

THE

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ISPATCH
MAY 2016

THE MAGAZINE OF THE
TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



THE DISPATCH **D**

MEMORIAL DAY 2016

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Honoring all who paid the ultimate sacrifice for the continuing freedom of our nation.

The Cover



Our 147th Air Support Operations Squadron at Gila Bend with a 357th Fighter Squadron A-10 Warthog flying overhead. Tactical Air Control Party members conduct a simulated deployment with its Czech partners in Arizona. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy/Released)

A Texas Air National Guardsman visits the Fallen Heroes Memorial during the annual Texas Military Department's Open House featuring the American Heroes Air Show, April 16, 2016, at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Christina Clardy/Released)



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I'LL SEE YOU ON THE HIGH GROUND

Commentary by Col. Bentley Nettles

Joint Forces Headquarters - Texas, State Judge Advocate

During my military career several commanders have used this phrase as their inspiring close to meetings, emails etc. Being a former infantry officer I have been taught to always find the dominant terrain feature (high ground) on the battlefield. For centuries, military tacticians have preached the necessity of obtaining and holding the high ground on any battlefield.

Recently, because of comments by Brig. Gen. Risch at an ethics counselor course, I begin to think more about the double meaning implied in the phrase, "I'll see you on the high ground." Does it also have meaning regarding our ethical behavior? It seems to imply an expectation of both subordinate and superior. The leader is saying I'll see you on the high ground, because he expects you to make it there and uphold the values and ethics of the military. Each service has its own list of values that it drills into new members and repeats through annual training and instills its ethics and values, sometimes through rote memorization.

On a personal level, however, what does ethically taking the high ground mean? Is it doing the harder right thing? Is it doing what is right even when no one is watching? Recently Dr. Leonard Wong, of the Army War College presented the results of a study he performed involving



**“ Do the
harder right,
even when
no one is
looking. ”**

- Col. Bentley Nettles -

different categories of officers. It's title, "Are we lying to ourselves, Dishonesty in the Army Profession," has caused quite a stir among the Army. Dr. Wong's focus is on the unending requirements pushed down and required of unit commanders. Each new investigation seems to push forward additional recommendations to solve problems that end up back on the shoulders of the men and women of the company unit.

These officers and noncommissioned officers are beginning their careers as more requirements are being heaped on the commander. More requirements than can be accomplished during the amount of time given to train and accomplish the tasks to standard. So some training is pencil whipped, training rosters are signed and head nods acknowledge what we all know. There is not enough time to do everything that we are being asked to do.

Is the failure to pushback on the unending requirements a failure of leadership at the unit level? Or is it also a failure at the battalion and brigade that passes through the requirements without challenging the need for these requirements and failing to prioritize or give guidance on what is critical. Everything cannot be critical or nothing truly is critical.

So the phrase, I'll see you on the high ground, implies, in part, an expectation that the subordinate will uphold the organizations values and ethics, while setting the right culture for the organization, which we all are proud members. Setting the standard and setting conditions for the organization's culture is what leaders do.

Also implied in the phrase, is a promise by the superior, that they too will, uphold the values and ethical standards, the senior leader is making a promise, I'll see you there. I'll be on the high ground waiting for you. As a senior leader in our organization, I promise to you that I will uphold the values and ethics of our service. I will show you the way to maintain the high standards of our Army, our Army National Guard, and Texas Army National Guard, of which we are proud members.

I make this promise despite the conduct of Gen. Sinclair, Gen. Patreaus, Gen. Ward and all the other senior leaders who failed to uphold those values. These leaders simply showed us that we are all human and any one of us can stumble. When privilege becomes an expectation instead of an additional benefit given senior leaders to help them do their job, it can and will become a problem.

But together, each of us can help to hold each other, thus ensuring that we get to and stay on the ethical high ground and ourselves accountable. As officers and enlisted members, by focusing on ethics and values of our organization can help to set the standard for what our organization can and should be.

Despite the misstep of some senior leaders, the military still enjoys the highest level of trust of the American people of any government organization. That trust has been nurtured earned and is well deserved. I can remember when I first came into the military through ROTC almost 33 years ago, the military was still reeling from the post Vietnam era and the trust and respect for the military was not nearly as wide spread.

So let's commit ourselves to being the torchbearers for the future members of our organization and to set the standards in our values and ethics, ensuring that we continue to have an organization in which we all continue to have pride. Do the harder right, even when no one is looking. By keeping the standards in the little things, the larger things will become obvious. Remember, I'll see you on the high ground. - **FROM THE TOP**

FROM THE TOP

REMEMBERING VIETNAM 50 YEARS LATER

Story by Capt. Maria Mengrone
176th Engineer Brigade PAO

AUSTIN, Texas – The Texas Military Department honored the service and sacrifice of Vietnam Veterans with a tribute to the 50th Anniversary of the Vietnam War at Camp Mabry, in Austin, April 16, 2016 as a part of its annual open house.

As part of the event, the traveling Vietnam Wall was on display on the parade field and received a steady stream of visitors. Owned and operated by the American Veterans Traveling Tribute, the wall is an 80 percent replica of the Vietnam Memorial in Washington D.C.

“I came here to make peace with myself because I suffer from survivor’s guilt and PTSD,” said Vietnam Veteran, James T. McCann, U.S. Navy 1965-85. “I visit my commander whose name appears on panel 62E, line 21; we served on the USS Kitty Hawk together. I am so glad the wall is here.”

The Vietnam War invokes plenty of emotion to those who served during that era. “I hope that people separate the politics from this war and focus on the lives that were forever changed; just look at all those names on the wall and remember their sacrifice,” said McCann.

More than 58,000 names of U.S. service members killed in action are inscribed in the v-shaped wall.

A Vietnam War reenactment of a battle fought on June 16, 1968 added an element of realism to the scheduled events.

Members of the community visit the traveling Vietnam Wall during the 2016 Texas Military Department’s Open House. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Christina Clardy/Released)

“The Vietnam reenactment is a way for a new generation of people to witness firsthand a moment in history,” said Jeff Hunt, Texas Military Forces Museum Director. “This is no classroom lecture or research paper. The audience gets to experience a more intimate living history.”

“I was in a listening post and was hit with shrapnel from a grenade; I remember we had to low-crawl 75 meters back to our post,” said Vietnam Veteran Sgt. John D. Eli, infantryman and Austin native. “I was in Vietnam on June 16, 1968 and actually lived through the gun battle that was reenacted.”

Eli was drafted into the U.S. Army and received a purple heart for wounds received while serving in Vietnam 1967-68. He volunteers as a technical advisor to the TXMF museum and offers a firsthand account on what the conditions were like while he served.

“I think the reenactment is pretty realistic, from the mud everywhere, to the uniforms and equipment. I think the audience also gets a sense of the fatigue we were under, it is very close to what I experienced,” said Eli.

Many families and Vietnam Veterans traveled from across Texas to attend the events.

“This is my first event like this,” said Vietnam Veteran Sgt. Benito C. Rios, infantryman, 1967. “I came from Del Rio, Texas to see this and I think it’s great what the military has done to put this together.”

Rios served only a short tour in Vietnam after his older brother Staff Sgt. Teofilo C. Rios was killed in combat on November 15, 1966.

“My brother’s son was born the day before he was killed in Vietnam he never got to meet his son,” said Rios.

The tribute ended with a film screening of the movie, “The Green Berets.”

“The men and women who served during the Vietnam War are every bit as heroic as those who served in World War II or Korea,” said Hunt. “This anniversary is the perfect opportunity for us to not only honor them, but to educate the public about what they did to help America fight and win the Cold War.” -D



Volunteers from the Texas Military Forces Museums demonstrate Vietnam War-era communication equipment during a live reenactment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Maria Mengrone/ Released)



Volunteers from the Texas Military Forces Museums Living History Detachment conduct a Vietnam War-era reenactment. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Maria Mengrone/ Released)



Vietnam veteran Sgt. Benito Rios shows off a shirt portraying his brother, also a Vietnam veteran, who was killed in action. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Capt. Maria Mengrone/ Released)

ONE LAST HONOR

Story By Capt. Martha Nigrelle
Texas Military Department Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas - The Texas Military Department, along with Missing in America Project volunteers, American Heroes Air Show, first responders and American Legion representatives, honored a fallen Airmen during a ceremony held at Camp Mabry in Austin, Texas, April 17, 2016.

Airman 1st Class James Beatty served honorably in the U.S. Air Force from 1975 to 1978. Shortly after being honorably discharged from the service, Beatty passed away. The events of his death are unknown and his body was never claimed.

"There have been thousands of brothers and sisters in arms whose lives ended in a similar manner and were lost to any family or friends," said retired Texas Military Department Chaplain, Col. John Price. "Not missing in action, but missing in America."

According to their website, the Missing in America Project works with private, state and federal organizations to locate, identify and inter the unclaimed cremated remains of American veterans and provide honor and respect to those who served their country by securing them a final resting place.

The Texas Army National Guard's Honor Guard rendered full military honors to Beatty, including a 21 gun salute. They presented a flag, on behalf of a grateful nation, to Javier Gonzalez, Post 83, American Legion Riders. Gonzalez received the flag on behalf of all veterans, since Beatty had no known next of kin.

"It's so important for Camp Mabry to be hosting this and to share it with the public," said Hunter Ellis. "It gives people a chance to honor those that have served and recognize the importance of serving. Hopefully we are fueling a new generation of freedom fighters for people who want to uphold those American values."



"It's never too late to honor our American Heroes for their military service."

- Wut Tantaksinanukij -

Ellis understands firsthand the significance of honoring the missing. His father fought in Vietnam and never made it home, being listed as missing in action for more than 40 years. Ellis, a Navy veteran, said he recognizes the importance of ceremonies that return service members to families or provide a permanent resting place for American heroes.

"It's important to be given full honors and return home," said Ellis. "My Dad's ID card is in a north Vietnamese museum. So I hope one day that it will be returned to American soil and at least I will have some part of him."

The Missing in America Project has interred 2,736 veterans' remains in the last 10 years, said Price.

"This was a memorable way for the community to finally identify and honor a long-lost hero that served our country," said Wut Tantaksinanukij, Co-Event Director of Austin's American Heroes Air Show. "It's never too late to honor our American Heroes for their military service."

Beatty's remains were interred at the Central Texas State Veteran's Cemetery in Killeen, April 18, 2016. **-D**

MAY 28-29



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See tanks, jeeps and armored fighting vehicles from throughout U.S. history.

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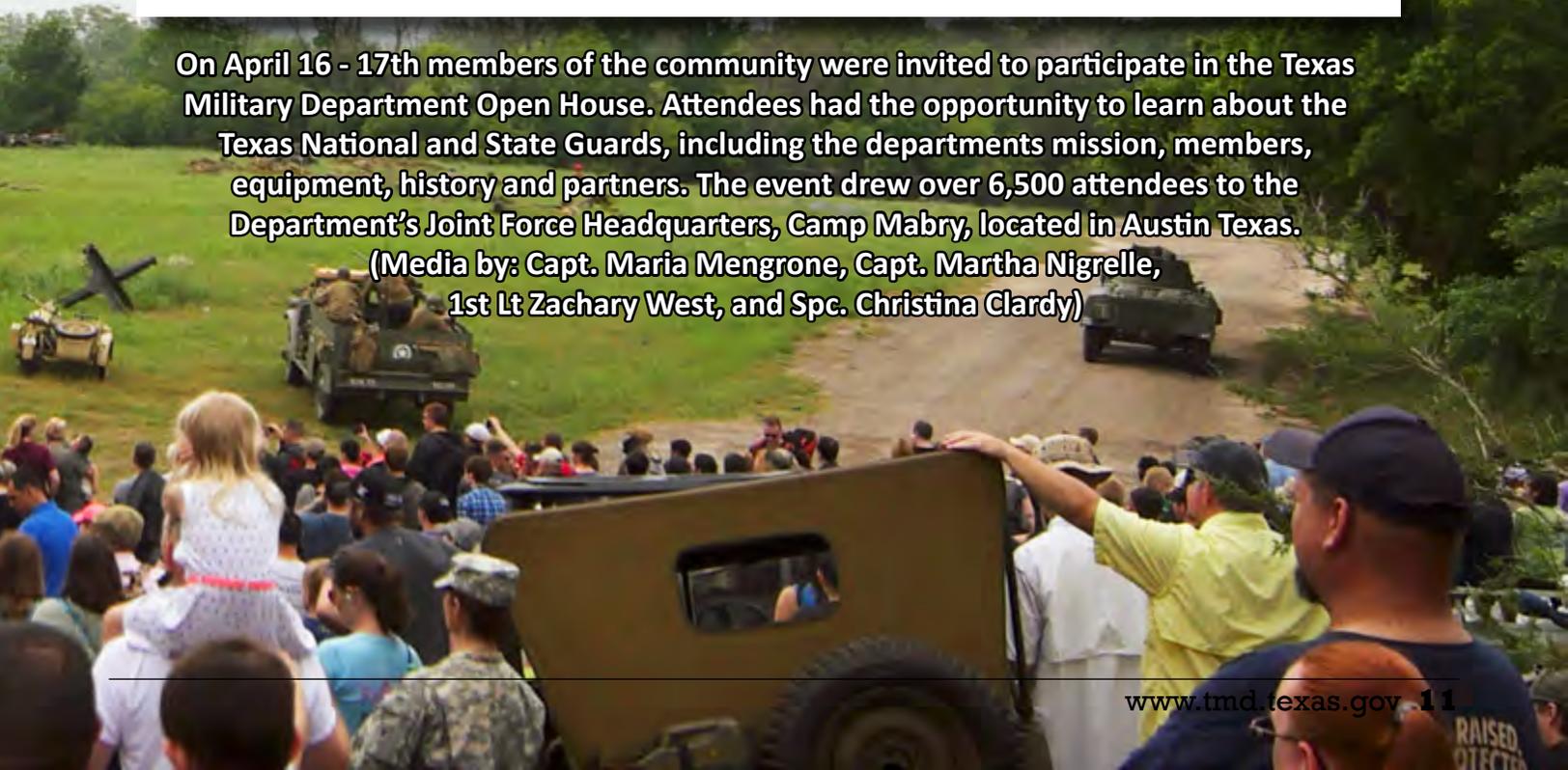
American HEROES SHOW



Click image to play video of TMD Open House!

On April 16 - 17th members of the community were invited to participate in the Texas Military Department Open House. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about the Texas National and State Guards, including the departments mission, members, equipment, history and partners. The event drew over 6,500 attendees to the Department's Joint Force Headquarters, Camp Mabry, located in Austin Texas.

**(Media by: Capt. Maria Mengrone, Capt. Martha Nigrelle,
1st Lt Zachary West, and Spc. Christina Clardy)**



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Cap. Bradley Grimm (center) presented with Danish Defense Medal by head of the Danish Defense Peter Bartram (left) and US ambassador to Denmark Rufus Gifford (right) (courtesy photo by Steve Warren.)

TEXAS GUARDSMAN HELPS FOIL SCHOOL BOMBING AWARDED DANISH DEFENSE MEDAL FOR SPECIAL MERITORIOUS SERVICE

*Story By Capt. Martha Nigrelle
Texas Military Department Public Affairs*

AUSTIN, Texas – Texas National Guard Capt. Bradley Grimm was awarded the Danish Defense Medal for Special Meritorious Service in a ceremony held in Denmark, April 19, 2016.

“Capt. Grimm provided actionable intelligence about a bomb threat against a school in Denmark,” said Col. Steve Warren, a spokesman for Combined Joint Task Force Operation Inherent Resolve. “The information he provided helped to foil a plot, and resulted in an arrest and a confiscation of explosives. Brad’s work likely saved the lives of Danish citizens.”

The information included a bomb threat against a Danish school.

According to Warren, Grimm helped develop a system to speed the flow of intelligence from the ground up to national capitals. This system was paramount in identifying the Danish authorities of the terrorist threat.

“It’s not every day an American captain receives a very high, prestigious medal from a foreign country,” Warren said.



Defense Gen. Peter Bartram, Danish Defense Chief, presented Grimm with the Danish Defense Medal for Meritorious Service with special honors.

According to a Danish officer, not only is the award one of the highest awards in Denmark, but also

the special meritorious duty citation makes this award very rare. The medal is awarded infrequently, even to Danes, and is roughly equivalent to something more than a Legion of Merit, but less than a Silver Star.

The medal was originally awarded for meritorious deployment outside of Denmark, but after 2010, the Danish government began awarding it to civilians or military personnel for meritorious service for the betterment of the Danish Defense.

“Capt. Grimm’s actions had a monumental impact on our allies in Denmark, and consequently on our coalition in the fight against international terrorism,” said Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the Adjutant General of Texas. “He embodies what our force stands for – Duty, Honor, Texas.” **-D**

HIGH WATER

*Story By Capt. Martha Nigelle
Texas Military Department Public Affairs*

Texas Guardsmen evacuated a girl from her Wharton Texas home during spring flooding, April 21, 2016. A detachment from Delta Company of the 536th Brigade Support Battalion, Texas Army National Guard deployed several Light Multi-terrain Vehicles to provide rescue operations (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt Zachary West/Released)



HOUSTON – Texas Guardsmen from the 736th Component Repair Company, 36th Infantry Division, pulled 140 people to safety from severe flooding in Houston, April 19, 2016.

Working alongside Harris County Police officers, firefighters, Sheriff's Office and Texas Task Force 1, guardsmen worked through the night to help Texans in need.

After linking up with partner emergency responders at the Harris County Fireman Training Center in Humble, the soldiers split up to provide assistance to severely flooded neighborhoods, sending half of their trucks to Ponderosa, a neighborhood located on the north side of Houston.

"We went into the water for about an hour and a half and came out with about 20 people," said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Michael Hoover, 736th Component Repair Company. "One of our other trucks stayed in the water until after 9 p.m. and pulled out 90 people."

Each truck went out with officers from the Sheriff's Office or the local police department and some also went with boat rescue squads from Texas Task Force 1.

"Our trucks can only go into 40 inches of water," said Hoover, explaining that some of their trucks went out worked with rescue boats. "Task Force 1 boats would go ahead of us in their boats and bring them back to the truck, then we would bring them to dry land."

The Emergency Medical Technicians, working with 9-1-1 dispatch, received addresses of distressed citizens, and passed the addresses on to guardsmen and firefighters so they could respond.

"As we would go to the address, we would pick up others who needed help," said Sgt. Allan Abel, 736th Component Repair Company. "We were supposed to stop at dark, but we got four priority calls just after dark and that took us a while because we kept filling up with people."

Deep waters made military land navigation training important in their ability to help those in need.

"In some places we had to go light pole to light pole; there were essentially no markers," said Abel. "Our training in hasty navigation and terrain association was hugely beneficial – that's what we were doing."

Texas National Guard high profile military vehicles were essential in rescue operations, said Chief Bob Royall, Assistant Chief of Joint Emergency Operations, Harris County Fire Marshall's Office. The majority of first responder vehicles are unable to maneuver through such deep waters and many rescue boats are limited to holding about six people, said Royall.

According to Abel, the military trucks were able to safely seat up to 25 people, in addition to the necessary soldiers and emergency first responders that accompanied each mission.



CLICK TO PLAY VIDEO 

“Many Harris County residents underestimated the dangers of rising flood waters; they lost all power and were cut off from society. Simple things like going to the doctor became very dangerous,” said Royall. “Had it not been for the National Guard’s high water vehicles, we would not have been able to get to many of these folks. There are untold hundreds, possibly thousands, we would not have been able to get to.”

Members of the community also worked to support rescue efforts.

“We went to Tin Roof Barbecue in Humble with Task Force 1 for lunch, about 60 people, and the owner refused to let us pay,” said Hoover. “There are a lot of civilians out here doing really outstanding stuff, supporting the guard, the task force and the police. They make our work a lot easier.”

Throughout Harris County, and the state, people worked together to help those in need.

“I’ve always felt the need to serve,” said Abel. “This is my main driver, to be able to do things like this for my fellow Texans.”

To date, Texas Guardsmen have helped rescue 221 people and 41 pets from severe flooding in southeast Texas. **-D**

Texas Guardsmen and Texas Task Force 1 rescue personnel waded through thigh-deep water to help stranded residents back to rescue vehicles during severe flooding in Wharton, Texas, April 21, 2016. In coordination with Texas Task Force 1 and the City of Wharton emergency services, a detachment from Delta Company of the 536th Brigade Support Battalion, Texas Army National Guard deployed several Light Multi-terrain Vehicles to floodwaters rescuing both people and pets. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by 1st Lt Zachary West/Released)



CORONET CACTUS

Story By 1st Lt Alicia Lacy

147th Reconnaissance Wing Public Affairs

About two dozen tactical air control party members from the 147th Air Support Operations Squadron, 147th Reconnaissance Wing, Texas Air National Guard and four Czech forward air controllers completed a full-mission profile April 16, 2016, in Gila Bend, Arizona, for an annual National Guard State Partnership Program exchange.

The Texas National Guard has been paired with the Czech Republic since 1993 and has completed hundreds of engagements in the U.S. and in the Czech Republic to support the security cooperation objectives of the U.S. European Command commander.

For this year's exercise, the battlefield airmen were able to mimic a cradle-to-grave, full squadron deployment, combining all warfighting elements from ground skills to air skills and close air support training with live fire.

"Typically, we piecemeal our training," said Capt. Steven Kroll, 147th ASOS director of operations, so the weeklong deployment allowed the airmen to merge all their full mission set capabilities within one mock, joint mobilization.

A tactical air control party member with the 147th Air Support Operations Squadron, 147th Reconnaissance Wing, looks at a map during a full mission profile deployment exercise in Gila Bend, Arizona, April 12, 2016. The battlefield airmen traveled to the desert range in Gila Bend for a weeklong simulated deployment with their Czech partners. (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy/Released)



Members with the 147th Air Support Operations Squadron, 147th Reconnaissance Wing pose outside C-130H (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy/Released)

In a typical deployment for a TACP or joint terminal attack controller, the airman integrates with an Army ground unit and provides the expertise on air power and how to best use it, whether in combat or humanitarian operations.

Once, the TACPs are attached to the Army unit, the commander can task out close air support missions for the airmen to engage the enemy, neutralize threats and keep the troops on the ground safe by matching the correct ordnance with the targets.

In addition to working with their coalition partners from the Czech Republic, the Texas airmen worked with active duty A-10s, F-35s and F-16s for live-fire, close air support controls, and with the Arizona National Guard's 2nd Battalion (Assault), 285th Aviation Regiment's UH-60 Blackhawks during a simulated key leader engagement that included airlift of the leaders, a quick reaction force, and extraction of all parties in combat conditions.

Altogether, the airmen completed nearly 100 controls, utilizing a mixture of live ordnance.

The Czech FACs possess the same combat skill set as the TACPs, so the training provided an opportunity to exchange tactics and procedures, as well as other training experiences.

Chief Warrant Officer Pavel, a FAC with the Czech Air Force, said the exchange also builds trust and camaraderie, so if deployed together, they are able to have an established confidence in each other's skills.

Pavel, who recently deployed with the 147th ASOS' commander, said the relationship the two units have built over the years has helped while he was downrange.



A Czech forward air controller works with the 147th Air Support Operations Squadron, 147th Reconnaissance Wing, to set up a tactical operations center (U.S. Air National Guard photo by 1st Lt. Alicia Lacy/Released)

According to Kroll, the dry, mountainous Arizona desert provided the perfect backdrop for this type of training.

"Davis Monthan and the Barry Goldwater Range in Gila Bend are really good training environments," he said. "It's wide open...it's a desert environment, it's a good representation of our current fight in Afghanistan, so that helps, and it's a good way to practice our MCOs."

Pavel agreed, saying that there aren't too many places in the Czech Republic that represent the environment and terrain in Southwest Asia, so giving his troops experience in that type of environment was invaluable.

Not only did the exercise allow the airmen to employ a full mission profile in a joint environment, but it helped prepare them for their Warfighter exercise later this year, in support of the Texas Army National Guard's 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 36th Infantry Division, Kroll said. **-D**

HALL OF HONOR



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**CAMP MABRY
AUSTIN TEXAS**



OUR FORCE: SSG ANNA REYES

SSG Anna Reyes serves as a platoon leader in the Texas State Guard 1st Battalion, 8th Regiment. She enlisted in 2010 and has deployed on state active duty to support Operation Borderstar.

Her civilian career with the Department of Homeland Security focuses on airline safety and security operations through the Transportation Security Administration. She deployed with the DHS Surge Capacity Force Team to New York in wake of Tropical Storm Sandy to assist FEMA with disaster relief in 2012.

New Key Leadership Positions



BILL WILSON TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

AUSTIN, Texas- The Texas Military Department recently announced and welcomed its new Executive Director, Mr. Bill Wilson, to the team. He began his new role on April 1, 2016, and is excited for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

“I am honored to be chosen for this role,” said Wilson. “As a veteran myself, I look forward to supporting the men and women in uniform and the citizens in Texas.”

Mr. Wilson most recently served as the Director of the Texas Senate Committee on Veteran Affairs and Military Installations. His prior positions include Director of the Fund for Veterans’ Assistance and the Veterans Employment Services programs at the Texas Veterans Commission; Policy Advisor for the Texas Workforce Commission; and a Legislative Liaison for the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services.

As the Executive Director, he serves as the principal advisor to the Adjutant General and the command group on state matters pertaining to the strategic and daily administration of the department.

“The Texas Military Department is very fortunate to gain a leader of Bill’s caliber in this key position,” said Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the Adjutant General of Texas. “His experience, integrity and professionalism will be of great value to our agency.”

Mr. Wilson received a bachelor’s degree in Government from the University of Texas at Austin. He also served as an Intelligence Analyst and Korean Linguist in the U.S. Army, prior to serving in the California and Texas National Guards as a Counter-Intelligence Specialist.

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