

Alabama Guardsman

Vol. III 2012

A publication for the Citizen-Soldiers & Airmen of Alabama



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Alabama Officer leads electronic warfare unit in Afghanistan

by Sgt. Darryl Montgomery
319th MPAD

KANDAHAR AIRFIELD, Afghanistan – A team here is at the tip of the spear when it comes to Army Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA). Soldiers with Task Force CEASAR are leading the way by laying the ground work needed to perform in this new mission arena for the Army.

Task Force CEASAR is comprised of 10 Soldiers from multiple state National Guard (NG) and active duty commands and is sponsored by Headquarters, Department of the Army, Electronic Warfare Division at the Pentagon.

CEASAR stands for Communications Electronic Attack with Surveillance and Reconnaissance and is a device that was specifically built to conduct aerial jamming and other Electronic Warfare operations from two fixed wing aircraft, according to Maj. Ross Cline, commander of the detachment and member of the Alabama Army National Guard's 62nd Troop Command.



Darryl Montgomery/photo

Maj. Ross Cline with Task Force CEASAR at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan, and resident of Mt. Olive, Ala., was selected to command the Army's first Airborne Electronic Attack unit and to be awarded the Bronze Star Medal and Basic Aviation Badge for his accomplishments.

CEASAR is the Army's initial response toward a large Airborne Electronic Attack (AEA) capability and capacity gap within its ranks. The most prevalent requirement that became evident in recent years is the lack of a Beyond Line of Site (BLOS) jamming capability to support the land forces, Cline said. The Army is developing Electronic Warfare (EW) as a new mission area, training EW Soldiers and developing EW weapons and CEASAR is the first BLOS Electronic Attack (EA) weapon in the

Army's arsenal.

"CEASAR is used to gain and maintain the advantage in the electromagnetic spectrum (EMS) that supports the ground force commander's scheme of maneuver," Cline said. "In layman's terms, CEASAR is a device that jams radio frequencies, denying the enemy the ability to coordinate operations at certain times and places while providing a tactical advantage to Coalition Forces," said Cline.

(Please see *CEASAR*, page 5)

Alabama Guardsman

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, int-paoal@ng.army.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.

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On the Cover

Soldiers with Task Force CEASAR assemble for a photograph with their unit guidon in front of the CEASAR-equipped planes at Kandahar Airfield, Afghanistan. Maj. Ross Cline, 62nd Troop Command, is the commander of Task Force CEASAR (contributed photo).

Adjutant General

Women have a proud history in the Alabama Guard



**Maj. Gen.
Perry Smith**

March is National Women's History Month. Alabama has a rich history with women often playing key roles. This is particularly true in the Alabama National Guard.

The Alabama National Guard trains thousands of Soldiers every year at the Fort McClellan Army National Guard Training Site, formerly U.S. Army post Fort McClellan. This post became home to the Women's Army Corps (WAC) in 1954 and remained so until the WAC was

dissolved in 1978. Today officer candidates and warrant officer candidates often sit in WAC Chapel on Fort McClellan for their in-briefings. That chapel is very near WAC Circle. The WAC made its mark on Alabama and inspired many young Alabama girls to grow up and join the military, knowing they had something valuable to offer their state and nation.

Two such young girls grew up to have quite an impact on the Alabama National Guard. One, 1st Lt. Sara Ferrero, became the Alabama National Guard's first female fighter pilot and another, Maj. Gen. Sheryl E. Gordon, became the Alabama National Guard's first female general officer. Ferrero is currently assigned to the 100th Fighter Squadron and Maj. Gen. Gordon is the Assistant Adjutant General.

I hope we can all learn from these two women. I hope we learn fearlessness, leadership and dedication to service. I want to personally thank these two women for inspiring me. I want each Alabama National Guard Soldier and Airman to realize it is leaders like those instrumental in establishing the WAC and then fully integrating it into the Army, as well as warriors such as 1st Lt. Ferrero and Maj. Gen. Gordon, who will lead the Alabama National Guard into the future, making it a premier organization among its peers. Lead from the front!

Note: For a history of the Women's Army Corps, visit <http://www.history.army.mil/books/wac/index.htm>.

State Command Sergeant Major

Why you should visit your local Veteran's Affairs office



**Command Sgt.
Maj.
Eddie Pike**

According to the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) website, their goal is to promote awareness of benefits those eligible veterans, their families, and survivors could be entitled to receive from

the federal and state governments. They want veterans and their families to receive the support, care, and recognition that they have earned and are entitled by administering programs,

anticipating future needs and taking action to meet those needs. There is an Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA) office, and a Veterans Service Officer (VSO) located in all 67 Alabama counties. To find your VSO, go to: <http://www.va.state.al.us/vso.htm>. National Guard members may be eligible for Veterans Affairs benefits under certain conditions.

Chapter 8 of the pamphlet published by the Veterans Benefits Administration titled "Federal Benefits for Veterans, Dependents and Survivors" lists the federal benefits that members of the National Guard may be eligible for. You can find it online at www.va.gov/opa/publica-

[tions/benefits_book.asp](http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/benefits_book.asp). You may be able to pick up a copy at your local ADVA office. There are several state benefits that a National Guard member might be eligible for. One of the benefits you are already familiar with is the National Guard license vehicle tag program. For a list of other benefits, go to this website: <http://www.va.state.al.us/laws.htm>, or see your local VSO. You can see a Veterans Service Officer at your local Department of Veterans Affairs Office to make a claim for VA benefits based on federal service. National Guard members can establish eligibility for VA benefits if activated for federal (Please see VA, page 5)

Guard recruiters take a shot with new methods

by Spc. Eric Roberts
131st MPAD

In the midst of war and shrinking budgets the Alabama National Guard recruiters are constantly taking advantage of various methods to enlist new Soldiers.

Recruiting is no longer a handshake and t-shirt giveaways; it is a production aimed at forming relationships with prospective soldiers.

Last month, the National Guard 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament traveled to the University of Alabama at Birmingham giving the Alabama Guard recruiters a unique tool to meet prospective Soldiers.

Sgt. 1st Class Brent Nix, 22nd Recruiting and Retention Battalion, said that the two weeks leading up to the event was crucial.

“The tournament was a cooperative effort between the National Guard, Redpeg Marketing and Team Lucid,” said Nix. “The Guard is marketed, and it is lead generated recruiting.”

Lead generated recruiting is used extensively in the National Guard. Recruiters go to events such as World Wrestling Entertainment matches, AMA Super-bike races and Indy Car races to generate leads, and after the event is over they are able to contact the participants.

Staff Sgt. Laura Carroll said that events like the basketball tournament “get the name of the Guard out there, while giving students something to do.”

As approximately 400 registered participants prepared to take their game to the hardwood, former NBA power forward Tim Hammonds took the microphone to share with the participants.

“I am not here to tell you to go into the National Guard,” said the former number one draft pick of the Washington Bullets. “I am here to tell you that you have options in life.”

“So many of you are going to graduate from UAB and be unemployed; the number one job for graduates these days is bar-tending,” added Hammonds.

Hammonds said the Guard offers employment, money for school and numerous opportunities in the hard economic times.

Alabama National Guardsman Cornelius Taylor, Battalion Commander of UAB ROTC, was on hand to take part in the festivities.

“This tournament shows what kind of organization the Guard is,” said Taylor.

Taylor who has spent six years in the Guard and has two deployments under his belt said that joining the National Guard is one of the best decisions he has ever made.

The decision to join for the Marketing major was made during his school through his relationship with his recruiter.

“I was part of the Naval ROTC in high school,” said Taylor, a native of Abbeville. “We saw the National Guard recruiters the most, and when



Eric Roberts/photo

A participant takes a shot at the National Guard 3 on 3 Basketball Tournament at the University of Alabama at Birmingham in February.

we needed money for our Military Ball, the National Guard sponsored it.”

Taylor said that he and his recruiter have kept up over the years and the relationships launched in high school have put him here today.

A day of recruiting came to a close Saturday with possibly others like Taylor amongst its participants, but Hammonds wanted to leave with one thought.

“The National Guard will instill core values in you that I used everyday in my 12-year NBA career,” he said. “They will instill Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless-Service, Honor, Integrity and Personal Courage.”

JOB FAIR

Must pre-register at www.hoh.greatjob.net by 16 April

19 APRIL 2012
9 A.M. - 2 P.M.

MOBILE CIVIC CENTER EXPO HALL
401 CIVIC CENTER DR. MOBILE, AL

24 APRIL 2012
1 P.M. - 4 P.M.

BIRMINGHAM CROSSPLEX
(HARRIS ARENA)
2331 BESSEMER RD. BIRMINGHAM, AL

26 APRIL 2012
12:30P.M. - 3:30P.M.

FORT TAYLOR HARDIN ARMORY
1600 NE BYPASS MONTGOMERY, AL

more info at [www.uschamber.com//hiring our heroes/events](http://www.uschamber.com//hiring_our_heroes/events)

(CEASAR continued from page 2)

The unit arrived in Afghanistan in August of 2011 and has put in more than 960 flying hours in support of more than 300 combat missions in southern Afghanistan. Cline, a resident of Mt. Olive, Ala., is one of the first Electronic Warfare Officers in the Army to receive the Basic Aviation Badge for his contributions as an aircrew member. "This deployment has been both challenging and rewarding to me

(VA continued from page 3)

service during a period of war or domestic emergency. Activation for other than federal service does not qualify Guard members for all VA benefits. If you visit your VSO, take a copy of the military orders, presidential proclamation or executive order that clearly demonstrates the federal nature of the service.

Members of the National Guard are eligible for VA health care if they served on

and it has been an honor to be a part of such a dynamic team" Cline said.

Cline has been involved in both Electronic Warfare and Cyber operations for the Army since 2006 so he is no stranger to the EW community at large. When not in uniform, Cline works for Science Applications International Corporation (SAIC) as a Senior Operations Analyst in support of EW and Cyber efforts at their Huntsville, Ala. office. "My

employer has been very supportive to me as they are with all service members supporting the war effort," Cline said.

Due to the tremendous success of the CEASAR project and the efforts of Cline and his team, it will remain at KAF and continue to support the warfighter for the months and years to come.

active duty in a theater of combat operations after Nov. 11, 1998, and have been discharged under other than dishonorable conditions.

For additional information about VA Health Care, call 1-877-222-VETS (8387). VA pays monthly compensation benefits for disabilities incurred or aggravated during active duty and active duty for training as a result of injury or disease, and for disabilities due

to injury, heart attack, or stroke that occurred during inactive duty training. Your local office of ADVA can help you apply for these benefits. The U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs is the federal agency that actually furnishes the benefits and services to veterans and their families, whereas the goal of the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs is to make veterans aware of those services.

Soldier makes historic transition to drill sergeant

by Sgt. 1st Class Jamie Brown
131st MPAD

An unusual event has occurred in the Alabama National Guard and it is producing positive results. Staff Sgt. Jamie Keith, a recruiter, from the 22nd Recruiting Battalion based in Montgomery, recently became the first member of the Alabama National Guard to graduate from U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School (USADSS).

Because the Alabama National Guard had never sent a Soldier to USADSS, it took some work for Keith to get there.

"I begged and pleaded," Keith said. "Everybody comes in the military and they want Airborne School, Air Assault School and I always wanted to be a drill sergeant and in the National Guard that's not possible. I got to reading on one of the websites and I noticed that some of the other Guard units in other states were doing it and so I ran it up the chain of command about a year ago." Eventually Keith landed a spot and reported to school June 15, 2011 in Fort Jackson.

After having overcome the challenge of getting into USADSS, Keith now had to meet the challenge of completing it.

"It's exactly nine weeks and four days, just like Basic," he said. "It actually mirrors Basic Training, but it's ten times as intense (as Basic Training) because you're already a noncommissioned officer, so you have to know everything that privates know plus everything you should have learned as an NCO."

According to Keith, coming from a National Guard background did make him stand out at school.

"Being in the Guard, we tend to get away from certain things, so I had to get back to that frame of mind, because I was the only National Guard person there. It was interesting at first. They kind of asked me 'what are you doing here?' My counterparts took to it well. They would always ask questions. I got picked on as a recruiter once in a while, but I knew that was going to happen.



Contributed/photo

Staff Sgt. Jamie Keith gives instruction to a Soldier in the Recruit Sustainment Program (RSP). Keith is the first Soldier in the Alabama National Guard to complete U.S. Army Drill Sergeant School.

I was expecting that. But they would always ask questions, "How is this going to work?" and that type of thing. But it actually helped, because it gave them a perspective of what we do here, so when all my buddies that went through with me see National Guard Soldiers and they're squared away, at least more than the regular Army ones, they know they've had prior training by the RSP (Recruit Sustainment Program)."

Making the RSP program more effective was the goal behind going to school for Keith.

"During the week I'm a recruiter and I take the hat off," he said. "The way the RSP works is our recruits, all the new privates, come here to get ready for basic training. So our job here is to get them ready for basic training so they're not in shock when they get there. So on the weekends, I provide that standard that they're going to see in basic training, so they don't get there and are terrified when they see a hat; they've seen them before."

So far things seem to be working out according to Keith.

"They seem to be responding well," he said. "Their movements are a lot faster than if I wasn't a drill sergeant. I actually got a lot more

training in this morning than I would have on a regular basis. That part is good."

Keith's fellow soldiers have also noticed the benefits of him attending USADSS.

"He's been extremely squared away since he got back," said Sgt. 1st Class Scott Smitherman, operations NCO, A Co. 22nd Recruiting Battalion. "His instructors, when I talked to them when he graduated, were impressed with him being a National Guard soldier and making it through that class. They had more respect for the National Guard after him completing that class. He's extremely motivated. He wants to be a good NCO. He takes care of his soldiers. He's always done that, even as a recruiter. He goes the extra mile once he gets them in the Guard."

Keith has not spent too much time reflecting on his achievement as the first drill sergeant in the Alabama National Guard. He's already looking to the future.

"It didn't hit me until I got home," he said. "I didn't know I was the first one in the state that had gone through. Maybe I won't be the last. I'd like to have a lot of counterparts here helping me."