airmen, I will continue to push three points: training to deploy, support



families of deployed members and, when the time comes, welcome home all returning military in a manner fitting of their service and sacrifice.

These last two points aren't tasks for just our Family Readiness Groups, Family Assistance Coordinators or the State Family Readiness Council, but for all members of the NJNG family.

I have never had any doubt that the New Jersey National Guard, as a force provider, would adapt to any changes in Department of Defense policies regarding deployment timetables or schedules. Still, I was glad to see recent improvements to the deployment policy for Guard and Reserve forces which include using whole units versus cutting up and crossing state lines to create task forces. This will ensure units that train together, deploy together. The recent changes

look toward 12 months maximum mobilization time, with approximately 10 months boots-on-ground; one year mobilized to five years demobilized ratio; and extra money for those service members deployed earlier...or extended.

By the way, New Jersey units will not be among the six National Guard units remobilized sooner than originally scheduled.

Let me finish by saying that I could not be more proud of Captains Tran and Welsh and the Soldiers of the 117th RSTA and 250th BSB. Our troops are doing an excellent job and I know they will continue to do so keeping in the Guard's 370-year tradition of serving state and nation. 🇺🇸



Cause and effect: how you make the difference

By Command Chief Master Sgt. Herbert E. Mimler Jr., 177FW

As I approach the end of my career in the NJANG, I have been reviewing all of the events during my tenure in the 177th Fighter Wing and as this unit's Command Chief. Like many people, I have always set goals and tried to look down the path that was before me to determine where I would like to be in the future. I have always enjoyed working to achieve these goals.

The Air National Guard has provided me with many great opportunities. The education, travel and training and all of the associated experiences have been a large part of my life, and also of my family's life. I thank all of my past supervisors and commanders for all of the investments they made in me, and in so doing, they made all of my experiences positive and pleasurable ones.

One story, that will always remain with me comes to mind. It dates back to my entrance into the Air National Guard. As part of a special requirement, for me to enlist, I had to obtain seven letters of recommendation. I began the process of collecting these recommendations from all of the prominent people I knew at the time. After obtaining the required seven letters, I submitted them to the unit and obviously, they proved to be acceptable.

Fast forward 35 years and I found myself at the Fort Dix/McGuire Air Force Base - Base Exchange/Post Exchange and was in line at the check out, in uniform. It had been a long road from entry into the Air National Guard as an airman basic and I now stood in line as a wing Command Chief. I looked at the person ahead of me in line and we both made eye contact at the same time. We recognized each other at the same time. Here in front of me was one of the men who wrote one of the recommendation letters so many years before when I enlisted in the ANG. I should mention that he was not the type of person who would normally be willing to write a letter for a person to join another service, but he wrote the letter for me



anyway. The gentleman in question, being a retired Navy officer, tried to enlist me in the Navy, when I was asking him for the letter for the Air Guard. With wonderment, he looked at my uniform and was surprised that I was still serving. At that point, he had been retired from the Navy for about fifteen years. After we got through the check out line, we went outside to talk and he asked me about my career. I briefly described my career and what I was currently involved with. He was impressed with what I had accomplished, while also realizing that many years had passed. At the end of the conversation, I shook his hand and thanked him for writing the original letter of recommendation. I knew on his ride home, that he was

thinking about how one small event 35 years previously had changed a person's life and resulted in a positive outcome.

Just as with the people who mentored me, I hope that during my career, I have guided people in a positive way and helped to influence them to make the right decisions for themselves and the Guard. People are the most important asset the Guard has. How people think determines how they act and how they act is a key factor in how others will react to them. You may never know the impact your actions and words have on others during the course of your career, but at the end of the day, when you look back at how you conducted yourself, you will realize that you have accomplished something very worthwhile. Knowing you did the very best you could do, you will then have the realization that you have completed your mission successfully.

Just as with the people who mentored me, I hope that during my career, I have guided people in a positive way and helped to influence them to make the right decisions for themselves and the Guard.

As I turn over the mantle of this position to my successor, I hope that you will provide him with the same level of feedback and support that you have provided to me. My best wishes to you all for continued success in your military careers and whatever endeavors you may become involved with in the future. My sincerest thanks to you all, and may God Bless America.

Cover Story

Building friendships one toy at a time

By Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA; Photos by Master Sgt. Joseph Iacovone Jr., 177FW/SF

The perimeter of Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq, is not a barren stretch of land, far from it.

"A lot of children live and play on the lands along our base perimeter," says Master Sgt. Joseph Iacovone Jr., Team Leader, Quick Reaction Force (QRF). "Some of the fields are used by their families for sheep and cattle. It is these kids we normally have direct contact with and are able to provide water or candy to on a routine basis during our patrols."

According to the members of the 177th Security Forces currently deployed to Kirkuk, one of the perks of being on perimeter patrol is the opportunity to interact with Iraqis.

This is aided in part by the donation of school supplies, clothes and toys sent to them from friends and family back home. Some of these gifts are turned over to the base chaplain to support a program called Operation Outreach. The chaplain collects the school supplies that are sent to individuals and squadrons and turns them over to U.S. Army or Coalition forces for dissemination to the local schools.

Yet not everything that is sent over is school supplies. There are also toys, sometimes lots of them. For a lot of Iraqi families, toys are not something they can afford to buy. Yet toys transcend borders and cultures; they also help promote goodwill toward the Airmen and Soldiers deployed in Iraq.

"Every now and then our teams will hand out some of the toys or clothing that people from back home sent to us for them," states Iacovone.



Staff Sgt. Jack Baum distributes water to schoolchildren during a patrol along the base perimeter.

And when you see the photos that get e-mailed back home, it is obvious that the toys are a hit with the kids. It's all about making friends — one toy at a time.



Spreading goodwill, (l-r) Staff Sgt. Gabriel Armstrong, Senior Airman Tara Cullen and Staff Sergeants Shawn Reilly and Patrick Donohoe pose with children after distributing toys and hats.

WING MAINTAINS BRIDGE

*Photo and story by Maj. Timothy G. Burke,
Airbridge Operations Officer, 108ARW*

A significant date for the 108th Air Refueling Wing quietly passed by last year. July 1, 2006 marked the second anniversary for the 108th's involvement with the North East Tanker Task Force (NETTF), which was formed two years earlier to create an "Airbridge" across the North Atlantic to support Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom.

The NETTF, or Bravo Alert as it is called, is operated by Guard members who have volunteered for active duty to support round-the-clock aerial refueling operations. These volunteers take turns being on alert to fly refueling missions for aircraft supporting the Global War on Terrorism.

True to the spirit of the original Minutemen, the aircrew and maintainers are ready for the mission within minutes, regardless of the hour or weather. Missions have included the most challenging flights that have been assigned to any of the six units comprising the task force. These include formation refueling over the ocean, supporting detainee renditions, large force exercises and refueling special operations aircraft. One crew even saved a mission when, after completing their original mission, they met up with another aircraft whose tanker broke and were able to fuel that aircraft also. On another occasion the TTF received a request to refuel two deploying aircraft that were desperately needed in theater. Within an hour maintenance provided the aircraft, crews vol-

unteered, and all mission planning was completed for clearance authorities. This immediate response saved the mission as it was close to being cancelled due to lack of refueling assets.

Since being "stood up" the 108th Bravo Alert operation has almost doubled in size. The wing is the only unit of the six participating in the task force to increase its participation. The 108th Tanker Task Force operates as a self-sufficient entity with minimal impact on the wing's daily operations.

This versatility has allowed the wing to refuel every Air Force cargo aircraft as well as a myriad of Air Force and Navy tactical aircraft. The task force deployed overseas for the first time last November. The close of 2006 saw 30-months of continuous operations with impressive results. Since 2004 the task force has been assigned more than 700 refuelings and flown more than 325 missions; they have logged 1,000-plus flight hours and transferred almost 17.5 million pounds of jet fuel. This is equivalent to being airborne for more than 42 days and, for an average car, more than

180,000 tanks of gas.

None of this would be possible without the dedication and hard work of the maintainers and support troops. The Command Post provided non-stop command, control and communications capability. The maintenance crews provide double, or when needed triple, the number of aircraft they are obligated to provide but also superior reliability matching or exceeding that of the most modern Air Force aircraft. Since the beginning, the maintenance reliability rate exceeded 95 percent; in 2006 that rate rose to 97 percent. Only five of 153 missions this past year were cancelled for mechanical reasons. This accomplishment is even more amazing considering these aircraft are almost 50 years old.

The importance of aerial refueling, and the contribution the NETTF has made, is evidenced by remarks by Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. T. Michael Moseley stating, "To be able to bridge the Atlantic, it's the tanker." And when an airlifter is refueled over the Atlantic, it is often a 108th tanker ensuring they get to where they're needed.

On the Border of Baghdad

By Master Sgt. Patricia Hughes, 177FW/SGP



Assessing the situation: Master Sgt. Patricia Hughes (second from right), an Air Force doctor, an Army medic and two interpreters assess an Iraqi baby with an ear infection, mom is in the background. Photo courtesy Master Sgt. Patricia Hughes, 177FW/SGP.

Smiling faces, happy people, something that seems to be in short supply in Iraq.

All this can be seen at the Civil Military Operation Center (CMOC) on the border of Baghdad.

Twice a week, a bus veers out of the Sather Air Base 447th Expeditionary Medical Squadron (EMEDS) parking area with

a doctor, medical personnel and volunteers to assist the doctors and spend time with the Iraqi children. These volunteers spend most of the time with the children coloring, playing on the swings in the yard constructed by the Civil Engineering team, or engaging in a game of soccer, mostly learning a new move or two from the children. It's a good thing, children are children all over the world when you come down to it - they laugh, cry, are shy, warm and cute.

The Center officially opened on Sept. 20 and is located inside the wire at the Army Special Forces Camp in Baghdad, Iraq. Before it became the CMOC, the Radwaniyah Palace Complex building served as the town hall. While it is operationally under Army control, the 447th EMEDS team and volunteers from Sather Air Base offer medical care to the citizens of Baghdad.

According to Chief Master Sgt. Kenney L. Souders, Superintendent, 447th EMEDS, at Sather Air Base in Baghdad, the Army initially established the CMOC to assist the Iraqi people for claims against the military and also address their medical needs.

When our Air Expeditionary Force first arrived in September, we were seeing about 25-30 Iraqis a day; four months later the number of people visiting the Center had doubled. Subsequently, several Iraqi translators were hired to help out. As you can imagine the translation could get a bit confusing but the best care was always provided.

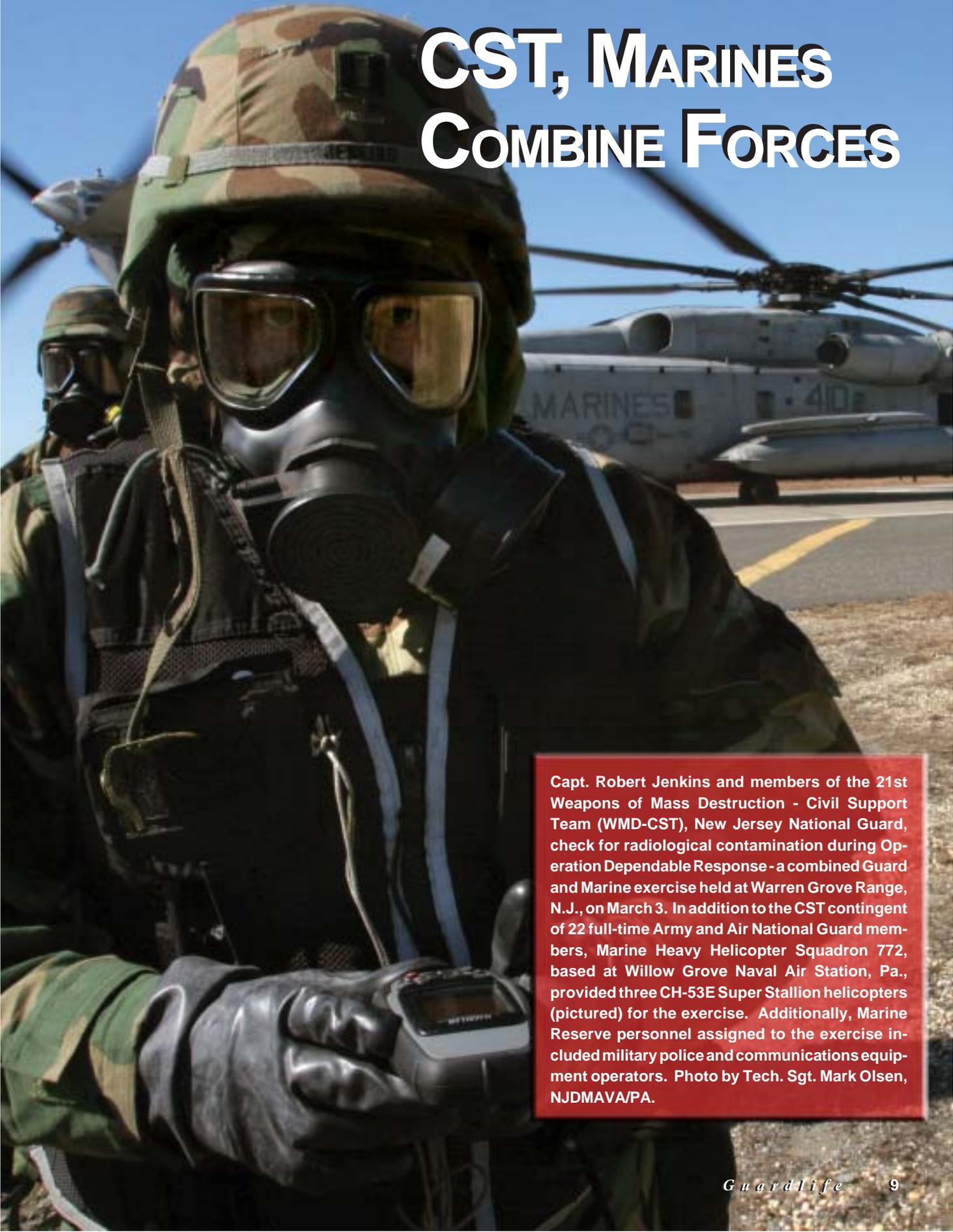
Security is extremely tight at the Center, but patient care is non-judgmental. Some faces become more familiar than others because not only of the medical care given, but because there is always a box of goodies that deployed Air Force member's churches, families and organizations have sent. That box is always filled with candy, clothes, school supplies, hygiene items and toys. Soccer balls are a big hit with the children.

The surroundings might be crushed in Baghdad but at the CMOC the spirits are always high.

GENERAL SECURITY

Staff Sgts. Patrick Donohoe (left) and Jason Scalzi (center) served as Air Force Chief of Staff General T. Michael Moseley's (right) security detail during his visit to Kirkuk Regional Air Base, Iraq in February. Members of the 177th Fighter Wing Security Forces were assigned to the general and Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Rodney J. McKinley as their special security detail. The Jersey Devils were assigned to the Quick Reaction Force, the only mobile response team available to respond to all points on base when needed. Photo courtesy USAF/PA.





CST, MARINES COMBINE FORCES

Capt. Robert Jenkins and members of the 21st Weapons of Mass Destruction - Civil Support Team (WMD-CST), New Jersey National Guard, check for radiological contamination during Operation Dependable Response - a combined Guard and Marine exercise held at Warren Grove Range, N.J., on March 3. In addition to the CST contingent of 22 full-time Army and Air National Guard members, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 772, based at Willow Grove Naval Air Station, Pa., provided three CH-53E Super Stallion helicopters (pictured) for the exercise. Additionally, Marine Reserve personnel assigned to the exercise included military police and communications equipment operators. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

Cuban immigrant living the 'American Dream'

MARTINEZ ASSUMES 50TH BCT COMMAND

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA; photo by Sgt. 1st Class Kryn Westhoven, 444MPAD

When 15-year-old Jorge Martínez boarded a “Freedom Flight” which took him from Castro’s dictatorship in Cuba to the United States via Spain in 1968, he did not know where he would eventually end up. All he did know was that given a choice “to stay in hell or to leave,” that he would take the latter, even if it meant never seeing his family again.

Four decades later Colonel Jorge Martínez has ended up commanding the largest unit in the New Jersey National Guard, a position he has been training for all his life.

“Who would have thunk it,” observed Martínez, paraphrasing baseball great Yogi Berra, as he took the reigns of the 50th Infantry Brigade Combat Team from Col. Frank Caruso in Lawrenceville on March 18.

That remark not only referred to his life’s journey, but the fact that an aviator was taking command of an infantry brigade. “I will use everything I have learned during my career to train you and to transform you into a capable, competent and cohesive force prepared to help defend the American people, our state and our nation,” he continued.

His career with the New Jersey Army National Guard spans 32 years and has taken him from his job as an enlisted mechanic with the Air Cavalry through Officer Candidate School, on to flight school where he learned his craft as a rotary wing pilot. Following flight school, Martínez returned to the 5th Squadron, 117th Cavalry, performing duties as Aero-Recon platoon leader, executive officer and commander, from 1986 to 1989. From there it was on to numerous positions within different commands, where he served at various times as executive officer, commander and liaison officer. Subsequent assignments allowed him to serve at state, brigade and battalion/squadron levels, leading him to remark, “Where else do you get the chance to be trained, to influence others positively and have the privilege to defend your country?”

Recent years of his duty were exemplified by such diverse assignments as commander of the 119th Corps Support Battalion, and Aviation Branch Chief and Deputy Chief of Staff for Aviation and Safety (G3 Air) for the Joint Forces Headquarters, New Jersey National Guard.

Along the way he managed to keep the flight suit associated with aviators, as he piloted various aircraft, including the OH-6 Cayuse (Little Bird), the UH-1 Iroquois (Huey), the UH-60 Blackhawk and the fixed wing, U-21 Beachcraft.

Martínez avers that his success is a combination of the environment of mentorship from the many sergeants, warrant



Col. Jorge Martínez (right) receives the 50th Infantry Brigade colors from Brig. Gen. Paul C. Genereux Jr. (center), Commander, 42nd Infantry Division while Col. Frank S. Caruso Jr. (left) watches.

officers and officers to whom he was exposed, and his proactive stance towards all tasks that may come his way, a thought he reiterated with the Soldiers of his new command.

“As an Air Cavalry Troop Commander, I learned to ‘Show Them The Way’ and as a Corps Support Battalion Commander ‘I Found The Way.’ Now, as your new commander, I will ‘Pave the Way’ for the Jersey-born and Jersey-based 50th Infantry Brigade to become Jersey’s best.”

Upon reflection, Martínez does not single out any one particular assignment over another. All of his experiences have helped him to get where he is now.

“The assignment is not for the person, it is for the person to give back to the organization,” he explains.

Throughout his career, Martínez has always been mindful from where he has come, and where he is going and he plans on taking the 50th BCT along with him.

“We face many challenges, but we will succeed, as long as we stay focused, stay true to ourselves, follow the Army Values, live by the Warrior’s Ethos and work with a sense of purpose and urgency.”

Considering what his prospects were as he walked the streets of Camagüey, Cuba in 1968, it is safe to say that young Jorge never could have imagined the journey he would soon embark upon, the values he would pick up along the way and where he would be standing 40 years later.

Who would have thunk it, indeed. 🇺🇸

Editor’s note: Capt. Jason Fetterolf, 50th Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs Officer contributed to this story.

Ceremony Breaks New Ground

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA; Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 11TFW/PA

The United States Army is rich in tradition, some going back more than 200 years.

In New Jersey, a new tradition was added to that immense and historic lineage, with the introduction of the Command Chief Warrant Officer Change of Authority Ceremony, which took place Feb. 10, at Fort Dix.

On that date, newly promoted Chief Warrant Officer (Five) Randy Niedt took the reins as the next state Command Chief Warrant Officer from Chief Warrant Officer (Five) Albert G. Curving.

Creating Tradition

One of the duties and responsibilities of the Command Chief Warrant Officer is upholding military customs and traditions, and to enhance the professionalism of the warrant officer corps, and the ceremony at Fort Dix accomplished just that.

While the position of state Command Chief Warrant Officer has been in the National Guard since 1996, when Alabama requested that the position be created, the ceremony which took place on February 10th was unique in that the ceremony itself was fashioned by Warrant Officer's Curving and Niedt to include a number of steps during the ceremony which are symbolic only to the Warrant Officer Command.

One of those is the Warrant Officer Charter. The charter used in the ceremony is a symbol of the charging of care of the Army National Guard Warrant Officer program. The act of passing the charter during the ceremony was symbolic of the transfer of responsibility from the outgoing Command Chief Warrant Officer, to the incoming Command Chief Warrant Officer.

The ceremony was videotaped and sent to National Guard Bureau where it may be adopted for use throughout the country as the official Command Chief Warrant Officer ceremony.

After acknowledging the six years of stellar service of Chief Curving, Chief Niedt spoke about the challenges ahead for the Warrant Officer program.

"The Warrant Officer Corps is changing fluidly, with the transformation of the Army," he noted. "It is imperative that we strive for excellence among the corps."

In addition, Niedt noted that he would be focusing on three important tasks as Command Warrant Officer, including beefing up the 50th Brigade Combat Team, developing a Warrant Officer detachment at the 254th Regiment, and to continue to develop and implement a Warrant Officer Profes-



Chief Warrant Officer Randy Niedt (left) accepts the Lineage Box from Chief Warrant Officer 4 (retired) Kenneth Langer (right) while Chief Warrant Officer Albert G. Curving (center) stands at attention during the Command Chief Warrant Officer Change of Authority Ceremony at Fort Dix on Feb. 10.

sional Development Program to help sustain the Warrant Officer Corps in New Jersey.

A Rich History

Warrant Officers have served in the Armed Forces of the United States since the Revolutionary War. After World War II, the Corps grew in size and significance as warrant officers made their mark as technical experts. Warrant Officers in the Army are brought in with specific levels of technical ability. They refine their technical expertise and develop their leadership and management skills through tiered progressive assignment and education.

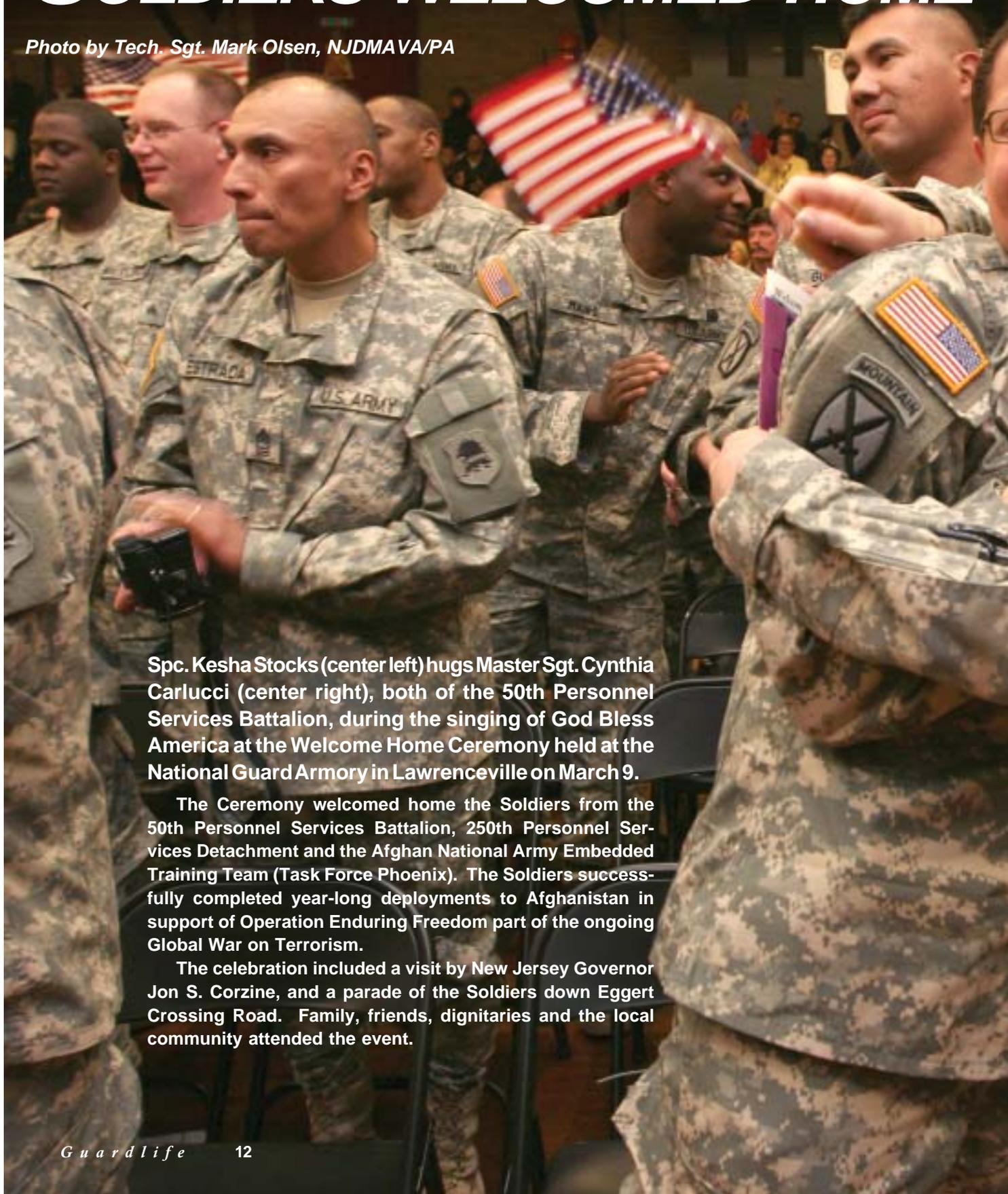
While there are many Warrant Officers within the state of New Jersey, there is only one Command Chief Warrant Officer. The state Command Chief Warrant Officer is responsible for proposing and executing policies and procedures, and with directing the career management of the Warrant Officer Corps in New Jersey.

By providing particular emphasis on Warrant Officer morale, welfare, discipline, performance, training and recognition for achievement and equal opportunity, the Command Chief Warrant Officer fulfills the responsibility to the Army National Guard leadership.

With the creation of the Command Chief Warrant Officer Change of Authority Ceremony, Chief Niedt seems to be off to a good start. 🇺🇸

SOLDIERS WELCOMED HOME

Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA



Spc. Kesha Stocks (center left) hugs Master Sgt. Cynthia Carlucci (center right), both of the 50th Personnel Services Battalion, during the singing of God Bless America at the Welcome Home Ceremony held at the National Guard Armory in Lawrenceville on March 9.

The Ceremony welcomed home the Soldiers from the 50th Personnel Services Battalion, 250th Personnel Services Detachment and the Afghan National Army Embedded Training Team (Task Force Phoenix). The Soldiers successfully completed year-long deployments to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom part of the ongoing Global War on Terrorism.

The celebration included a visit by New Jersey Governor Jon S. Corzine, and a parade of the Soldiers down Eggert Crossing Road. Family, friends, dignitaries and the local community attended the event.



FRG's absorb Troop surge impact

Photo and story by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA

Many of the families of the 117th RSTA (Reconnaissance, Surveillance, Target Acquisition) and 250th Brigade Support Battalion watched intently as President George W. Bush addressed the nation about the war in Iraq on Jan. 11.

The President's words "So I've committed more than 20,000 additional American troops to Iraq" might have made a few families wonder if this would affect planned homecomings just two months away.

It was confirmed shortly after the president's remarks that the 148 New Jersey Soldiers who had left Camp Shelby, Miss., in March 2006 to deploy to Iraq as part of the BCT would be extended up to 125 days. The Soldiers would be part of the troop surge that would help quell the sectarian violence that was threatening to rip apart Iraq's fragile democracy.

The importance of the mission did little to comfort the families. "Their reactions were up and down," said Tina Bell, president of the Vineland Family Readiness Group (FRG). "Some were mad, some were depressed, some were angered; it fluctuated because it was so close to their anticipated coming home."

Since late September and early October 2005 the families had faithfully crossed off days on the calendar looking forward to when the Soldiers would return in March 2007 to the Vineland, Bordentown and West Orange armories.

"You have to start the countdown all over again, we were right there. Now we're back to square one again," added Bell, whose husband is Sgt. David A. Bell of C Troop, 117th RSTA.

The day after the President's address started early for members of the Army Guard's Family Programs team. It was a race to call all the families before they found out through the media, as the troop extension became the lead story on the local TV newscasts later that day.

As Family Assistance Center coordinators quickly disseminated the information to loved ones, notification seemed to be bogged down in the shifting sands of Iraq. Soldiers who had not yet been notified were questioning the validity of information family members were providing via phone calls and e-mails.

"It was an issue for us because we told the families and then they in turn told their Soldiers and they didn't know," said Marie Durling, Family Programs Specialist. "We were all surprised that they (the Soldiers) didn't know."

That communications breakdown was the hot topic two



Army-Navy League commander Jack Dale (left) presents a \$5,000 check to the Family Readiness Group's of the Woodbury and Vineland Army National Guard represented by Tina Bell (center), Vineland FRG President and Tracy Kloss (right), Woodbury FRG president on Feb. 24 in Woodbury.

days later at a series of town hall style meetings held at the three armories. Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth said the communications problems regarding the troop extension was being given the highest priority of the Department of the Army and the National Guard Bureau.

At those meetings Guard senior leaders answered questions on the extension and discussed the services that would be available for the families. The concern for the effect on the spouses, children, parents, siblings and employers was highlighted with Governor Jon S. Corzine's attendance at the meeting in West Orange. Even with the support of the National Guard extended family, there are the day-to-day issues that have to be handled in every household.

"You still have no one there. You can't walk into the other room and say to him that the water heater just exploded all over the floor. You have to do it yourself," said Bell.

For the FRG's at the affected armories the question in the weeks that followed was how to best address possible family issues and if additional fund raising would be needed. The Woodbury and Vineland FRG's are sharing a \$5,000 donation from the Army and Navy Union, Post 52 of National Park.

"Thank god we have the grants that are available that we can push to the families. If it is something small like an electric bill we can just write them a check," added Bell.

Once again these Home Front Heroes are marking off their calendars.

Governor visits ChalleNGe program

By Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA with DMAVA intern Adam Wallace

New Jersey Governor Jon S. Corzine and Maj. Gen. Glenn K. Rieth, The Adjutant General, were at Fort Dix Feb. 8 to take a tour of the National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program, a residential program which offers "at-risk" teenagers a second chance at life.

After being briefed by the program's director, retired Col. Kenneth J. Prossick, the Governor walked the halls of the facility, visiting classrooms and chatting with cadets and cadre. The visit culminated in a trip to the dining facility, where the Governor and General Rieth joined the cadets for lunch.

Commenting on the program, Governor Corzine had extremely positive remarks.

"I'm deeply impressed," said Corzine.

"I'm proud of the kids. It looks like these young people are trying to make a world for themselves that's positive, and that's the best thing you can ever do."

The Governor toured the facility as part of his fact-finding tour during budget season, where the state government decides where to invest funding and support.

"We ought to expand this program, where more young people can get the access to climb that ladder to better opportunities," commented Corzine as he addressed the cadets. "Anything that we can do in the world of politics and government to help make that happen for more kids, I think, is my responsibility."

Established in 1994, the ChalleNGe Program offers second chances to "at risk" youth, ages 16-18 that are no longer in school.

Funded by more than \$1 million per year, the 17 week residential program at Fort Dix provides a quasi-military style structured environment that includes academics, physical training, life coping skills, responsible citizenship and community service.

For one recent graduate, the ChalleNGe program offered



Governor Jon S. Corzine has lunch with cadets from the New Jersey National Guard's Youth ChalleNGe Program at Fort Dix. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

a number of opportunities.

I think back to all the discipline I've learned, all the respect I have for the leadership," noted cadet Nathaniel Terzano of

We ought to expand this program, where more young people can get the access to climb that ladder to better opportunities. Anything that we can do in the world of politics and government to help make that happen for more kids, I think, is my responsibility.

Governor Jon S. Corzine.

Franklin who took home the Leadership Award. "I can actually achieve my high school diploma, and at home I couldn't do that, because I didn't have the self-discipline. I learned a lot of good trades while in this program, and now I'm going to apply them in life."

He also noted the importance of teamwork, which the ChalleNGe Program stresses at all levels.

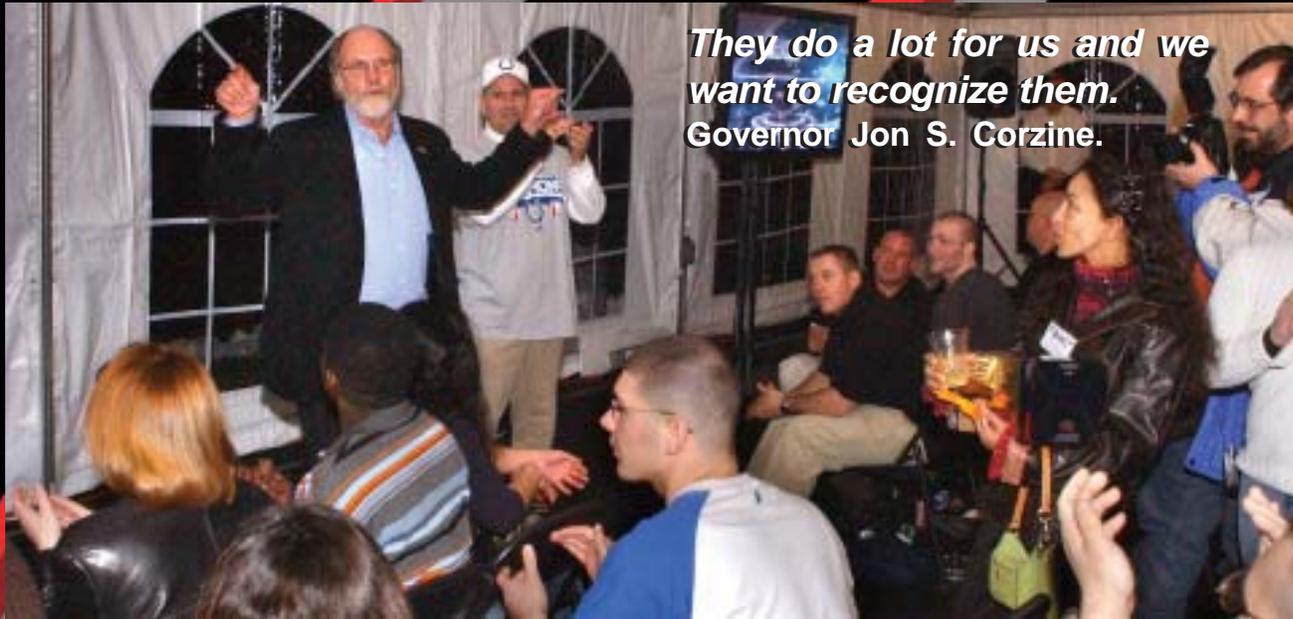
"When you succeed, it feels good. When everyone is working together and does the right thing and everything goes the right way. The National Guard's ChalleNGe Program is a great program."

The program's most recent graduating class reported that more than 90 percent of the cadets obtained their high school diplomas, 50 percent moved on to college, and 20 percent joined the military.

Parents with "at risk" children between the ages of 16-18 can contact the ChalleNGe Program at (800) 997-5587 or at www.njycp.org.

Super Bowl Sunday with the Governor

Photos and story by Sgt. Shawn Morris, 444MPAD



They do a lot for us and we want to recognize them.
Governor Jon S. Corzine.

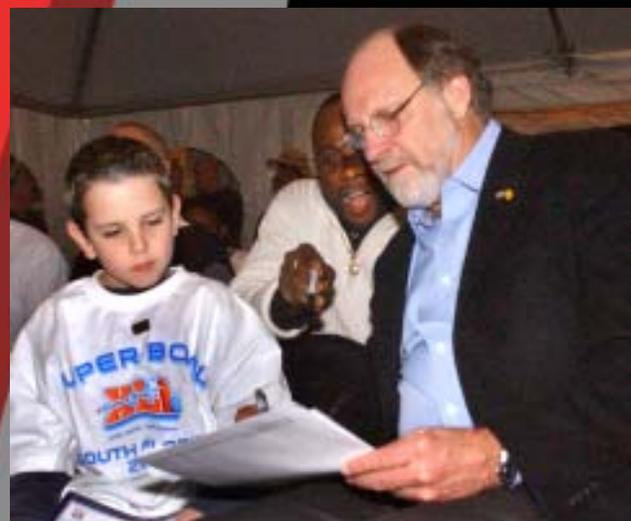
Governor Corzine hosted a Super Bowl party at the Governor's mansion at Drumthwacket on Feb. 4.

Invited were Soldiers and Airmen of the New Jersey Guard who had been deployed and their family members. "You truly are what makes America great," said Corzine to the Guard Soldiers. "You're part of an all-volunteer force. Its tough being a Guardsman in today's National Guard. You've all stepped up to the plate; you've all done a fabulous job."

This year's game pitted the Chicago Bears against the house favorite, the Indianapolis Colts.

A large tent was set up on the mansion grounds, and two large-screen TVs were brought in to view the game. Food was plentiful, and prizes were given out during the game.

"I love these people. They've sacrificed for us," said Corzine about his reason for having the gathering with the Guardsmen. "This is not complicated; this is about human being to human being. They do a lot for us, and we want to recognize them."



Photos (clockwise beginning at the top): Governor Jon S. Corzine thanks Guardmembers and their families for their sacrifices. The Governor and two fans look over a program prior to the start of the game. Bottom right, fans watch as the Colts win the Super Bowl.



Your Chaplains: dedicated to you

By Chaplain, Col. Alphonse J. Stephenson, State Chaplain

The New Jersey Army and Air National Guard Joint Chaplains' Corps is comprised of nine clergy dedicated to the spiritual well-being of our Soldiers, Airmen and their families.

Chaplains are clergy in uniform, and as such, must meet the high demands of all uniformed personnel, with one exception, we are not weapons qualified. As non-combatants, but trained for field conditions, we rely upon our chaplain's assistants to "watch-our-backs," literally!

There are two concepts your chaplains here in New Jersey have embraced:

ecumenism and jointness. First, ecumenism: in mutual respect and shared love for God and His creation, we join together from all faiths, denominations and traditions, working together for the good of humanity. Your chaplaincy is blessed with a great mix: seven Protestant ministers of varied denominations, a rabbi and a Catholic priest. No matter what our faith and background happens to be, a chaplain is a chaplain, is a chaplain. Together, your chaplains continue to build upon that which unites us, namely, service to the Almighty and our country, with special dedication to the men and women in uniform and their loved ones.



Chaplain, Col. Alphonse J. Stephenson (second from left) with his chaplain assistants while on deployment to Qatar. Photo courtesy Col. Alphonse J. Stephenson.

The second concept which strengthens us is jointness. We are proud that for the past two years, your Army and Air Guard chaplains have come to know each other and rely on each other for mutual support and practical assistance. The walls between Army green and Air Force blue have disappeared, and happily, jointness is working here in New Jersey.

Our newest resource is the CHAPLAINS' HOTLINE. By calling (609) 694-0635, know that your chaplains are only a phone call away.

Chaplains have a HOTLINE too! We call it prayer. Be assured of our prayers for you and your loved ones daily.

Remember, everyone is a recruiter.

Infantry Soldier selected as one of ten Heroes of the Year

Staff Sgt. Robert A. Dollaway (right) along with his wife Rebecca look at die-cast replica of the National Guard sponsored NASCAR race car given to the 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry Soldier for being selected as one of ten "Heroes of the Year" by the Jackson Hewitt Tax Service. Rebecca nominated her husband for his work as the Senior Personnel Service Sergeant at the Infantry Battalion headquarters in Riverdale. While Dollaway was not the overall winner, the Dollaway's did attend the Auto Club 500 NASCAR NEXTEL Cup Series race at the California Speedway at Fontana on Feb. 25. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, NJDMAVA/PA.



News Guard Families Can Use

Compiled by the Guardlife Staff

Council Grant Program

Family Grants are available to New Jersey Guard members who have been mobilized longer than 90-days within a one-year period, and their families must be experiencing financial hardship.

Business grants are available to New Jersey Guard members who have been mobilized longer than 90-days also within a one-year period and were self-employed business owners at the time of being mobilized. Such grants are for the purpose of helping sustain the business during the service member's mobilization or helping to resume the business operations following service member's de-mobilization.

For more information on grant criteria or to apply for a grant contact a Family Assistance Center or the Family Readiness Groups nearest you.

Programs for returning veterans

Helmets to Hardhats is a national program that connects Guard members with career training and employment opportunities within the construction industry. The program is administered by the Center for Military Recruitment, Assessment, and Veterans Employment.

Eligibility varies but in most cases, you must be at least 18 years of age, have an honorable discharge, a high school diploma or equivalent, pass a drug test, conduct an interview and be physically fit to perform work.

For more information logon to: www.helmetstohardhats.org/

Troops to Teachers is designed to assist military personnel in pursuing a second career in public education (elementary, secondary or vocational). This program provides certification assistance, job placement assistance and may be able to provide financial assistance to assist with certification costs. Spouses are also eligible.

For more information contact Melissa Fantozzi, Program Coordinator at 1.800.680.0884 or by email at ttnj@doe.state.nj.us. For information on the State program go to www.nj.gov/njded/ttnj/ or the Department of Education website at: www.proudtoserveagain.com/

Bill extends education eligibility

Governor Jon. S. Corzine signed a bill which extends eligibility for higher education tuition assistance to New Jersey Guard members and increases the number of tuition-free credits available to Guard members and their dependents on Jan. 24.

The legislation allows Guard members called onto active duty to utilize state tuition assistance credits after their enlistment expires, or should they be medically discharged, prior to completing their studies. This bill extends eligibility for this higher education tuition benefit to New Jersey Guard members whose use of the free tuition benefit is interrupted by a deployment to active duty.

The new law also increases the number of credits eligible for funding from 15 to 16 per semester.

PDHRA/Battlemind Online Instructions

Note: completing both of these surveys is mandatory for returning Soldiers.

To complete your Post-Deployment Health Reassessment (PDHRA) online you must log into your AKO account and under "My Soldier Data", click on "My Medical Readiness Status is...(more)". In the first box, under "Deployment Health Assessments", click on the link at the end of the paragraph "Deployment Health Assessments".

Click on DD-2900; click on "Start New Survey". After you submit the survey, you must speak to a provider by calling the PDHRA Call Center at 1-888-734-7299. Your PDHRA is not complete until you speak to a provider.

To complete your Battlemind Briefing online: Log into your AKO account; under "My Soldier Data", click on "My Medical Readiness Status is...(more)". In the fourth box under "PDHRA Battlemind II", click on either the Powerpoint or the video version of the briefing.

If you cannot log into AKO or do not have access to the internet, then you must call the PDHRA Call Center directly at 1-888-PDHRA-99 (1-888-734-7299). The staff will assist you in completing the entire DD-2900 over the phone and will then immediately conduct the PDHRA screening interview.

INCENTIVE FLIGHTS AVAILABLE

CONTACT THE 108TH ARW PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE AT (609) 754-4173
OR BY EMAIL AT PA.108ARW@NJMCGU.ANG.AF.MIL. OPEN TO ALL NJNG
GUARDMEMBERS AND THEIR SPOUSES.





Announcing
***The 1st Annual NJNG
Photo Competition***

Winners get published in the November 2007 issue of *Guardlife*.

Open to all active members of the New Jersey National Guard.

Categories:

- Guard Activities (deployments, drills, ATs, events and state active duty)
- Portraits
- Still lifes
- Landscapes
- Humor

Each category has 1-3 places and two honorable mentions

Deadline: October 1, 2007

All images must have been taken after January 1, 2006
Photos can be either digital or film
If film, original negatives need to be supplied if your photo is chosen.
If digital, a copy of the original file needs to be supplied.
Submit digital entries via email to:
pao@njdmava.state.nj.us
All other entries should be mailed to:
Public Affairs Office
Attn: Photo Competition
101 Eggert Crossing Rd.
Lawrenceville, NJ, 08648
Judges reserve the right not to award in categories.

Members of the Guardlife staff, 444th MPAD, 108th ARW and 177th FW PA and VI staffs are excluded from the competition.

SHORT ROUNDS

RSTA, AIRMEN RETURN, NEW STOREFRONT, RECORD BANNER, NE



Keeping an eye on things

Cavalry Scout Sgt. Chealoo Mastroddi, C Troop, 5th Squadron, 117th Cavalry, surveys the area outside the wire at an entry control point at Logistics Support Area (LSA) Anaconda, Iraq. The unit just recently passed the one year milestone, which in the words of 1st Sgt. Michael V. Rigby makes them "The old dogs on the block." Anaconda is one of the largest American military bases in Iraq. Photo courtesy 5-117 Cavalry.



Never let go

Staff Sgt. Jason Scalzi, 177th Fighter Wing Security Forces, hugs his wife Damaris and daughter Rachel after serving a six month tour at Kirkuk Regional Air Base in Iraq on March 13. The 13-member team were assigned to the Quick Reaction Forces - a mobile response team designed to all points on base and outside the wire. The team was responsible for everything from unexploded ordnance sweeps to serving as security details for visiting dignitaries. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, 177FW/PA.



On the lookout

Two members of the New Jersey National Guard Recruiting Command scan the streets looking for new applicants at the newest store front recruiting center to open in New Jersey. The office, which had its grand opening on Feb. 22, is located at 80 Ward Street in Paterson. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Robert Stephenson, NJDMAVA/PA.



World's longest banner

The world's longest holiday greeting banner, dedicated to the men and women serving in Iraq, was unveiled at Crockett Middle School, Hamilton, on Dec. 15. Lt. Col. James Stenson (right) along with more than 850 students, New Jersey Army and Air National Guard members, local veteran organization members and elected officials were on hand for the event. The banner measures 990 feet long, weighs 500 pounds and was signed by more than 50,000 people. Surveyors determined that the banner, which stretches nearly three football fields in length, had earned its place in the Guinness Book of World Records. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

ER, NEW COMMANDERS AND CHANGE OF AUTHORITY CEREMONY



New Troop Command(er)

Under the watchful eyes of outgoing commander Col. John DiNapoli (left) and Command Sgt. Maj. James H. Marshall Jr. (right) Brig. Gen. Charles A. Harvey Jr., (second from left) presents incoming commander Col. Kevin C. Hegarty with the 57th Troop Command colors during the Change of Command ceremony at the National Guard Armory in Atlantic City on March 4. Photo by Maj. Carl Palmer, NJ-JFHQ-PA.



Hayes to command Infantry

Col. Jorge J. Martinez, 50th Brigade Combat Team commander, center right, passes the colors of the 2nd Battalion, 113th Infantry to incoming commander Lt. Col. James A. Hayes. Battalion Command Sgt. Maj. Thomas Clark, left, stands ready to receive the colors at the Change of Command ceremony held at Sea Girt on Feb. 11, while Lt. Col. Nicholas Chimienti, right, watches the flags pass signaling the end to his 18-months as the battalion commander. Photo by Kryn P. Westhoven, DMAVA/PA.



254th gets new leader

Col. James T. Corrigan (left) accepts the 254th Regiment (Combat Arms) guidon from Brig. Gen. Charles A. Harvey Jr. (right) during a Change of Command ceremony at the Sea Girt armory March 3. Relinquishing command of the 254th was Col. Frank W. Dulfer. Photo by Sgt. Shawn Morris, 444MPAD.



108th gets new Command Chief

In a Change of Authority ceremony on March 17, Command Chief Master Sgt. Joseph Ortu passes the 108th Air Refueling Wing colors back to Wing Commander Col. Michael L. Cunniff while incoming Command Chief Master Sgt. Vincent P. Morton watches. Morton, formerly with Security Forces, is the first African-American Command Chief Master Sergeant in the history of the New Jersey Air National Guard. Ortu served the Wing as Command Chief from 2002-2007. Photo by Master Sgt. Ray Knox, 108ARW/CF.

New Jersey National Guard

NEW JERSEY ARMY NATIONAL GUARD

To First Sergeant (E-8):

David F. Moore
Richard D. Vanwhy

To Master Sergeant (E-8):

Joseph Dicola
Michael A. Steck Jr.

To Sergeant First Class (E-7):

Marco A. Chavez
Carl B. File Sr.
Jose M. Fuentes-Soto
Keron P. Johnson
Samuel Jones
Eliezer A. Viera

To Staff Sergeant (E-6):

Boris Arias
Steven R. Clark
Daemion A. Clarke
Juan R. Cuello
Wilfredo Dehoyos
William E. Edmeads
Jr.
William J. Eisele III
Ryan M. English
Christina D. Ermi
Fred A. Giberson
Joseph A. Gonzalez
Robert J. Hladik

Jeffrey J. Kennedy
Matthew M. Kline
Donald W. Lanterman
Jr.
Jose L. Malave
Carl W. Oliver
Robert R. Peer
Jason E. Petry
Franklin E. Pinili
David C. Pitt
Luis G. Rodriguez
John M. Roldan-
Alvarez
Julian A. Sanchez
Huascar A. Sime
Jaime P. Simon
David W. Thurston
Toby Tirrito
Israel Vega Jr.
Eric J. Zucker

To Sergeant (E-5):

Derric Bartholomew
Jason W. Boothe
Scott E. Boyle
Jose A. Castro
Karl E. Cheney
Adam R. Clark
Javier D. Colquicocha
Kevin M. Dean
Robert E. Fernandez
Phillip C. Fitzpatrick
Neal T. Gibson
Edison F. Guerrero
Robert J. Kimmel
Richard Leon
Alexander Lopez-
Arenas
Daniel P. Montgomery

Benjamin L. Moody
Peter J. O'Brien Jr.
Patrick W. Pastore
Nicole M. Pierce
Erick F. Rodriguez
Richard J. Rodriguez
Jason M. Ryan
Jason J. Silk
Bayan W. Stevens
Joseph S. Thorpe

To Specialist (E-4):

Monika C. Buechner
John A. Davison
Bryam Elie
Bruno M. Figarola
Michael A. Gonzalez
Timothy J. Jardinico
Oscar A. Llerena
Claudius C. Mairs
David A. Malave
Rosalie Martinsen
Christopher M. Maute
Samantha C. Nigro
Sarah A. Nothdurft
Pedro L. Rodriguez
Michael J. Shelton
Frank E. Suydam
Glenn R. Sweeten Jr.
Nicholas G. Vannicola
Anthony Viera
William S. Woll Jr.
Joey C. H. Yeh
Jared J. Yoon

To Private First Class (E-3):

Adam P. Butterfield
Andrew J. Clayton

Brian J. Costigan
Kelvin Cruz
Jeffrey S. Hancaviz
Percy A. Llerena
Onel Pagan
Denisse R. Rodriguez
Eric G. Schreier

To Private (E-2):

Jorge F. Bodden
Ryan L. Davenport
Alexander J. Dejesus
James J. Diana
Matthew T. Gambale
Starr R. Gardner
Ryan W. Griffith
Samuel I. Guerra
Ashanti W. Jones
Manuel Larranaga Jr.
Gerald A. Macfarlan
Jr.
Kenneth J. Moore II
Desire Morales
James E. Nelson
Donald M. Nowell
Dawn J. Pasquale
David A. Pinero Jr.
Jeffrey A. Pronovich
Christopher J. Roig
Frank D. Rosabal
Dennis A. S. Ryan
Michael P. Santos
Jason S. Schriever
Stefanie M. Scully
Sachika L. Soto
Rajen J. Spicer
James J. B. Stanly
Kenneth S. Tisch
Eric E. Torres

Guard Enlisted Promotions

Dwan A. Wilson

NEW JERSEY AIR NATIONAL GUARD

To Chief Master Sergeant (E-9):

Ariano Collazo

To Senior Master Sergeant (E-8):

John A. Early
Bonnie L. Gaskell

To Master Sergeant (E-7):

Michael A. Blue
John A. Bunce
Denise C. Green
David R. Heulitt
Thomas S. Pruss
Valentino Lopez Jr.
Christopher D. Schmidt

To Technical Sergeant (E-6):

Katie L. Baker
Dean B. Burlew
Kenneth R. Challender II

Bruno A. Egizi

Juan F. Lubrani
Michael Mcaleavey
Cindy L. McNally
Rodney B. Morgan
Francis A. Spence
Brian R. Tunis

To Staff Sergeant (E-5):

Amanda Alvarez
Omar Hernandez
Jamie V. Kendall
Stephen G. Lee
Sebastian Mizgala
Alison J. Mortensen
Michael F. Sears
Joseph G. Tabor
Paul J. Woodring III

To Senior Airman (E-4):

Carolina Gutierrez-Cubillos

To Airman First Class (E-3):

Jason A. Adair
Scott B. Bulmer
Kyle R. Decker
Patrick B. Degrazia
Brandon P. Foster

Thomas M. Foulds

David J. Heitman
Andrea M. Liverpool
Barbara C. Louisael
Skylar M. Marine
Victoria E. Montes
Andrew M. Nechetsky
Daryl J. Padula
Ying J. Pang
Jeffrey K. Pharo
Christopher E. Smith
Christian M. Thomas
Angela E. Tolliver
William J. Welsh III

To Airman Basic (E-2):

Tatiana Cabarcas
Demetrius Reyes

Congratulations To All!

Compiled by
Master Sgt. Daniel J. Calderale (Army) and Master Sgt. Paul B. Thompson, Jr. (Air).

Family Assistance Centers

108th Air Refueling Wing

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McGuire AFB, NJ 08641
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laura.forrest@njmcgu.af.mil

Jersey City Armory

678 Montgomery Street
Jersey City, NJ 07306-2208
POC: Janis Shaw

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Lawrenceville Armory

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Lawrenceville, NJ 08648-2897
POC: Jane Hackbarth

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Morristown Armory

430 Jockey Hollow Road
Morristown, NJ 07960-0499

POC: Sheilah Kelley

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Pomona NJNG FAC

400 Langley Road

Egg Harbor Twp, NJ 08234

POC (Air): Joan Searfoss

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POC (Army): Michael Hughes

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Somerset Armory

1060 Hamilton Street

Somerset, NJ 08873

POC: John Hales

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Teaneck Armory

Teaneck & Liberty Roads

Teaneck NJ 07666-0687

POC: SSG Joe Coltery

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Toms River Armory

1200 Whitesville Road

Toms River, NJ 08753

POC: Maria Morro

maria.morro@nj.ngb.army.mil

Woodbury Armory

658 North Evergreen Avenue

Woodbury, NJ 08096

POC: Michele Daisey

michele.daisey1@us.army.mil

Our Toll Free Number

1-888-859-0352 Reaches All

Family Assistance Centers



Guardmembers, become A Recruiting Assistant and for every person you recruit into the New Jersey Army or Air National Guard you earn \$2,000. Logon to <http://guardrecruitingassistant.com/> pick your branch of service, fill out the application and you are on your way to helping someone make a great career choice and some serious cash for yourself.



LAST ROUND - Hi Mom, WELCOME HOME

Photo and story by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA



Sgt. 1st Class Keron Johnson (center), 250th Personnel Services Detachment, New Jersey Army National Guard, with daughters Sapphira (left, age 12, left and Mikayla (right), age 15. The 250th, along with the 50th Personnel

Services Battalion returned to New Jersey from a year-long deployment in Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Mark Olsen, NJDMAVA/PA.

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