

Alabama Guardsman

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Tour gives legislators closer look at state's armories

Eric Roberts
131st MPAD

Members of the Alabama Army National Guard conducted an Alabama legislative armory tour by CH-47 Chinook helicopter to selected Alabama National Guard armories, June 8.

The mission was to provide legislators with an up-close look at aging armories and discuss the funding opportunities and technology available to repair them.

“Our intent was to provide the delegation with information on the condition of our armories, the adjutant general’s vision and strategic plan for our state’s armories, and the highest priority for the use of any additional state funds that are provided for the improvement of our armories,” said Col. Brian B. Barrontine, State Construction & Facility Management Officer.

Col. Bryan Morgan, Staff Judge Advocate and a participant on the trip, stressed the importance of state support to obtain more federal funds.



Eric Roberts/photo

Brig. Gen. Allen Harrell, the Director of Joint Staff, along with other Alabama Army National Guard staff members and members of the Alabama Legislature conducted an Alabama Legislative Armory tour by CH-47 Chinook helicopter to selected Alabama National Guard Armories, June 8.

“It was a great opportunity for members of the Alabama Legislature’s military and veterans committees to visit the armories in Calera, Talladega and Montgomery,” said Morgan. “All (the legislators) seemed interested in the Alabama National Guard’s ability to leverage state dollars in order to receive federal funds for needed building projects.”

With a majority of the Alabama National Guard armories more than 40 years old, updated and highly functional facilities are one of the adjutant general’s top priorities.

“The trip allowed the legislators a firsthand glimpse of Alabama Na-

tional Guard facilities, while giving them an opportunity to travel in one of our aircraft,” said Col. Dennis Butters, ALNG Public Affairs Officer. “During our tour, the legislators were able to see how appropriations to the Guard can be used to make us the best functional force possible.”

The end result of the trip was a discussion of the responsibilities of maintaining a functional National Guard.

“We benefited by understanding the information gaps that exist in our delegations so that we can better support them in performing their responsibilities,” said Barrontine.

Alabama Guardsman

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On the Cover

Sgt. 1st Class Roy Chandler surveys the Gulf State Park wildfire from a CH-47 Chinook in Gulf Shores, June 29 (photo by Eric Roberts).

Coming Soon

On the 10 year anniversary of 9/11 we will take a look back at how that tragic event affected the Alabama National Guard.

Adjutant General

Safety: preparing and being proactive in preventing accidents



**Maj. Gen.
Perry Smith**

I instituted a safety stand-down earlier this year after some very serious accidents that cost damage to property, serious injury and even lives. I emphasized the heavy responsibility of command-

ers and senior NCOs to ensure that all Soldiers and Airmen are trained on safety standards and procedures and that an environment of sound judgment is cultivated.

I am happy to report that since that stand down accidents, particularly vehicle accidents, have declined greatly. I want to thank all those involved in working on this. There is nothing more valuable at stake than the lives of our service members. This affects not just our warriors, though, but their families as well. We need to focus not just on conducting proper safety checks on our military vehicles, but also on our personal vehicles. We need to know how to identify and mitigate dangerous behavior in our personal lives. This means being aware of the dangers of driving while intoxicated, recognizing the dangers signs in our buddies, and knowing what to do about it when someone we're with wants to drink and drive.

I want to continue to encourage leaders at every level and all of our warriors to think safety first, particularly when preparing to get behind the wheel of an automobile. Let's work hard to make considering safety a regular part of our everyday lives. Let's be proactive in preventing accidents that will cost money, cause injuries or take the lives of friends and family.

The Alabama National Guard is known throughout the nation and even the world as a premier National Guard organization, made up of highly trained, professional warriors. Let's not allow our remarkable achievements to be tainted by being too relaxed about protecting our most precious assets. Lead from the front!

State Command Sergeant Major

Sergeant's business: the many levels of leading soldiers



**Command Sgt.
Maj.
Eddie Pike**

As warriors in the Alabama National Guard, we are all in positions to be leaders. It's not just a duty position or rank that makes a leader. It was once suggested that there is no officer or NCO business, only leader business.

While this may hold true in some situations, the Army's Leadership Manual (FM 6-22) makes a clear distinction. As an essential part of our Guard leadership team, noncommissioned officers (NCOs) are most often the closest to the troops

as direct supervisors and caretakers of our greatest asset: our Soldiers.

NCOs are crucial in the development and care of our Soldiers. Our Soldiers look to their NCOs for answers, for solutions, for guidance and for inspiration. As NCOs go about conducting this day-to-day business in the Alabama National Guard, we must do so with the NCO vision in mind. We must always be an NCO corps that leads by example; trains by experience; maintains and enforces standards; takes care of Soldiers; and adapts to a constantly changing world.

Over the past ten years, mobilizations, transformation, hurricane response, oil-spill clean up, and tornado response have required many of our junior leaders to "grow up" very rapidly. This environment of fast

paced transition has had a definite shift in how Guard operations are conducted. This shift has required the Alabama National Guard to also adjust our leadership mindset to be more agile, adaptable and multi-skilled. No matter what the mission or how rapid our pace of operations, our NCOs must know how to instill and enforce discipline and accountability in our month-to-month training and operations. This discipline and accountability can be best achieved by getting back to the basics of soldiering and leadership.

First line leaders at all levels must ensure their Soldiers are properly prepared for every training event. Pre-execution check lists, pre-combat inspections, and Preventative Maintenance Checks and Services **(Please see *Leadership*, page 11)**

Snap Shots

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



Gregory Depta/photo

Maj. Gen. Perry Smith poses with key Romanian military leaders at the Romanian Land Forces Headquarters. This was Smith's first visit to Romania as Adjutant General. The Alabama National Guard has participated in the State Partnership Program with Romania for 18 years.



Chief Warrant Officer 2 Joseph Wilson, FSC 1-167th Infantry, makes a paracord bracelet during the State Family Programs Volunteer Workshop hosted by the Alabama National Guard Soldier and Family Support Services for members and volunteers of the Alabama National Guard in Birmingham,

Contributed/photo



Eric Roberts/photo

Sgt. Justin Ellison maneuvers a water bucket during the Gulf State Park wildfire from a CH-47 Chinook in Gulf Shores, June 29.



Dt gpf e'Vj qo cu/photo

Pvt. Robert Carlisle takes the Oath of Enlistment into the Alabama Army National Guard at the Montgomery Military Entrance Processing Station (MEPS) in July. Delivering the Oath of Enlistment is his father, Chief Warrant Officer 2 John Carlisle who, unbeknownst to his son, returned from Afghanistan just in time to welcome him into the armed services. Carlisle is a third generation Special Forces enlistment. His grandfather, also named John Carlisle, retired from the 20th Special Forces Group. His father is currently serving with the 7th Special Forces Group from Fort Bragg. "I've always wanted to do it," Robert said. "To follow in their footsteps."



Contributed/image

Maj. Gen. Perry G. Smith and Command Sgt. Maj. Eddie W. Pike traveled to Bagram, Kandahar and Kabul Afghanistan with the National Guard Bureau's Joint Monthly Access Reserve Component (JMARC) trip, June 20-25, 2011.



Eric Roberts/photo

Sgt. Maj. Bill Jones coins a fan at the Honda Grand Prix of Alabama at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, April 11.

1-167th Infantry prepares for deployment at National Training Center



Contributed/photo

A soldier with 1-167th Infantry participates in a training exercise at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., earlier this summer.



Contributed/photo

A soldier with 1-167th Infantry engages a target during training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., earlier this summer.



Contributed/photo

Soldiers with 1-167th Infantry conduct convoy operations during training at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, Calif., earlier this summer.

New facility helps put Alabama ahead of the curve

Bethany McMeans
131st MPAD

TUSCALOOSA, Ala. - It's a new day, a new age – and the Alabama Army National Guard is taking steps to ensure they are ready to face new challenges.

In early July, the ribbon cutting for a new Armed Forces Reserve Center took place in Tuscaloosa, which is one of six new facilities that have been built in the state over the last five years.

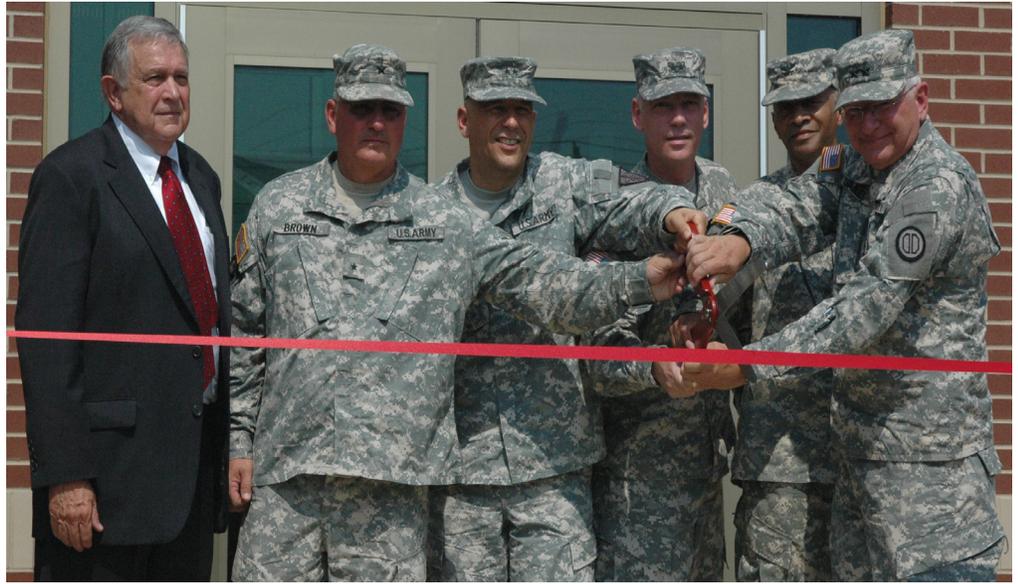
The new armories that were a result of the 2005 Defense Base Closure and Realignment Commission have helped increase efficiency and improve mission capability.

“The facilities before this were built in the fifties and sixties but do not support the mission we have now,” said Col. Brian Barrontine, Construction Facilities Maintenance officer for the Alabama National Guard.

“These new buildings are made to be more efficient and save more money than their predecessors.”

Barrontine continued by saying the design of the buildings help to enhance the readiness of the units. Due to an increase in space, units will be able to save time and money when it comes to some training because they will not have to travel to Fort Rucker or Fort McClellan.

Furthermore, the new, up-to-date technology such as wireless internet capability and video teleconference rooms will allow multiple units to train through one instructor at their designated



Bethany McMeans/photo

The outgoing commander of the 31st Chemical Brigade, Maj. Gen. Charles Gailes, and incoming commander, Brig. Gen. David Brown, participate in the ribbon cutting at the new Armed Forces Reserve Center in Tuscaloosa at the beginning of July. This center is one of six new facilities that have been built in the state since 2005 that have up-to-date technology and resources.

unit drill location or have computer labs with secure internet access, he added.

“Having a joint forces armory for the Guard and the Reserves help to bring about better mission coordinating and improves our capability,” said Lt. Col. Jeffery Desmond, Design and Project Management branch officer of CFMO. “The Alabama National Guard partnering with the Reserves works well because we are all one Army. We can all be better prepared by the partnership, thereby combining our resources.”

“Taxpayers are also benefiting from the building of these new facilities,” said Barrontine. “Operation and maintenance will be less than the old buildings and the gas and electrical capability is more efficient due to the new

technology utilized,” he added.

Both Barrontine and Desmond stated that making joint facilities which include other agencies is ideal and brings optimal results.

“We would like to expand for an interagency facility bringing in police departments, fire departments, and other similar agencies,” said Barrontine. “The facility could be used as a headquarters for natural disasters such as Hurricane Katrina or the tornadoes of Tuscaloosa.”

“We look forward to doing more projects like this,” Desmond added.

Through progressive ideas that save money, the Alabama National Guard will be better prepared, trained, and ready in order to accomplish whatever future missions may arise.

46th CST prepares for possible threats during training exercise

Eric Roberts
131st MPAD

The President of the United States was headed to Montgomery to make an appearance at Riverwalk Stadium. Local and National authorities were on their toes with security as their main concern. The unthinkable happened. There were possible threats of radiological substances at the stadium. With possible disaster threatening, the Alabama National Guard's 46th Civil Support Team deployed to the site to ensure safety for the President and the citizens of Alabama.

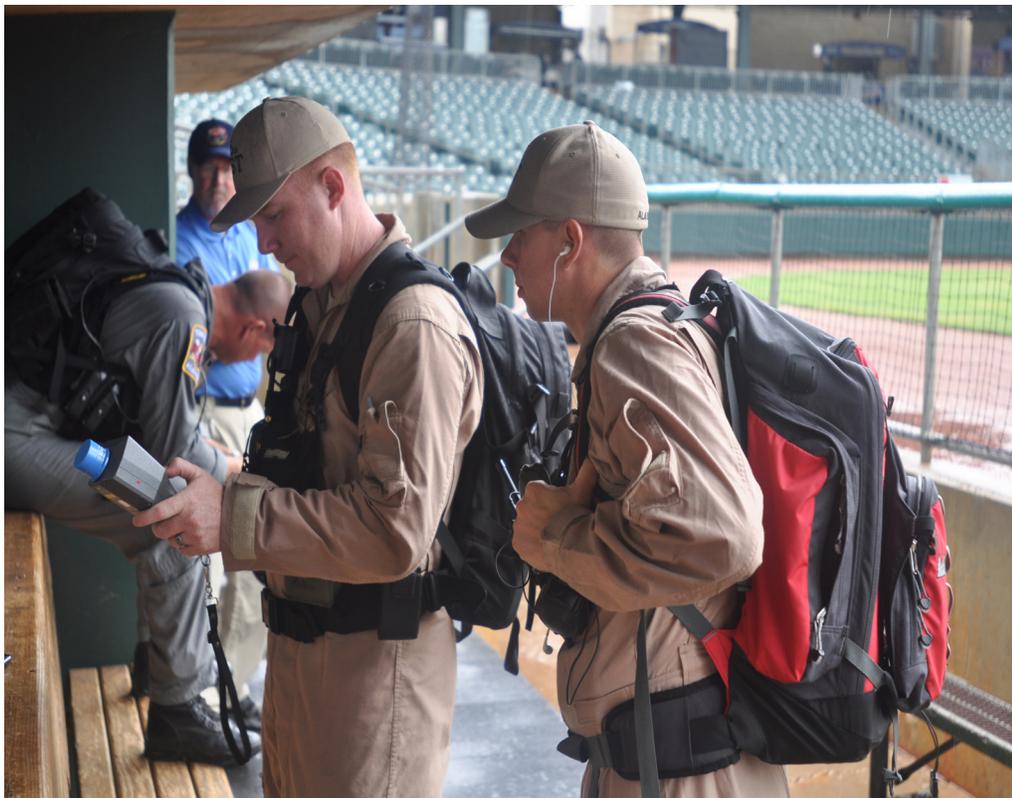
The team moved quickly and efficiently to clear the stadium of potential threats.

With one large sigh of relief, the training mission was finished. The team had completed the training that would leave them more capable should such a scenario happen in the real world.

The Alabama National Guard's 46th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) along with other organizations participated in the Department of Energy's Road RAPTER course, June 20-23.

Training is an essential part of being proficient in identifying and handling CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear) elements that pose a threat.

Whether the guard is responding to materials based on intelligence, a dirty bomb, or radiological threats, the CST's will be the first boots on the



Eric Roberts/photo

Members of the Alabama National Guard's 46th Civil Support Team (Weapons of Mass Destruction) participate in a training mission at Riverwalk Stadium in Montgomery, June 22, 2011.

ground, said Gerald Walsh, Training and Outreach Coordinator, Department of Energy, Radiological Assistance Program. The commitment was made to the National Guard Bureau to make radiation response training a priority.

As first responders to danger, exercises ensure the safety of Guardsmen and civilians.

"We are the Department of Defense's tip of the spear of homeland defense and security," said Maj. John Craft, CST Deputy Commander. "We are a unique capability of the Guard. This is our job 365 days a year. We work hard, our team members go above and beyond the normal military schools. There

are hundreds of extra hours of training that are required to maintain our proficiency."

The CST is a valuable asset to all other agencies of that state in times of dire need.

"Our team sets up in conjunction with others," said CST Commander Lt. Col. Rick Pelham. "Regardless of our mission set, we are the DOD first responders. When the Tuscaloosa County EMA EOC (Emergency Operations Center) was destroyed during the recent tornadoes, the 46th CST reestablished critical communications capability. Our guys are top notch, and we are training to find better ways to respond."

Guard forms partnership with Panther racing team

by Eric Roberts
131st MPAD

The captivating sounds of Indy cars filled the air. Fans rose from their seats on the grandstands and grassy knolls just for a glimpse of Indy racing. As the checkered flag waved, the fans cheered, gathered their belongings and headed home with mere memories. For the fans the weekend festivities had come to a close, but for Panther Racing and the National Guard the pride exhibited, the relationships formed, and the honor displayed will last for a lifetime.

Members from the Alabama National Guard and Panther Racing joined together to enjoy the festivities of the Honda Grand Prix of Alabama at the Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham, April 8-10.

Panther racing is showcasing more than talent. They are showcasing the very pride of the National Guard with every lap completed.

“It is an honor to be sponsored by the National Guard,” said Patrick M. Spencer, Executive Vice President of Panther Racing. “It goes back to pride here at Panther racing. It is an honor to be a messenger for the Guard as we go from town to town. We take pride in helping the Guard meet their needs, whether that is with the National Guard Youth Challenge, the USO, or the Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve. It is



Eric Roberts/photo

J.R. Hildebrand, driver of the Panther Racing National Guard Car, leaves the pits at Barber Motorsports Park in Birmingham during the Honda Grand Prix of Alabama, April 11. Hildebrand paid tribute to the Alabama National Guard by placing the Joint Force Headquarters patch decal on the front of the National Guard car.

Panther racing’s small contribution back to the Guard.”

“The National Guard is more than just a sponsorship; it is a relationship,” said National Guard Panther Racing driver J.R. Hildebrand. “We get to make a real difference from the people that watch us down to the kids we interact with at Youth Challenge.”

Honor is at the heart of the National Guard. Panther Racing echoes that by carrying a torch in honor of the National Guard in every race they attend.

“Get Panther Racing off the sports page and put us on the human interest page,” said John

Barnes, CEO of Panther racing. “We want to raise awareness of the ESGR and National Guard through racing, and we try to transcend that to the millions that watch us. It is more than sponsorship, it is a relationship. The Guard and Reserves are our community. We are blessed as a nation to have the leadership of the Guard. Every time we have an opportunity to honor them we do. It is easy to talk the talk, but we have to walk the walk. I have a lot less breaths looking forward than I had. It is time to leave footprints in the sand and carry the torch in honor of those who give us the right to do so.”

Chillin' out

Alabama Air Guard Chaplain returns from deployment to Antarctica

by Brenda Thomas
Staff Writer

Lieutenant Colonel Larry D. Layne, Senior Chaplain, 226 Combat Communications Wing, has returned to warm, sunny Alabama from a 60-day deployment to Antarctica.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) established McMurdo Station in 1956 with no intention of building the Chapel of the Snows that stands today. Several buildings served as makeshift chapels until the Chapel of the Snows was built in 1989. The Air Guard deploys three chaplains to the station every year during the austral summer in support of the NSF.

“In Antarctica the science mission is the number one and only reason why we are there,” said Layne. The first chaplain of the year takes the Erebus Chalice, which was carried on an expedition led by Sir James Clark Ross, to the chapel. The last chaplain brings the chalice back to the Christ Church Cathedral in Christchurch, New Zealand. The chalice is one of the most treasured items on station and among the oldest relics on the continent.

“Our job was to maintain a fully functional chapel and visit work sites,” said Layne. “It was much like being deployed to the desert. There are so many similarities, and I think experience served me well.”

Deployment to the Antarctic is like deployment to the desert because of isolation and adaptation. “There are all of the typical things you expect in the desert but the biggest difference is in the desert you are battling other countries and people,” said Layne. “In Antarctica, it’s man against nature and man against himself.”

Also, the military isn’t in charge – it is just a support group. In this part of the



Contributed/photo

Lt. Col. Larry Layne, senior chaplain, 226 Combat Communications Wing, poses with penguins while deployed as a chaplain in Antarctica.

world, the military takes directive from the NSF. Along with these challenges, Layne said he faced personal obstacles as a chaplain. “It was a highly scientific, highly educated community. You’re in a culture where there are many alternative religions.”

Despite all of the challenges this deploy-

ment presented, Layne endured. Like the chaplains before him and the chaplains to follow him in coming years, he did what was necessary to complete the mission. Now that he is home he has returned to his civilian job as a Hospice chaplain at Baptist Health.

Safety

Safety tips for the start of the school year

With summer coming to an end and the start of the school year, this is a reminder for parents and drivers to do their part to keep kids safe as they walk to school.

Parents should be proactive and take the time to talk about safety with their kids before they head back to school.

It is recommended that parents walk the route to school with students before the start of the year to assess hazards and select a course with the least number of traffic crossings.

Adults can teach and model the following safety behaviors that all children should follow, even if they don't walk to school every day.

Top Back to School Safety Tips
Here are some simple reminders for drivers:

- Slow down and be especially alert in the residential neighborhoods and school zones

- Take extra time to look for kids at intersections, on medians and on curbs

(Leadership continued from page 3)

are our primary preparation tools. These focused checks minimize the chance of neglect or mistakes that may derail a mission or cause unnecessary casualties. Checking also gives leaders a chance to see and recognize subordinates who are doing things right or to make on-the-spot corrections when necessary. This cycle is complete and begins anew when each training event is documented by a thorough, to-standard after-action-review.

All of our activities – both on and off duty – are of little value if not conducted in a smart and safe manner. In most cases, accidents are avoidable when thoughtful, deliberate efforts are made. Key to these efforts and always applicable, is the Comprehensive Risk Management Process.

As NCOs, we must ensure that we make

- Enter and exit driveways and alleys slowly and carefully

- Watch for children on and near the road in the morning and after school hours

- Reduce any distractions inside your car so you can concentrate on the road and your surroundings. Put down your phone and don't talk or text while driving

Reminder for your kids:

- They should cross the street with an adult until they are at least 10 years old

- Cross the street at corners, using traffic signals and crosswalks

- Never run out into the streets or cross in between parked cars

every effort to identify hazards and take the necessary precautions in order to protect our Soldiers. This means making sure our motorcycle riders have the Basic Rider's Course; using the tried and true battle-buddy method as we identify designated drivers and cover-down on one another during training events, to include IDT weekends; and also checking in with and keeping our Soldiers informed and aware throughout the month, not just IDT weekends.

The mission of the National Guard must always continue. Part of ensuring this continuity is making sure we are training our Soldiers to someday fill our boots. This advancement starts by encouraging and enforcing strict compliance with MOS qualification. Our Soldiers can't be effective, efficient or safe if they



- Make sure they always walk in front of the bus where the driver can see them

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are not properly trained to do their jobs. Also, our Soldiers cannot be promoted unless qualified in their slot. Taking the time to conduct proper, written performance and developmental counseling will help to ensure our Soldiers are qualified, promotable and ready to keep the Guard moving forward.

NCOs must be leaders who are consistently enforcing standards while at the same time instilling discipline that will pay off in critical situations. Disciplined Soldiers take the right action, even when they may not feel like it. A good leader instills discipline by training to standard, instilling confidence and building trust among team members. A great leader also prepares his Soldiers to do the same. I challenge each and every NCO in the Alabama National Guard to be a great leader.