

THE DISPATCH

D

JUNE 2016

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



Contents

- 4 From the Top
- 6 Good Ol' Fashion Loadeo
- 8 Best Warriors Honored
- 10 Ever Vigilant
- 14 Hall Of Honor
- 16 Reunited
- 18 Cyber Shield
- 19 Emerald Warrior
- 21 Real Guidance
- 24 Our Force
- 25 Key Leaders

The Cover



Texas Guardsman Staff Sgt. Jake Jackson competes against soldiers from the Arkansas National Guard, Kansas National Guard, Louisiana National Guard, Missouri National Guard, Nebraska National Guard and Oklahoma National Guard during the Region V Best Warrior Competition May 17-19, 2016, at the Kansas Regional Training Center, Salina, Kan. The Soldiers competed against one another in a grueling set of events that included an Army Physical Fitness Test, day and night land navigation, a 12-mile ruck march and appearance before a board of command sergeants major. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Pfc. Kathryn Mazos/ Released)



Members of the Employee Support of the Guard and Reserve group visited the 136th Airlift Wing, Texas Air National Guard, Naval Air Station Fort Worth Joint Reserve Base on April 29, 2016. The group learned about the 136AW mission and capabilities, (National Guard photos by Tech. Sgt. Vanessa Reed/ Released)



Governor
Greg Abbott



The Adjutant General
Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols

Public Affairs Officer
Lt. Col. Travis Walters

Deputy Public Affairs Officer
Maj. Joshua Amstutz

Public Affairs Staff
Capt. Martha Nigrelle
Sgt. Elizabeth Peña
John Gately
Laura Lopez
John Thibodeau
Michelle McBride

Graphic Layout and Design
Bob Seyller

Contributing Writers and Photographers

The Texas Military Department Public Affairs Office would like to thank all the contributing writers and photographers who generously share their work with us. Without the hard work and dedication of Soldiers, Airmen and civilians, we would not be able to tell YOUR TMD story.

** The Dispatch is an authorized publication for members of the Texas Military Department and the Department of Defense. Contents of The Dispatch are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. Government, the National Guard Bureau, or the State of Texas. * The editorial content of this publication is the responsibility of the Texas Military Department Public Affairs Office. * The appearance of advertising in this publication, including inserts or supplements, does not constitute endorsement of the products or services advertised by the U.S. Army or the Texas Military Department. * Everything advertised in this publication will be made available for purchase, use, or patronage without regard to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, marital status, physical handicap, political affiliation, or any other factor of the purchaser, user, or patron. If a violation or rejection of this equal opportunity policy by an advertiser is confirmed, the publisher will refuse to print advertising from that source until the violation is corrected. * Content is edited, prepared and provided by the Texas Joint Military Department Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 10, 2200 W. 35th Street, Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas. 78703.**

WARRANT OFFICERS



THE CULTURE OF RELEVANCE AND READINESS

Commentary by CW5 Earnest E. Metcalf

Texas Army National Guard Command Chief Warrant Officer

Everywhere I travel I see warrant officers doing great things for the Army and for the Texas Army National Guard. I see them working hard in their day jobs and volunteering their time and energy to a multitude of important projects. While representing about two percent of the total Army force and 15 percent of all Army Officers, ask any Commander—we're the first technical experts they seek in solving complex problems.

The Act of July 1918 introduced the rank and grade of warrant officer. It established the Army Mine Planter Service in the Coast Artillery Corps and directed that warrant officers serve as masters, mates, chief engineers and assistant engineers of each vessel.

The military grade of "warrant officer" dates back two centuries before Columbus, during the fledgling years of the British Navy. In World War I, the Coast Artillery Corps was responsible for mine defenses in major ports. Conflict between soldiers and civilian employees who manned these vessels revealed the need to ensure officially, the birth date of the Army Warrant Officer Corps is July 1918, when Congress established the Army Mine Planter Service as part of the Coast Artillery.



“ What hasn't changed in 98 years is our pride, our dedication to cause, our fortitude as professional technicians. ”

- CW5 Earnest E. Metcalf -

The Texas Army National Guard warrant officer cohort is comprised of over 365 men and women. These men and women are technical experts that manage and maintain increasingly complex battlefield systems. They enhance the Army's ability to defend our national interests, and to fight and win our nations wars.

In 98 years so many Army traditions remain unchanged; waiting in line to have your paycheck fixed. Wearing a hat that doesn't repel water and doesn't repel the sun. Carrying the same entrenching tool that Julius Caesar's soldiers did. Feeling great joy that the ball point pens you ordered from the supply system three months ago finally arrived. What hasn't changed in 98 years is our pride, our dedication to cause, our fortitude as professional technicians. What hasn't changed is the common bond amongst technical experts who have chosen a unique and challenging career path.

Ninety eight years ago I don't think anyone dreamed that someday Warrant Officers would be flying all of our manned and unmanned Army aircraft, securing communications in the White House and being the tip of the spear in places like Afghanistan. In the 1920's when the Warrant Officer Corps was formalized, Ford Model T's filled the streets, the U.S. had one public radio station and F. Scott Fitzgerald penned short stories capturing the Jazz Age. Perhaps three or four Military Occupational Specialties existed at the time, now we have more than 60 MOS's and 20 branches to serve in.

The Texas Army National Guard is currently authorized 498 warrant officer positions. These positions are currently filled at approximately 66 percent. It is necessary to have these positions filled at 100 percent. There are important lessons learned from not having 100 percent strength in numbers. King Leonidas’ infamous 300 were a group of highly skilled, highly trained warriors who were subject matter experts in the art of war. But even he fell short of defeating the Persian Army due to his lack of more fully qualified experts.

Future challenges await all of us. Our nation faces a multitude of unique threats, budget reductions and changes to the Army structure. I have great comfort knowing that every day our fine Warrant Officer Cohort helps the country to achieve what President Lincoln referred to as “...a just and lasting peace..”

In order to become a warrant officer an individual service member must meet basic and specific branch requirements. Each individual branch has its specific criteria for branch approval. The warrant officer strength manager (WOSM) plays an integral part in the processing of the applicants packet processing and professional military education and training. Throughout the duration of the candidacy process the strength manager counsels and advises each Soldier on the appropriate direction to take in terms of becoming a “fully qualified” warrant officer.

Basic Warrant Officer Candidate Prerequisites:

1. U.S. Citizen
2. GT Score of 110 or above
3. High school Diploma or equivalent
4. Secret Security Clearance
5. Must be able to pass a standard APFT
6. Age Requirements:

Aviation WO: 32

Technical WO: 46 (waivers are granted on a case-by-case basis).

There are two categories of warrant officers within the Army Technical Warrant Officers and the Aviation Warrant Officers. Both variations of warrant officer are unique in how they are force multipliers for the military and to their commanders. A Soldier interested in becoming a future warrant officer in the TXARNG must first review the prerequisite information on the USAREC Warrant Officer website and then contact the WOSM. The WOSM will Of- fice provide detailed guidance on the pre-determination packet processing and PME requirements for warrant of- ficer candidate school.- **FROM THE TOP**



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT JOINING THE WARRANT OFFICER CORPS CONTACT

TECHNICAL WOSM

Devane R. Love

Office: 512-782-1989

Email: devane.r.love.mil@mail.mil

AVIATION WOSM

Christopher Cordero

Office: 512-782-1457

Christopher.n.cordero.mil@mail.mil



Story By 2nd Lt. Phil Fountain

149th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

LUKE AIR FORCE BASE, Arizona (April 8, 2016) – A weapons loading team with the Texas Air National Guard participated in the Load Crew of the Quarter competition at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, April 8, 2016.

Tech. Sgts. Mark Nash and Federico Barrios and Senior Airman Robert Satter, aircraft armament systems technicians assigned to the 149th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, a subordinate unit of the 149th Fighter Wing, headquartered at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas participated in the first quarter competition.

In addition to the 149th team, the competition included U.S. Air Force weapons loading teams from the Luke-based 61st, 309th and 310th aircraft maintenance units, subordinate units of the 56th Fighter Wing.

“We were invited by the 56th Fighter Wing’s loading standardization section to perform in a ‘loadeo’ competition,” said Chief Master Sgt. Darin S. LaCour, the wing weapons manager for the 149th. “A three-member crew competed against the active duty weapons loaders for a load crew competition.”

“When we came here and introduced ourselves to them, they said, ‘hey, we have a competition, would you like to join?’ LaCour said. “We jumped at the chance and said ‘absolutely, we’ll be ready.’”

The 149th is currently conducting their F-16 Fighting Falcon operations at Luke, near Phoenix, while San Antonio’s Kelly Field undergoes repairs, which has temporarily limited the fighter training unit’s flight operations in the Alamo City.

“It builds camaraderie between the crews, out there,” said Master Sgt. Ian Snowsill, the weapons standardization superintendent for the 56th Maintenance Group. “It’s a competition, it’s bragging rights.”

The timed competition required the teams to load two inert AIM-120, advanced medium-range air-to-air missiles onto on their unit’s aircraft, Snowsill said. Additionally, there was a tool kit inventory and inspection by quality assurance from the 56th. There was also an individual written examination.

The competition brought out the Texas unit’s pride, complete with the Lone Star State’s flag on display and members from across the wing cheering on the weapons load crew.

“You definitely saw the pride that was in our unit,” Barrios said. “Being in the competition, you’re so focused on the task at hand. But, when you’ve got people out there cheering that loud, you can’t help but hear.”

“It motivates you,” Barrios said. “You want to go faster, you want to be more proficient, because you know you’ve got people behind you rooting you on.”

In addition to fellow weapons loaders, the 149th had airmen from across the wing watching the loaders compete.

“It’s not only good for loaders, but for the wing, in general,” LaCour said. “From the crew chiefs – to show off their jets and how clean we keep them – to the loaders showing off their skillsets and their speed and accuracy, to the [aerospace ground equipment] guys showing off their equipment and how quickly and well they work, to the operations guys coming out and seeing what we do every day.”

“This machine wouldn’t work without everyone involved,” LaCour said. “The loaders were highlighted today, but it takes everybody.”

As a career field, weapons load crews are responsible for ensuring their unit’s primary assigned aircraft are properly loaded with munitions and countermeasures to meet the pilot’s mission and contingency requirements, LaCour said. Competitions like this reinforce the importance of the loader’s role in the Air Force mission.

“The time-standard they used is the standard across the U.S. Air Force,” LaCour said. “It shows the load crews where they’re at, as far as their time standards. It’s a big morale booster for everyone involved.”

LaCour was pleased with his weapons loaders’ performance.

“They did an outstanding job representing the Texas Air National Guard and the Air Force, in general,” LaCour said. **-D**



149TH AIRCRAFT MAINTENANCE SQUADRON

- 1) Tech. Sgt. Federico Barrios, an aircraft armament systems technician, installs a fin on an inert AIM-120, advanced medium-range air-to-air missile.
- 2) Chief Master Sgt. Darin S. LaCour, wing weapons manager for the 149th Fighter Wing, watches his crew during the loading competition.
- 3) Senior Airman Robert Satter (left), Tech. Sgt. Federico Barrios (center) and Tech. Sgt. Mark Nash (right) pose with the Texas flag.
- 4) Tech. Sgt. Mark Nash, an aircraft armament systems technician, inspects an inert AIM-120, advanced medium-range air-to-air missile.

All photos taken during 56th Fighter Wing’s quarterly load crew of the quarter competition at Luke Air Force Base, Arizona, April 8, 2016.
 (U.S. Air National Guard Photos by 2nd Lt. Phil Fountain / released)

BEST WARRIORS HONORED

Story By 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy

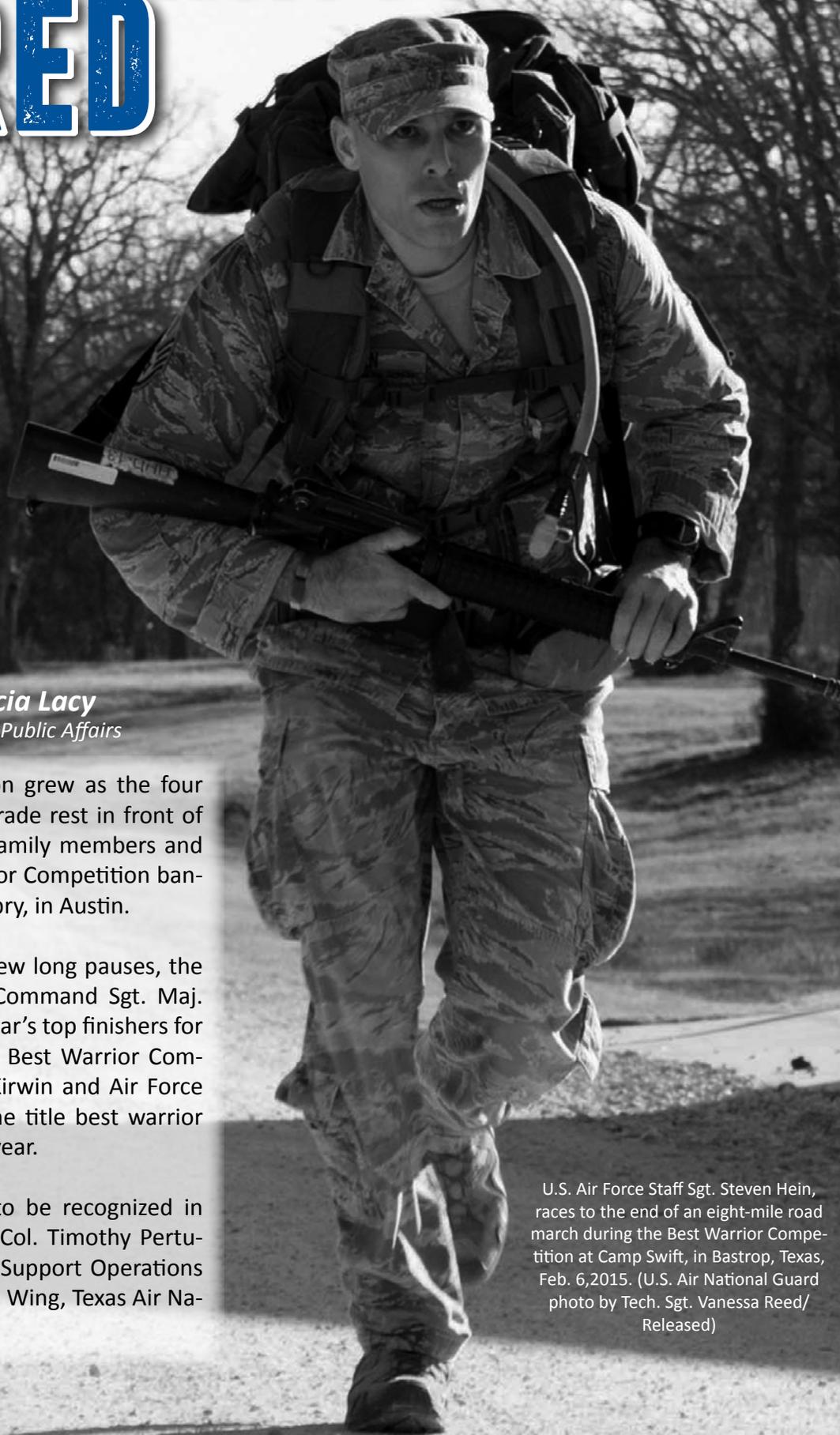
147th Reconnaissance Wing Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas -- The anticipation grew as the four airmen and soldiers stood at parade rest in front of a room filled with their peers, family members and leaders at the annual Best Warrior Competition banquet May 13, 2016, at Camp Mabry, in Austin.

After the third drum roll and a few long pauses, the state's Senior Enlisted Advisor Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Weedon announced this year's top finishers for the Texas Military Department's Best Warrior Competition. Senior Airman Austin Kirwin and Air Force Staff Sgt. Steven Hein earned the title best warrior and bragging rights for the next year.

"It's an honor for our airmen to be recognized in the joint environment," said Lt. Col. Timothy Pertuis, commander of the 147th Air Support Operations Squadron, 147th Reconnaissance Wing, Texas Air National Guard.

U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Steven Hein, races to the end of an eight-mile road march during the Best Warrior Competition at Camp Swift, in Bastrop, Texas, Feb. 6, 2015. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by Tech. Sgt. Vanessa Reed/Released)





Staff Sgt. Steven Hein, (left) security forces airman 136th Airlift Wing, Senior Airmen Austin Kirwin, (right) tactical air control party member, 147th Reconnaissance Wing, stand together after Hein and Kirwin are named the top junior enlisted and noncommissioned officer competitors at the Texas Army National Guard's Best Warrior Competition banquet May 13, 2016, at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas. The annual competition is an Army-wide competition that tests the physical and mental endurance of soldiers. (Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Alicia M. Lacy/Released)

The Best Warrior Competition is traditionally an Army competition that tests soldiers' physical and mental aptitude, but in 2013, the Texas Army National Guard integrated its Texas Air Guard counterparts. Since then, the Air guardsmen have competed with their Army comrades every year.

Kirwin, a tactical air control party member from the 147th ASOS, and Staff Sgt. Steven Hein, a security forces airman from the 136th Security Forces Squadron, 136th Airlift Wing, competed with about 60 other Texas Air and Army Guardsmen, as well as Army reservists from the 75th Training Command and members from the Chilean armed forces during the four-day competition Feb. 4-7, 2016, at Camp Swift in Bastrop.

"Airmen are competing and accomplishing alongside their Army National Guard and Chilean counterparts, and once again, airmen take the title of best warrior in the state of Texas" Pertuis said. "Senior Airman Kirwin and Staff Sergeant Hein are great examples of the tough professionals that our Texas Air National Guard recruits and develops."

Though this year was Kirwin's first time competing, this is Hein's second time competing for the title.

"I figured I'd give it another try," Hein said. "It was a good experience. It's fun. You get to meet some new people, experience new things and learn some new stuff."

"It's pretty impressive to make it twice in a row because he's competed against all the guys in his wing and beat them out a second time to get there," said U.S. Army Master Sgt. Shane Ruppel, BWC noncommissioned officer in charge, about Hein's second appearance at the annual competition.

The competition tests competitors through a series of events, including urban warfare simulations, board interviews, marksmanship, land navigation, physical fitness tests, a road march, an essay, an obstacle course and other warrior tasks and battle drills.

"The state of Texas leads the way in joint and international integration with our State Partnership Program and through the Best Warrior Competition," Pertuis said. "I'm grateful for the opportunity to serve with and lead these great airmen." **-D**

EVER VIGILANT

6th CERFP PARTICIPATE IN VIGILANT GUARD DISASTER EXERCISE

*Story By Staff Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson
136th Maneuver Enhancement Brigade Public Affairs*



*A Soldier with the Texas National Guard's 836th Sapper Co., 6th CBRNE Enhanced Response Force Package – CERFP, part of the Joint Task Force 136th (Maneuver Enhancement Brigade), prepares to rappel down a steep embankment during a low-angle rescue mission, as part of exercise Operation Vigilant Guard 2016 near Baton Rouge, La. April 15-17, 2016.
(U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson/Released)*

BATON ROUGE, La. (April 16, 2016) – Disaster response involves a plethora of military and civilian agencies, including the 6th Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear and Explosives Enhanced Response Force Package. Making sure those parts stay connected and moving in the same direction takes training and coordination across both military and civilian agencies.

During Operation Vigilant Guard, held near Baton Rouge, La., April 15-17, 2016, the soldiers and airmen of the 6th CERFP, part of the Texas National Guard's Joint Task Force 136 (Maneuver Enhancement Brigade), enjoyed a chance to train with the Louisiana CERFP, Louisiana Task Forces 1 and 2 and members of the Florida CERFP, as well as coordinating transportation and vehicle movement validation with the Mississippi and West Virginia Air National Guards.

For CERFP Commander Lt. Col. Heather Flores, Vigilant Guard satisfied two main objectives for her troops, to train and be trained.

"Our primary objective during Vigilant Guard was to get our new trailers validated in an air load," said Flores. "We received new trailers last year, and so we had to get all our equipment repacked and figure out how to load that into a military airframe."

A C-17 crew from the West Virginia Air National Guard transported members of the CERFP, along with the new trailers for validation, instructing the Texas Guardsmen on how to properly install loading ramps as well as securing equipment, large and small, for air movement. The flight crew was "wonderful," said Flores. "They did an amazing job training us and getting all our equipment loaded."

After reaching Baton Rouge and unloading the trucks, trailers and baggage from the plane, the second part of the mission began.

"Our other objective during Vigilant Guard was to help the Louisiana CERFP get their new Search and Extraction teams trained up," said Flores.

Search and Extraction Teams have a unique mission set, said 1st Lt. Jason Montalvo, 1st Platoon leader, 836th Sapper Co., part of the 6th CERFP.

"We go in to areas where there may be chemical or other hazards," he said, "and we rescue people from collapsed structures or inaccessible places."

After linking up with the incident commander, said Montalvo, there is a chain of events leading up to actually heading in to the "hot zone." Determining the exact nature of the disaster, including any chemical hazards, setting up an operations center next to decontamination assets, and setting up a reconnaissance team all happen before anyone ever suits up to head into the hazardous area. "After all that, we suit up- in full protective gear if necessary- and we establish our priorities of work," he said.

This kind of exercise with the support of an experienced unit is very helpful, said 1st Lt. Tolliver Washington, executive officer for the 927th Engineer Company, Louisiana CERFP's S&E element.

Although Washington knows his Sappers are up to the challenge, it's still useful to look to what other units do. "Being a combat engineer relates to this mission," he said, "since we do a lot of hands-on missions, and when something goes wrong we can fix it, but there's a difference between a unit with four years of experience and a unit with a few months of training. We've had this mission less than a year, so we're still in the early phases of our mission. We're working on getting all the training but this type of exercise is a huge benefit."

The Sappers in the 836th learn from each exercise, too, according to Montalvo. He stressed the exchange of ideas as a key element to the training.

"We're here to help this S&E team get ready for their overall evaluation," he said, "but we want to trade ideas so we can all implement ideas and process that work better. It's important because we've all got really diverse thoughts."



Soldiers and airmen hand off an infant "casualty" during a low-angle rescue mission, as part of exercise Operation Vigilant Guard 2016 near Baton Rouge, La. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson/ released)

The Sapper Company stays proficient in their military mission, says Montalvo, and that helps with their civil support mission as well. "Obviously, we're not going to use explosives when trying to rescue people from a collapsed building, but that's not the only thing engineers do. We do other types of work, including vertical construction, and we work with our hands a lot. That gives us a broad knowledge base to draw on but hearing from other people is always good."

The training benefits extend to another integral part of the S&E teams- the Air National Guard rig medics. The rig medics, highly trained Airmen, deploy with each S&E team to render medical care to casualties inside the hazard area. In order to do so safely, they must be trained to perform the same ascending and descending tasks as the Sappers.

"I really enjoy this part of being a medic," said Airman 1st Class Juan Espinoza. "There's a lot of thinking on your feet because everything changes." For Espinoza, the newest rig medic in the CERFP's 149th Medical Detachment, this exercise was his first true test.

"I haven't gone through the full rig medic training," he said, "so I had to learn everything on the fly."

Although he was nervous at first, coming through the other side of a tough mission has been eye-opening.

"I feel really confident in the team and what we can do," Espinoza said. "We save people's lives. We get in, we get the patients and we get them out and to higher tier medical care."

"I am so proud of these guys," said Flores. "They do amazing work for Texas and for all of FEMA Region VI. It tickles me to death to watch them do their jobs."

Apart from the hands-on aspect of training, exercises like Vigilant Guard give agencies a great chance to test communications, said Flores. "In the military, we use a lot of acronyms, and a lot of our civilian counterparts have no idea what they mean, so it's good to practice communicating in plain terms."

Not all communication issues are between people, said Flores. "Our radios had to be reprogrammed so we could talk to the local first responders," she said.

Technical adjustments aside, the Louisiana CERFP "integrated us really well, and it was great to see our teams embedded into the local urban search and rescue teams and Louisiana Task Forces 1 and 2," said Flores.

"No exercise ever goes the way you expect," said Flores. "This is a great chance to keep our folks flexible and thinking outside the box." **-D**

Soldiers work through a collapsed structure rescue exercise (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson/ released)



6th CERFP members construct the tactical operations center (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Jennifer D. Atkinson/ released)



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT HALL of HONOR

Story By Sgt. Michael Giles

100th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment

AUSTIN, Texas (May 14, 2016) -- The Texas Military Forces celebrated the contributions of two lifetime senior enlisted members by inducting them into the Texas Military Department's Hall of Honor May 14, 2016, at Camp Mabry.

The two retired military leaders, Sgt. Maj. Elwood H. Imken of the Texas Army National Guard, and Chief Master Sgt. Johnny D. Jones of the Texas Air Guard, received recognition for long and impactful military careers when they joined the ranks of the nearly 100 members who have been inducted since the tradition began in 1980.

The Hall of Honor, a room in the Texas Military Forces Museum, displays portraits and histories of military members whose leadership played key roles in transforming the Texas Military Department in positive ways. Texas military regulations state that Hall of Honor nominees need to have demonstrated positive impact through pioneering efforts or by changing the "outlook and focus of the organization."

Imken's 49 years of combined military and civilian federal service included leadership roles in training, disaster relief and community outreach missions such as Food for Families and Blue Santa. He said he learned early in his career that planning and program management were important for taking care of soldiers, because training time for Guard Soldiers was limited.



Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, Texas Military Forces adjutant general, inducts retired Army Sgt. Maj. Elwood H. Imken into the Texas Military Forces Museum Hall of Honor at Camp Mabry, Texas, May 14, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Sgt. Michael Giles)



Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, Texas Military Forces adjutant general, inducts retired Chief Master Sgt. Johnny D. Jones into the Texas Military Forces Museum Hall of Honor at Camp Mabry, Texas, May 14, 2016. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Sgt. Michael Giles)

“You knew you had to do good planning,” Imken said. “If you didn’t do good planning and task analysis on things, you couldn’t do anything.”

Imken’s advice for young service members looking to support the military in positive change is to work to make things less complicated.

“The biggest thing is listen, learn, use common sense and keep things simple,” Imken said.

Jones, a 38-year veteran of the Air Force and Air National Guard, served in Vietnam, Desert Storm/ Shield as well as Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom. His pioneering included breaking a record for transporting loads during Desert Storm and facilitating the emergency airlift of a 30-ton cooling tower by C-130, a feat that had never before been accomplished.

Jones said he was shocked to learn that his image and story would be placed on the wall in the Hall of Honor.

“Many times I’ve read the narratives and looked at the photos of the people on that wall,” Jones said. “I never expected to be on that wall with them.”

Hall of Honor inductees such as Imken and Jones have made the Army and Air and National Guards far stronger than they used to be, said Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the Adjutant General for Texas. He explained that leaders such as these have brought the Texas Military Department out of times when they were under-funded and under-equipped so that they can play key roles in national defense and domestic response.

“We owe our present conditions to them,” Nichols said. “They started the process to enable us to be equipped, trained and ready.”

“It is our honor to honor them, because they honored us by serving,” Nichols said. “We owe them that same honor to thank them for what they did for us.” -D



[*Click for Hall of Honor Video*](#)

REUNITED

TEXAS STATE GUARDSMEN REUNITE FAMILIES DURING KITE FESTIVAL

Story By Spc. Stefan Wray

2nd Regiment Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas – It couldn't have been a more perfect day for flying kites, as thousands gathered in Austin's Zilker Park on Sunday, March 6 2016, for the 88th Zilker Kite Festival.

For the 9th year, guardsmen from the Texas State Guard's 2nd Regiment spent the day helping to reunite children and parents who had become separated in the crowd and providing logistical support to event organizers.

Weather conditions were optimal and the wind was constant throughout the day enabling hundreds of kites of all designs, colors, shapes and sizes to remain in flight from mid morning to late afternoon.

Partnered with the Austin Park Rangers, guardsmen worked to reunite lost children with their parents.

"We had a lot of good people out in the field that knew what they were doing," said Austin Park Ranger Brian Leuzinger. "I think we just had a really great command team that were sharing information, making sure that everyone knew who and what we were looking for."

Working alongside park rangers, guardsmen were able to exercise their ground search and rescue skills, one the regiment's primary missions.

"The Kite Festival is really amazing. You get to see all the teamwork," said Private 1st Class Francis Ortiz, 3rd Battalion, 2nd Regiment. "All the training I had paid off to do search and rescue, locating any missing children or missing parents."





Texas State Guard Private 1st Class Pauline Deal speaks with festival goers who are lined up to board a bus that will return them to their vehicles at the Zilker Kite Festival in Austin, Texas, March 6, 2016. Assisting in the movement of large numbers of people is part of the Texas State Guard's mission. (Photo courtesy of Texas State Guard)

Some guardsmen even worked as linguists.

"Pfc. Dianna Salinas did an excellent job today. In one situation, an unaccompanied child was brought back to our TOC. While she was here Pfc. Salinas sat down on the ground with the child. The child spoke only Spanish," said Texas State Guards Staff Sgt. Curtis Rust. "Salinas was able to translate and get us the information we needed to reach out and locate the parents."

The Exchange Club of Austin originally founded the kite festival in 1929. It moved to Zilker Park in 1936 when the park opened and has been there ever since.

"We so appreciate y'all and we so need y'all to be here. It means so much to us," said Dorothy Twidwell, a member of the Exchange Club and the key festival organizer, referring to the 2nd Regiment's role in assisting with the festival. "The crowd has grown so large that what we need from the State Guard is management of the crowd, help getting people on and off the buses, and help us patrolling the field."

Approximately 25,000 festival goers attended the free event this year, said Les Stobart, ABC Home and Commercial Services' Marketing Director. The festival is actively being transferred from the Exchange Club to ABC.

"One of the first questions that we ask every year is 'Is the Guard going to be back? Can we count on the Guard again?'" said Sobard. "We couldn't do it without y'all, so we deeply appreciate the role that the Guard plays in everything."

The 2nd Regiment began preparations in advance of the actual festival. A logistical team was at Zilker Park the day before to make preparations. The 2nd Regiment converged on the morning of the festival near Zilker Park. Once on site, the Tactical Operations Center was set up adjacent to the command centers for Emergency Services and the Park Rangers.

Radios and GPS tracking devices were distributed to teams who were dispatched to positions throughout the park as well as other points in Austin where festival attendees would leave their cars and board buses to get to the park.

"It definitely exceeded my expectations," said Texas State Guard Pfc. Miranda Leal. "I didn't think it was going to be this involved and with this many people. It's really fun. I would do it again next year."

The regiment helped reunite 11 lost children with parents or guardians during the event. **-D**

Cyber Shield

Story By 2nd Lt. Victoria Mcgoffin

71st Theater Information Operations Group Public Affairs

EDINBURGH, Ind. – Soldiers and airmen from the Texas Military Department joined more than one thousand guardsmen from 46 states and territories to participate in a National Guard Bureau cyber defense exercise at Camp Atterbury near Edinburg Indiana, April 18-27, 2016.

Cyber Shield is designed to challenge service members to defend a network against incoming cyber threats in order to protect vital infrastructure from attacks by outside forces.

The two Texas units, the 71st Theater Information Operations Group, Texas Army National Guard, and the 273rd Information Operations Squadron, Texas Air National Guard, joined forces to create a unified cyber team for the exercise. Eleven service members formed the Texas team, while the other 27 Texas guardsmen provided support to other states—including Arkansas, Louisiana, Virginia, Minnesota and others.

Guardsmen worked with mock civilian entities in order to simulate the complex relationship between privately owned critical infrastructure and the U.S. government, for example a power grid said Maj. Timothy Amerson, the Texas team lead.

One piece of the National Guard’s mission is to help their state and the nation protect critical infrastructure during a man-made or natural disaster.

Participants were constantly challenged to consider not only how to successfully defend their mission partner’s network, but also how to anticipate the additional impacts and costs associated with their decisions.

“This exercise directly mirrors what we do in the real world,” said Amerson “We are learning how to protect and maintain critical infrastructure within the U.S. from outside threats.”

This was the first time the cyber team from Texas worked together on a major exercise, Amerson explained. The team was able to learn and grow together throughout the two weeks they spent in Indiana.

“When we came in, the assessment team rated us at a beginner level. In the end, we were assessed as advanced,” said Amerson. “We blew everyone away.”

Several members of the Texas team also got the opportunity to provide support to other states. Staff Sgt. Brian Jones, 71st Theater Information Operations Group, joined the Minnesota team for Cyber Shield and had the opportunity to see firsthand how other states coordinate cyber activities.

For Jones, one of the biggest takeaways was the high quality of communication while working with other states. Even though the groups had never worked together before, they ultimately figured out the individual strengths of each member of the team and took the time to collaborate with one another, said Jones. That information was then used to deny the hackers’ ability to damage the network.

“By working together we saw what was happening and were able to see the other possible types of attack,” Jones said.

Overall the experience was invaluable to both the soldiers and airmen of Texas, said Amerson. “We will use the feedback we received at Cyber Shield to continue to improve and begin preparing for next year.” -D



SECURE TEXAS

See if you could hack it as a National Guard Cyber Warrior.
Use the key hidden on this page to break the Cypher below.

Jvunyhabshapvuz vu zijbypun Alehz myvt pa'z vuspul lultplz.
oaawz://atk.alehz.nvc/jfily-zoplsk



EMERALD WARRIOR

TEXAS GUARDSMEN SUPPORT SPECIAL OPERATIONS TRAINING

Story by 2nd Lt. Victoria McGoffin

71st Theater Information Operations Group Public Affairs

HURLBURT FIELD, Fla. – Soldiers from the 71st Theater Information Operations Group, Texas National Guard, provided support to the special operations community as the only National Guard unit in this year’s iteration of the Emerald Warrior exercise at Hurlburt Field, from May 2-15, 2016.

The soldiers worked closely with sailors from Naval Special Warfare Group 2 and airmen from the Air Force Special Operations Command to create plans for interaction with local populations during a deployment.

This is the third year the Texas unit has participated in Emerald Warrior, and each year its role has grown, said Maj. Brent Kemp, Information Operations team leader. This year, Kemp served as an advisor to the command team during their key leader engagements with people within the exercise that acted as members of the local population.

A U.S. Army UH-60 Black Hawk flies over Eglin Range, Fla., May 6, 2016, during Exercise Emerald Warrior 16. Emerald Warrior is a U.S. Special Operations Command sponsored mission rehearsal exercise during which joint special operations forces train to respond to real and emerging worldwide threats. (U.S. Air Force photo by Senior Airman Jasmonet Jackson)



A U.S. Army soldier checks his gear prior to a high-altitude low-opening jump from a U.S. Air Force MC-130H Combat Talon II with the 15th Special Operations Squadron during Exercise Emerald Warrior 16 at Hurlburt Field, Fla., May 6, 2016. (U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Gregory Brook)

“We look at the likes and dislikes of a specific person,” said Kemp. “It lets the commander be better prepared and have an idea as to what he is going to say.”

There are certain things that a commander can and cannot do based on the background and the culture of the people he is meeting with, said Kemp. The team may be expected to partake in local customs, and it is up to the IO planner to inform and prepare the leadership team.

“Every component of the armed forces prepares for key leader engagements, but each one does it in a different way,” said Kemp. “Emerald Warrior gave the 71st TIOG an opportunity to utilize their skills in a joint environment and to also learn how the other service branches prepare for coordination with local leaders in a deployed environment.”

In total, Emerald Warrior has been going on for more than 10 years, said Capt. Robert Kueber, 71st Theater Information Operation Group planner. The exercise builds on itself, wherever the previous iteration left off, the next one will begin.

“As soon as you feel like you have everything figured out, it changes,” said Kueber. “We work with a different unit every year and this year we’re learning how to support the Navy. We adapt to different circumstances and learn something new every year.”

“These exercises provide the SOF community with a unique perspective and capability that they otherwise typically wouldn’t see,” said Col. Kevin Countie, Commander of the 71st Theater Information Operations Group.

Exercises like Emerald Warrior show how information operations functions as a force multiplier in the operational environment.

“We want to bring more units together as a single team, much like Cyber Shield and Cyber Guard and have our service members operate in a joint environment,” said Brig. Gen. Sean Ryan, commander of 71st Troop Command.

“This is our third year and each time we build our team a little differently to bring more assets and capabilities, said Ryan. “Next year will be even better.” **-D**



A U.S. Air Force AC-130U Spooky gunship pilot with the 4th Special Operations Squadron scans the airspace while providing close air support during Exercise Emerald Warrior 16 at Hurlburt Field, Fla., May 5, 2016. Emerald Warrior is a U.S. Special Operations Command sponsored mission rehearsal exercise during which joint special operations forces train to respond to real and emerging worldwide threats.

(U.S. Air Force photo by Tech. Sgt. Gregory Brook)

CHANGE YOUR FOOD CHANGE YOUR MOOD

REAL
Guidance
by
Jessie Trofe, MA, LPC

My eyelids feel like weights as I begin to nod off at my desk. Uh, why did I eat that big lunch? Maybe if I hadn't skipped breakfast, I wouldn't have been starving when noon rolled around. Great, now I feel guilty AND tired. I reach out for a piece of chocolate and a coffee to try and lift my mood and wake myself up, but it only serves to keep me stuck in a negative cycle: a short-lived "sugar high" and the inevitable crash that follows. But what if I could choose to eat something instead that lifted me up and kept me there? Knowing why food plays such an important role in how we feel, as well as which foods energize and sustain us, can help us choose foods that positively impact our mood, and ultimately the way we function each day.

GLUCOSE AND INSULIN

Changes in our glucose and insulin levels greatly impact our moods. Eating almost any type of food leads to a rise in glucose (a fancy word for blood sugar), which then causes insulin to be released. This is important because insulin helps transport glucose into cells, where it can be burned for energy. Foods that are high in sugar and refined carbohydrates, such as most fast-food, sweets, and fried foods, lead to a rapid rise in glucose and surge in insulin levels. This is the quintessential "sugar rush" but as the old saying goes, "What goes up, must come down." After a high-sugar, high-carb meal, the glucose levels sharp increase can result in rapid mood swings going from upbeat to down, and increased feelings of sleepiness with difficulty concentrating. This help explain why we often feel tired and cranky after a carb-heavy lunch.

On the flip-side, foods rich in protein (fish, chicken, turkey) or fiber (non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli and salad greens) produce minimal increases in glucose and insulin, helping to stabilize moods rather than disrupt them. Ad-

ditionally, diets rich in protein and fiber, and lower in carbohydrates, help people lose weight by curbing hunger through stabilizing glucose. We can use our knowledge of how glucose and insulin impact the body and mind, as motivation to choose foods that support stable moods and energy levels.

SEROTONIN AND DOPAMINE

Another way in which we can influence the way we feel through food is by manipulating neurotransmitters such as serotonin and dopamine. Neurotransmitters, also known as brain chemicals, are responsible for regulating how we feel. Most likely you have heard of the neurotransmitters- serotonin and dopamine, which significantly impact our mental wellness. While serotonin relaxes and provides feelings of well-being and contentment, dopamine is responsible for our motivation and energy. Together these neurotransmitters contribute to our overall mood as well as our drive and "zest" for life.

In order to create serotonin and dopamine, certain amino acids, vitamins and minerals are needed in our diets. These nutrients serve as the biological building blocks for these neurotransmitters, and ultimately influence how we feel, think and act. For example, consuming food high in tyrosine, an amino acid commonly found in proteins, helps to increase feelings of alertness and motivation. This reaction takes place because tyrosine helps produce dopamine, the brain chemical that increases our energy levels and drive. If we learn which foods contribute to increasing serotonin and dopamine, we can choose to add these foods to our diets, and ultimately influence the way we feel.



Tips for Enhancing Mood through Food:

1) Eat a little protein with each meal- Protein stabilizes blood sugar (glucose) and reduces appetite, thus decreasing the amount of food typically eaten. Also, most protein contains amino acids essential to creating the brain chemicals that lift mood: serotonin and dopamine. Good sources of protein include fish, turkey, chicken, eggs cheese and legumes.

2) Drink more water- When we are hungry, our body is often signaling that we are dehydrated. Drinking a glass of water first and then gauging hunger may provide a more accurate assessment of what the body is crying out for. Unfortunately, many people quench their thirst with juices, sports drinks, or sodas that contain large amounts of sugar, which can crash or swing the mood. Add a wedge of lemon or citrus to make water more tasteful and exciting.



3) Eat a variety of high-fiber non-starchy fruits and vegetables. Fiber helps to stabilize blood sugar, thus helping to stabilize your mood, and move food through your digestive tract. High fiber, non-starchy vegetables and fruits, are also high in nutritional value and rich in vitamins and minerals needed in creating serotonin and dopamine. Some excellent sources include dark lettuces (spinach, romaine, arugula), cucumbers, asparagus, broccoli, carrots, green beans, tomatoes, blueberries, apples, watermelon and cantaloupe.



4) Eat serotonin-increasing foods- Tryptophan is the amino acid that is used in creating serotonin, the brain chemical that has a powerful calming, yet uplifting effect. You may know one food that is rich in tryptophan- turkey. Many people attribute feeling tired after eating their Thanksgiving meal to the tryptophan in the turkey. Yes, the turkey is high in tryptophan, which aids in relaxation, but it is also high in tyrosine, which energizes us. Feeling tired after a Thanksgiving meal most likely is a result instead of the consumption of such a large meal, which results in the spike and then drop of glucose levels. So don't blame the turkey...tryptophan is truly a beautiful thing. Other foods rich in tryptophan include root vegetables such as sweet potatoes, yams and carrots; squash and pumpkin; green, yellow and leafy vegetables; and whole grains such as brown rice, couscous and polenta.



5) Eat dopamine-increasing foods- Tyrosine is the amino acid that is needed to create dopamine, the brain chemical that plays a powerful role in increasing energy level, motivation, and drive. Foods rich in tyrosine are typically proteins such as fish, chicken, turkey, beans, legumes, nuts and seeds.

6) Get your B vitamins- Each B vitamin plays a unique role in contributing to mental and physical health. For example, vitamin B12 helps increase mental sharpness and clarity, while B2 (also known as riboflavin) helps prevent and reduce migraine headaches. Though B vitamins are largely important in regulating mood, studies show that three-fourths of Americans do not consume enough of the required daily amount of folic acid, a key B vitamin, and about one-third of the population is not consuming enough B6 or B12, two other important B vitamins that contribute to mental health. Because B vitamins play such an essential role in our health, Jack Challam, the nutritionist and author of "The Food-Mood Solution" recommends taking a "high potency B vitamin" that contains at least 50 mg each of vitamins B1, B2, B3, and B6. Food that are rich in B vitamins include wild-caught salmon, lean beef, turkey, broccoli, asparagus and leafy greens.

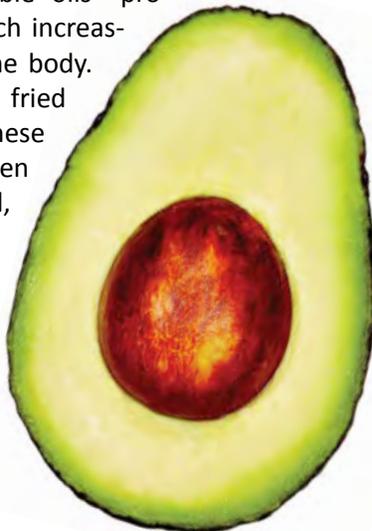
7) Get your Omega 3 Oils- Omega 3 oils are considered among the most healthful of all dietary fats and studies show they help reduce depressive symptoms, impulsive behavior and aggressiveness. Omega 3 oils are found in grass-fed meats, coldwater fish such as salmon and cod, salad greens and flaxseed. Taking two to four grams daily as a supplement is also a good option to ensure the daily requirement is met.



8) Avoid fast-food- “Fast food” in this context refers to food served at fast food restaurants, as well as pre-packaged microwaveable meals. It’s no secret that fast food restaurants serve foods rich in sugar, refined carbohydrates and unhealthy fats. Microwaveable meals often share these same qualities, and typically contain chemicals that enhance their taste or appearance. As nutritionist Jack Challam states, “They are more of a testament to technology than to good nutrition.” To learn tips on how to avoid the trap of fast food, see the box below titled- “Plan Ahead.”

9) Reduce sugars, grain-based carbs and most refined oils- Sugars such as sucrose and high-fructose corn syrup, as well as grain-based carbs like pizza, pastas and breads, both destabilize blood sugar levels, and thus destabilize our mood. Try filling up on protein, healthy fats (avocado or olive oil) and vegetables, and inevitably you will reduce the amount of carbs and sugars you consume.

Refined oils such as corn, soybean, peanut and “partially hydrogenated vegetable oils” promote inflammation, which increases stress responses in the body. Unfortunately nearly all fried foods are cooked in these unhealthy oils, and when these oils are heated, their trans fat increases by 40 percent. Choose foods instead that are grilled, baked, or sautéed using olive, grape-seed, or avocado oil.



10) Plan Ahead- Perhaps this tip carries the most weight, but is often the one many struggle the most with. When we allow hunger and stress to dictate our decision-making around food, we are likely to seek temporary comfort and sacrifice the quality of food for the ease in obtaining it. To avoid getting hungry and making an impulsive decision about what to eat, I carry a bag of trail mix with me to snack on for a boost of protein, which stabilizes my blood sugar and my mood. It also buys me some time to seek out a meal that won’t result in guilt, mood crash, and being tired. If you plan on dining out, practice defensive eating by limiting carb intake (think one piece of bread from the basket versus three) and choosing meals high in protein and low in fat (seafood, chicken, turkey, and tofu).

It’s empowering to know that we have the ability to choose how we feel. By choosing to consume foods that not only help stabilize our moods, but lift them, we can influence how we feel each day. We essentially can choose to feel happier, more relaxed, and also more energized and excited about life. To learn more about which foods can help you feel your best, check out the National Nutrient Database at <https://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/nutrients/index> . This useful tool shows which food rank the highest in tryptophan, tyrosine, B-vitamins, omega 3 oils, and other important vitamins, minerals, and amino acids. We have the opportunity each day to feel healthier and happier through what we put into our bodies. Knowing this, today I choose to eat well and take care of my body and my mind. How do you choose to feel today?

Jessie Trofe is the new Contracting Psychological Health Coordinator for the Texas National Guard and works out of Medical Command (building 11) at Camp Mabry in Austin. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor and is available for free behavioral health consultation for service members and also focuses on outreach, prevention, and education through training and resource gathering. She can be reached at (512) 782-5001 ext. 4232 or jessica.l.trofe.ctr@mail.mil.



TEXAS AIR GUARD



OUR FORCE

STAFF. SGT. LONNIE G. DUNKIN III

Headquarters Texas Air National Guard Information
Technology Specialist

*The Guard has given me a way to serve my community
with a mission I believe in while allowing me to work
toward my future professional and personal goals.*





New Key Leadership Positions



Col. Charles M. Schoening

Commander, 176th Engineer Brigade
Texas Army National Guard

EXPERIENCE: Previous commands include C Company, 176th Engineer Battalion; 72nd Brigade Special Troops Battalion; and the Training Center Garrison Command for Texas. Post-9/11 mobilizations include Task Force Confidence 2001 to 2002, Operation Noble Eagle 2004, Operation Iraqi Freedom 2005 and 2010 and Operation New Dawn 2010 to 2011.

EDUCATION: Bachelor's degree in Environmental Science from Concordia University of Texas; Master of Science in National Resource Strategy from National Defense University and Master of Science in Environmental Policy and Management with Honors from American Military University. Resident Senior Service College, Eisenhower School for National Security and Resource Strategy, Fort McNair, Washington, D.C.

DID YOU KNOW: Col. Schoening is retired from the Austin Water Utility and now serves as the Principal-in-Charge for Central and South Texas for the consulting engineering firm Arcadis.

IN HIS WORDS: "I am honored to wear the uniform of our country's Army and to serve the great state of Texas. I am proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our citizen-soldiers, who sacrifice so much to defend our country and help their neighbors in times of need."



Lt. Col. John "Les" Davis

Director of Construction and Facilities Management,
Texas Army National Guard

EXPERIENCE: Lt. Col. Davis was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the Texas Army National Guard from Tarleton State University's ROTC in Stephenville, Texas in 1993. He served as an Armor Officer until 2008 and branch transferred to Infantry. Davis has served as an AGR officer since 2001 with his mobilizations and deployments including Operation Noble Eagle 2 and Operation Armored Falcon from 2002 to 2003, as well as serving as the Agriculture Expert Team Leader for Texas Agribusiness Development Team IV during Operation Enduring Freedom 2010 to 2011. He also served as the Camp Mabry Garrison Commander from 2011 to 2015 and served as the Deputy Construction and Facilities management Officer from 2015 to 2016.

EDUCATION: Bachelor of Science in Earth Science from Tarleton State University.

DID YOU KNOW: Davis was the recipient of the National Guard Bureau's Platinum Award for Top Officer Strength Manager of the year for Fiscal Year 2009, during his time in Recruiting and Retention.

IN HIS WORDS: "It is truly an honor and a privilege to be selected as the Director of Construction and Facilities Management. I'm excited to be taking over such a complex and diverse directorate and I sincerely appreciate the trust and confidence of our senior leadership by assigning me to this new role. With the expertise and support of the CFMO staff, I will strive to maintain the momentum in building and maintaining facilities that provide our communities the support and protection they need."

Your Texas Military Department App

News, videos and photos about
TXARNG
TXANG
DOMOPS
TXSG
TMD



Look for

Texas Military Department 

in your App or Play store



Available now on iOS and Android