

Alabama Guardsman

Vol. IV 2012

A publication for the Citizen-Soldiers & Airmen of Alabama



In this issue:

Armory tour shows legislators the Guard's capabilities and needs. Pg.2

The Adjutant General and State Command Sgt. Maj. Pg.3

Snap Shots: Highlights in the Alabama National Guard Pg.4

Soldier elevates the standard and sets the example Pg.7

Armory tour shows legislators the Guard's capabilities and needs

by Sgt. 1st Class Jamie Brown
131st MPAD

Members of the Alabama legislature got a close-up look at several Alabama National Guard armories and got an idea of the capabilities and needs of the Guard infrastructure during an armory tour conducted by the Alabama National Guard April 16.

The tour, hosted by Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, the adjutant general and Maj. Gen. Sheryl Gordon, assistant adjutant general took six legislators to three armories in the Mobile/Baldwin County area. All of them were in varied conditions so legislators could see the entire spectrum of armory needs and capabilities.

Where last year's legislative flight gave an overview of tornado response and mobilizations, this year the



Jamie Brown/photo

Representative Mark Tuggle, left, and Representative Duwayne Bridges step off of a CH-47 Chinook Helicopter at the conclusion of an Alabama legislative armory tour on April 16. The tour gave several state legislators a better understanding of the capabilities and needs of several armories within the state.

emphasis was on hurricane preparedness. Legislators were taken to armories in Foley, Fairhope and Mobile where they discussed with Guard leaders the strategic importance of these armories in relation to hurricane response. In the event of a hurricane, these armories would be essential to staging Guard personnel and supplies.

With June 1 and the begin-

ning of hurricane season approaching, hurricane preparedness is a high priority to the Alabama Guard. The Guard completed a hurricane rehearsal drill in April and will conduct a hurricane preparedness exercise in May.

"Hurricanes are what we're known for," said Smith. "This is what we do."

According to Col. Bryan
(Please see *FLIGHT*, page 5)

Alabama Guardsman

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

Adjutant General.....Maj. Gen. Perry Smith
Public Affairs Officer.....Col. Dennis Butters
131st MPAD Commander.....Maj. Anthony Laier
Senior Editor.....Sgt. 1st Class. Jamie Brown
Senior Editor.....Staff Sgt. Martin Dyson
Staff Writer.....Sgt. Bethany McMeans
Staff Writer.....Spc. Eric Roberts
Staff Writer.....Spc. Jennifer Montagna
Staff Writer.....Spc. Tiffany Harkins
Staff Writer.....Spc. Kyle Looney

On the Cover

The 1/117th Field Artillery Battalion prepares for deployment to Afghanistan in late 2012 by conducting real time missions with howitzers at Fort Rucker, Ala., March 3. (photo by Spc. Kyle Looney).

Adjutant General

Staying mindful of safety is key during outdoor season



**Maj. Gen.
Perry Smith**

The long, warm days of spring and summer are upon us, and many of you will head outdoors to take advantage of the pleasant weather. These warmer months offer abundant opportunities for

fun with the family and friends, but historically, they also represent the most dangerous time of year for Soldiers, Airmen and their families. As your Adjutant General, I am asking you to be aware of the hazards associated with increased outdoor activity

and take every precaution to keep yourselves and your families safe. Please pay particular attention to the following areas: Travel – Speeding, drinking and driving, lack of sufficient rest before getting behind the wheel of a car – are deadly in many situations. Think, before you get behind the wheel and always watch out for the other driver.

Motorcycle Riding – We've lost far too many Guardsmen recently due to motorcycle accidents. Take advantage of the motorcycle safety courses offered for Guardsmen and ensure you wear all necessary protective gear when enjoying your motorcycle.

Water Safety – Whether you're fishing, swimming, boating or skiing, spending time on the water is a great way to relax

and enjoy the outdoors. No matter what type of water related activity you are taking part in; always ensure you have the proper number of life preservers on hand. If you're not a swimmer, take a drown-proofing class and ensure family members do the same. Take time to learn the rules of using a boat or Jet Ski – this will go a long way toward keeping you and your family or friends safe on the water. Be sure to know the location of all personal flotation devices, fire extinguishers, emergency signaling devices and other safety gear. Those of you that have pools ensure fencing and gates are installed to prevent children and pets from entering the pool area and never leave them unsupervised while swimming. Home Safety – After a safe day at work, **(Please see SAFETY, page 5)**

State Command Sergeant Major

Trust and Professionalism Are Values for Senior Leaders



**Command Sgt.
Maj.
Eddie Pike**

As the war in Iraq has come to an end and the war in Afghanistan is scaling down, the Alabama National Guard still requires leaders who are professionally qualified, who can

establish and maintain disciplined units through trust and esprit de corps among Soldiers and families, ultimately building stronger organizations dedicated to mission accom-

plishment.

The wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and the transitions our Alabama National Guard Soldiers have endured over the past several years have resulted in neglect of the Army Education System. There is no argument that immediate operational needs command priority over all else during wartime. But, as we draw down from the OPTEMPO of the wars, the restoration of the Army Education System deserves a high priority in our preparedness for the future. It is a keystone of the professionalism our current leaders need to develop their junior leaders for the future.

Maintaining a disciplined force

depends on adherence to standards of organization, training and recognition of the threats we must be prepared to defeat. Future leaders must know how to set standards, establish training requirements, and recognize the changes required by the threats to our national interests.

The establishment and sustainment of trust is by far the most critical demand placed on leaders, both current and future. One of the combat Soldiers' most frustrating dilemmas can be the misplacement of trust, a situation that could confuse Soldier response in a stressful scenario.

The value of trust is a two-way **(Please see TRUST, page 5)**

Snap Shots

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



Jamie Brown/photo

Maj. Gen. Perry Smith, the adjutant general of Alabama, and Maj. Gen. Sheryl E. Gordon, assistant adjutant general, along with other Alabama Army National Guard staff members and members of the Alabama Legislature conducted an informational tour by CH-47 Chinook helicopter to selected Alabama National Guard armories, April 16.



Kyle Looney/photo

A member of the 1/117th Field Artillery Battalion acquires a target and prepares to fire a round during a live fire exercise. The unit conducted real time missions with howitzers at Fort Rucker, Ala. on March 3.



Sandra Lucas/photo

Special Forces candidates climb and repel ropes during the Special Forces Readiness Evaluation (SFRE) at Pelham Range, Alabama. The two day SFRE allows interested individuals an opportunity for evaluation and self-assessment before entering into the 21 day Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) course. Before donning a "Green Beret" individuals must demonstrate the highest levels of intelligence, trainability, physical fitness, motivation, influence, and judgment. The 20th Special Forces Group is one of two National Guard Special Forces groups. To learn more visit the 20th Special Forces Group (Airborne) on Facebook or visit www.alguard.state.al.us and click on the Unit page.

(FLIGHT continued from page 2)

Morgan, staff judge advocate for the Alabama National Guard, the trip provided Maj. Gen. Smith an opportunity to provide the legislative leadership an overview of the financial needs of the Alabama National Guard for current repair and maintenance as well as an opportunity to discuss future needs for construction. On both trips, this topic was covered by Col. Brian Barrontine, construction and facilities management officer.

The legislators on the trip

(SAFETY continued from page 3)

don't forget safety when you get home. Recognizing hazards and knowing how injuries occur is key to keeping everyone in your household safe, both indoors and out. The National Safety Council has identified the following injuries as the top home-related hazards:

- Drowning in homes resulted in 1,100 deaths in 2011 – a 10 percent increase from the previous year.

- Falls account for 8.9 million trips annually to emergency rooms

(TRUST continued from page 3)

requirement, but its initial thrust must be from senior to junior leaders. When a sergeant is directed to train the members of his squad, to create confidence among his Soldiers in their abilities and in each other, and to form a team that can accomplish a squad's missions, he deserves the authority to make decisions and take actions appropriate for squad activities and operations.

found it to be beneficial.

"It was very useful," said Representative Mark Tuggle from the 81st district. "It gave me a better understanding of the economic impact of the Guard and also the economic impact of each individual armory."

Tuggle said the trip was more than just informative, it was also an experience he will never forget. He called riding in the CH-47 Chinook helicopter, "One of the coolest things I've done as a legislator."

in the United States. Ensure walkways around your home are free from clutter and be careful using ladders.

- Poisoning is responsible for more than half of all fatal home-related accidents and includes deaths from drugs, medicines, other solid and liquid substances including gases and poisonous vapors. Ensure poisons and hazardous materials are clearly marked and secured from the reach of children.

In turn he trusts that his platoon leader and company commander will stand with him, agreeing with his decisions or counseling and advising him regarding his judgment and accepting his honest mistakes as learning experiences. A chain of command that functions in this manner, between captains and lieutenants, between brigade and battalion commanders, and between com-



Andrew Richardson/photo

Placards from a recent hurricane ROC drill show what units are available in the Mobile area to respond to a hurricane.

I encourage every member of the Alabama National Guard and their families to get out and enjoy all that spring and summer have to offer, but please ensure that all your activities are conducted with safety in mind. Thank you for what you do every day. Your hard work keeps our National Guard safe and ready for the next mission.

manders and their staffs creates the foundation of trust throughout a command. It also breeds trust and confidence among Soldiers in their units as they accomplish tasks, meet standards, and satisfy mission requirements. It creates the loyalty and esprit de corps that identify the finest units and organizations.



ALARNG Monthly Safety Bulletin

Safety First! Prevention Always!

29 March 2012

Spring Cleaning

Spring is upon us. The days are getting longer and warmer. Spring's arrival means it is that time of year again when we seriously clean our homes. While this is a rewarding activity, it can also be a risky one. Falls, cuts, chemical burns, and electrical shock are just some of the injuries which can occur.

You can survive spring cleaning by following these safety tips.

- ◆ You probably have lots to do so plan your work carefully – don't try to do it all at once.
- ◆ It may not feel overly warm but that doesn't mean you cannot get a heat injury. Make sure you drink plenty of water. Also, don't forget the sun block and wear a hat.
- ◆ Carefully inspect & repair lawn equipment and tools before using. Never lay hand tools such as rakes, hoes, shovels on the ground where they can be stepped on or tripped over.
- ◆ Wear protective clothing. Wear sturdy leather shoes, not tennis shoes, and safety glasses when operating mowers, edger's, trimmers, or other power tools. Wear vinyl or rubber gloves when you use liquid cleaning products. Cloth or leather gloves will protect your hands from minor injuries which can occur while you are dusting, moving furnishings, and handling debris.
- ◆ Beware of electrical hazards. Keep moisture away from electrical appliances and outlets. Don't spray cleaning products directly onto light switches or the fuse panel area of an electrical stove. Ordinary household vacuums must not be used on damp surfaces.
- ◆ Watch for overhead electrical hazards. Never touch a light fixture while you are on an aluminum ladder. When using an extension pole to clean ceilings or wash windows, stay away from lights and power lines.
- ◆ Slips, trips and falls are common household accidents, and they can occur easily when the house is in disarray during spring cleaning. Keep traffic areas clear of buckets, cords, boxes and other obstacles. Clean up spills promptly, and move carefully on damp surfaces. Look over your shoulder before you back up. Many housekeeping accidents happen as a result of tripping over objects or bumping into obstacles when backing up.
- ◆ Read the directions before using any cleaning product. When using the product, keep the work area well-ventilated. Many chemicals used for house cleaning can cause irritation to the respiratory system as well as burns to the eyes and skin. Never mix bleach and ammonia because this creates a deadly gas. Avoid using ammonia cleaning products in the bathroom at the same time as cleaning products containing bleach. Another way which this deadly mixture accidentally occurs is by pouring a bucket of ammonia cleaning product, which has been used for cleaning floors or windows, into a toilet bowl already containing a bleach product.
- ◆ Ladders are involved in many serious injuries at home. Inspect your ladders for wear and damage and secure them when in use. Place the base of the ladder on a solid, even surface. Do not stand on the top few rungs of a ladder. Do not lean away from the ladder because this can cause it to tip over.
 - ◆ Use sturdy scaffolding and good sense when doing work at heights such as cleaning stairwell ceilings or second story windows. Consider hiring an expert for this kind of work.
 - ◆ Use proper lifting techniques when moving bags of potting soil, fertilizer, mulch, decorative stone or paving blocks. Plan how you will pick something up and where you will set it down. Get help if necessary. Use the strength in your legs, not your back, to pick up a load. Bend your knees, and keep the load close to your body.
 - ◆ Supervise children and keep cleaning chemicals and tools out of their reach.



Follow these suggestions this spring and year-round to prevent accidents while you are house-cleaning

SAFETY BULLETIN

*Follow Me***Soldier elevates the standard and sets the example**

by Spc. Brenda Thomas
Staff Writer

“Follow me!” is the motto of the United States Army Infantry. Not only are infantrymen the first into battle, but they often elevate the standard and set the example for fellow Soldiers. Private First Class Dylan Hawkins raised the bar for newly enlisted Soldiers in the Alabama Army National Guard by breaking his company’s Army Physical Fitness Test record with a score of 369 in March 2012.

Hawkins, a 21 year-old Destin, Fla., native, enlisted in the Alabama Army National Guard as an infantry Soldier in the 1/131st Cavalry in Geneva, Ala. Prior to joining, he worked part time as a firefighter/EMT and part time as a lifeguard. He was in search of a new way to challenge himself and find other ways to make a difference in his community.

Friday March 23, 2012 began as a dreary day, with rain clouds blotting out the sun. The rain stopped just long enough for the graduating Soldiers to leave the parade field of the National Infantry Museum, Fort Benning, Ga., following their ceremony. They met with their eager family members to officially bring an end to their 14-week training. Hawkins was greeted by his proud mother and father, along with several unexpected



Brenda Thomas/photo

Pfc. Dylan Hawkins, a recent graduate of U.S. Army Infantry School, stands outside Fort Benning’s National Infantry Museum with Lt. Col. Jeff Smith, 22nd Recruiting and Retention Battalion commander, and his recruiter Sgt. 1st Class Jere Jensen, March 23, 2012.

visitors.

Sgt. 1st Class Jere Jensen, Hawkins’ recruiter, was among several service members who visited him on his graduation day. “Hawkins was an exceptional recruit,” said Jensen. “He scored a 99 on the ASVAB (Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery), with a GT (General Technical) score of 139.” Lt. Col. Jeff Smith, 22nd Recruiting and Retention Battalion commander, came to congratulate this Alabama National Guard recruit himself. Representatives from the 20th Special Forces Group were also present to give Hawkins guidance on a possible career as a Green Beret. He was also offered an Accelerated Ranger Selection course if he chose

to switch from the National Guard to the Regular Army.

“I’ve just been presented with a bunch of opportunities and I’m going to have to think about them,” Hawkins said. “I never would have guessed that people cared so much and were so invested that they would come all the way out here to see me.”

Hawkins not only met Army standards, but he exceeded them. “He proved himself in all training,” said Staff Sgt. Gerald Johnson, one of Hawkins’ Drill Sergeants. “He showed potential to do anything in the Army.”

“It feels great,” Hawkins said. “People appreciate that I have potential and try to help me fulfill that potential.”