

# Alabama Guardsman

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# Alabama Guard gains new training center at ceremony

By Brenda Thomas  
State Public Affairs Office

DECATUR, AL - The transfer of ownership ceremony of the Lurleen B. Wallace Development Center here was conducted Aug. 8, 2013 between the Alabama Department of Mental Health and the Alabama National Guard. The facility opened in Decatur on Sept. 1, 1971, and was the state's first regional developmental mental health center, with 40 residents. Serving a 13-county region in North Alabama, this state-of-the-art facility grew to 193 residents by the end of its first year of operation. At its peak in 1975, it had 400 residents and more than 650 employees. Over time, more and better community resources were developed, and the center closed its doors on October 31, 2003.

The property has been vacant since the DMH halted operations there. The DMH is transferring ownership to the Alabama National Guard to be repurposed as a regional training facility. The 160 acre property will serve as a site for field



Brenda Thomas/photo

*DECATUR, AL - Gov. Robert Bentley addresses the attendees of the transfer of ownership ceremony of the Lurleen B. Wallace Development Center here Aug. 8, 2013 between the Alabama Department of Mental Health and the Alabama National Guard.*

training exercises and annual training for Alabama's Guard units. It will feature barracks, a medical facility, a dining facility, a fitness center, and classrooms. The site is estimated to be complete by 2018, culminating with a CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear) training center. The property is state owned, but will be authorized federal funds for support.

"Because of the advancements in care for people with developmental disabilities, the need for the Wallace Center no longer exists for the Department of Mental Health," Alabama's Governor Robert Bentley

said. "A transfer of this property will allow the Alabama National Guard to re-purpose the property for a regional training center for our Guardsmen. Our Guardsmen deserve a first-class training center, and the Wallace Center is a perfect location for training. I appreciate Sen. Orr for leading this process, and the Department of Mental Health and Alabama National Guard for making it a reality. Today's announcement is a prime example of what government agencies can do when it works together."

"After many years of showing this (Please see *FACILITY*, page 5)

## Alabama Guardsman

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## On the Cover

*Soldiers move 'survivors' from a Blackhawk medevac helicopter with F Co. 1-214th Aviation Regiment Army Reserve out of Fort Knox, Ky, at a small airport outside of Dayton, IN, on August 3, 2013 during the Vibrant Response exercise. The 1-214th conducted medevac missions transporting the injured and medical supplies to medical facilities as part of a disaster scenario. These Soldiers served with the nearly 300 Alabama Guardsmen who participated in the exercise as part of Task Force 46. To read more about the exercise please see story on page 6. (photo by Spc. William Frye).*

## Adjutant General

**Alabama Guard serves several critical roles**

**Maj. Gen.  
Perry Smith**

Recently the Alabama National Guard's 46th Civil Support Team responded to a suspicious substance at the Alabama Attorney General's office on the

same day that firefighters from the 117th Air Refueling Wing assisted in the response to a UPS plane crash near the Birmingham airport. Alabama's Soldiers and Airmen worked heroically that

day to assist people in need.

The week before that, nearly 300 Alabama National Guard Soldiers participated in a large command post training exercise with U.S. Army North – Vibrant Response 13-2 – in Camp Atterbury, Ind., which simulated a massive nuclear explosion in a Midwest American city. The units and Soldiers involved in that exercise performed in an exemplary manner and confirmed their ability to be a vital part of this nation's chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear tiered response force for the next two years.

These are just three examples

of the ways in which the Alabama National Guard serves a critical role in our communities, state and nation. As we enter the heart of hurricane season as a Gulf Coast state, we should remember that Citizen Soldiers and Airmen are integral to serious storm response, as we saw in the successes of the response to the April 2011 tornadoes, Hurricane Sandy, and various winter storms in the last couple of years.

Since 1636, the militia, now the National Guard, has been the force on whom the people of this country depend to protect them in time of war and to aid (Please see **ROLES**, page 5)

## State Command Sergeant Major

**A history of rations in the American military**

**Command Sgt.  
Maj.  
Eddie Pike**

The logistical task of providing rations for military personnel has been critical throughout history. Long before Napoleon uttered his now famous words, "an Army marches

on its stomach," much thought had been given by warring nations to the problem of providing nourishment for their fighting men. The Greek and Roman warriors, Frederick the Great, and Wellington, all were

cognizant of the need for good food supplies and the dire effect that a lack of suitable provisions had upon the moral, esprit de corps, discipline, and physical condition of an Army.

At the opening of the Revolutionary War, the colonies fed their own militia. Once the Army had grown and had taken on a uniform character, the problem of feeding became more difficult. During the second Continental Congress in 1775, delegates determined that soldiers fighting the Revolutionary War should receive one pound of beef, three-fourths of a pound of pork or one pound of salted fish per week; three pints of peas or beans per week; a half pint of rice or one pint of Indian meal per week;

one pint of milk per day; one pound of flour per day or hard bread once a week; and one quart of spruce beer or cider per day. Although soldiers received their rations regularly at the beginning of the conflict, supplies ran low as the war dragged on and soldiers often went hungry

Nearly a century later, the challenges of preservation and supply remained the same during the Civil War. The marching ration for Union soldiers was salted beef or pork, hard bread, and coffee. Dried vegetables provided soldiers with necessary vitamins, but were not very tasty. In addition to these challenges, rations were subject to insect infestation and (Please see **RATIONS**, page 5)

# Snap Shots

A look at some of the recent highlights from the Alabama National Guard



Sandra Lucas/photo

*Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., the commander of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force visited the Kabul Base Cluster, Kabul, Afghanistan, Aug. 8, and met with members of the 226th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade from Mobile. Pictured from left to right: Spc. Jaunie L. Ellis, Staff Sgt. Kenneth K. Dickerson, Maj. David B. Traylor, Capt. Noel A. Zvonar, Chief Warrant Officer 3 Denise W. Richardson, Cpl. Mark R. Mitchell, Marine Corps Gen. Joseph F. Dunford Jr., Master Sgt. Jeffrey E. Hauger, Spc. Michael J. Castorani, Maj. Michael D. Anderson, and Master Sgt. Paul R. Barnes.*



Brenda Thomas/photo

*Gov. Robert Bentley pinned the Alabama National Guard's newest general officer. Brig. Gen. Danny Speigner was joined by his family for the ceremony held at the Alabama State Capitol, August 1, 2013.*



Brenda Thomas/photo

*Members of the Alabama North Central Funeral Honors team practice regularly to ensure they are prepared to perform services for veterans and retired service members.*

**(FACILITY continued from page 2)**

facility to private businesses, quasi government groups and others for purchase, I am grateful that under the leadership of Gov. Bentley and Gen. Smith we are putting this significant state asset back to use in a very positive way to support our men and women in uniform," said Alabama Sen. Arthur Orr. "The people

**(ROLES continued from page 3)**

them in time of disaster. People depend on us... on you... on me. We should take pride in that and work to do all we can to be always ready, always there when our state or nation calls us.

The examples I gave above were all in the news, some in

**(RATIONS continued from page 3)**

and decay.

World War I required the Army to send provisions across the Atlantic, so the military used more canned food. The canning process represented one of the most important innovations for Army rations. However, the canned provisions did not provide a balanced diet. A new challenge for the Army would be to create healthy and appetizing rations.

As food technology advanced, greater variety became possible. The Army developed 23 different rations and supplements during World War II. Despite the variety of rations available, soldiers complained about the monotony of the meals—not surprising since six of the eleven menus for the C-ration contained beans.

During the Korean War, soldiers consumed surplus C-rations from

of Morgan County were disheartened to see such a beautiful facility of over 160 acres and 20 plus large brick buildings not being used and falling into disrepair. We have today a great story of putting this facility back into service to benefit both the taxpayers and our military."

"Acquiring this facility for the

the national news. People see us as we go about our business. Remember, as you serve the people of this great state and nation, to conduct yourself in a manner befitting a member of the oldest military organization in America and as a profes-

WWII. Meanwhile, the military created the Meal, Combat, Individual. MCIs came in 12 options, each providing 1200 calories, and represented a new emphasis on creating a nutritionally balanced meal.

During the Vietnam War, the military made use of new technology, like freeze-dried food, to improve the preservation and transportation of rations. Responding to soldiers' complaints about carrying heavy tins of food, the Army began experimenting with plastic packaging. The end result was the Meal, Ready to Eat. MREs were to be nutritional, able to withstand fluctuations in temperature and being air-dropped, and have a minimum shelf life of three years.

Although the first MREs met the requirements, troops were not satisfied with the meals, calling them "Meals Rejected by Everyone."

Alabama National Guard is a momentous occasion," said Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, Alabama's adjutant general. "This location will serve as a great multi-purpose training site for the Guard and possibly others in the foreseeable future."

sional in arms. This goes for the privates through the generals. Remember our core values and be proud of the uniform you wear. Thank you for your service and your sacrifice. Lead from the front!

The military listened. Today, 24 menus are available, including vegetarian and kosher options. MREs today have the flameless heater which allows soldiers to heat their food using a small amount of water to create a heat-producing chemical reaction.

Wrapped in unremarkable brown plastic, the MRE represents an important part of a war fighter's daily life and more than 200 years of experiments. The importance of sound nutrition to the performance of modern military personnel may be more important today than in the past. Food fuels the fighter, and inadequate fuel for fighters will bring the military machine to a grinding halt.

**Editors' note: This column was reprinted from the U.S. Army Soldier Systems Center (Natick) newsletter "The Warrior".**

## Alabama Guard plays key role in Vibrant Response exercise

by Eric Roberts  
131st MPAD

CAMPATTERBURY, Ind. - The 31st Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Brigade along with other elements of the Alabama National Guard played a role as part of Task Force 46 in the simulated aftermath of a nuclear attack in two Midwest cities during the Vibrant Response exercise held here in early August.

“Our mission is no different at home helping the citizens of Alabama, or during a chemical, biological or nuclear attack,” said Lt. Col. Brian Naugher, chief of staff for the 31st CBRN Brigade.

While the Alabama National Guard provided support in numerous areas to Task Force 46, Spc. Miranda York, an intelligence analyst at the 145th Chemical Battalion in Centreville, says that the National Guard is perfect for missions such as this as they are “different” from other military components.

“Intel is different in the National Guard, instead of looking, you respond,” said York. “We monitor infrastructure, roads, medical facilities, disaster sites, troop movements along with other factors.”

York said this information is gathered and used to help the command aid in the decision-making process.

The three-year veteran of the National Guard, said Vibrant Response has been a great training tool.

“I am used to monitoring (intelligence) across neighborhoods, but here we monitor across counties,” said York. “It is a much larger scale operation.”

The operation provided unique training for not only intelligence, but for other elements as well.

“As the Anti-terrorism Force Protection Officer, I advise and liaise with the command to ensure we protect the force,” said Capt. Courtney Pullam, 31st CBRN



William Frye/photo

*Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith, the adjutant general of the Alabama National Guard speaks with Spc. Ebony Johnson with the 31st Chemical Brigade August 5, 2013 at Camp Atterbury Joint Maneuver Training Center in Edinburgh, Ind., during the Vibrant Response training exercise. Vibrant Response is a U.S. Northern Command-sponsored field training exercise for chemical, biological, radiological, nuclear and high-yield explosive consequence management forces designed to improve their ability to respond to catastrophic incidents.*

Brigade.

“I look into insider threats, new and emerging threats, riots, lack of law enforcement. Before we insert our troops, we want to make sure its safe for our Soldiers,” he said.

Pullam says the training gives him an opportunity to rehearse his options, whether the mission is real or notional, “I am an advisor, I paint the picture of what security is and what we have to do to acheive it.”

While the nearly 300 Alabama National Guard Soldiers worked around the clock, the cohesiveness of the mission lands on the shoulders of Naugher.

“I am responsible for ensuring that all

sections are working as a cohesive unit to accomplish the mission and support those Soldiers in the field,” said the Guntersville native.

Naugher added that it does not matter whether the mission is actual or training, regardless the mission is to “support and defend the homeland in the case of a chemical, biological, radiological or nuclear attack as part of the tiered CBRN response enterprise.

“This mission is a perfect fit for this brigade headquarters, it allows us to be ready to respond on a moment’s notice to local and national requirements,” said Naugher.