

ALABAMA GUARDSMAN



**152ND MILITARY
POLICE RESPOND
TO TORNADO**

Annual Training
1-117th Field Artillery
1-131st Aviation
161st Multifunctional Medical

**CEREMONIES HELD TO
REMEMBER FALLEN AIRMEN**



What's Inside

- 3 Adjutant General & State Command Sergeant Major
Memorial Day & Annual Training: An assesment of our readiness
- 4 Alabama Guardsmen participate in marathon while deployed
1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion runs Boston Shadow Marathon
- 5 Ceremonies held to remember fallen Airmen
117th Air Refueling Wing - Bay of Pigs
- 6 SnapShots
Highlights from around the Alabama Guard
- 7 Soldier Recognition
Women's History Month Honoree & Supply Excellence Award recipients
- 8 Field Artillery Battalion conducts live fire exercise
1-117th Field Artillery
- 9 "With liberty and justice for all."
Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month
- 10 Alabama units collaborate for Annual Training
Photo Story - 1-131st Aviation Battalion & 161st Multifunctional Medical Battalion
- 12 Retired
Retiring Alabama Guardsmen



The Alabama Guardsman is published by the 131st Mobile Public Affairs Detachment, Alabama Army National Guard. Submissions are encouraged and should be e-mailed to the 131st MPAD, alngpao@mail.mil, (334)213-7572. The views and opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of Defense, the Department of the Army, the National Guard Bureau or the Alabama National Guard. This publication is electronically published on the Alabama National Guard website.

Adjutant General.....Maj. Gen. Perry Smith
 Public Affairs Branch Chief.....Col. Dennis Butters
 Public Affairs Officer.....Lt. Col. Shannon Hancock
 131st MPAD Commander.....Maj. Andrew J. Richardson
 Senior Editor.....Sgt. 1st Class. Jamie Brown
 Staff Writer.....Sgt. Bethany McMeans
 Staff Writer.....Staff Sgt. Christopher Davis
 Staff Writer.....Sgt. Eric Roberts
 Staff Writer.....Sgt. Brenda Thomas
 Staff Writer.....Spc. William Frye

On The Cover

PELHAM RANGE, Ala.-The 1-131st Aviation Battalion from Hope Hull collaborated with the 161st Multifunctional Medical Battalion from Mobile to conduct annual training exercises at Pelham Range. The 161st performed sling load operations, attaching and detaching blivets to the aircraft, while the 1-131st pilots trained in sling load aircraft maneuvers. See more photos on page 10. (Photo by Brenda Thomas).

Adjutant General

Memorial Day



Maj. Gen. Perry Smith

As the month of May progresses and the weather warms, our minds may shift toward barbeque, swimming pools, family gatherings and other summer-time fun. All of those things can be enjoyable; and a holiday with time off of work is a great time to enjoy them. That holiday,

though, is so much more than a time with family in the backyard. Memorial Day is a time that this nation has set aside to remember those who have given their lives in service to our country. Cicero once wrote, "History is the witness that testifies to the passing of time; it illumines reality, vitalizes memory, provides guidance in daily life, and brings us tidings of antiquity." Without the memory of those who have given their lives for our nation - from Concord to Kandahar - we cannot fully appreciate

the freedoms we enjoy in this country. We must never let those memories fade. We must let history be our witness and keep our memories alive. Remembering the fallen has a great purpose, as President Lincoln noted in the Gettysburg Address. He said, "It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us - that from these hon- (Please see MEMORIAL, page 11)

State Command Sergeant Major

Annual Training: An assesment of our readiness



Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie Pike

The Alabama National Guard ranks among the best in the Nation and has consistently recruited and retained Soldiers and Airmen who perform with high levels of skill and expertise. During the summer months, select units are scheduled to participate in annual training exercises which have historically been

the highlight of traditional Soldier involvement. Annual training is where our Soldiers have the opportunity to comprehensively use knowledge, resources and their occupation specialty skills in an action-filled environment. The two-week annual training period is precious time dedicated to mission accomplishment which occurs when the individual Soldier is constantly engaged, knowledgeable and skilled in their duties and proficient in the execution of their job assignments. The National Guard

uses many unique training methods; from real-life training exercises, high tech simulation training, live fire battle drills or distance learning. The Guard is ready only because we train. The Alabama National Guard is among the best in the nation because we train our Soldiers to be the best. Annual training is a requirement of Soldiers, but I have found that the men and women in our formations choose to be an active part of the training experience and desire to accomplish their mis- (Please see AT, page 11)

Alabama Guardsmen participate in marathon while deployed

by Lt. Col. Huey T. Haymon
Public Affairs Officer, 167th TSC

BAGRAM AIRFIELD, Afghanistan - Five Soldiers from the 1103rd Combat Sustainment Support Battalion (CSSB), Alabama National Guard, participated in the Boston Shadow Marathon held at Bagram Air Base, Afghanistan, April 18, 2014.

Maj. Chris Amos, 1st Lt. James Mann, SSgt. Ebony Mathis, Sgt. Marvin Valenzuela, and Spc. William Jackson started the race in a field of 600 runners. Mann finished in 7th place overall, with a time of 3:00:43. Amos, Valenzuela, and Jackson also completed the 26.2 mile race.

“Prior to this run we were able to run a couple of half-marathon shadows.” said Mann. “Running has been ideal PT considering the environment, especially at FOBs like KAF (Kandahar Airfield) and BAF.”

The Bagram Shadow Marathon is certified by the Boston Athletic Association. The association provided start and finish banners, commemorative items, and certificates for participants. Chaplain (Cpt.) Fr. Lukasz J. Willenberg of the 10th Mountain Division, a Boston native, coordinated and set up the event.

The 1103rd CSSB is deployed to Afghanistan to support retrograding material and descopeing base closures for the entire Combined-Joint Operating Area.



Contributed/photo

1st Lt. James Mann and Maj. Chris Amos display medals awarded for participation in the Bagram Shadow Boston Marathon. Maj. Amos finished 3:56:50 and 1st Lt. Mann finished in 7th place 3:00:43 out of 600 runners.



Contributed/photo

1st Lt. Mann and the other race participants began the marathon early in the morning before sunrise.

Ceremonies held to remember fallen Airmen

by Master Sgt. Ken Johnson
117th Air Refueling Wing Public Affairs

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. - The 117th Air Refueling Wing held two ceremonies here, April 18, 2014, to honor four Alabama Air National Guard Airmen who were killed in action during the Bay of Pigs invasion.

On April 19, 1961, two B-26 aircraft operated by Thomas “Pete” Ray, Riley Shamburger, Wade Gray and Leo Baker were shot down by Cuban fighter jets.

The Bay of Pigs operation was a Central Intelligence Agency mission intended to use Cuban ex-



Ken Johnson/photo

Retired members from the 117th Air Refueling Wing who participated in the Bay of Pigs invasion were present during a grave side wreath laying ceremony honoring Thomas Pete Ray. Ray was the only Alabama Airman who was killed during the invasion that was returned to the United States. Ray’s grave site is located in Forest Cemetery overlooking the Birmingham Airport

iles to invade the island of Cuba and start a revolution against Fidel Castro. Conducted in secrecy, it was carried out in part by Airmen from the 117th Reconnaissance Wing, which later became the 117th Air Refueling Wing. Due to the secret nature of the mission, no one in the Alabama Air National Guard was allowed to discuss the mission or what had happened to the airmen for more than two decades. It was another twenty years before the CIA publicly acknowledged the failed invasion and the loss of the Alabama Airmen.

guest during the ceremony were fellow 117 Air Refueling Wing Airmen Charles Yates, Roy Wilson, Freddy Raley and Jim Glenn who were involved in the mission.

“When we lost our pilots, that was really bad. It’s a sad thing for them not to come back” said Yates.

A public grave-side service was held later in the day at Ray’s tomb in the Forest Hill Cemetery. Ray’s body is the only one of the four airmen that was returned to the United States.

The service began with a prayer by Chaplain Daryl Hamaker followed by Lt. Col. Michael Metcalf laying a wreath at the Ray’s grave. The service concluded with a 21-rifle salute by the 117 Air Refueling Wing honor guard follow by the playing of Taps by Master Sgt. Richard Bailey.



Ken Johnson/photo

Retired members from the 117th Air Refueling Wing who participated in the Bay of Pigs invasion are honored during a nose art dedication for the Alabama Air National Guardsmen who were shot down and killed during the invasion. They are a few of the last surviving participants of the secret operation that cost the lives of Thomas Pete Ray, Riley Shamburger, Leo Baker and Wade Gray.

A private nose art dedication ceremony was held on base in the maintenance hangar. Special

Snap Shots

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



Robert Kendall/photo

ATHENS, Ala.- Governor Robert Bentley visits the Bill & Barb Trailer Park on HWY 72, one of the locations affected by the tornado, accompanied by Spc. Dustin Ballenger and Spc. Shane Bower from the 152nd Military Police Company.



Robert Kendall/photo

ATHENS, Ala. - Spc. Shane Bower of the 152nd Military Police Company detours unauthorized personnel from entering the disaster area and provides direction for authorized citizens.



Robert Kendall/photo

ATHENS, Ala. - Sgt. Wesley Donaldson and Pvt. 1st Class Darren Reedy from the 152nd Military Police Company assist local officials with security in Limestone county where deadly tornados touched down April 28, 2014. Soldiers secured the area, allowing residents to begin the process of cleaning up their homes while the military police provided access control.

Women's History Month Honoree

by Staff Sgt. Brittany McDonald

This year's theme, Celebrating Women of Character, Courage, and Commitment, honors the extraordinary and often unrecognized determination and tenacity of women. In reflection of Women's History month, we recognize Sgt. Chelsey George.



George joined the Alabama Army National Guard in January 2009 as an E-1, private, gaining a Secret security clearance and becoming a military police officer. With less than two years into her enlistment, Sgt. George moved through the ranks and was promoted to E-4, specialist. Within the next year (2012), Sgt. George deployed with the 152nd Military Police Company and was promoted to E-5, sergeant.

While deployed, she was able to attend Warrior Leadership Course and graduate with honors to include being ranked in the top 20 percent of her class and was placed on the Commandant's list. Sgt. George has attained superior group results among her peers through positive action and leadership skills. During deployment, Sgt. George not only conducted her military police duties but took responsibility for all administrative and personnel actions for the Soldiers in her unit.

In addition to Sgt. George's professional military service, she also upholds the standard for being a Citizen Soldier in her community. She strives to stay fit for more than just her military obligations but for her own personal health and has competed in more than ten 5K post runs that were promoting esprit de corps. She has recruited Soldiers in her unit to attend Financial Peace University to help them better their financial decisions for themselves and for their family.

Not only is she a professional in her military career but has attended college with Summa Cum Laude honors and has been able to maintain a 4.0 GPA. On March 22nd, 2014, Sgt. George reenlisted for three additional years to continue her service in the Alabama Army National Guard. This woman goes above and beyond as a Soldier and as a productive and positive member of our society that needs to be recognized so that many other women may strive for excellence to better this great nation in which we live.

Supply Excellence Award



Sgt. 1st Class Charles E. Bunn, 279th Army Field Support Brigade and Staff Sgt. Christopher S. Waggoner, Troop B, 1st 131st Cavalry Squadron earned recognition for their excellent efforts with the Army Chief of Staff, Supply Excellence Award (SEA). The units begin by competing on a major command level and go through a thorough inspection of their records, standard-operating procedures, and how well they follow Army and National Guard Regulations. To win the award, the 279th Army Field Support Brigade and Troop B, 1st 131st Cavalry Squadron achieved excellence on an evaluation of its battalion property book office and unit supply and arms room procedures.



Field Artillery Battalion conducts a live fire exercise

by Staff Sgt. Christopher Davis
Contributing Writer

CAMP SHELBY, Miss. - Battery A of the 1-117th Field Artillery Battalion conducted a live fire exercise, May 5, 2014, at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. This exercise included joint forces from the Mississippi Air National Guard, 1-117th Field Artillery Battalion and C Troop of the 1-131st Cavalry.

The operation was a sling-load airlift of a M777 155mm howitzer underneath a CH-47



Christopher Davis/photo

A CH-47 Chinook from the Mississippi Air National Guard flies on final approach to conduct a sling load operation with Section 2, A Battery, gun crew. The members of Section 2 are responsible to connect two ropes, connecting four points, to the CH-47.



Christopher Davis/photo

As members of Section 2, A Battery, insure all have left the 155mm howitzer, the CH-47 Chinook crew chief inspects the two cables as the howitzer is lifted off the ground.

Chinook helicopter from a staging area to a new firing position.

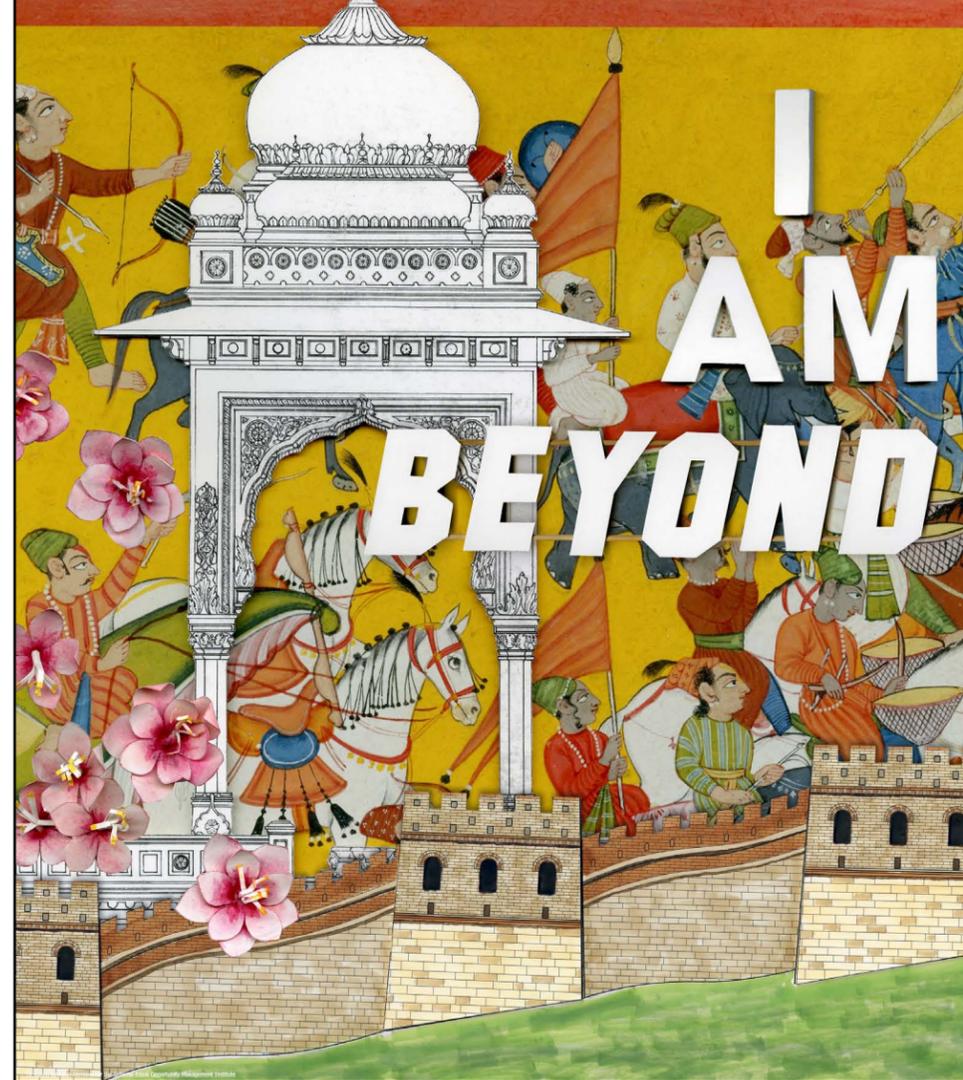
“It is part of the core mission for this unit,” said Col. Curtis Faulk, the post commander at Fort McClellan. “This is how a unit, like A Battery, prepares for down range missions.”

Col. Faulk was a second lieutenant with the 1-117th Field Artillery the last time sling-load operations were conducted by Alabama Army National Guard units at Fort Stewart, Georgia, in 1992.

Battery A is comprised of two platoons with three howitzers each performing a wide array of missions. Each section, each gun crew has between seven to nine members. A senior noncommissioned officer serves as crew chief giving directions to the crew as they are setting up for the next firing order. Three

(Please see *LIVE FIRE*, page 11)

ASIAN AMERICAN PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH



by Staff Sgt. Stephanie Speckman
187th Fighter Wing

“I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America and to the Republic for which it stands...” This American creed of loyalty, patriotism, and unity has been recited by Americans from all walks of life throughout generations. The pledge is a sentiment that is poured out on the battle fields, and it is a statement that echoes proudly through the

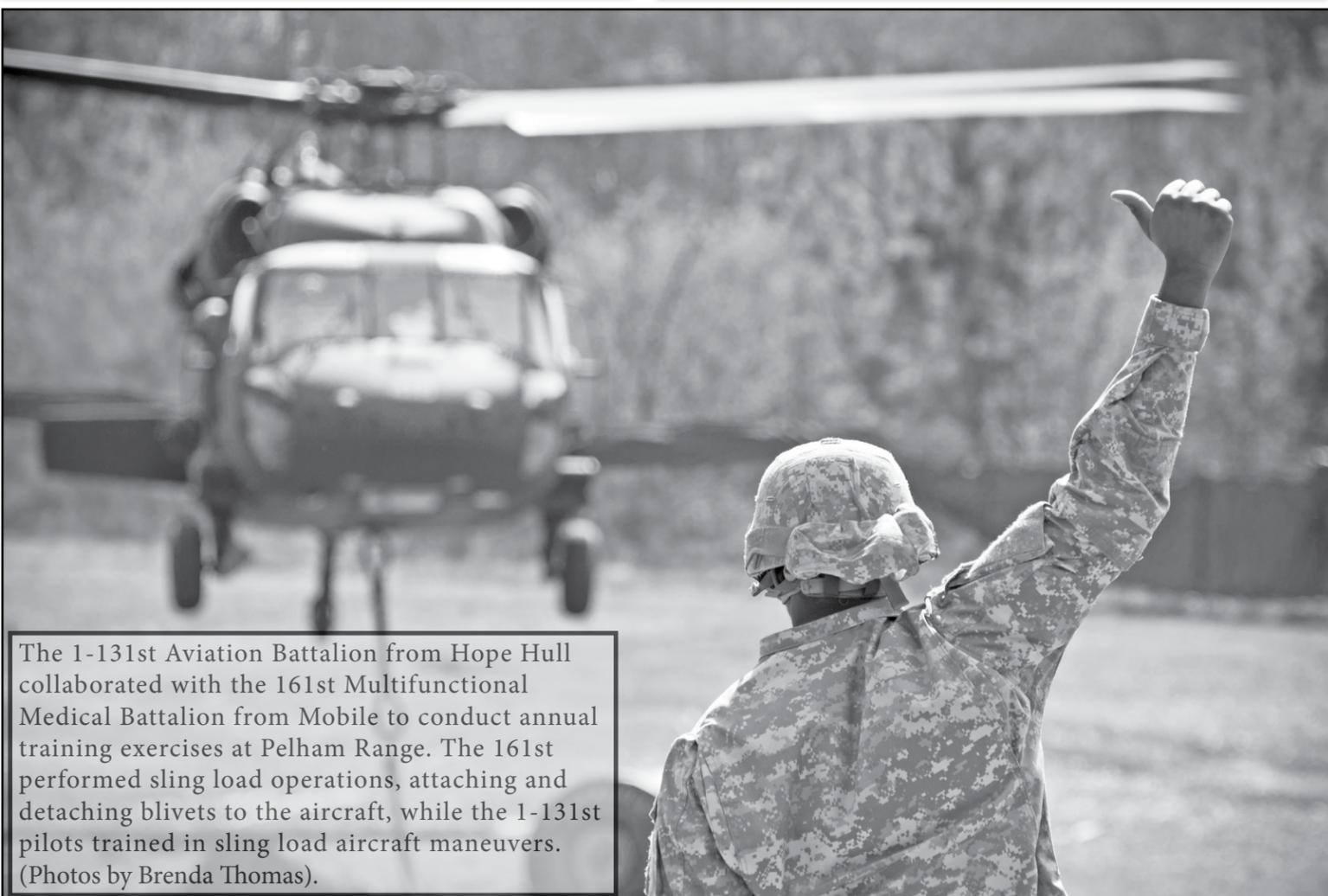
school halls.

For some Americans, pride in the colors has been tested through injustice and hardship. In 1942, Executive Order 9066 was signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, which called for the round-up of more than 100,000 Japanese Americans. They were brought to internment camps or “relocation centers” because their loyalty was called into question after the Japanese Attack at Pearl Harbor.

Prejudice and injustice is not uncommon to the Asian American experience. The bitter struggle can break down a people group, indeed, it can break down the soul. For Asian-Pacific Americans, however, adversity was met with fortitude. Where there was injustice, endurance held strong. Where prejudice permeated, the American will prevailed.

In 1978 President Jimmy Carter signed a joint resolution proclaiming the first ten days of May as Asian Pacific Heritage Week. Later, President George H.W. Bush extended the week-long celebration and declared May as Asian-Pacific Heritage Month. The month of May is particularly special to Asian-Americans and specifically chosen. In May 1843, the first group of Japanese immigrated to America. Years later, in May 1869, the transcontinental railroad was completed. Chinese immigrants were the majority of those who labored on the tracks.

Asian Americans fought for this country while their families were held at internment camps. They fight for our country today. Many have contributed greatly to our government, science and medicine, education, and the arts. We take this time in May to celebrate and honor our fellow Americans of Asian-Pacific Islander heritage. Not only do we celebrate this month, but we should remember our history and learn from it. We should understand our allegiance and hold fast to our words when we say, “One nation, under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”



The 1-131st Aviation Battalion from Hope Hull collaborated with the 161st Multifunctional Medical Battalion from Mobile to conduct annual training exercises at Pelham Range. The 161st performed sling load operations, attaching and detaching blivets to the aircraft, while the 1-131st pilots trained in sling load aircraft maneuvers. (Photos by Brenda Thomas).

(MEMORIAL continued from page 3)

ored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion...”

This Memorial Day, let us keep alive the memories of the fallen and take up their cause of freedom for our great nation.

There is nothing wrong with a barbeque on Memorial Day – I plan to have one myself – but let us not allow the festivities to overshadow the reason for the holiday; that is, that some of our comrades-in-arms have died in battle that our freedom might be secure.

I hope you will do as I will this Memorial Day and say a prayer for the families left behind, for those warriors still in harm’s way, and for every fighting man and woman in our military. Lead from the front!

(AT continued from page 3)

sion and the commander’s intent.

I had the opportunity this month to visit Soldiers from the 877th Engineer Battalion, 231st Military Police Company, 131st Cavalry, 142nd Battlefield Surveillance Brigade, and the 117th Field Artillery, during their annual

training. These Soldiers expressed their desire to participate in the field training exercises, their willingness to exceed expectations and even expressed how exciting the field environment can be when everyone is working together.

Soldiers are able to use

the experiences gained during their annual training and will be better positioned to serve and protect our State and Nation. The adjutant general and I are particularly proud of every Soldier and the added value they give to our Guard.

(LIVE FIRE continued from page 8)

noncommissioned officers function as the main gunner and assistant gunner, while the third acts as the ammunition crew chief. The rest of the crew is referred to by numbers according to their placement to moving rounds and setting up the howitzer at a firing position.

To ensure the adage, “Slow is smooth, and smooth is fast,” everyone in a crew has a very specific function to perform Staff Sgt. Emanuel Littrell explained.

Littrell expressed an experienced crew can send a round

downrange in less than four minutes from setting up the howitzer to receiving a firing order from the fire direction officer in the battery to computing the digital firing system for the final adjustments for traverse and elevation.

As high-explosive rounds landed on the designated impact area, members of C Troop, 1-131st Cavalry acted as the forward observers for A Battery. They would call in the coordinates to the FDOs and report battle damage assessments from the impacting rounds.

The coordination between

three different commands tested the skills and communications for the units involved.

“The teams did an outstanding job today,” said Capt. Joey Johnson, commander of A Battery, 1-117th Field Artillery Battalion. “You cannot beat these guys. They love what they do.”

The soldiers of Battery A displayed a professionalism to face the task at hand and complete the mission in a timely manner. Many of them hope to conduct similar operations in the future.

12 Alabama Guardsman

Congratulations to the following retiring Alabama Guardsmen:



O4	VANDYKE ZACHARY ANDREW	167TH THEATER SUSTAINMENT CMD
W5	PHELPS REX LEWIS JR	JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS
E6	WEBB RONALD LEE	2025 TRANS CO
E5	SANFORD GREGORY DONALD	167TH THEATER SUSTAINMENT CMD
E5	BARRINEAU RICHARD ALLEN	HHC 1-167 INFANTRY BATTALION
E5	HANNAH LAKEESHA ANWANN	DET 1 166 ENGINEER COMPANY
E6	WILLIAMS TERRENCE BERNARD	31ST BRIGADE SUPPORT COMPANY
E5	ROPER ERIC DEWAYNE	117 FORWARD SUPPORT COMPANY
O3	THOMPSON JANICE ELIZABETH	HSC 161 AREA SPT MED BN
E6	ROBERTS JAMES MICHAEL	CO A 711TH BSB
E7	MORGAN JOHN WALTER	HHD 711 BRIGADE SUPPORT BN
E6	EPPERSON CAREY MACK	GSB SPT & DISTRO CO (-) (ABN)
E6	TAYLOR JOEL MINH	DET 1 1165 MP CO
E7	STANBERRY JOSEPH JR	31ST SIGNAL COMPANY (CSB)
E7	MCCLAIN ALLEN SMITH	HHD 145 CHEMICAL BATTALION
E7	PHILLIPS STEVE FREDRICK	HHC 20 SF GP (ABN) 1 SF
O6	MOURI MICHAEL PATRICK	HHC 20 SF GP (ABN) 1 SF
O6	MOORER TERRY FITZGERALD	JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS
O6	HILL JOHN BRANT	62ND TROOP COMMAND
E9	GREEN WILLIAM SAMUEL	JOINT FORCES HEADQUARTERS