INDIANA GUARDSMAN

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Front cover: Command Sgt. Maj. Brad Seifers, right, inspects Sgt. 1st Class Mark Grant, a supply sergeant, during the Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 38th Infantry DIvision Army service uniform inspection at the Cyclone DIvision Armory in Indianapolis, Sunday, Dec. 6, 2015. Seifers is the battalion's senior enlisted advisor. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Gary R. Nelson

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Message from The Adjutant General …

Service to communities, before self

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is, what are you doing for others?"

As Guardsmen the answer to this question is reflected in the many different facets of our lives.

As Guardsmen our service is to our communities across the state, our fellow Hoosiers, and our fellow Americans across this great nation.

As military service members, Airmen or Soldiers, the answer to this question is reflected in our values.

For Soldiers we follow the Army Values and one of those is Selfless-Service, "to put the welfare of the nation, the army and your subordinates before your own."

For Airmen, we follow the Air Force Values. And the Air Force's second core value is "service before self." It says "that professional duties take precedence over personal desires."

Finally, as Guardsmen we are citizens first, we come from communities and we must serve the communities, not only as Soldiers or Airmen, but also as citizens. That is another way we can do something for others.

Though the military mission is always first, our Soldiers and Airmen will benefit from the training and from participating in community events and community organizations.

Communities all across the state will benefit by your participation, but only as much as you are willing to do. I encourage you to do so, to embrace that side of yourself. I recognize that being a part of community enriches your lives, but it also enriches the Indiana National Guard. It makes you better Guardsmen. It makes you better leaders.

As active forces downsize, they will rely more on the National Guard. We must become better. I realize this could stretch your comfort zone, and it may be more inconvenient for some. But I'd like to quote Dr. King again, and it's something I took to heart when I visited his memorial in Washington at Christmastime.

"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy."

After more than 14 years of deployments, these are still challenging times. I ask you all to remember that we took the oath of service to protect and to do for others – our fellow Hoosiers, our fellow Americans.

Adjutant General visits Bloomington

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Lowry

Indiana National Guard Sgt. Maj. Sherman Debro, the Field Maintenance Shop #20 supervisor, talks to Maj. Gen. Courtney P. Carr, about space limitations at the shop, Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2015. "This is always good to get out and see what's going on," Carr said about his visit to the maintenance shop and Bloomington Armory. The adjutant general has made it a point to visit every armory within the Hoosier State.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Lowry

Indiana National Guard Brig. Gen. Ronald A. Westfall, center, receives his new rank from his wife, Sheryl, right, and Maj. Gen. Courtney P. Carr, Indiana's adjutant general, during a promotion ceremony at the Indiana National Guard's headquarters in Indianapolis, Friday, Dec. 11, 2015.

Joint chief promoted to brigadier general

Staff Report
Indiana National Guard Public Affairs

The Indiana National Guard's Director of the Joint Staff, Ronald A. WestfaIl, received the rank of brigadier general at Joint Force Headquarters. Indiana's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Courtney P. Carr, promoted Westfall during a ceremony Dec. 11.

Westfall serves as the chief of staff for the Indiana Air and Army National Guard, more than 14,000 Hoosier Guardsmen, civilian employees and volunteers.

During the ceremony, Westfall thanked the people important in his life and military career.

"My original intent was to thank everyone who played a role in helping me to get to this point in my life and my career, but I realized that would be impossible. Because every single person in this room, along with so many others whom I have had the pleasure to know - my family, my friends, those whom I work with and have served alongside over the course of my life - each of you have played a role," " said Westfall.

Westfall most recently served as the Army chief of staff, Indiana National Guard, Joint Force Headquarters, prior to his present assignment. Other assignments included director of strategic initiatives and commander of the 76th Infantry Brigade Combat Team. He started his career as an enlisted Soldier prior to commissioning as a second lieutenant from the Indiana Military Academy in 1986.

Westfall, a resident of Mooresville, Ind., became director of the joint staff for the Indiana National Guard in August 2015.

He has deployed three times: to Bosnia in 2002 as the Camp McGovern force protection officer; to Iraq in 2003 as the executive officer with 1st Battalion, 293rd Infantry Regiment; and to Iraq in 2008 as the 1st Battalion, 151st Infantry Regiment commander.

Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Lowry

Brig. Gen. Ronald A. Westfall, the director of the joint staff, thanks people during his promotion ceremony at the Indiana National Guard's headquarters in Indianapolis, Friday, Dec. 11.

Artillery battery fades to black

Storied Indiana National Guard unit,139th E-TAB, cases it colors

By Staff Sgt. Lorne W. Neff
Indiana National Guard Public Affairs

The Indiana Army National Guard's Battery E (Target and Acquisition), 139th Field Artillery, or E-TAB, cased its colors in a ceremony, Saturday, Nov. 7, 2015. The ceremony occurred at at Stout Field in Indianapolis.

During the ceremony, Battery Commander Capt. Peter Warfel saluted his commander and said, "Sir, I relinquish command." Thus ending the run of one of Indiana's most deployed units in the last 20 years.

Before the casing, Warfel thanked the battery's soldiers for their service and for helping him during his 18-month command.

"During my command, you all carried yourselves with a sense of duty, a sense of honor and sense of professionalism," said Warfel. "And given this unit's storied history, I think everyone can leave this unit on par with that storied history."

Indiana Army National Guard Col. David Vesper, 219th Engineer Brigade commander, was the keynote speaker at the casing ceremony. He started as a private with ETAB in 1984 before receiving his commission in 1988. He outlined the history of the unit explaining how the battery was able to adapt with technology as radar systems changed over the years, the battery's mission was target acquisition, tracking incoming fire to enable return fire, but modernization also lead to the casing.

"Radar systems are simpler and easier to use, and don't require a centralized oversight that requires a dedicated battery to keep them going," said Vesper. He said what was once done by a whole separate battery like the E-TAB can now be done by a platoon and small crews.

The E-TAB's history included the first major deployment by an Indiana National Guard unit since Vietnam when a unit detachment headed to Bosnia in 1996. The battery again deployed to Iraq in 2004 and then to Afghanistan in 2012.

"Us going away isn't a huge shock," said Sgt. 1st Class Aaron Cooper, a platoon sergeant in the unit. "But it's still sad." Cooper had been in the unit for more than 10 years and deployed to Iraq and Afghanistan.

"It's bittersweet," said Sgt. Jerrad Lizotte, survey section leader, who deployed with the battery to Afghanistan. "You move on to better things, but at the same time I've grown through the ranks with all these guys and some of them have become my best friends. I trust them with my life."

The unit isn't going completely away. Its lineage and history, along a handful of its Soldiers will be going to Headquarters and Headquarters Battalion, 2nd Battalion, 150 Field Artillery Regiment.

"The way lineage works in the National Guard, they don't belong to guideons," said Vesper. "Even though the battery did these three deployments, it is the Soldiers that did the deployments and when units close their guide-ons, you look at where the Soldiers go."

Indiana National Guard Soldiers who served with Battery E (Target and Acquisition), 139th Field Artillery, help case the unit's guideon in November.

Ceremonial Unit horses retire

Staff Report
Indiana National Guard Public Affairs

Two of the Indiana National Guard's Percherons draft horses retired at a ceremony at Indiana National Guard headquarters, Wednesday, Dec. 9.

The horses, Sgt. 1st Class Bob and Staff Sgt. Garrett, also received recognition for years of service delivering Indiana soldiers and airmen to their final resting place. Before serving in Indiana, the pair were members of a caisson unit at Arlington National Cemetery.

The Indiana's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Cortney P. Carr, also took time to thank the Indiana National Guardsmen and civilians who volunteer their free time to care for all of the horses in the team.

"We just wouldn't be here today if were not for the members of our volunteer ceremonial units, those who serve today and the scores who have served over the years," said Carr. "They, along with the Percherons, represent the Indiana National Guard in communities throughout the state superbly."

Indiana National Guard Sgt. 1st Class Nicholas Wall, the Ceremonial Unit's operations sergeant, said the horses will be treated well in their retirement.

"It is still being worked out were they will be retiring to," said Wall, "but it is guaranteed that we will ensure they will live out the rest of their lives being spoiled and well taken care of."

They were assigned to the 3rd Infantry Regiment also known as the Old Guard, in Fort Myer, Virginia.

This was Bob and Garrett's first term of military service. While assigned to the caisson platoon with the Old Guard they worked in Arlington National Cemetery. They were a part of countless ceremonies pulling the caissons that carried fallen service members to their final resting place.

No records are available stating how many missions they completed, but after nearly three years of duty there, and during the height of the War on Terrorism, they could have easily provided honors for more than a hundred fallen service members.

Bob and Garrett came off of active duty and joined the Indiana National Guard in July 2010.

Promptly after they were fitted for their harnesses, trained with the team and went right back to work. They have marched in numerous parades, supported ceremonies and horse shows, and pulled the caisson that carries fallen Hoosier heroes to their final resting places.

These heroes included not only just military service member but also Indiana police officers killed in the line of duty.

Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Runser

Indiana's Adjutant General, Maj. Gen. Courtney P. Carr, poses for a photo with Staff Sgt Garrett, left, and Sgt. 1st Class Bob after the horses retirement ceremony at the Indiana National Guard headquarters at Stout Field in Indianapolis, Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2015. The horses retired after a nearly five years with the Ceremonial Unit. Photo by Les Newport

Deployed Hoosiers help tell Soldiers' story

Indiana Army National Guard Maj. Mike Delp interviews United Kingdom Army Brig. James Learmont, who is currently serving as the Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command – Iraq deputy commanding general for interoperability, in Baghdad, Iraq, Tuesday, Dec. 18, 2015.

Indiana National Guardsmen documenting history

Staff Report
Indiana National Guard Public Affairs

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait – The Indiana Indiana National Guard's 138th Military History Detachment, currently deployed in support of Operation Inherent Resolve, is making history of its own.

Hoosier Guardsmen, Lt. Col. Mary Shaw, Indianapolis, and Maj. Mike Delp, Bloomington, Ind., have been in Kuwait since the end of September 2015 replacing the 161st Military History Detachment of the Georgia National Guard.

One of the primary tasks of a military history detachment is to conduct and preserve oral interviews of key personnel in order to tell "the Soldiers' story."

Indiana Army National Guard Maj. Mike Delp recently traveled to Iraq to interview key members of the Combined Joint Forces Land Component Command – Iraq, a component of Combined Joint Task Force – Operation Inherent Resolve.

"Having the opportunity to interview a wide range of officers from different organizations outside the Army has been an incredible opportunity and experience," said Delp, who prior to this deployment was the general officer management officer in the personnel directorate for the Indiana National Guard.

Delp interviewed general officers from the U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Air Force and the United Kingdom armed forces discussing a variety of subjects including training Iraqi soldiers to fight the Islamic State, working with other troop contributing nations and sharing lessons learned.

"Being a military historian has given me the unique chance to listen, document and discuss the different viewpoints from coalition members from all over the world," Delp said. "And I get the opportunity to be involved in a higher strategic level that I otherwise would never have been exposed to."

The 138th Military History Detachment will remain in theater until late spring.

Since World War II, MHDs have had the mission of documenting, recording and gathering history of Soldiers on the battlefield and today there are a total of 35 military history detachments in the Army: one in the active-duty Army, 27 in the Army Reserve, and seven in the Army National Guard.

Racer races to save driver's life

By Airman 1st Class Lonnie Wiram
181st Intelligence Wing Public Affairs

Indiana Air National Guard Col. L. Kip Clark, right, the commander of the 181st Intelligence Wing, presents Senior Airman Leah Puckett, left, with the Indiana Distinguished Service Cross.

A 181st Intelligence Wing Airmen earned the Indiana Distinguished Service Cross for her heroic efforts involving a car accident near Brazil, Indiana.

"I was driving to drill and I hardly ever stop in the morning, but this morning I pulled into a gas station at exit 23 to get a bottle of water," said Senior Airman Leah M. Puckett, as she reflected on the day of the accident.

"There was an Airman at the gas station getting some things, as well. We did not exchange words, just a head nod. She got in her vehicle and headed towards base as I paid for my water," said Puckett. "I got in my car and headed to drill like a normal drill morning."

As Puckett drove closer to Hulman Field, tragedy struck.

"I'm traveling behind a van and all of a sudden I see a white flash through the air and realize it's headlights through the air," said Puckett. "I look up in my rear view mirror to make sure no one was behind me so I could stop."

Puckett did not hesitate. She stopped her vehicle, put it in park, turned her caution lights on, and ran up to the van to check on the driver.

"I got up to the van and there was a military member standing outside his van with blood on his face, and he said, 'I'm OK. I'm OK. I'm OK,'" said Puckett.

Puckett stood there for a minute, looking around, and then she saw smoke in a field.

Puckett's morning changed drastically.

"It's a car," Puckett said. "I didn't see the car a first because the car was black, it is early morning in November, and it was dark."

"My first assumption was that the car was going to blow so to give that person a chance I need to get to the car now and shut the engine off and get them out," Puckett said. "I took off running towards the car."

The car was the woman's from the gas station that morning.

She got to the vehicle, turned off the engine and assessed the damage.

"I tried to get the driver's side door open, but the door was smashed in and glass everywhere," said Puckett. "I went over to the passenger side and got that door open."

Puckett then got in the vehicle checked over the woman, and called 911.

Due to the conditions of the woman, Puckett did not move her but administered first aid.

"I made a tourniquet, the best I could, to apply self-aid buddy care, by tightening her cuff on her blouse," said Puckett.

While sitting in the vehicle, keeping the driver stable, Puckett heard the woman's phone ring, and it kept ringing.

"Her phone had a protective case, but the collision was so hard that the phone case came off the phone and the phone was cracked," said Puckett.

Puckett then answered the phone. It was a family member of the woman. Puckett explained to the family member what happened and calmed them down.

While this took place, the authorities and fellow Indiana National Guardsmen took care of the driver.

Puckett then learned that the woman's leg was severely broken, so severe that the blood stopped going to the leg, so the authorities airlifted her to the hospital.

While the authorities moved the woman to a stretcher, Puckett held the woman's hand and went to the hospital with her. Puckett did not leave her side.

That day Puckett became an example of the 16th line of the Airman's Creed, "I will never leave an Airman behind."

She took her training and used her knowledge to save a woman's life that day.

"I don't feel like a hero, I don't feel like that," said Puckett. "I feel like this is what I was trained to do. It's what the United States Air Force trained me to do."

"Being a Racer has given me the opportunity to be more confident, more self-assured, and more knowledgeable in things like self-aid buddy care, leadership and performing under pressure."

The 181st Intelligence Wing Commander, Col. L. Kip Clark presented Puckett with the Indiana Distinguished Service Cross for her heroic efforts.

"I am Racer, and any Racer would do the same; it is who we are," said Puckett.

Indiana Army National Guard Lt. Col. Barry Hon, Muscatatuck Urban Training Center site manager, leads the commander of the Israeli Home Front Command, Maj. Gen. Yoel Strick, and his party, on a tour of Muscatatuck Urban Training Center battlefield effects, Wednesday, Dec. 9, 2015. Photo by Master Sgt. Brad Staggs

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Indiana Army National Guard Staff Sgt. Shane Linville, a 38th Infantry Division administration assistant, kisses his wife Sarah, as they hold their two children, Scout, left, and June, following a departure ceremony of approximately 60 Hoosier Guardsmen at the 38th Infantry Division Armory in Indianapolis, Friday, Nov. 20, 2015. The Guardsmen will oversee safe, secure, humane, legal, and transparent care and custody of detainees at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Photo by Sgt. 1st Class Jeff Lowry