

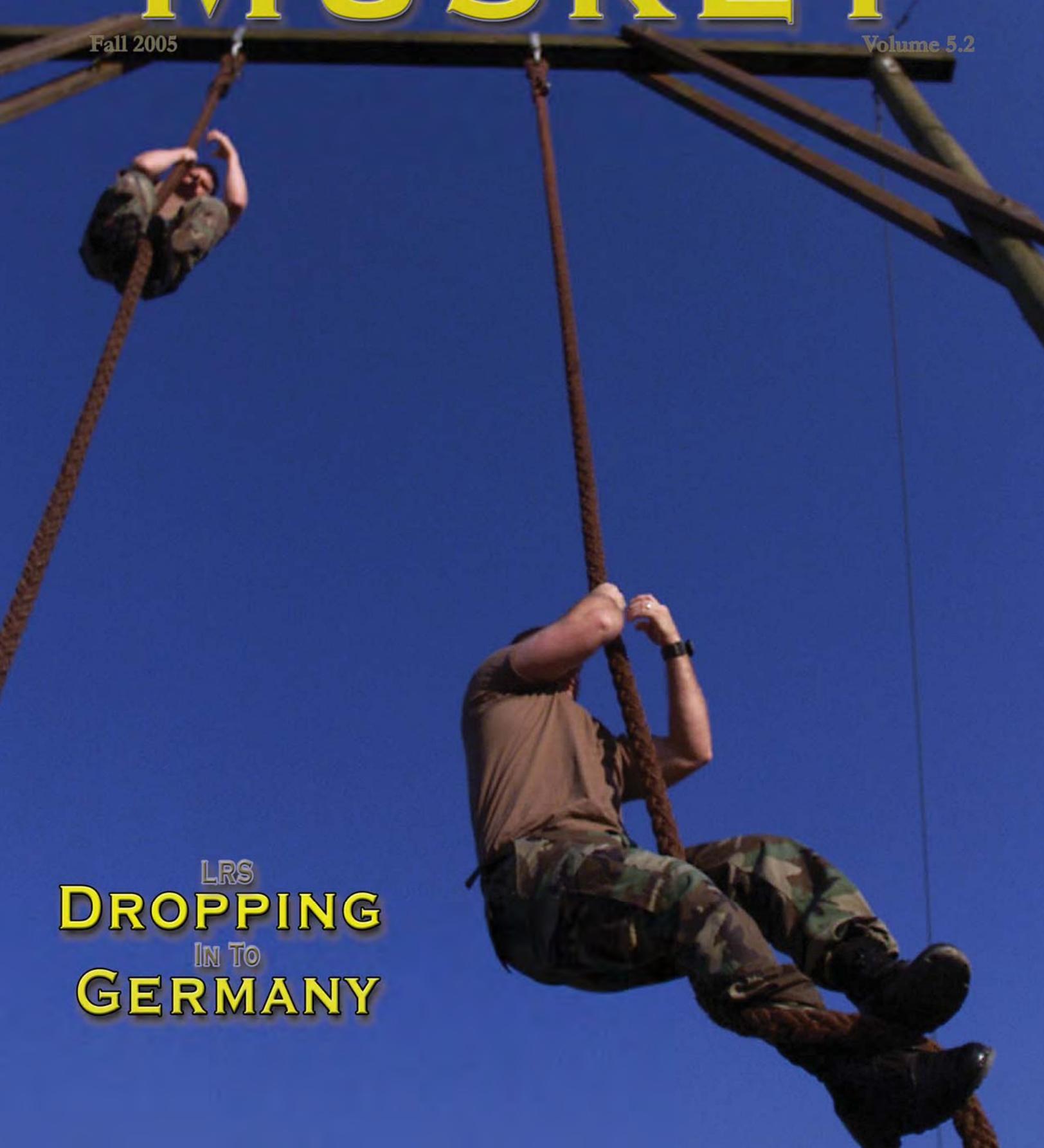
Produced for the members of the Maryland Army National Guard

# Maryland MUSKET

Fall 2005

Volume 5.2

LRS  
DROPPING  
IN TO  
GERMANY





Second Lt. Richard Olsen, with B Company, 229th Main Support Battalion, scans the area ahead of him during training on convoy defense procedures.  
Photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy.

## Maryland Musket

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at Fort A.P. Hill, Va. Story on page 4.

## FALL 2005

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### on the cover...

***Soldiers of E Company, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion, (Long Range Surveillance) scale ropes during morning physical training while on annual training in Hohenfels, Germany. Story on page 18. Photo by Spc. S. Patrick McCollum.***



Soldiers from the 229th Main Support Battalion evacuate “casualties” during training on convoy procedures at Fort A.P. Hill, Va. Soldiers trained on how to recover a stalled vehicle while under fire, convoy defense procedures and how to evacuate casualties while under fire. Photo by Pfc. Beverly Stanley.



Learning the art  
of

— Convoy Defense



Text by Pfc. Beverly Stanley

# Learning the art of Convoy Defense

The 29th Division Support Command of the Maryland Army National Guard is committed to preparing for new threats that are presented to soldiers while deployed. In an effort to heighten awareness, the unit, which includes the 729th Forward Support Battalion and the 229th Main Support Battalion, recently conducted convoy defense training culminating in a live-fire exercise at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Soldiers were put in a simulated threat environment with three different scenarios: how to recover a vehicle, how to evacuate a casualty, and how to mount and dismount a vehicle in order to provide covering fire while under simulated attack.

The simulation exercise is comparable to what the unit may encounter if deployed to an area like Iraq or Afghanistan.

“In today’s environment in Iraq and Afghanistan, combat service support Soldiers are routinely put into environments and situations where they have to defend their lives,” said Maj. Gregory Tine, support operations officer with the unit. “In the convoy live fire exercises that we have going on today, we are putting them into a training environment that allows them exposure to such a situation.”

The Soldiers are aware of how much this convoy training is needed.

“This is the main support battalion and we deliver supplies and we conduct convoys, so if and when we are deployed this training is exactly what we need to complete our mission,” said 2nd Lt. Phillip Richardson, a branch ordnance administration officer, with the 229th MSB.

This training exercise was carefully planned to ensure positive results.

The organization started about a year ago when the division commanding officers decided to organize a training event to teach skills that would support the Army’s new modular structure and focus on war fighting skills, which many refer to as warrior skills. The command staff wanted training that would be equivalent to the situations Soldiers are faced with during real-world missions.

“The integration of the warrior [skills] is another step towards preparing Soldiers for the new threats that wartime situations present,” said Tine. “So what we’ve been doing is building on these common task skills with the warrior squads and integrating them all the way up to our section and company level.”

The instructors have come together from all the units of the division support command- medical, maintenance and supply.

“They put backgrounds aside and looked at common tasks and created a successful training environment,” said Tine.

“The instructors took us step by step [until] we got it. First we crawled then we walked then we ran through the training,” said Pfc. Chineu Ogbonna, a truck driver for B Company.

Though the instructors were all non-commissioned officers, the ranks of the students ranged from privates to the officer level. This variation in rank was said to have had a positive impact on the training event.

“Young Soldiers can always benefit from older Soldiers just as older Soldiers can benefit from the younger ones,” said Master Sgt. William A. Sievers, operations NCO, 729th FSB. “Everyone has something to contribute to the entire good of the organization. Without the integration of the old with the new, the system is doomed for failure.”

The training was rigorous, but many said the heat was the most difficult aspect faced during the event.

“My battle buddies kept me motivated today,” said Pfc. Andre E. Turner, a truck driver with B Company 229th MSB. “We drank plenty of water and stayed out of the sun.”

“The most challenging thing is basically dealing with the elements today,” said Richardson when referring to the training exercise.

Throughout the training teamwork was a major factor.

“The instructors worked hard to accomplish the goal which was a successful training event,” said Tine. The

Soldiers stayed motivated, and, continuing with the commitment to being prepared, those who planned the training took notes on how to build on what was taught.



Above: Spc. Joseph Thomas, a motor transport operator with B Company, 229th Main Support Battalion, scans his surroundings for potential threats as he rides in the back of a five-ton truck during training on convoy defense procedures at Fort A.P. Hill, Va.

Right: Soldiers of the unit provide covering fire for their convoy while under simulated attack. Photos by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy



# I'm with The Band

You may have seen them in your armory, in your neighborhood, or in a parade, but where do they come from? What else do they do? What is the function of the Army band? Do they have weapons besides flutes and trumpets? Although it may not be widely known, Army bands function much like every other unit in the Army.

Recently, the Maryland Army National Guard's 229th Army Band spent a weekend qualifying with M16A2 rifles at Gunpowder Military Reservation, in Glen Arm, Md.

"[Qualifying] helps with readiness, in case we get deployed, we have to make sure everybody can shoot the M16 if need be," said Spc. Erica Day, a trombone player with the band.

"We are Soldiers first before we are musicians," said the band's acting commander, 1st Sgt. Arnold L. Bundy. "For our readiness we have to be prepared as far as homeland defense is concerned."

Playing for the band does not take the Soldiers away from the Soldier first mentality, especially during wartime.

"We have two missions. The first is obviously our musical mission to support our troops and civilians," said Bundy, who has been with the unit since 1975. "Supporting the troops is basically to keep up the morale of the troops. Right now Army wide we have two bands in the desert and their main job is morale and support of the troops out there in the desert. They are basically doing top twenty-type music for the Soldiers. The type of music the Soldiers want to hear, not necessarily Bach and Beethoven but up-tempo type music the Soldiers love."

Secondly, "We are tasked to augment the [Military Police]," said Staff Sgt. Richard Gorelick, a team leader with the band, "to help them pull guard duty and stuff like that."

Training is only one aspect of the band's busy schedule. Today it is qualifying on the range; tomorrow it is back to performing for the members of the band when they travel around the area to put on concerts for the community and endorse the Army.

"It is to promote the Maryland National Guard, the Army and the Army band program," said Bundy speaking of concerts. "Typically we do somewhere in the area of twelve to fifteen concerts [a year]."

Annually the band puts on about 45 shows that include concerts, parades and ceremonies. To keep up with the busy schedule, Bundy said the 49-member band is broken up into four categories: the ceremonial band, which traditionally plays for parades or change of command ceremonies; the concert band which mainly plays for the civilian audience; the show band which is gear toward the younger generation; and the brass ensemble which plays at chapels and similar places.

And to keep up with that very busy schedule the band's drill schedule is not like most units.

"Our unit drills every Wednesday night," said Bundy. "As a band we have to stay proficient and if we were to just rehearse once a month, we would not stay very proficient. The Soldiers enjoy it even though it is a busy schedule."

All of the hard work pays off and has allowed members of the band to experience many different things, such as going overseas.

"We got to go overseas and play with other bands from other countries," said Day "It was my first experience out of the country and we got to hear different styles of music from other bands."

Gorelick agreed.

## Text and photography by Sgt. Rob Barker

“We took a trip to Estonia and we got to play with a few other bands from around Europe,” he said, speaking of one of his favorite moments in the band. “We got to show off a little bit for them. That was a lot of fun.”

During their trip, the unit played more than military music.

“It’s a mix,” said Gorelick. “We play some military marches and some show tunes and some jazz and rock tunes, a lot of patriotic stuff too. That is what the people want to hear a military band play.”

The busy schedule does not affect the morale of the band. Bundy, Gorelick and Day have combined for more than 50 years service in the 229th Army Band and Day credits the longevity to two reasons.

“I love music, and I love my unit,” she said.



*Spc. Erica Day, a trombone player with Maryland's 229th Army Band reviews her target after recently qualifying as a marksman at Gunpowder Military Reservation in Glen Arm, Md. The band spent the day qualifying before preparing for a concert the following night.*



# PLAYING The Enemy

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Text and photography by Spc. S. Patrick McCollum

# PLAYING The Enemy



*Above: Soldiers of Alpha Troop and Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry (Recon), march toward an objective in Hohenfels, Germany while on a scouting mission.*

*Far Right: Members of an Estonian scouting platoon prepare to participate in the assault of an objective during a training mission with the 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry (Recon) in*

*Hohenfels.*

*Previous page: Sergeant 1st Class Romeo Dacquel, left, a platoon sergeant with Alpha Troop, 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry (Recon), and Spc. Hyung Chon, a parts clerk with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, of the 1-158th Cavalry, respond to a simulated assault on a town in the Army's Combined Maneuver Training Center in Hohenfels.*

Spc. Christopher Riggs, a cavalry scout with A Troop, 1st Squadron, 158th Cavalry (Recon), could have been on vacation.

In Germany with two Army buddies from the 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment he explored one of the regions many forests. Their group stopped every now and then, talking and pointing out various things. As they headed back to their waiting vehicle, the forests suddenly swarmed with activity.

“Get on the ground!” a Soldier yelled in the clearing. He was in full combat gear and flanked by Bradley fighting vehicles, helicopters, and many of his compatriots. Riggs and his companions were detained as suspected insurgents due to the fact that the forest overlooked a mockup of the town of Ramadi, which had been suffering from “insurgent” attacks since the 1-158 Cavalry had rolled into town.

It was part of the mission of A Troop and Headquarters and Headquarters Troop 1-158th Cavalry as well as E Company, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion (Long Range Surveillance), and a platoon of Estonian Cavalry Scouts. The group spent three weeks in Germany to help the 1st Armored Division prepare for an upcoming deployment to Iraq. While half of the group was tasked with mounting missions as the opposing forces -- insurgent attacks with rocket propelled grenades, mortars, and improvised explosive devices -- the other half was to play BLUEFOR -- Iraqi National Guard forces friendly to US Forces.

“Our Soldiers are doing everything they can to ensure the Soldiers from the 1st AD get the training they need so that when they go to Iraq, they complete their mission and come home,” said 1st Sgt. James Nugent, the first sergeant for A Troop and the noncommissioned officer in charge for the mission.

In the forests and towns of the Combined Maneuver Training Center in Hohenfels -- known more commonly as “The Box” -- the battles were fought. In the beginning cav elements came back bragging of how many Bradley fighting vehicles they destroyed, how they got away, and how close they evaded being thrown into the simulated detention center, where suspected insurgents were detained for 72 hours if enough evidence was against them. But that soon changed.

“They learned through their mistakes,” said Nugent. “As they learned how to adapt, it became much harder for our insurgents to mount attacks.”

Meanwhile the BLUEFOR were playing the part of a friendly foreign army that needed to be utilized. After a few missteps, Nugent thought the cav had helped the 1st AD learn how to work with the troops training to defend their country.

“1st AD units learned how to work with and utilize Iraqi National Guard units, treat them as attachments, learn how to employ them in a way that I hope they will employ them when they get to Iraq,” said Nugent.

In addition to the mission of preparing the 1st AD, cavalry Soldiers trained on other tasks including close quarters battle, which were taught by the veterans of the current conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.



Staff Sergeant Erik Miller, a scout with A Troop, ten year SWAT team member on the civilian side and a veteran of the current Iraq war, led his troops through the variations of entering a room. First they practiced without weapons, learning how to move as a team. Then an outline of a room was taped down to see where to move. People were added, and eventually the troops were able to practice on actual CMTC training houses with their weapons.

“We practiced mounted patrolling techniques that included crossing danger areas while pulling support, tactical angles which you have to watch for window sniper positions,” he said. “From my experience in Iraq there’s no Ranger files, there’s no wedges, there’s no treelines. There’s just sand and cities.”

The cav also was able to train in their primary mission of scouting. Each platoon was charged with different avenues of approach to an objective from which command elements were observing. Each went through winding avenues of the forest, observing and taking notes.

“It’s doing the things we’ve trained on for however many years,” said Nugent. “They’re planning their missions, they’re conducting their reconnaissance, they’re actually going to fight their fight.”

This training culminated in a defense and assault on a CMTC town. On defense, members of the unit set up checkpoints and stationed personnel inside of the city to defend against insurgent assault.

On the attack, cav members were given the task of sneaking up on the town to attack buildings that the LRS held as insurgents. The positions were heavily defended, answering the assault with rattle of expended blank ammunition and yelling. But that day there was no real damage. Although the LRS and cav traded hits, it was only training, designed to save lives if the real thing ever came along.

## A Soldier's story

Many members of the Maryland Army National Guard anticipate serving in and around Maryland. However, one particular member of A Troop, 1-158th Cavalry (Recon), was pleasantly surprised when the first time he reported to his unit for a three-week mission to Hohenfels, Germany to play the “opposing force” for the 1st Armored Division as they prepare for a deployment to Iraq.

Pvt. Travis Stansbury, from Centerville, Md., was introduced to his unit at the first company formation in Hohenfels.

“I got the initial hazings,” he said. “The dumb jokes like ‘go ask the supply sergeant for a chemlight battery.’ Or ask for a small MILES gear [MILES gear is all the same size].” When he is teased about his E-1 rank, which leaves nothing on the collar, he is quick to respond: “I just tell them I keep my rank on my civilian clothes too.”

Stansbury struggled with indecision before joining the cav. He knew he wanted to join the Guard, but the 19-year-old aspiring comic-book writer wasn’t sure where he would fit into the military.

“My recruiter told me about the cav, kept going on and on about it, his one statement was ‘why walk when you can drive,’ Stansbury said of his decision to join the 1-158th Cav. “ ‘Here comes the cavalry’ is a classic line, so it must mean something.”

After all the indecision, fitting in at the cav has been easy for the new recruit. All the jokes are just part of integrating him into the team, according to some of the older Soldiers in the unit.

“Being in the military at any period of time you’re going to crack jokes,” said Sgt. Lawrence Middleton, a communications noncommissioned officer with the unit who frequently targets Stansbury for jokes. “That’s nothing that’s going to

bother anyone. You have to have a sense of humor to deal with the real world stuff that’s going on. At the same time you can be serious about your job and do what you have to do to contribute to the military.”

Stansbury understood this mentality, and though he is only still adjusting to the unit, he already feels like he has a home there.

“I feel like calling these guys my brothers. I don’t feel like the new guy. They treat me like family, take me under their wing. I love it here so far,” he said. “Hopefully I’ll be able to grow up as a soldier and say ‘you know what? I am a cavalryman. This is what I want to do.’”

Though he’s new to the cav, spending time in Germany seemed a little familiar to him.

“This reminds me of a lot of ruck marches we took in cav school, he said.” “There are hills all over the place.”

# **TRAINING THE FORCE**



**BANG!!!** An explosion ripped through the air at Blackstone Army Airfield located at Fort Pickett, Va.

“All of you are dead,” yelled 1st Sgt. Roy White of the 629th Military Intelligence Battalion. “Even the journalist. What do we need to do, spray paint the can and sandbag so you can see it?”

The can and sand bag represented an improvised explosive device, and while the explosion wasn’t real the training was. The Tactical Training Team put members of the 29th Aviation Brigade of the Maryland Army National Guard through their paces.

The Tactical Training Team, composed of both active duty and National Guard members, was formed in 2003 as an independent mobile training team. Its purpose is to create realistic training scenarios that troops may encounter in real world missions.

“There is no substitute for hands-on experience that imitates combat situations,” said Sgt. 1st Class Robert L. Killian of the 629th Military Intelligence Battalion. While round-robin training and Power Point are easy to plan and execute, we feel it is actually detrimental to soldiers by giving them a false sense of their abilities.” said Killian.

“The team believes that tactical soldiering skills should be maintained and improved upon,” said Killian. “With the current and future battlefield ever changing, working in combat support roles no longer guarantees being in the rear with the gear.”

Mixing active duty and reserve component personnel adds diversity and experience to the team, said Killian.

The team’s training ability comes from the varied backgrounds in its members, who have been assigned to the unit voluntarily.

Presently there are 10 members with a combined total of 80 years of military service including combat tours in Operation Desert Storm, Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom. The team has certified combat lifesavers, hazardous material handlers, a master driver and has attended other classes as well, said Killian.

And all of that experience comes together when planning out a training scenario, which can be a time intensive process.

“The team has spent about one thousand man hours planning this real world training for the 29th Aviation Brigade,” said Staff Sgt. Jeremy Sheets of the 704th Military Intelligence Battalion, Fort George G. Meade, Md.

While undergoing the training the goal for the 29th Aviation Brigade was to have fourteen training units encounter realistic stressful situations while going through the Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie lanes and receive a go, said Sheets.

And the lane threw a number of situations at the aviation Soldiers.

“When units drive through the lanes they encounter sniper attacks, civil unrest, IEDs that go bang, take prisoners, deal with embedded journalists and evaluate casualties and evacuate them using air support,” said Sheets.

All of these elements can be over whelming to the Soldiers on the first day of training, contributing to a no go.

“On the first day the Soldiers usually do not get a go for the lane because they are tense and have not used their skills in sometime, the training usually takes several days,” said Sheets.

During the scenarios Soldiers are reminded to rely on the training they have received through out their military career. Usually this training comes back to them and aids with negotiating the lane.

“Since they have been through a lane once they are calmer and their training comes back to them,” said Sheets.

When the training ends the Soldiers move through the lanes with confidence using the skills they were taught. “If our training saves one Soldier’s life then our training has been successful and we have done our job,” said Killian.

*First Lt. John Henderson, left, and Staff Sgt. Wilson Trabel both with the B Company, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion, call in a nine line medical evacuation request during training at Fort Pickett, Va.*





Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Clay, DOIM help desk NCOIC, makes adjustments and repairs to the hard drive of a computer. In addition to providing computer support the DOIM also maintains telephone, satellite and other data and voice communication equipment for the Maryland Army National Guard.

*Text by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy and Spc Luke Rollins*

*Photography by Spc. Luke Rollins*

To some, it's a somewhat mysterious sounding acronym that conjures up images of secret activities and covert operations reminiscent of the NSA--which despite assertions by some that it stands for No Such Agency, in reality NSA is the National Security Agency. To others, it's simply a group of "computer nerds." And still others have never heard of this organization, though they utilize its equipment almost anytime they are at their unit. Computer nerds or super-secret agents, the question still remains--

# *Who is the DOIM?*

For many Soldiers of the Maryland Army National Guard, their only interaction with the Directorate of Information Management is when they have a computer problem and place a call to the DOIM help desk. And while the computer network and help desk operations are a large part of the mission of the DOIM, what many may not realize is the responsibilities of the DOIM extend to almost every communication system of the Maryland Army National Guard.

Based out of Camp Fretterd in Reisterstown, the DOIM "is responsible for providing data and telecommunications in secure and non-secure forms," said Maj. Adam Flasch, director of information management.

Simply put, everything from wiring phone jacks and issuing computers to individual units to maintaining the computer network falls under the DOIM. And for the Soldiers assigned to the DOIM, that's quite a lot of computers and other equipment to maintain.

"Right now the entire network in Maryland has over 1200 computers," said Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Clay, DOIM help desk non-commissioned officer in charge. "That's to include servers, laptops and desktops. Also we support all portable telecommunications equipment—cell phones, any wireless that might be in the network and all telecommunications equipment to include telephones, land lines, satellites and hard wiring."

The DOIM is able to keep all those systems functional with a total of just 28 very busy full-time employees.

"I have four phones lines. I have email and sometimes I also receive requests through the fax," said Clay, describing a typical day at the help desk.

And according to Clay, the multiple phone calls, emails and faxes add up to between about 50 and 150 requests for assistance per day. Those requests can range from an individual being locked out of their computer to more serious issues such as infections from computer viruses. If a problem can't be fixed over the phone, or through remote access of the network, a repair ticket is filled out and assigned to a technician to make the repair.

"I'll create a ticket through the help desk if I can't fix it within the first 15 minutes and I'll assign it to another

technician," said Clay. The technician will then get back to the individual who reported the problem and go out to the site to make the repair.

The help desk is part of one of the DOIM's five branches. Falling under the Automations branch, which is charged with providing laptop and desktop support, those who work there also repair damaged computers, hard drives and other computer equipment, as well as manage the help desk.

The Network Operations section manages the internal portions of the computer network and administers network security and systems administration, while the Telecommunications section provides voice and data wiring services.

"All voice and data jacks anywhere in any [Maryland Army National Guard] facility were wired by the DOIM," said Flasch.

The remaining branches of the DOIM include the Administrative Services section, which manages printing, reproduction and publications, and Distance Learning, which maintains and operates telecommunication systems at classrooms in armories throughout the state.

Regardless of what part of the DOIM those assigned there work, the focus of the DOIM is on the end user of the system—the Soldier.

"We have a five-year plan," said Flasch. "And everything on that five-year plan revolves around what we can do for that unit commander, that first sergeant, platoon sergeant, platoon leader and that Soldier to enhance their ability to do their jobs."

And one way the DOIM is enhancing the Soldier's ability to do their job is by focusing on a presence on the Internet and the World Wide Web.

"Our intent is to get the units to provide us with Soldiers to come in and help us design a Soldier's page," said Flasch. "Your average Soldier, an E-4, will have specific needs and can identify that to us. Then, we can develop an NCO's page and a leader's page. And again, it focuses on the NCO, the lieutenant, the captain and helping them make the best use of information. That's our number one goal—to make information available at the right time to the right person."

*(See DOIM page 22)*

# Long Range Surveillance

Hiking. Close-quarters battle. Physical training with logs. More hiking.

Such is the life of a Soldier in E Company, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion (Long Range Surveillance).

The unit's annual training in Hohenfels, Germany involved a combination of conventional and unconventional training methods. While close quarters battle training embraced the tried-and-true method of repetition, PT took the not-so standard route and incorporated logs or rope climbing. Even the seemingly mundane task of getting from one place to another involved some aspect of training.

"We walked everywhere we went," said Pfc. Mark Ruhsam, an infantryman with the unit and a sailmaker in the civilian world, of LRS marches to training that eschewed motorized transport across the sprawling Combined Maneuver Training Center. "And we were glad to do it," said the Annapolis, Md. native. This was in addition to any 8-mile ruck marches scheduled for morning PT.

The whole mission of the LRS is to provide "eyes on" surveillance for military intelligence, a task that is changing with the War On Terrorism, said Staff Sgt. Christian Grant, a

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*"The mentality requires that you're willing to go the extra mile,"*

-Staff Sgt. Christian Grant,  
team leader,  
E Company-

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Ranger and team leader with the unit.

"Typically the LRS lived in the woods and did more mountain-man types of things," Grant said. This strategy was geared toward an enemy with a fixed position on a battlefield. In the previous mission, the Airborne-qualified LRS Soldiers would parachute far away from an enemy camp, hike the remaining distance, and report back their findings. With the new battlefield shifting to cities such as Baghdad and Fallujah, it became necessary to engage the enemy in order to carry out the mission.

"Most of the conflicts are going to be in cities, so chances are we need to be prepared if not for general Soldier skills, then directly for the mission ahead," Grant added. For the unit to provide round-the-clock surveillance for a busy Baghdad intersection, for instance, a building must be entered and cleared of any opposing elements. This requires constant training in close-quarters battle.

Adding this to yearly Airborne qualifications, Ranger school, the requisite hiking, and other training elements of the unit, monthly drills with the LRS can be quite demanding.

"The mentality requires that you're willing to go the extra mile," Grant said of the commitment the LRS demands. "LRS within the National Guard, they usually hold themselves up as pretty elite. And generally speaking they are. Just because it does take a little bit extra."

The "extra" that Grant speaks about can probably be characterized in one more requirement he outlined.

"You also need to be willing to throw a rucksack on your back and walk for no other reason than to train."



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*Left: Spc. Frances Packard, a Scout with E Company, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion (Long Range Surveillance), hoists a log with members of his unit and the 1-158th Cavalry as part of physical training.*

*Right: Pfc. Mark Ruhsam, a Scout also with E Company, practices the basics during close-quarters battle training.*

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**Text and Photography by Spc. S. Patrick McCollum**

## Soldiers affected by Katrina, stationed in Iraq get support

By Maj. Jackie Guthrie, 377th Theater Support Command Public Affairs

CAMP ARIFJAN, Kuwait (Army News Service, Sept. 8, 2005) -- More than 800 Soldiers on duty in Iraq and Kuwait have been directly impacted by the wrath of Hurricane Katrina, and the Army has sent a newly created "Tiger Team" to Camp Victory, Iraq, to help them.

The Tiger Team, led by Brig. Gen. Sean Byrne, director of Military Personnel Management for the U.S. Army, was established to identify Soldiers who have family and/or property in the affected regions.

More than 545 Soldiers from the Louisiana National Guard's 256th Brigade Combat Team in Iraq were identified as having property and

families affected by the hurricane. Another brigade from the Mississippi National Guard is also in theater.

Tiger Team members, with assistance from the Coalition Forces Land Component Command, 377th Theater Support Command and 390th Personnel Command in Kuwait, brief Soldiers on available resources, collect detailed

information from affected soldiers and send it to a team at Fort Polk, La.

### *Polk task force also helping*

The Polk team, known as Task Force Care, works with housing relocation services, Army chaplains, Veterans Administration counselors, FEMA representatives, Red Cross volunteers, medical assistance teams and many other care organizations to help redeploying soldiers such as those in the 256th BCT as well as Soldiers coming home on temporary emergency leave.

"We're here (in Kuwait) to identify Soldiers' issues and problems," Byrne said. "Our focus is on you and your family and what the Army can do for you," he told Soldiers of the 256th BCT. "These Soldiers have done everything their country has asked them to do," he said and now the Army is going to do whatever it can for them and their families including supplying housing, locating family members, treating medical conditions and providing employment options.



“We care about Soldiers,” said Byrne. “We’ll do everything we can do to do what’s right for Soldiers and their family.”

#### **Team also concerned about jobs**

One of the right things is ensuring Soldiers have jobs to come home to, he said. The hurricane ruined more than just homes; it also destroyed businesses and eliminated jobs Soldiers planned to return to. Army officials are offering Soldiers employment options such as extending on active duty in state or federal status to help with relief efforts or joining the active Army, Byrne said. Of course, Soldiers also have the option of completing their active duty tour as scheduled and seeking alternate employment options.

The teams will also ensure Soldiers and families have access to the medical care through the Army’s Tricare medical system. Army lawyers will be on hand to provide assistance filing insurance claims, applying for government assistance funds and any other legal situations that arise. And counseling is also available from Army chaplains and other nonprofit organizations.

#### **Unit also helping Soldiers**

Tiger Team personnel are determining what resources each Soldier in the 256th BCT needs as they redeploy through Camp Victory en route to Louisiana; at the same time, commanders and personnel specialists are, as always, taking care of their Soldiers.

“We’ve initiated a program at Ali Al Salem to identify any Soldier going on emergency leave to affected areas,” Byrne said. This ensures

departing Soldiers receive the same briefings and are able to report their problems to the assistance teams. All affected Soldiers, regardless of unit, will have help available when they get off the plane in the U.S.

#### **Lieutenant: ‘Army one big family’**

Knowing the Army is going to help is putting Soldiers’ minds at ease.

“This program is going to help me locate my family and get them to a safe environment,” said 1st Lt. Andre Geremillion, 256th BCT. When officials warned the hurricane was coming, Geremillion’s wife and son loaded up the car and drove to San Antonio, Texas to stay with family. He said no one knows the condition of the family home but fears it’s been looted. Geremillion plans to get his wife and son and live in Army housing at Fort Polk until he can rebuild not only his home, but also his life.

“The Army is one big family and I’m excited and also happy that they are showing that they care,” Geremillion added.

“The hurricane scattered everything I hope to go home to across the country,” said Staff Sgt. Tiger Chaplain, also with the 256th BCT. “All my stuff is under water ... everybody’s homes are damaged. All I want to do is get home and see what damage has been done and get my family back together.” And he is encouraged the Army is going to help him accomplish his goals.

“I didn’t know what help I would get but I knew help would be given,” he said about the Army’s Tiger Team.

# Maryland Soldiers save lives in Iraq

*By Spc. Matthew Wester,  
3-1 AD Public Affairs*

TAJI, Iraq – Sometimes Soldiers perform best when they are in the most stressful situations.

That was true of troops from B Company, 1st Battalion, 115th Regiment, 29th Infantry Division on the morning of Aug. 28.

Through quick and decisive action, the Maryland National Guard Soldiers diverted a car bomb from its intended target and saved many lives.

According to B Co. commander, Capt. Brian S. Borakove, an Arlington, Va., native, Soldiers from his company’s 1st Platoon were conducting a mounted patrol when they noticed a suspicious vehicle driving through the town of Saba Al Bor.

B Co. runs patrols in the area around the clock and has become very familiar with the residents and traffic patterns.

“By ‘living’ there, you know what should and shouldn’t be there,” Borakove said.

The platoon leader, 1st Lt. Michael Kirtland, from Burtonsville, Md., decided to search the car and another car traveling with it. He directed the drivers to pull to the side of the road.

When the Soldiers were preparing to search the rear car, the driver detonated the explosives-laden vehicle.

The dismounted Soldiers were wounded and their vehicle became a burning hulk.

Their comrades sprang into action, securing the area and aiding the wounded.

“One of the guys ran through a cloud of black smoke, found his buddy, pulled him to safety and started treatment,” said Sgt. 1st Class Patrick M. Carey, platoon sergeant for 1st Plt. and a Silver Spring, Md., resident. “Everybody did a great job. The lieutenant’s driver (Spc. Ernest Miller IV, from Baltimore) was still working the radio while the vehicle was on fire.”

Kirtland pulled the vehicle’s gunner out of the burning humvee.

If the Soldiers hadn’t stopped the two cars, “it would have been a mass casualty incident,” Carey said. “The cars were completely destroyed, so we know they were packing a lot of explosives.”

“We believe (the car bomber) was headed to another target,” Borakove

said. “I believe the Soldiers on the patrol saved the lives of others at checkpoints in the area.”

The senior leaders of the company praised the performance of their troops.

“Our Soldiers performed well during crisis,” said 1st Sgt. Donald R. Connolly, from Silver Spring, Md. “Their training and skill showed through, and they all made us very proud.”

“I’m extremely proud of how they handled themselves after contact with the enemy,” Borakove said. “Their actions showed the great confidence they have in each other.”

The two Soldiers wounded in the attack were evacuated to a medical facility in Germany and are recovering from their wounds.

*Spc. Jason Farr of B Company, 1st Battalion, 115th Infantry Regiment, 29th Infantry Division, painstakingly searches every house and shed during a cordon and search in Taji, Iraq. The operation was a joint effort between Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces and yielded 21 detainees as well as fake passports and numerous automatic weapons. Photo by Tech. Sgt. Russell E. Cooley IV, 1st Combat Camera Squadron.*

# Remembering 9-11



Service members hang their heads in a moment of silence during a memorial ceremony held on Camp Eggers in Kabul, Afghanistan, to remember those who lost their lives during the Sept 11 attacks and in the Global War on Terrorism. (Photo by: U.S. Army Sgt. Benjamin T. Donde, 117th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment)

*America  
will  
never  
Forget*

*(DOIM from page 17)*

Flasch said he envisions being able to have leader books and other resources for Soldiers at all levels posted to a unit page or other area on the Web, and by doing so would create an easy-to-access, searchable library of materials that on hardcopy is spread over a wide variety of resources.

Some may say that's an overwhelming task to accomplish. But, for many at the DOIM accomplishing the seemingly overwhelming happens on an almost daily basis. With a wide area to cover and a minimal amount of personnel, the DOIM has been successful in completing its mission of providing a productive and capable network of telecommunication equipment and access to information.

"The network is on 24/7," said Flasch. "We've never failed to keep the network running, even during power failures. We've had minor outages at different facilities, but the network has never been fully stood down."

And Flasch said that is a testament to those who work within the DOIM.

"It's a great job," said Clay. "I love it. It's challenging. Though, at the end of the day, I'm glad to go home."



Sgt. 1st Class Clifford Clay, DOIM help desk NCOIC, answers a call for computer assistance. Clay says that he averages between 50-150 help desk calls per day.



# In Passing



Let your voice be heard

**The Army has recently changed the requirements of PLDC, BMCOC and ANCOC for promotion; what are your thoughts?**

**Sgt. 1st Class Ed Bulson**



*Bulson, a field conductor with the 229th Army Band, leads Soldiers in a rehearsal during a monthly drill. Photo by Spc. S. Patrick McCollum.*

**"I think they need it."**

**Sgt. Kevin Foy**



*Foy, a cook with Joint Forces Headquarters, prepares hamburgers during a monthly drill. Photo by Spc. S. Patrick McCollum.*

**"I don't see it affecting what we already have; the way we do business. I think everything will continue as normal."**

**1st. Lt. Mark Taylor**



*Taylor, the commander of B Company, 229th Main Support Battalion, samples the food during a dining-in ceremony held at Camp Fretter in Reisterstown, Md. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Soucy.*

**"I don't think it's necessarily a bad thing. I don't necessarily think they need it to become an NCO."**

# Final Frame



*Spc. Caleb Pier, a combat medic, gives aid to a simulated civilian casualty as Spc. Elise Adams pulls security. Both Soldiers are with Company B, 629th Military Intelligence Battalion and trained on multiple battlefield scenarios at Fort Picket, Va. Photo by Spc. Keith Muckler.*