

Alabama Guardsman

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Military Police company celebrates homecoming with ceremony

By Eric Roberts
131st MPAD

The Alabama Army National Guard's 152nd Military Police Company, out of Hartselle and Scottsboro, returned from active duty after more than 10 months of supporting Operation Enduring Freedom.

Capt. Jacob Shook, Commander, said he was relieved to be home.

"I could not be more proud of these guys, they had a very important mission. Truth be told, I will miss these guys," Shook said.

The 152nd celebrated with family members, Guardsmen and members of the community at the Sparkman Civic Center May 1.

During the Wednesday ceremony, Sgt. Corey Cato took center stage, but not to make a traditional speech. Cato hit his knee and proposed to Laura Cross. To which she said yes.

Cato said he was thankful for the opportunity that Capt. Shook



Eric Roberts/image

Spc. Steven Gifford of the 152nd Military Police Company hugs a loved one during a welcome home ceremony in Hartselle, May 1, 2013.

and others provided to give Cross a memorable moment.

"It was epic," said Cato.

The 152nd deployed in June 2012 and provided security forces support to units based in Southwest Asia during its deployment.

Sgt. Joseph Hardin said the last ten months had been a challenge but called the units homecoming "unimaginable" and a "long time coming."

"This is a proud day," said Lt. Col. Mike Izzo. "This is a proud

day to be called your battalion commander. Soldiers, you have made me proud."

"You are protectors of freedom," Izzo said to the returning Guardsmen. "Wear that combat patch with pride.

The Alabama National Guard has called more than 21,000 personnel to active duty since 9/11 and remains a top contributor among the nation's National Guard.

Alabama Guardsman

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On the Cover

Alabama Guardsman, Spc. Carson Shelton, of the 129th Area Support Medical Company, runs down a trail as he participates in the Mystery Event during the Region III Best Warrior Competition April 29-May 2, at Camp McCrady S.C. The South Carolina National Guard hosted the event which included NCOs and Soldiers from 10 states and territories competing for two spots at the National Guard Bureau level Best Warrior competition taking place in July. Two Guardsmen represented Alabama, Shelton and Sgt. Robert Sitze of Alpha Co., 20th Special Forces Group. Unfortunately Sitze was unable to compete, because of an illness. Please see more coverage of the competition in the Snap Shots section, pages 4-5 (photo by Sgt. Jonathan Wilson).

Adjutant General

Always ready for Alabama's top threat



**Maj. Gen.
Perry Smith**

We recently had a hurricane rehearsal of concept (ROC) drill and a hurricane exercise down to the task force level in order to ensure we are prepared for the upcoming hurricane season.

I encouraged the

headquarters staff and the task forces to take these preparations seriously, because we know that hurricanes remain a top threat to our state. We need to keep in mind that we, the Alabama National Guard, are a key player in hurricane response.

The Gulf Coast has not been hit with a major hurricane in several years. However, we have still been continually preparing for the threat, because we know that we cannot be spared forever. Experts are calling for a year of higher than average hurricane activity in the Atlantic. Some experts believe we will have 3 or 4 major hurricanes make landfall this coming season. Obviously, we cannot know for sure what will happen. But we must use our experience and the advice of experts to plan for what may be coming.

Helping our neighbors and fellow Alabamians during disaster response is a core mission for the Alabama National Guard. It is what makes us unique among military organizations. In the days following the tornado outbreak of April 2011, I saw that

the Alabama National Guard – Army and Air Force – can work together and work with government agencies to render fast, efficient and professional help to those in need. I know that our recent ROC drill and hurricane exercise built confidence in our processes. Let's build on that and take it down to the individual Soldier and Airman level. We need to ensure that we are ready to respond just as readily and well during this coming hurricane season as we did in April 2011.

I will be praying that we are spared from major hurricanes again this year. However, I will be prepared and I will trust that every Soldier and Airman in the Alabama National Guard will be prepared to respond. Let's be always ready, always there. Lead from the front!

State Command Sergeant Major

The long and distinguished history of Sergeant's stripes



**Command Sgt.
Maj.
Eddie Pike**

NCOs have been with us for a long time, dating back over 200 years. But sergeant's stripes date back even further, to the Spartans, Macedonians, and later, the Romans. These stripes were to ensure that

NCOs were immediately recognizable in the confusion of battle. If Julius Caesar wanted to get the word out quickly to make something happen, he talked to the nearest centurion. This worthy NCO was plugged into a network of up-front

leadership on the battlefield.

There is considerable evidence of the survival of NCO traditions through the Dark Ages and their revival and proliferation with the Renaissance. General George Washington, like Caesar, faced the challenge of fielding a readily visible network of up-front leadership to organize a chaotic battlefield. Since he and his officers were generally on horseback, brightly colored shoulder epaulettes visible from above made sense. Beginning in July 1775, sergeants wore a red strip of cloth on the right shoulder and corporals wore green. In 1779, General Washington went to white epaulettes for infantry NCOs, yellow for artillery, and blue for cavalry. Sergeants wore epaulettes on both shoulders, and corporals wore them on the right shoulder

only.

Epaulettes remained the approved solution for designating NCOs through 1821, when the practice fell out of fashion. Chevrons on sleeves took root as an alternative to epaulettes on shoulders for NCOs. Chevrons proved to be keepers.

In 1821, chevrons pointed up. During the Mexican War, the system extended to all branches and noncommissioned ranks, with white or yellow chevrons pointing up on fatigue uniforms. In 1851, uniforms changed again and all chevrons pointed down. Designated branch colors led to infantry stripes in light blue, cavalry stripes in yellow, and artillery stripes in red. The mass mobilization of the Civil War put tens of thousands of NCOs in chevrons where **(Please see STRIPES, page 7)**

Snap Shots

This edition features Spc. Carson Shelton who represented the Alabama National Guard during the Best Warrior Competition April 28-May 2, 2013 at Camp McCrady, S.C.



Jonathan Wilson/photo

CAMP McCrADY, S.C. - Alabama Guardsman, Spc. Carson Shelton, plots grid coordinates during the Call for Fire exercise during the Region III Best Warrior Competition, April 28-May 2, 2013.



Contributed/photo

CAMP McCrADY, S.C. - Alabama Guardsman, Spc. Carson Shelton, participates in a six-mile ruck march during the Region III Best Warrior Competition, April 28-May 2, 2013.



Contributed/photo

CAMP McCrADY, S.C. - Alabama Guardsman, Spc. Carson Shelton, low crawls through barbed wire during the Obstacle Course Challenge during the Region III Best Warrior Competition, April 28-May 2, 2013.



Jonathan Wilson/photo

CAMP McCRADY, S.C. -Alabama Guardsman, Spc. Carson Shelton, participates in the Stress Shoot exercise during the Region III Best Warrior Competition, April 28-May 2, 2013.



Contributed/photo

CAMP McCRADY, S.C. -Alabama Guardsman, Spc. Carson Shelton, participates in the Stress Shoot exercise during the Region III Best Warrior Competition, April 28-May 2, 2013.



Jonathan Wilson/photo

CAMP McCRADY, S.C. -Alabama Guardsman, Spc. Carson Shelton, participates in the final phase of the Mystery Event during the Region III Best Warrior Competition, April 28-May 2, 2013.

Gulf War Legacy: Part of Today's Mission

by James Burroughs
135th ESC

Kuwait City, Kuwait- Standing next to Kuwait's Highway 80 today is not much different than standing next to a modern U.S. interstate in Arizona or Texas. There are six lanes of hot asphalt separated by a median. People drive through the bleak, desert landscape as quickly as possible to get to their destinations without paying much attention to the scenes outside. It was much different 22 years ago when this stretch of road was called the 'Highway of Death'.

On Feb. 25-27, 1991, U.S. and coalition forces attacked Saddam Hussein's Army, which had invaded six months earlier, as they attempted to maneuver out of Kuwait. Between 1,400 to 2,000 vehicles were hit or abandoned in a huge convoy and hundreds of Iraqi soldiers were killed. These soldiers had spent the last six months occupying and looting much of Kuwait.

After the battle, American, British and coalition forces secured the area and buried the Iraqi dead in temporary graves. The locations were marked and the grid coordinates were noted so that following forces, either from Iraq or the United Nations could retrieve the bodies for permanent burial in Iraq. In the years that followed, shifting sands covered the sites and the fallen were left to rest a few yards from the highway where they died.

Today, Alabama's Soldiers in the 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command are serving in Kuwait supporting Operation Enduring Freedom and the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) area of operations. There are a handful of Gulf War veterans deployed with them but most of the Soldiers remember very little about the conflict that cemented the U.S.'s close relationship with Kuwait.

Kuwaiti citizens are grateful to the U.S. for leading the coalition that freed them



James Burroughs/photo

Sgt. Jared Dineen, 1st Theater Sustainment Command's Mortuary Affairs Specialist, looks on as a Kuwaiti forensics expert directs the excavation of an Iraqi soldier burial site from the Gulf War. Dineen compiled and organized the data that led the Kuwaiti teams to dig at this site in northern Kuwait. If remains are found, the Kuwaiti police will contact the Iraqi government and arrange a dignified transfer of the human remains for permanent burial.

from Saddam's brutal invasion but they also honor and remember the sacrifices of their own citizens in resisting the invasion.

Kuwait's National Committee for Missing and Prisoner of War Affairs (NCMPA) is committed to locating and returning the 605 Kuwaitis who were taken prisoner by Saddam Hussein. After the Gulf War ended and in the years that followed, Hussein claimed to have released the prisoners and denied having any knowledge of their locations. Shortly after the U.S. invaded Iraq, information about the fate of these POWs became available. They were all killed by Saddam Hussein's army and buried in Iraq.

Armed with new information and access to the country, Kuwaiti Police sent Col. Mejbek Almutairi to lead a forensic team into Iraq in 2003 to recover the bodies. "We went into Iraq hoping to find live prisoners. We found only dead," he said. "One mission

ended but we had hope that we could bring them back to Kuwait."

Working with the U. S. Marines, Almutairi's team recovered more than 220 bodies of the missing prisoners.

Iraq's government is now working with Kuwait in searching for the remaining bodies. In return for their cooperation, the Iraqis are asking the NCMPA to help them recover the bodies of their fallen soldiers buried in Kuwait.

The biggest challenge in this mission is locating the burial sites of the Kuwaiti prisoners. There are no records of the burials and sites have to be located using the memories of eye-witnesses willing to come forward with information.

In order to find the burial sites of Iraqi dead, the NCMPA had to request the cooperation of the U.S., U.K. and the International (Please see *LEGACY*, page 8)

Guardsman's heroic actions help save a life

by Jamie Brown
Senior Editor

He had been in a coma for three days. When he woke up and met his neurosurgeon for the first time, he thanked him for saving his life. The surgeon replied, "Warren, don't thank me. You need to thank that National Guardsman for saving your life at the accident scene."

This is how Warren Butler learned that Sgt. 1st Class Todd Jarrell, a recruiter with the Alabama National Guard, had helped save his life.

Butler was in a horrific automobile accident on Interstate 65 near Calera. His skull was fractured and he was trapped nearly upside down, literally bleeding to death.

Jarrell was driving north on I-65 when he saw smoke clearing from an accident. He pulled over when he saw a vehicle flipped on its side in the median. Jarrell then sprung into action. He crawled into the vehicle and lifted Butler's head onto his shoulder and wrapped a towel around the wound to stem the flow of blood. He stayed with Butler until the paramedics arrived 22 minutes later.

"All the civilians were very glad I stopped and the fire and rescue were very thankful that I stopped and did what I did," Jarrell said. "They even asked me to stay where I was and continue to help Warren while they were



Brenda Thomas/image

Sgt. 1st Class Todd Jarrell (middle) stands with Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, The Adjutant General (right) and Warren Butler (left) at a ceremony April 24, 2013 at the Joint Force Headquarters Building in Montgomery. At the ceremony Jarrell was presented the Alabama Distinguished Service Medal for his heroic actions Sept. 21, 2012. Encountering a serious automobile accident on the interstate, Jarrell acted quickly and rendered medical aid to Butler until paramedics arrived. Butler credited Jarrell with saving his life.

cutting the roof off the vehicle."

Jarrell said that his military training prepared him for the moment.

"It helped tons being a combat lifesaver and knowing how to handle stressful situations," he said. "This is what we call in the infantry controlled chaos. Being in the 167th Infantry and Marine Corp Infantry gave me the confidence and ability to render aid."

Butler was life flighted to the UAB hospital where he had four hours of brain surgery.

After coming out of his coma and learning of Jarrell's selfless act, Butler wanted to meet the man who helped him.

"I desperately wanted to meet the man who took the time and effort to save me," he said. "Fortunately, my family already knew Sgt. 1st Class Todd Jarrell well since he came to the hospital to check on me. As soon as I was able I reached out to Sgt. 1st Class Jarrell to thank him. He was so modest about what he had done for me and he was sincerely more interested in how I was doing. He was just (Please see JARRELL, page 8)

(STRIPES continued from page 3)

hundreds had worn them before. By 1872, the Army recognized eleven grades of NCOs sporting seven distinctive chevrons.

Chevrons began pointing up again in the early 1900s and have been pointing up ever since. Following earlier usages for infantry, cavalry, and artillery, chevrons communicated branch and specialty along with rank. They did so by varying the colors of the stripes and adding specialized icons for specialty technical NCOs. After WWI, chevrons designated only leadership. Five noncommissioned grades were recognized—corporals received two stripes, sergeants received three, staff sergeants received three and a rocker, and higher grades received three stripes and two or three rockers and colors

were standardized.

The Army struggled over distinctions between combat leadership and technical specialties. In WWII, it introduced chevrons with a T underneath for each of three technical grades. In 1955, unique specialty patches emerged for specialist grades paralleling those of senior NCOs. By 1959, there were six grades, running from Specialist 4 through Specialist 9. During the 1970s and 1980s, the Army phased out all but Specialist 4. Specialist 4 was relabeled Specialist and not considered an NCO, even though the pay grade was the same as a corporal. NCOs were to be leaders regardless of specialty and they would lead in combat as required.

Stripes on sleeves remain an NCO tradition, but alternatives

have emerged as outer garments, equipment, and redesigned uniforms with shoulder pockets make the location less practical—or visible. Beginning in 1967, the Army recognized miniature metal pin-on insignia. Designed for collars, these soon became popular centered on the front of helmets. In due course, cloth versions replaced metal, and then hook and loop cloth emerged as an alternative to sewing or pinning them on.

At any Army birthday celebrations, you will see sergeant's stripes worn in various places on the uniforms of the time. Regardless of where they are worn, they communicate a message: "I am a noncommissioned officer. I lead soldiers."

(JARRELL continued from page 7)

glad I was doing better and it brought me to tears. I cannot express to anyone in words how I feel about Todd Jarrell's care for me after my horrific accident. Not many people would stop to help a complete stranger who was near death on the interstate. In fact, no one was helping me until he ran to the scene. I no longer believe things happen by chance. Todd Jarrell was my gift from God."

Jarrell is reflective and humble regarding his part in the events of that day.

"I am blessed that Warren is at home and with his

family and kids," he said. "My father was an assistant chief for Irondale Fire Dept so I have been around things my whole life. My dad passed two months after I returned home from Iraq and I know he would have stopped, and he gave me the courage to stop. He loved helping people and so do I. I never wanted to receive any awards or recognition all I needed is to know that Warren was alive, well, and with his family."

To honor Jarrell's heroic actions, an award ceremony was held April 24 at the Joint Force Headquarters Building

in Montgomery. Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, the adjutant general of Alabama, presented Jarrell with the Alabama Distinguished Service Medal. Both Jarrell's and Butler's families attended the event.

"It is a pleasure that we have an opportunity to recognize Todd for what he did," Smith said. "The award he is receiving is the Alabama Distinguished Service Medal. It is the highest award the state of Alabama can bestow on any Soldier or Airman. We're proud to have him in the Alabama National Guard."



2013 NATIONAL GUARD SUMMER SAVINGS DRIVE

by the

Adjutant General, Major General Perry Smith

A PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, personal and household savings are fundamental to America's stability and vitality; and

WHEREAS, adequate emergency savings, retirement funds, and safe debt-to-income ratios are critical components of personal financial security; and

WHEREAS, personal financial security of servicemembers is a crucial aspect of military readiness; and

WHEREAS, Military Saves is a Department of Defense-wide social marketing campaign to persuade, encourage, and motivate servicemembers and their families to take financial action in building wealth through saving money and reducing debt;

WHEREAS, Alabama Joint Force Headquarters is a partner in the Military Saves campaign and is committed to helping its Military Family, including Officers, (Sailors, Airman, Soldiers), family members, retirees, and civilian employees take immediate financial action to build wealth, not debt;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Major General Perry Smith, Adjutant General, do hereby proclaim the month of June 1st- 30th 2013 as the:

NATIONAL GUARD SUMMER SAVINGS DRIVE

I HEREBY call upon all members of our Alabama National Guard Family and all military service branches within the state of Alabama to set a personal savings or debt reduction goal, make a simple savings plan, and take action on that plan, or take another positive wealth-building action during the NATIONAL GUARD SUMMER SAVINGS DRIVE, and **pledge** to sustain that action during the following year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 21 day of May, 2013.

[Signature]
Major General Perry Smith, Adjutant General - Alabama

(LEGACY continued from page 6)

than 20 years earlier.

Gathering and compiling data from different sources was challenging. The NCMPA worked with the Pentagon's Defense Prisoner of War/Missing Personnel Office to gather the grid coordinates from different military records. The next step was to compile the data and produce a list that could be used to identify potential sites from which to recover bodies.

This job was handled on a volunteer basis by Sgt. Jared Dineen, a mortuary affairs specialist from the New Hampshire National Guard. He is on his third tour with the Theater Mortuary Affairs Office, where he has worked behind the scenes bringing home our fallen warriors from the battle-

fields of Iraq and Afghanistan. In this role, he currently works with the 135th ESC.

The 135th's Mortuary Affairs team provides oversight and guidance to mortuary affairs operations throughout the Middle East as the Theater Mortuary Affairs Office based in Camp Arifjan, Kuwait.

Once the records were compiled and probable duplicate positions were identified a list of 39 definite points inside Kuwait were located.

It is up to the NCMPA to determine the priority of dig sites and deal with the challenges of digging on private and public lands. On the first dig, the remains of 32 soldiers were recovered and returned to Iraq.

Not every dig has been successful. Some-

times the grids have errors and lead the teams to dig where there are no bodies.

"The original coordinates were figured by hand using a paper map," explained Dineen. "We expect that there are errors. On one site we found remains but they were about 200 yards from the plotted point."

One of the next sites to be looked at is located near another nearby U.S. Airbase. This site is recorded as having over 120 remains waiting to be recovered.

"I will never leave a fallen comrade," is part of our Soldier's Creed. This is a value we hold in common with the Kuwaitis hoping to return their fallen.

"I will work until the job is done," said Col. Almutairi.

Soldiers learn combatives during deployment

by Katherine Dowd
135th ESC

CAMP ARIFJAN, KUWAIT – Three Soldiers from the 135th Expeditionary Sustainment Command spent the first week of May participating in a Level Two Modern Army Combatives Program (MACP) course at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. Capt. Fredic Whitehead, Force Protection Officer; Sgt. Corey Pisacrita, Support Operations and Sgt. Jeremy Hamilton, Information Technology Specialist, completed the 80-hour course on May 10. MACP is the Army's hand-to-hand combat training program. It was developed to establish an effective hand-to-hand combat program that combines techniques from various martial arts such as Judo, Muai Thai, and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu.

MACP has four skill levels. During the level two course, Soldiers spend the first day reviewing basic techniques that they learned during level one. They learn additional techniques that are introduced throughout the class as well as the history of martial arts and MACP.

"MACP teaches a Soldier to respect the craft and the Soldiers who spend countless hours teaching the discipline," said Whitehead. "Not only does it instill confidence, it also makes the Soldier a combat multiplier by giving them the ability to teach others the same craft."

From head lock escapes to reverse bent arm bars, the Soldiers in the class are motivated to learn everything and perfect each technique. They shift from grappling with their opponent to helping each other understand their mistakes within sec-



Katherine Dowd/photo

Sgt. Jeremy Hamilton grapples with a fellow classmate during his Level 2 Modern Army Combatives Program (MACP) qualification on May 10 at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait. He was one of three 135th ESC Soldiers who took the 80-hour course and graduated.

onds. The course brings a variety of different people together who have a common interest.

The MAC Program has proven to be a useful tool for all Soldiers who participate in it. It benefits Soldiers by teaching skills that are useful in both their civilian and military lives.

Whitehead, a police officer in Atlanta, said that the things he learned throughout the course will directly play into that. "My job at home requires me to be confident in my ability to handle any situation," Whitehead said. "MACP is one of those courses that teaches you about yourself. It reinforced the self-defense training I received in my civilian career."

"As soon as I heard about the chance to take the level two course, I signed up for it," Pisacrita said. "I feel like it may open more opportu-

nities for me in my military career. It also helps me be better prepared to protect my family, friends and fellow Soldiers."

Self-defense is one of the main focus points of MACP. In the event of hand-to-hand combat, Soldiers must be prepared to defend themselves from the enemy until help arrives.

"Combatives is a great skill to learn," said Hamilton. "Many people think that it is just a class that teaches you how to fight, but it isn't. We learn to properly defend ourselves and do what is necessary until our battle buddies show up to help us."

Soldiers stationed at Camp Arifjan, Kuwait, have the opportunity to take both Level 1 and Level 2 MACP courses while they are here.