



THE DISPATCH

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OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



MARCH 2017



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**HERE:**

Texas Military Department security officer, Fernando Mendez, center, partners with the Austin Police Department, and Austin SWAT while conducting active shooter training during the 2017 Force Protection Exercise in Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas, Feb. 16, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Kaycee Stocker)

ON THE COVER:

2nd Lt. Travis Stephen, a pilot of the Texas Air National Guard, shows a Laredo community member the inner workings of a C-130 airplane during the 2017 George Washington's Stars and Stripes Air show in Laredo, Texas, Feb. 12, 2017. The Texas Military Department supported the city of Laredo during the 120th annual celebration of their heritage and the birthday of the first U.S. President, George Washington. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Spc. Kaycee Stocker)



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TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

COMMUNICATING ACROSS THE FORCE



“Don’t be afraid of social media, but don’t let it run unchecked and unmonitored either. It has proven to be a powerful aid for communicating with Service members”

COLONEL STEVEN METZE
TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICER

As your Public Affairs Officer I’d like to touch on some points from the Public Affairs community and the Texas Military Department.

You are working in a rapidly evolving communication environment. Virtually everyone in your organization has a computer at home and a mobile phone in their pockets. Given that every phone contains a camera, anyone in your area can take part in real-time reporting to represent, or misrepresent what happens around them.

Print and broadcast media now has to compete with amateur publishers for the audience’s limited attention span. Service members are growing more accustomed to instant information, and organizations that fail to keep current on communication technology will find themselves drowned out by more agile organizations that can.

Don’t be afraid of social media, but don’t let it run unchecked and unmonitored either. It has proven to be a powerful aid for communicating with Service members, yet it often gets overlooked. If nothing else, an internal newsletter – print and/or digital – is an excellent tool for ensuring every Service member is up on recent and upcoming events within your unit.

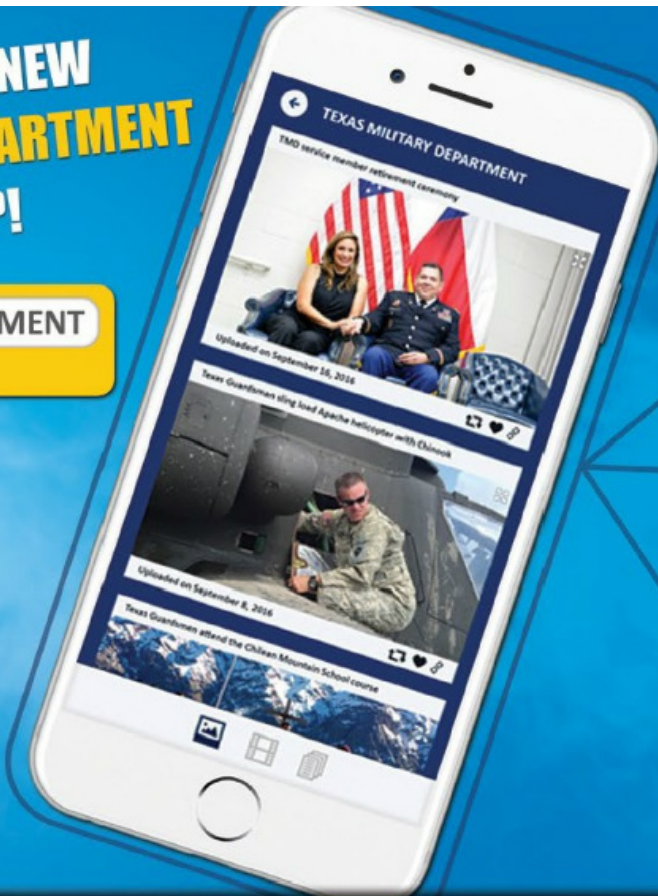
We’re constantly working to improve communications across the TMD. Here are a few things going on within Public Affairs right now.

1. The Texas Military Department [website](#) has a “Resources” tab we are constantly updating with relative information, including TMD job listings, how to get lodging for drill, a selection of official forms and the order of precedence for awards.
2. The Texas Military Department App is easily downloadable off “Google Play” or the “App Store,” allows you to receive critical alerts, see stories about the TMD and allows anyone to upload photos directly to the Public Affairs Office so we can better highlight what your Service members are doing.
3. The Enhanced Lone Star Portal is an intranet connection to secure information and unit pages you can get to from anywhere in the world as long as your computer is CAC equipped and you have established your security profile.

It is a privilege to be your PAO and I am honored to serve within such an exceptional organization.

FROM THE TOP

CHECK OUT THE NEW TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT MOBILE APP!

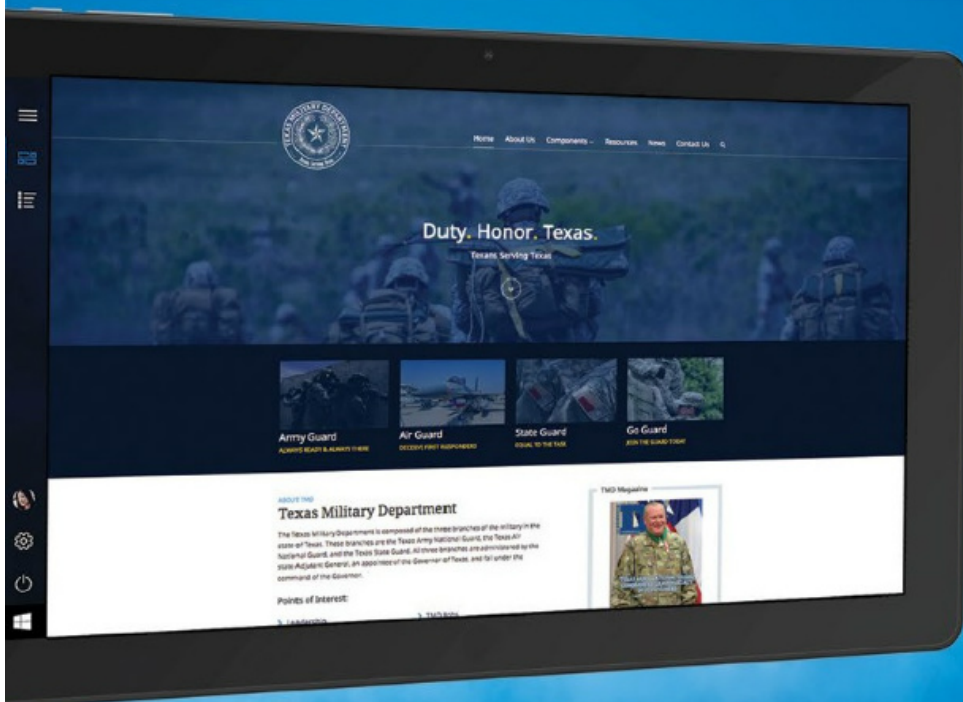


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NEW LOOK, NEW CONTENT, NEW NAVIGATION!

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Story By: Sgt. Michael Giles
100 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



CONNECT UNDERSTAND MOTIVATE

COMMAND SGT. MAJ. WEEDON'S LIFE AS A STUDENT OF LEADERSHIP

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BASTROP, Texas — Long before serving the Texas Army National Guard as its senior enlisted leader, Mark Weedon ran a homeless shelter. This job presented him with a troubling question: why couldn't he do more for the people he was trying to help?

"I wanted to figure out why it is that there are people who come to this organization that I can't fix," Weedon said.

To better understand the problem, he took a leave of absence and spent two weeks hopping trains, deliberately living as a homeless person. His journey brought him closer to accepting and respecting people with a different mindset.

"You can survive or thrive," Weedon said. His weeks on the trains helped him realize some people are not ready to let go of the survival mindset that inhibits them from thriving.

"Having spent that time out there living and surviving helped me to understand that you can't fix everything," Weedon said. "It's allowed me not to cast people aside as quickly who don't meet my expectations."

Now, Weedon approaches the end of a 26-year National Guard career in which he made his mark by demonstrating the same commitment to serving and understanding people that he embraced when he served the homeless. He has gained a reputation as a selfless mentor, a leader who succeeds through building relationships and an advisor who strives to understand what Soldiers and Airmen need.

"He's definitely a people person," said Master Sgt. Ramon M. Ruiz with the 136th Regional Training Institute. "I felt comfortable knowing that I could seek guidance from him."

Ruiz said that Weedon has the ability to see Soldiers' potential and give them good career direction. Weedon once called him into his office to advise against a transfer Ruiz was planning. "If you go to that unit, your skills will waste away," Weedon told him, encouraging him to instead pursue a more challenging position.

"He can just see people, inside and out," Ruiz said. "He can see what they're capable of—their strengths, their weakness—and he puts the pieces in the right place."

Weedon demonstrates selfless service to Soldiers and inspires others to take care of their Soldiers, said Sgt. Mitch R. Guile, a medic with the Texas Medical Command, remembering how Weedon came to the aid of a Soldier who had forgotten to bring some crucial gear to a training event.

"Command Sgt. Maj. Weedon took off his gloves he had—since it was about 20 degrees outside—and gave them to him," Guile said. "When you see the top enlisted guy taking care of even the lowest ranking guy out there, you definitely have to take care of your guys, and make sure the guys below you are taking care of the guys below them."

Command Sgt. Maj. Mark A. Weedon speaks with Soldiers during the Texas Military Department's Best Warrior Competition at Camp Swift near Bastrop, Texas, March 3, 2017. The 2017 Best Warrior Competition is considered the final event that Command Sgt. Mark A. Weedon will spearhead before retiring March 25, 2017. (U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Sgt. Mark Otte)

While Weedon led junior-enlisted Soldiers through demonstrations of selflessness, he also led senior enlisted members by encouraging them to integrate their ideas, said Command Sgt. Maj. Murphy L. McCardell, 56th Infantry Brigade Combat Team.

"We all have a Type-A personality. He has the ability to get his agenda across while allowing other command sergeants major to have a say," McCardell said. "He has the ability to allow other leaders to bring their insights together to collectively come up with a way ahead."

Improving collaboration was also Weedon's desired outcome for the Texas Military Department's Best Warrior Competition, which he coordinated during the last month before his retirement. Weedon said the competition creates opportunities for members of both the Air National Guard and Army National Guard forces to adapt to joint force operations.

"For me, this joint competition is about that," Weedon said. "It's about bringing us together."

Weedon said that one of primary goals of Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the adjutant general of the Texas Military Department, is to overcome obstacles that the two forces experience when working together. As Airmen and Soldiers compete together over three days, they develop relationships that will improve their ability to function in joint force missions.

"By the time we get to Saturday night and we've been sharpening the edge together, now you're going to see some lifelong friends made," Weedon said. "They'll have a relationship, and we will become better at protecting Texas because of that."

Weedon does not attribute his strengths in working with people to any unique talent, but rather to the basics.

"Part of that is human nature—we tend to want to help our fellow man," Weedon said.

He also credits the basic ideals of the Noncommissioned Officer Corps, which he said he received repeatedly during Army leadership courses. The most basic of these ideals: placing the welfare of one's Soldiers before one's own.

"Putting that in practice and watching the level of influence rise, when you put other people first, it's incredible, so it stuck with me," Weedon said.

Simply embracing the tenets of Army leadership is how Weedon succeeded in strengthening the 136th Regional Training Institute when he served as commandant, Ruiz said.

"He went back to the basics and instilled leadership and discipline into the NCO Corps," Ruiz said. "He really got us back on our azimuth of making sure we were doing what's right."

"He sets the example," Ruiz continued. "He sets the standard. He's the mold of what right looks like and gives us the inspiration to be like that." **-D**

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TXANG COMMANDER PINS SECOND STAR

Story & Photos by 1st Lt. Phil Fountain
149th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

AUSTIN, Texas – The commander of the Texas Air National Guard was ceremoniously promoted to the rank of major general at Camp Mabry, in Austin, Texas, March 4, 2017.

Family, friends and colleagues joined Brig. Gen. David M. McMinn when his new military rank insignia – two stars – was pinned onto his service dress uniform, by his wife and daughter, at the Lone Star State's National Guard headquarters.

"Promotion is for potential," said Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the adjutant general and senior-ranking military officer within the Texas Military Department. "It's for the things you've done in the past that gets you in the position to be greater still for the people who serve the nation and the state."

Maj. Gen. McMinn is a command pilot with more than 5,000 hours in Air Force aircraft, including multiple trainers as numerous variants of the C-130 Hercules tactical aircraft.

He received his commission upon graduation from Clemson University, in 1984. McMinn went on to complete undergraduate pilot training at Vance Air Force Base, Oklahoma, and was assigned to Pope Air Force Base, North Carolina, in 1986.

McMinn joined the Texas Air National Guard in 1992, after serving as an aircraft commander in the Persian Gulf War. He served as an instructor pilot with the Fort Worth-based 136th Airlift Wing, which culminated in his service as the wing's vice and then wing commander.

Additionally, he deployed to serve as the 321st Expeditionary Operations Group commander during operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, and most recently served as the Texas Air National Guard's chief of staff until his appointment as commander in November 2015.

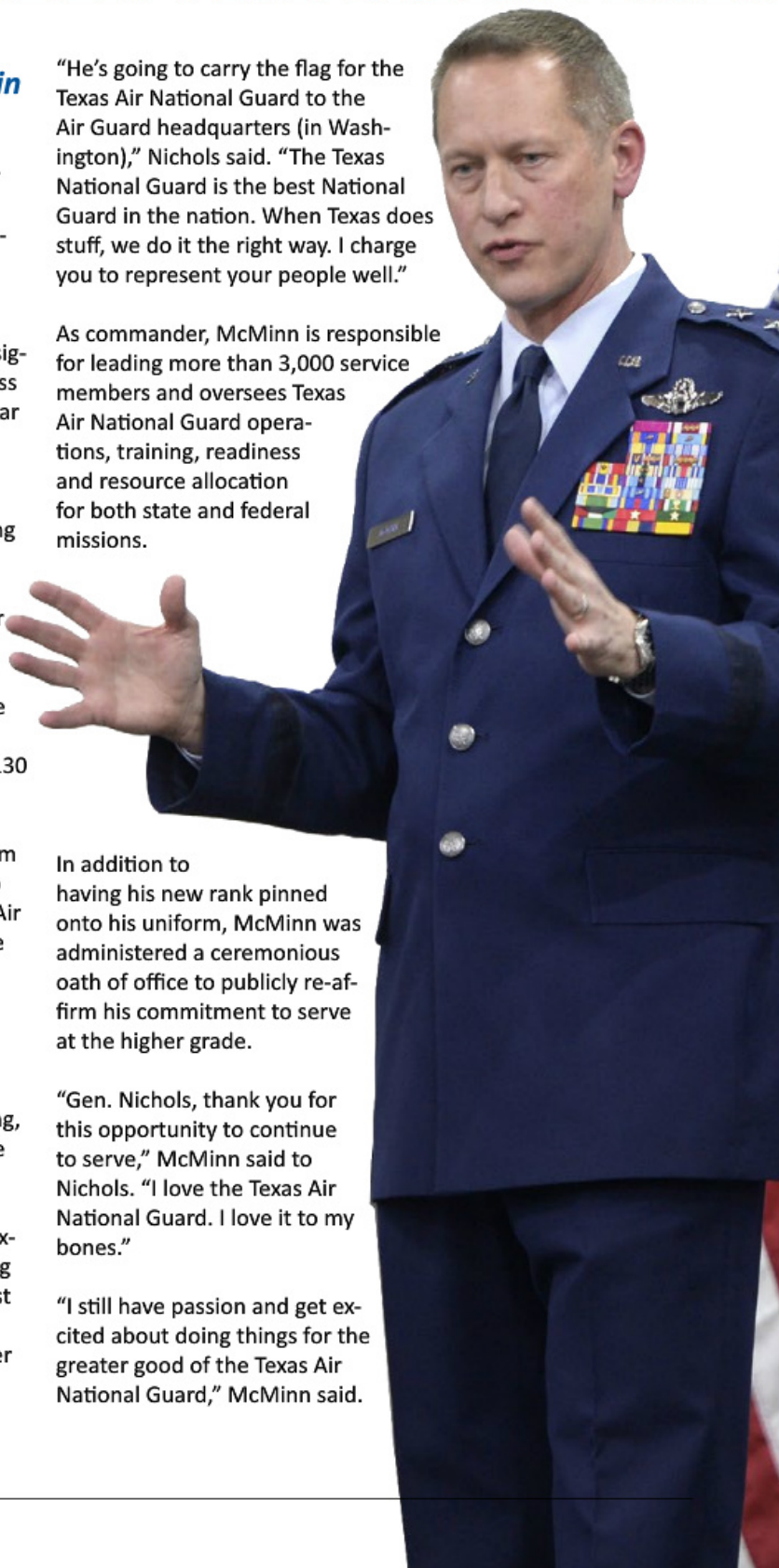
"He's going to carry the flag for the Texas Air National Guard to the Air Guard headquarters (in Washington)," Nichols said. "The Texas National Guard is the best National Guard in the nation. When Texas does stuff, we do it the right way. I charge you to represent your people well."

As commander, McMinn is responsible for leading more than 3,000 service members and oversees Texas Air National Guard operations, training, readiness and resource allocation for both state and federal missions.

In addition to having his new rank pinned onto his uniform, McMinn was administered a ceremonial oath of office to publicly re-affirm his commitment to serve at the higher grade.

"Gen. Nichols, thank you for this opportunity to continue to serve," McMinn said to Nichols. "I love the Texas Air National Guard. I love it to my bones."

"I still have passion and get excited about doing things for the greater good of the Texas Air National Guard," McMinn said.



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His job is to take care of the three wings and geographically separated units throughout the state, as well as the airmen who serve.

The Texas Air National Guard has three major wings: the 136th Airlift Wing C-130 Hercules airlift operations, 147th Reconnaissance Wing MQ-1 Predator operations and the 149th Fighter Wing, a formal training unit for F-16 Fighting Falcon pilot production, located in Fort Worth, Houston and San Antonio, respectively.

“We have one chance to make a good impression,” McMinn said.

Throughout his career with the Texas Air National Guard, McMinn has challenged the organization to improve business practices to ensure airmen’s promotions, pay issues and medical care is handled as efficiently as possible.

“I am really dedicated to making sure that what we do in the Texas Air National Guard is to meet those priorities that the adjutant general has so eloquently laid out,” McMinn said. “First off, it’s Duty – Honor – Texas, to the core.”

“His priority of putting people first, what a valuable lesson,” McMinn said, “If we take care of our people, we propel them and make them better than when they joined us. And, hopefully, our organizations are better than when they leave.”

In addition to People First, Nichols’ priorities for the Texas Military Department including ensuring the agency and its units are Relevant & Ready when called and is able Communicate & Partner by building lasting relationships.

A key to making the organization better is to encourage processes to move faster, McMinn said.

“We’re going to add velocity to our processes as an indication to our men and women that join us, that they joined what they expected to join, a world-class organization,” McMinn said, “to be a part of something larger than themselves and to contribute to the defense of their nation.”

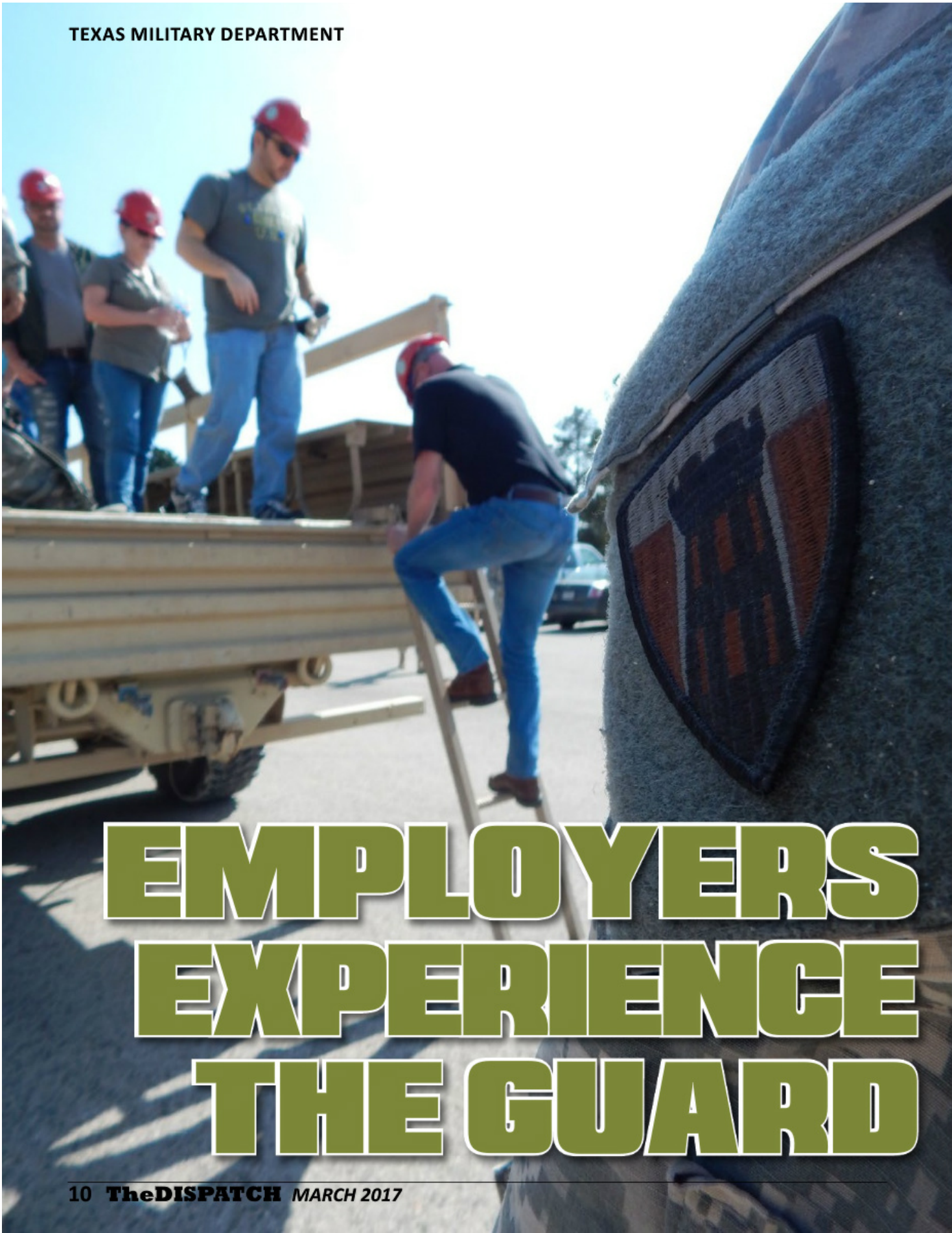
In addition to his Air National Guard duties, McMinn maintains a civilian career flying passenger aircraft for a major airline. **-D**



Brig. Gen. David M. McMinn, commander of the Texas Air National Guard, is sworn in as a major general by Maj. Gen. John F. Nichols, the adjutant general of Texas, during a promotion ceremony at Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas.

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EMPLOYERS EXPERIENCE THE GUARD

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Story & Photos by 1st. Lt. Jolene Hinojosa 111th Engineer Brigade Unit Public Affairs Rep.

AUSTIN, Texas – Nineteen employers participated in the Employee Support to the Guard and Reserves Boss Lift, hosted by the Texas Military Department's Domestic Operations Task Force at Camp Swift and Camp Mabry in Austin, Feb. 11, 2017.

"We had a tremendous experience at the ESGR Boss Lift event. The activities were really engaging and fun, but it also really put the National Guard's mission in perspective for us," said Carl Stanley, one of the employers in attendance. "We always look for opportunities to support those who support our country and we were very honored to be nominated for the event."

Boss Lift is an ESGR-sponsored program that helps bridge the gap between National Guardsmen and their employers by giving bosses a taste of what their employees do on a drill weekend and serves to advise, mediate and educate employers and service members on the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Act.

Participants in the Boss Lift were nominated by currently serving Soldiers and Airmen. Some of the attendees included Katherine and Carl Stanley, a husband and wife business team of Rising Point Solutions in Hurst, Chris Schmidt, Manager, Veteran and Military Affairs Coordinator for Starbucks in Austin, and Charlie Culpepper, Former Mayor of Round Rock and owner of Round Rock Industrial Equipment Services.

The Boss Lift event began at Camp Mabry and included a tour of the Joint Operations Center and static displays presented by the 6th Civil Support Team and the Texas State Guard. The employers were then flown to Camp Swift for a demonstration of the Governor's 20 pistol competition, an introduction to the Engagement Skills

Trainer and familiarization with the Mission Ready Packages offered by the Texas National Guard's 176th Engineer Brigade.

While familiarization with Soldier tasks is part of the goal for Boss Lift, the networking effects are much further reaching.

"One of our main objectives in participating in the Boss Lift event is to build and foster connections between the military leadership and our corporate partners in order to really support our Soldiers, veterans and their families," said Schmidt. "We try to expose the challenges of the National Guard and create a shared understanding of what it means to hire service members."

For some participants, this was their first exposure with the National Guard outside of interaction with their citizen Soldiers and Airmen. However, even for those who have had experience within the military, they still described their experience as positive and enlightening.

"I have always been a supporter of the National Guard," said Culpepper, "but my experience here today was a great eye opener to see their operations in more detail. I am leaving here with an even greater respect for what they do for us and our country."

The Boss Lift proved to be a great opportunity to communicate, partner and demonstrate the Texas Military Department emphasis on taking care of soldiers and putting people first. Service members and employers left that day with a better understanding of each other and took strides to build lasting relationships.

"This was the third boss lift that I have participated in, and it is probably the best one," Schmidt said. Events such as these allow us to build our network and help spread the word that when you hire a service member, you are hiring a leader." -D



Members of the Texas State Guard help coach employers at the Governor's 20 Pistol shooting tables during the ESGR Boss Lift hosted by ESGR and the Domestic Operations Task Force of the Texas Military Department at Camp Swift and Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas, February 11, 2017.

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TEXAS AVIATION BATTALION DEPLOYS TO MIDDLE EAST

Story & Photos by: 1st Lt. Leyda Ocasio
449th Aviation Support Battalion UPAR

SAN ANTONIO – Members of the Texas Army National Guard, along with friends and family bid Soldiers from the 449th Aviation Support Battalion, 36th Aviation Brigade, 36th Infantry Division farewell during a mobilization ceremony at the Freeman Coliseum, in San Antonio, Texas, Dec. 2, 2016.

The deploying citizen-Soldiers will be stationed in the Middle East conducting logistical support operations in support of Operation Enduring Freedom-Spartan Shield. The Operation Enduring Freedom Spartan Shield force allows forces to contribute to U.S. Army Central Command mission imperatives to counter, protect, defend and prepare while building partnerships.

“The whole purpose of the battalion is to get the right logistics and supplies where they need to be; we are the logistical muscle for the entire combat aviation brigade,” said Lt. Col Robert Guevara, commander of the battalion. “We are working as a team and I absolutely love it. Everything that I do is about getting us to work together to strengthen us as a collective solid team.”

While in the preparation stages, the battalion has been war-gaming and stabilizing their forces as they get ready for their next move to Fort Hood. There, they will participate in various culminating exercises which will allow the battalion the opportunity to utilize the military decision making process and put their plans into action.

“Right now, the greatest strength that I see is that our leaders are actively engaged,” Guevara said. “We have leaders who have no problem exercising initiative and who want to accomplish whatever mission they are assigned.”

This will be Guevara’s first deployment as a battalion commander. He says there is nothing like having the privilege to command Soldiers, recognizing it as a privilege, an honor and a blessing.

“The Army is a one team one fight operation and with that being said it is important that Soldiers stay mission focused.”

The battalion has previously deployed to Iraq in for Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2006 and 2008.

The 449th ASB will deploy alongside the Texas Army National Guard’s 2-149th General Support Aviation Battalion. **-D**



Command Sgt. Maj. Joe Cazares and Col. Ronald Burkett of the 36th Aviation Brigade address soldiers before a deployment ceremony in San Antonio, Texas.



Battalion Commander Lt. Col Robert Guevara and Battalion Command Sgt. Maj Richard Tinney casing the battalion colors. Spc. Kevin Needles as guidon bearer.

TEXANS HONOR GEORGE WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY

Story & Photos by: Sgt. Daisy Broker
72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team PAO



LAREDO, Texas – Citizens of both the United States and Mexico came together to celebrate the birthday of America's First President. This international event, hosted annually by the city of Laredo allows members of both nations to meet on the Juarez, Lincoln International Bridge to share cultures and honor ceremonial traditions stretching back 120 years. Members of the Texas Military Department were on hand to help set-up and equip the event and participate in ceremonial roles.



1. Brig. Gen. Rick Noriega (right) and Brig. Gen. Carlos Garza (left) exchange flags with a General from Mexico during the Abrazos Ceremony.

2. Texas Army National Guard Soldiers from the 249th Chemical Company, 71st troop Command provide equipment and support during the celebration on the Laredo-Juarez International Bridge.



3. Abrazos Children embrace each other as a symbol of unity between the United States and Mexico.

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BASTROP, Texas — Soldiers and Airmen from three nations gathered near Bastrop, Texas last weekend for a three-day competition that tested each individual's skill, strength and endurance, March 5, 2017.

In the Texas Military Department's fifth annual Best Warrior Competition, members of the Texas Army National Guard, Texas Air National Guard and invitees from the Chilean and the Czech Republic militaries, squared off against each other for the title of Best Warrior.

Twenty Seven Best Warrior candidates competed in one of two categories: Best Junior Enlisted and Best Noncommissioned Officer. Service members were rated in nine events, including a 12-mile road march and an obstacle course, that closely imitated real combat situations. Two additional events gauged the soldiers and airmen in military writing and their professional appearance.

Integrating three countries into one competition presented challenges for event organizers, but command senior enlisted leader, Command Sgt. Maj. Mark Weedon, said that every effort is made to offer a fair playing field for competitors from every contingent.

It took an almost year-long effort to bring the three nations together, but Weedon said the effort paid off because it offered more than just an opportunity for Soldiers to compete for the title; the real training value came from learning to work with other nations in real-world operations.

Story By: Sgt. Mark Otte

100 Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



FINDING 'THE BEST' WARRIOR

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"It gives them and us confidence that we've got partners around the world, so that if anything went bad in any of our countries, we've got some help we are accustomed to," Weedon said.



Texas Army National Guard Spc. Mark Samuel Alvarez, 1-149th Attack and Reconnaissance Battalion, completes his sit-ups up during the physical fitness test at the annual Texas Military Department Best Warrior Competition (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Marline Duncan)

Both Texas components participating in the competition were comprised of citizen Soldiers and Airmen and reflect the readiness of members of the Texas Military Department to don their uniforms and operate at the level necessary for high-tempo operations.

Sgt. Juan Poncedeleon with the Texas Army National Guard's 112th Cavalry Regiment, 72 Infantry Brigade Combat Team, described his preparation for Best Warrior after winning his unit's internal competition.

Texas Air National Guard Airman competes in the Best Warrior Mystery event which included range time with a M-16 or M-4, Weapon system assembly, an obstacle course with barricades and barb wire and a series of additional warrior tasks that were to be completed within a set time. The mystery event was the final chance for Soldiers and Airmen to demonstrate their skills and score points for the final judging tally. (Texas Military Department photo by: Bob Seyller)

(Background Image) Chilean Army Cpl. Camilo Riffó Leal is the first competitor to finish the 12-mile ruck march in the three-day Texas Military Department Best Warrior Competition at Camp Swift, near Bastrop, Texas March 4th 2017. PFC Castro finished the ruck march first within a time of two hours and two minutes. (U.S. Army National Guard photo by Sgt. Marline Duncan)

"The first thing I did was talk to people that have competed in the event before so that I could learn from them," Poncedeleon said. "After that, I had to make an honest assessment of where I was at with my warrior tasks and drills."

Competitors first participated in unit-level selections to earn their spot in the statewide competition.

The Texas Military Department was the first state to open its Best Warrior Competition to the Air National Guard in 2013 and international partners in 2016. Now, other states like Nebraska, hope to follow in Texas' footsteps by welcoming foreign militaries into their Best Warrior competitions.

This year marked Chile's second appearance in Texas' Best Warrior competition but was the Czech Republic's first year to attend.

Although, the winner won't be officially announced until April 7, Leal said that no matter who wins, the friendships and comradery the competition fostered will endure.

"It's been a very wonderful experience. I have had a chance to talk to the other soldiers and hope to keep that communication going," Cpl. Camilo Leal said. "If they come to Chile, I will welcome them with the same hospitality they have shown me." -D

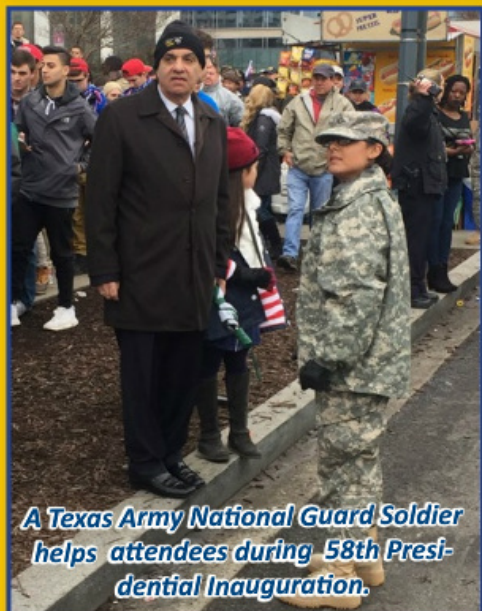


TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

TEXAS NATIONAL GUARD MILITARY POLICE SUPPORT PRESIDENTIAL INAUGURATION



Texas Army National Guardsmen from the 136th Military Police Battalion gather in front of the U.S. Capitol Building during the 58th Presidential inauguration in Washington D.C. Jan 20, 2017.



A Texas Army National Guard Soldier helps attendees during 58th Presidential Inauguration.



Texas Army National Guardsmen sleep in sports stadiums while preparing to support inauguration activities in the national the Capital

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Texas Guardsmen form a security perimeter during the inauguration.



Inauguration team arrives in Washington DC via Texas Air National Guard C-130

**Story By: 1st Lt. Chad Bell
& Sgt. First Class Edith Banda**
136th MEB Public Affairs Office

WASHINGTON – Texas Army National Guardsmen from the 136th Military Police Battalion joined National Guardsmen from across the country to assist with the peaceful transfer of power during the 58th Presidential Inauguration in Washington D.C. on Jan. 20, 2017.

Deputized as part of a Special Police Force for the Inaugural event, 30 Texas soldiers utilized their military skills and professionalism to ensure that their Secret Service-mandated missions were completed with excellence and respect to American traditions.

“The whole time there my thoughts were on making sure all my decisions were the correct ones, for the wellbeing of my Soldiers to the protection of the American citizen,” said Staff Sgt. Gaddi Raya, 136th Military Police Battalion. “The opportunity to be able to conduct a mission to actually utilize my training in crowd control was amazing.”

Soldiers trained with Secret Service members and District of Columbia Metro Police Officers for their mission, ensuring they were prepared to conduct security checks and crowd management, mitigate civil disturbance, assist with traffic management and provide first aid.

“For most of the Soldiers, it was their first time dealing with crowds of individuals yelling and throwing objects to other individuals, expressing their freedom of speech; or minimal threats that arose from a couple of individuals in the crowds,” said Sgt. 1st Class Edith Banda 136th Military Police Battalion.

“They still maintained calm as they executed their command and presence without hesitation.” Said Banda “The crowds respected us and most thanked us for our service, despite the chaos that was going on.”

For the 30 Texas National Guardsmen, the 58th Inauguration will always be a day that will be personally historic as they became part of the history that is now American history. Alongside fellow service members and civilians alike, as the new President took to the stand, each of them engaged in the historic moment as Americans.

“Attending and serving at the 58th Presidential Inauguration was an amazing once-in-a-lifetime experience!” Exclaimed Spc. Karen Bustamante, 136th Military Police Battalion. “It was great seeing so many National Guard men and women from all over the country come together to be a part of special moment in United States history. This is definitely something thousands of soldiers, including myself, will remember for the rest of our lives.” -D

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TEXAS GUNFIGHTER HEADS INTO THE SUNSET

Story by Tech. Sgt. Rebekkah Jandron
149th Fighter Wing Public Affairs

JOINT BASE SAN ANTONIO-LACKLAND, Texas – The command chief master sergeant of the 149th Fighter Wing, Texas Air National Guard was ceremoniously retired after 35 years of military service at Joint Base San Antonio-Lackland, Texas, Feb. 25, 2017.

Command Chief Master Sgt. George B. Longoria of San Antonio served his entire career with the 149th, serving in the 149th Communications Flight, before being selected to serve as the wing's command chief in 2011.

"Some people might call this work," Longoria said in an earlier interview about his retirement. "I never called it work. I just know that I didn't have any trouble sleeping at night because I gave it a whirl."

Serving his entire career at the 149th, in various roles, Longoria attributes the success of his career to his family, friends and colleagues that surround him.

"I realized that along with the people it was our core values that made a huge impact in my career and led me to this day," Longoria said. "I truly believe you are only as good as those around you, and I have had the privilege to work for some heroic leaders (and) alongside some amazing and brilliant airmen."

Many friends and colleagues took to the podium during the ceremony to remark on his long and distinguished career with the wing.

One of those impacted by Longoria was Col. Susan M. Dickens, commander of the 149th Mission Support Group. She reflected on the time they spent working together.

"I got a lot of mentoring and I loved every minute of it and sought it out regularly because I knew I could trust it," said Dickens.

Longoria's speech focused more on the people than on himself. He used words of encouragement for everyone to succeed.

"Today, I challenge all of you, when the opportunity lends itself, present guidance or direction," he said. "Do not wait for things to happen, make things happen."

Longoria said he is proud to be associated with the 149th Fighter Wing, whose members are known as the Lone Star Gunfighters.

"I will be a Gunfighter for life, supporting your efforts even beyond my last official duty day. I owe more to the 149th Fighter Wing and Air National Guard than I could ever repay."

Col. Timothy Madden, the wing's commander, expressed personal appreciation for Longoria during his remarks.

"I can't thank you enough," Madden said, "for your mentoring and your leadership, your friendship, your patience."

He also thanked Longoria's family for their support of the chief's service.

"He's a big deal," Madden said. "Thank you for sharing him with us."

Longoria, who calls himself a "Gunfighter for life," said he plans to travel and spend time with his family following his retirement. He expressed confidence in the future of the wing.

"I'm very proud of this wing and I know I'm leaving it in good hands, and everyone will take it to the next level," said Longoria. "I'm honored to be a part of this organization. I'm extremely blessed to have had that opportunity." **-D**

**“ I WILL BE A
GUNFIGHTER
FOR LIFE ”**

Command Chief Master Sgt. George B. Longoria



TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT



VALUES DRIVEN LIFE GOALS

REAL GUIDANCE

By Jessie Trofe, MA, LPC

Did you make a New Year's resolution this year? If so, how is that working out for you? Maybe you can relate to the millions of people who report to abandoning their goals by now, which they may have set with the best of intentions. Or maybe you didn't make a resolution this year because you were tired of breaking them and wanted to avoid the guilt that often accompanies not following through. Perhaps you didn't set a New Year's resolution because you weren't sure what you really want to work toward. It is difficult to set meaningful goals that you are personally invested in working toward when you are unsure of what direction you would like to head. Or perhaps you know deep down what you value, but fear of failure (or success) has left you stagnant, stuck in a cycle of trying to make ends meet, but starving your soul. I know I have felt this way before and it's stifling and overwhelming, like I've fallen into a deep pit with nowhere to go but there is somewhere to go...up!

To get out of the hole you have to be willing to climb. Standing still, while engaging in the same avoiding and numbing behaviors will only serve to keep you stuck. But what if we could purposefully choose the direction we wanted to head, and begin to climb toward the proverbial light? What if we could move toward something we actually cared about and feel more alive and engaged with life?

In order to live more fully and authentically, it is important to take the time to examine our values. According to Dr. Steven Hayes, Professor of Psychology at the University of Nevada, "To live a valued life is to act in the service of what you value." So what is it that you value? In Dr. Hayes' breakthrough book "Get Out of Your Mind and Into Your Life", he provides a framework for examining the values that matter the most to us. Additionally in this self-assessment he suggests, examining how our behaviors match (or differ) from our values. Are we living in a way that reflects the values most important to us? As in most cases, awareness, is the first step toward making positive change. After all, wasn't it Socrates that said, "The unexamined life is not worth living?"

In order to explore your values, let's walk through one of Dr. Hayes' value exercises called "Ranking Your Values." To begin, let's consider 10 areas of life that might be important to you. There may be some that you feel strongly about, and others that are less important to you. There is no judgment here. Allow yourself to feel how you really feel about each of these, not thinking about what your friends, family or colleagues might say. Pretend like nobody else will see this exercise and really they don't need to. This exercise is for you, after all, it's your life. As you read through each of these value domains, think of a phrase that reflects how you aspire to live in relation to the value. For example, for the "parenting" value, if you

are a parent or aspire to be one, what type of relationship would you like to have with your children? And if you don't plan on having children, how can you support your family and friends in their role of parenting? A value phrase for parenting might look like, "I wish to be supportive, understanding and emotionally present with my children."

TEN VALUED DOMAINS

1) Marriage/Couple/Intimate Relationship- What kind of partner would you like to be? What actions make you feel like you are loved and how do you wish to show your partner (or potential partner) love?

2) Parenting- What type of parent do you wish to be or how can you support other parents in your life in their role?

3) Family Relations (Other than intimate relations and parenting)- What does it mean to be a son, daughter, brother, sister, in-law, grandparent, aunt, or uncle to you? What would you like your family relationships to look like?

4) Friendship/Social Relations- What type of friend do you wish to be? How would you like your friendships to enrich your life?

5) Career/employment- What kind of employee do you wish to be? What type of difference do you wish to make when it comes to your job?

6) Personal Growth and Development- Is training/education important to your career goals or growth?

7) Recreation/leisure- How do you wish to recharge? What hobbies, sports and vacations do you wish to manifest in your life?

8) Spirituality- This area includes your faith, spiritual, religious practices and your connections with others in this area. How do you want spirituality and the bigger picture to be a part of your life?

9) Citizenship- In what ways would you like to contribute to your community and society? This includes charitable organizations, volunteer work, and social and political contribution.

10) Health/Physical Well-being- How would you like nutrition, exercise and healthy coping skills to influence your life?

TEXAS MILITARY DEPARTMENT

Ranking Your Values				
Domain	Values	Importance	Manifestation	Life Deviation
Marriage/ Couple/ Relationships				
Parenting				
Other Family Relations				
Friendship Social Relations				
Career/ Employment				
Education/ Training Personal Growth				
Recreation/ Leisure				
Spirituality				
Citizenship				
Health/ Physical Well-Being				

Next, using the "Ranking Your Values" chart above, rate each value domain in two ways. First, ask yourself how important this particular area is to you at this time in your life on a scale from one to 10, with one meaning not at all important and 10 meaning extremely important. This is how important this value is to you, not what your actual behavior looks like around the value. Also, you can rate several values the same if they have the same level of importance to you. For example, maybe you have three values you rate as a nine. Now rate each value domain according to your actual current behavior, with one meaning it is not at all manifested in your behavior and 10 meaning it is extremely well-manifested in your behavior. Try to think objectively about your behavior, without attaching judgment on how you are currently living your life. Finally, subtract the score for your actual current behavior ("manifestation") from the "importance" score for each value domain, giving you your total score to record under "life deviation." The number you get for "life deviation" for each value domain is probably the

most important. The higher that number, the larger the discrepancy between what you want from your life and how you are actually living your life. The areas with the largest differences are the areas in particular to focus on in order to align both your values and your behaviors. When you begin to work on lessening the gap between what you want and how you behave, you will begin to feel more in tune with your life. In order to work on these areas of importance, set attainable, realistic goals that can help you achieve a more congruent and fulfilling life. To learn more about how to set SMART goals, check out the following link- www.military.com/education/keys-to-success/set-smart-goals-for-your-future.html.

I firmly believe that you can create the life that you desire by first exploring what is important to you, and then taking value-driven action. Here's to living the life you were meant for!



TOUR OF DUTY

SPC KATTY AIMEE GRACIA

*Texas Army National Guard, 836th Engineers
Signal Assistant/ CERFP Operations Assistant*

*"I like the Guard because of the friendship and
the family, but most importantly because of
my personal growth."*



New Key Leadership Positions



Col. Gary Jones Commander, 147 Reconnaissance Wing

EXPERIENCE:

Col. Jones received his commission in the Air Force through Officer Training School in 1995. He spent several years as an Electronic Warfare Officer on the RC-135V/W Rivet Joint. Jones also served as a Program Engineer at Air Force Material Command, Functional Manager at Headquarters Air Combat Command and a Program Element Monitor at the Pentagon. Jones joined the Texas ANG in 2007, as a Predator pilot, and served as the Wing Plans Officer, Director of Operations, Squadron Commander, Vice Wing Commander and now the Wing Commander.

EDUCATION:

Bachelor of Science in Professional Aviation from Louisiana Tech University, and a Masters of Political Science from the University of Oklahoma.

DID YOU KNOW:

Col. Gary Jones is a fifth generation Texan and a direct descendant of Stephen William Jones, who fought alongside Stephen F. Austin and Jim Bowie during the Texas Revolution.

IN HIS WORDS:

"It is an honor to lead the 147th Reconnaissance Wing while serving our country and the great State of Texas. When called upon to defend the United States of America, or Texas, I am fully confident the 147th Reconnaissance Wing will take the fight to our adversary from the air, on the ground and in cyberspace. We are also standing by to support Domestic Operations with equal zeal."



Col. Thomas C. Hamilton Chief of Staff, Texas State Guard

EXPERIENCE:

Hamilton was commissioned as an infantry officer upon completion of the ROTC program at the University of Texas at Austin. After completing the Infantry Officers Basic Course, Ranger and Airborne Schools, his first duty assignment was in the 3/508 Airborne Battalion at Fort Kobbe, Panama Canal Zone. Completing his infantry detail assignment, he was posted to Puerto Rico as a Military Police company commander. Returning to the states, Hamilton was then assigned to the 6th Special Force Group at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. He also served as a Counter Insurgency instructor at the JFK Center for Special Warfare. An assignment to Thailand followed where he was assigned as the Training and Liaison Officer to the Royal Thai Security Guard Regiment. After a brief assignment to the Military Police School he was posted to the 4th Infantry Division in the Republic of Vietnam as the Deputy Provost Marshal. Next Hamilton served as an ROTC instructor at Loyola University in New Orleans, after which he attended the Army Command and Staff College. Upon graduation, he was assigned as the Battalion Executive Officer, 793 Military Police Battalion, Nuremberg, Germany and later as the Provost Marshal, Southern Bavaria. Hamilton returned to the Military Police School at Fort McClellan to Command the 10th Military Police OSUT training battalion. A tour in Israel followed where he was assigned as the Security Officer for the Near East Airbase Construction Project in the Negev Desert. Completing this tour, he attended the Air War College and later, the Defense Language Institute before being assigned as the NATO Liaison Officer to the Turkish General Staff. Hamilton retired after 27 years of federal service. Upon his military retirement he worked for the Texas Attorney General as a field director in the Child Support Enforcement Division.

EDUCATION:

Hamilton holds a bachelor's degree in education from the University of Texas and a master's degree from Loyola University. His military education includes Infantry Officer's Basic Course, Ranger and Airborne schools, Military Police Advance Officer's Course, Army Command and Staff College, U.S. Air Force War College and Defense Language Institute Course in Turkish.

DID YOU KNOW:

Tom and his wife Patricia have adopted, and are raising, their 13 year old grandson, Jack.

IN HIS WORDS:

"Being a member of the Texas State Guard is among the most unique and rewarding experience of my life. The volunteer spirit and sacrifices of the men and women to serve their fellow Texans follows the proud and selfless tradition of our state and nation. I am honored to serve as their Chief of Staff."

MARCH 11-12



GUNS *of* 1863

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