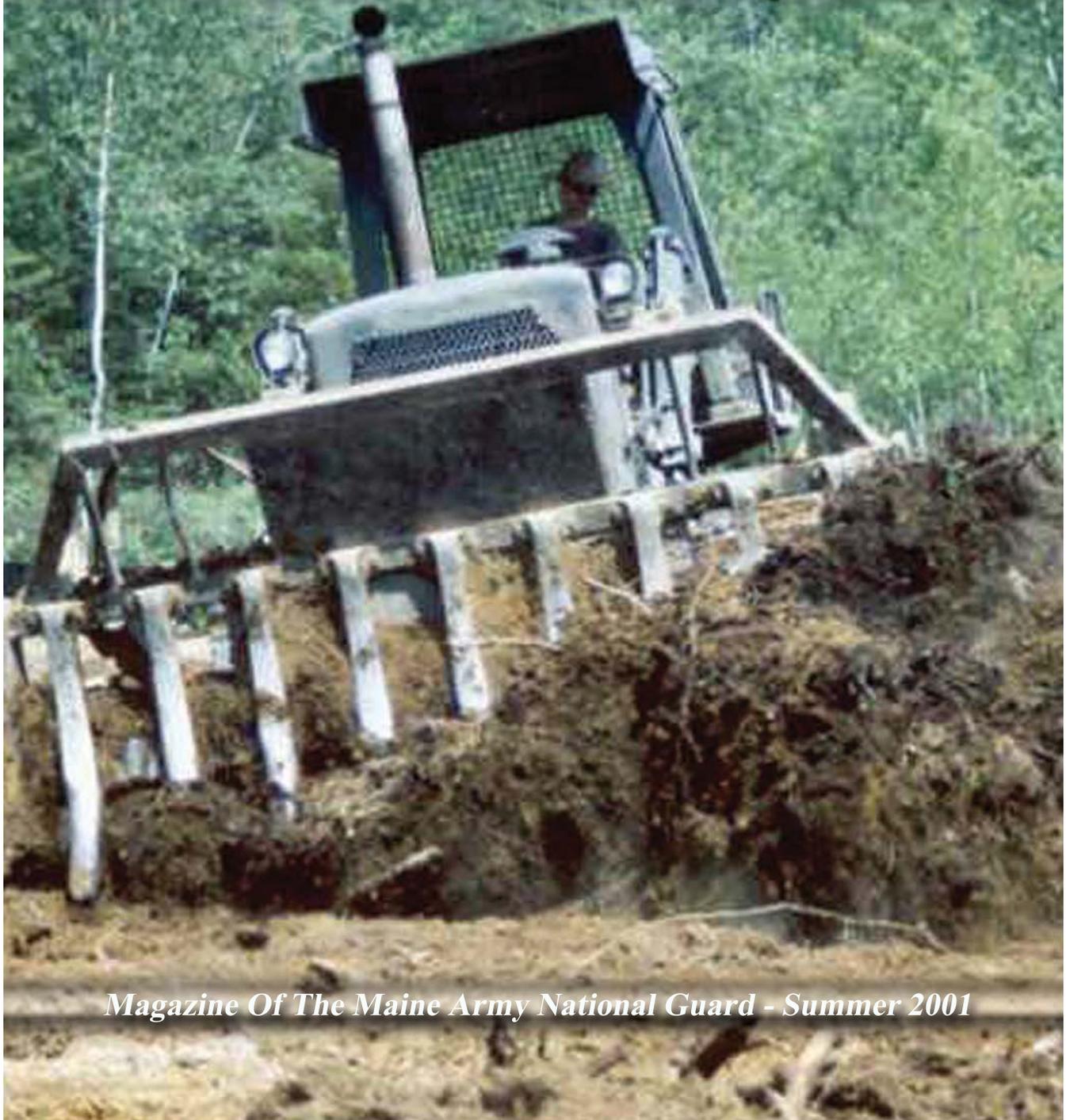
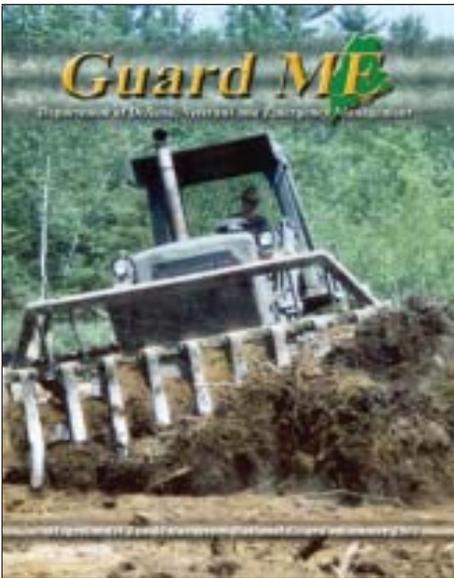


Guard ME

Department of Defense, Veterans and Emergency Management



Magazine Of The Maine Army National Guard - Summer 2001



On the Cover...

The 'Root-Rake' mounted on a D7 dozer goes about its work in Madison, Maine. (Photo by: Dan Fortin, PA)

Guard ME

The Magazine of
the Maine Army National Guard

Summer 2001

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From the Adjutant General

More Than Just a Soldier

In June I took the opportunity to travel to Fort Benning, Georgia semi-anonymously with a close friend to attend his son's graduation from an Infantry combined BCT/AIT program.

While I have had occasion over the past few years to observe new soldiers undergoing training, this was the first basic training graduation I have attended since my own in February 1967, at Fort Dix, New Jersey. This is not an old "war story", there's a lesson here, so bear with me.

My BCT graduation experience was at the height of the Vietnam War when upwards of 40,000 men a month were being drafted and basic training was being conducted at over a dozen posts around the Country.

Soldiers were being turned out with assembly lined precision by what we called, somewhat less than affectionately, the "Big Green Machine". We trained six days a week back then and graduation was pretty much a training schedule event on the eighth Saturday of basic.

We had a parade, as I recall, with a pass in review and a not particularly memorable address by someone I can't remember. I also seem to recall seeing a few family members of trainees who drove in from their homes close to Fort Dix.

Immediately following graduation we shipped out to our respective advanced individual training programs. This was the Army way in 1967.

This is not the Army way in 2001. Graduation at Fort Benning was an event extending over two days with the primary focus being on the graduating trainees' family.

On the day preceding the actual graduation, families, with invitations in hand, followed the many signs posted everywhere directing them to the company area of their soon to be graduate. Here they were greeted and ushered into a large room for a briefing by the battalion and company commander and were introduced to each drill sergeant. There were literally hundreds of family members in attendance.

A turning "blue" ceremony (it's an infantry rite of passage) followed in the company area where the families saw their soldiers for the first time.

The next day there were well over a thousand family and friends present to observe the graduation of two companies on the parade field. A very impres-



MG Joseph E. Tinkham, II

sive infantry firepower demonstration preceded the graduates' entry onto the field.

The graduating companies were formed and the soldiers were addressed by the only officer having the Medal of Honor still on active duty. The ceremony concluded with a pass in review led by the Fort Benning Army Band. I was not the only one totally impressed.

There is a lesson here that the Army, at least the Infantry, seems to have learned, and it's one which we would be wise to also acknowledge. The Army has recognized that it has recruited more than just a soldier. It has recruited the soldier's family as well.

They appear to realize that it's not just the Army who has an interest in the successful service of this new soldier. This interest is multiplied by the mothers and fathers and others who also care, those willing to partner with the Army to ensure the young soldier's success.

We too need to form a partnership with our younger Guard members' family. When Jack or Jill joins the Maine Army National Guard, I am certain it is most often a family supported decision. Why don't we develop an early relationship with the new soldier's family?

We have geography on our side. Our soldiers and their families are local and are our neighbors. A partnership of this type could greatly complement each stakeholder's efforts to help our soldier, their son or daughter, over rough spots of Guard duty, school and new independence.

Let's try it.

Guard ME

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Engineers invade Buffalo Country

By: SFC Angela Blevins, PA

Deep within the Black Hills of South Dakota, during July 9 through 21st, over 6000 troops were involved in Operation Golden Thunder, the largest military event known. Not just the National Guard, but the Army Reserves and active duty soldiers, too, gathered to train. Among the units from across the United States, was Maine's 240th Engineer Group.

In the fall of 1999, the unit Commander Col. Frank Toderico and Staff Officer 3 (S3) Lt. Col. Leslie Swartz attended a commander's conference. They were asked if their unit would like the opportunity to field command and control other engineering units. These units would work primarily for Custer State Park and the Black Hills National Forest on different engineering projects.

"This is the first time in a lot of years that we have had the whole unit tactically deployed," said Swartz. In preparation for the trip, the conex's (large containers) were packed and the vehicles prepared. This unit usually trains for a mission overseas, packing for ship transportation. A lesson learned by the 240th was that their equipment needed to be on site, in the state of South Dakota, within a short period of time. This required a different transportation method and meant reconfiguring their packing.

To get their equipment to South Dakota required "the South Dakota Army National Guard" to send 10 tractor-trailer rigs from the 88th Troop Command to Maine. They picked up our vehicles and brought them back to South Dakota. They were on the ground only 2 hours in Augusta when

See 'Buffalo Country' page 9



The 240th Engineer Group's survey section, assisted by the 52nd Eng. Company B, Oregon, surveyors, prepare to set control points for sonar tubes. (Photo by: SFC Angela Blevins, PA, MeARNG)

Engineers Benefit Local Towns

National Guard Training Saves Towns Big Money

By: MSG Dan Fortin, PA

When the Guard first came onto the project site they were faced with a daunting task. In front of them lay 26 acres of open land covered with approximately 2000 tree stumps. Those stumps had to be completely removed.

According to 1LT Robert Berry, Horizontal Platoon Leader for Company C, 133d Engineer Company, Maine Army National Guard that's when the citizen-soldiers rolled up their sleeves and went to work. "We went out and rented a 'root rake' which fits on the front of a D7 dozer. The rake literally sifts through the dirt and roots leaving the dirt behind and pulling out the stumps. In a matter of an hour and one-half we had a roadway down the middle of this field."

Over a two-week period, Maine Guard members of the Engineer Battalion were tasked with the 'grubbing and stumping' portion of a construction project for a multiple ball field complex for the town of Madison. They also were tasked with a similar project for the town of Falmouth. Both projects involved the removal of stumps, the removal of existing top-soil and clay, and the initial grading to sub-grade levels of several athletic fields and parking lots.

A storage, pole barn and a foot bridge is also being constructed as part of the Madison project. An element of Charlie Company was also tasked with the construction of a concession stand and access road improvement for the town of China.

Skip Varney, Director of Parks and Recreation for the town of Falmouth said that having the Guard do this project has saved the town a great deal of money. "Having the Guard do this project has saved the town between \$150,000 to \$200,000. I definitely would solicit their help again."

Varney went on to say that the trickiest portion of the planning came with try-



The Pole Barn being constructed at the Madison, Maine project site. (Photo by: MSG Dan Fortin, PA, MeARNG)

ing to match the Guard's training needs with what he wanted to get done. "With the assistance of the officers and enlisted personnel of the Battalion, I had to take into consideration what I wanted to get

Community Parks Project. They have gotten a lot more done than I expected they would. Their level of expertise is higher than I expected."

The Engineer Battalion, as part of their Annual Training, regularly participates in these community construction projects. These projects are part of the Innovative Readiness Training Program or IRT.

Under this program Guard units such as the 133d, perform community projects such as those in Madison, China and Falmouth, Maine saving these towns money while at the same time receiving top-notch training. To qualify for the IRT program the projects must meet the engineer's tactical training requirements, along with their MOS or construction skill training needs.

According to Battalion Commander, LTC Jim Mountain, the Battalion regularly saves Maine towns \$500,000 on an annual basis.

The engineers work on these projects during drill weekends or on Annual Training. Typical projects include the construction of roads, athletic fields, runway expansions, bridges, buildings, and building renovations.



Dozer doing work around site. (Photo By: MSG Dan Fortin, PA, MeARNG)

done and match that up with what the Guard needed to accomplish in their training plan this year. That is why we decided to abandon the vertical projects at this time and concentrate on the horizontal portion of phase 1C at the Falmouth

Guard Joins Forces with Active Army

By: SSG Carl Weiss, PA

Throughout our nation's history, we have often maintained a rather small standing army during peacetime. As tensions have escalated around the globe and the United States inevitably found itself on the brink of war, various means have been used to assemble the troops necessary to go off to war. Whether young men and women joined the armed forces due to patriotism, the desire to do one's part or were drafted, building up the Army has been accomplished time and again as the need arose.

After World War II, the United States found itself embroiled in a struggle for superpower supremacy with the former Soviet Union that lasted for nearly 50 years. This struggle was known as the Cold War. The collapse of the Soviet Union and WARSAW pact, effectively ended the Cold War, and has led to a great reduction in the number of armed forces the United States maintained. The modern day buzzword for reducing the armed forces is downsizing. This downsizing has resulted in a reduction of the number of active

duty soldiers and an increased role for the Nation's Reservists and National Guardsmen.

In July of 2000, the active Army continued this recent trend with the decision to reduce the size of XVIII's Corp, headquartered at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The decision from FORSCOM was to eliminate the Corp's Air Traffic Services, located at Fort Drum, home of the 10th Mountain Division. Enter the Maine Army National Guard. Utilizing a new concept known as Multi-Component Integrated Unit, or Multi-Comp for short, active duty units are integrated with reserve component units. The Multi-Comp concept looks at the readiness posture of both Active Army and the Reserve units involved. Integrating the two units allows services to be provided to both components, while at the same time, accomplishing the needed downsizing.

In the case of the 120th Air Traffic Services, ATS, 59 Air Traffic Controller, ATC, positions held by soldiers stationed at Echo Company in Fort Drum were eliminated. Alpha Company at Fort Bragg

transferred 22 of its 59 positions to Fort Drum. Twenty-two positions from the MeARNG's 120th Aviation Company were sent to Fort Bragg to recoup their losses. This new Multi Comp unit has its headquarters located in Bangor, Maine and is now called E/120th ATS. It is manned entirely by Maine Army National Guard members and supports the Maine Army National Guard and its Air Traffic needs. A detachment from Echo Company is now stationed at Fort Drum, New York and is known as E/120th ATS (Det.). This detachment is manned by active duty Army soldiers and supports the 10th Mountain Division.

The end result is the military has fulfilled its need to downsize part of the Corps. The ATS soldiers have been reorganized at three locations to ensure that proper air traffic coverage continues. Additionally, active duty soldiers and traditional, two day a month Army National Guardsmen, are depending upon each other to accomplish their mission.

See 'Guard Joins Forces' page 8

Maine Army Guard's Coins of Excellence



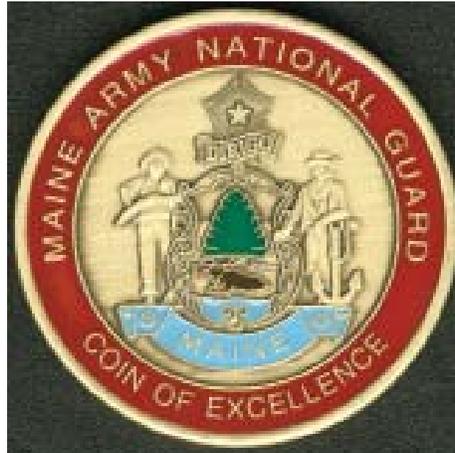
240th Engineer Group



133d Engineer Bn.



152d Field Artillery



Front of Coins

The Adjutant General, his Commanders and the Command Sergeant Majors now have a coin that they can give in recognizing their soldiers or individuals who exhibit exceptional performance in support of the Maine Army National Guard.

This honorary coin has a prominent unit crest, with brilliant colors on one side and the Maine State seal on the other. Having a thickness of 1/8 inch and 1-1/2 inches in diameter, each coin is significant in size and is prominent in the hand of the receiver.



52d Troop Command



286th Pet. Supply Bn.



Command Group

Guard Crew meets State's Special Construction Needs

By: MSG Dan Fortin, PA

Gutting a 50,000 square-foot warehouse in Caribou, Maine and converting it into a first-class Army National Guard Armory is no easy task. Under the watchful eye of 1st Sgt. Phil Ceaser, project NCOIC (non-commissioned officer in charge), his Active Duty Special Work (ADSW) crew performed the miraculous.

His eight-soldier crew, made up of Maine Army National Guard members from all the engineer companies in Maine worked on the project for nearly five months. During that time, they constructed an arms room complete with a concrete safe, male and female latrines, a new kitchen facility, new heating and air-conditioning systems, two new drill floors, a supply room, a medical examination room, and a new Distance Learning Center.

According to 1st Sgt. Ceaser the work was a good training experience. "Several soldiers in my crew are not MOS (Military Occupational Skill) qualified in carpentry. So while we worked, we enhanced their 51 Bravo skills. At the project, we had a kitchen and several latrines to construct. That involved a lot of ceramic floor tile

and bathroom wall tiles to install. That was good training for us."

Maine taxpayers benefit a great deal in having these soldiers do the upgrade. Even though half of the cost for the remodel was funded with Federal dollars, the State's portion was reduced by the citizen-soldiers. "The State of Maine benefits in two ways," Ceaser stated. "First, because we don't have the same overhead as a private contractor would have on a project this size, we can do it for a lot less money. Second, the state ends up with better trained soldiers. A project like this gives me the opportunity to offer extended training and Annual Training Periods to the soldiers involved."

The crew stays together year-round working on any job the State needs done and in which they have the necessary skills. Over the past several years, the crew has worked on several armory roof replacements, earth work and a parking lot at the AFRC (Armed Forces Reserve Center) in Bangor, and stone and masonry work at the Blaine Memorial in Augusta to name a few.

The refurbished armory will be the new home for the Headquarters Battery of the 152nd Field Artillery.



Sgt. Anthony Margin, a member of the 1136th Transportation Company, Detachment 1 in Sanford, Maine, cuts strapping to finish the ceiling in the shower stalls at the Solman Building in Caribou. (Photo by: MSG Dan Fortin, PA, MeARNG)

Solman Warehouse Project



During the early part of 2000, the Maine Army National Guard received an unexpected gift: a beer warehouse. No the National Guard is not getting into the beverage business, but in a time when business prospects in Aroostook County looked bleak and the Guard Armory in Caribou needed major repairs, it became an interesting prospect.

The 50,000 square-foot beer warehouse was the long-time home for Solman Distributors in Caribou. In 1999, Solman merged with Maine Distributors in Bangor, Maine. That merger left no need for the warehouse.

"That's when we remembered our longtime relationship with the Maine Army National Guard," said Scott Solman, the son of the previous owner and present partner at Maine Distributors. "We decided that instead of letting the building set for a longtime empty that we would donate it to the National Guard." By accepting the building, the Guard received a 1 million dollar piece of property for nothing.

The building, once it has been completely refurbished, will be the new home of Headquarters Battery, 152nd Field Artillery Battalion. According to Battalion Commander Lt. Col. Fred Umphrey, the new facilities will serve the Battalion well. "The new armory is three times the size of our old armory. The new facility has two drill floors and a Distance Learning Center. The two drill floors will allow us to keep our Operations Center setup and operational all the time. The Distance Learning Center will also allow us to train our soldiers on location for MOS qualification, NCO courses and conduct our statewide, battalion meetings. This will save the Guard a great deal of time and money." Umphrey went on to say that the new facility will allow the battalion to conduct all required physicals at one location for additional savings. With the additional space, the battalion will be able to conduct year-round training indoors.

Not Just Another Day at the Office

By: MSG Dan Fortin, PA

Maine's Guard members come from varied civilian backgrounds. Some are bankers, some are accountants, others are truck drivers. They are a dedicated group of citizen - soldiers possessing a great deal of pride in their country and in themselves. In fact Winston Churchill once said, "The Reservist is twice the citizen." However, being a citizen-soldier can sometimes bring conflict with ones employer.

No one understands that better than the soldiers in charge of running the Maine Army Guard's, 133rd Engineer Battalion. Every year, during their two-week Annual Training Period, the Battalion sets aside one day and invites their soldier's bosses out for a day on the job site. This year's event was especially appropriate since on February 9, Maine's Governor Angus King signed a Proclamation that designated 2001 as the, "Year of the Employer".

Earlier this year, letters were sent out inviting all nominated employers to join the engineers for Employer Support of the Guard and Reserve (ESGR) day at the Skowhegan Fairgrounds. Twenty-five



Spc. Brooke Taylor a medic on board of a Maine Army National Guard Blackhawk, insures that all employers are secure prior to their flight over the project sites. Spc. Taylor is a member of the 112th Medical Company (Air Ambulance), Maine Army National Guard in Bangor.



ESGR day attendees get a first-hand demonstration of the new Concrete Mixer Module. (All Photos by: MSG Dan Fortin, PA, MeARNG)

employers came looking forward to what they might see and learn.

Cliff Nadeau, a front-line supervisor at Bath Iron Works who attended, thinks having this type of day is a good idea. "I feel we should support the Guard for what they do for us. I remember when the Ice Storm and the Gulf War took place. I had an employee who took part in both. Sometimes its difficult for us to know what my employees go through when they are on duty. This will definitely help me under-

stand what the Guard is all about."

The day started out with a briefing by the Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Jim Mountain. He described the makeup and the mission of the Battalion and the purpose of the community projects the engineers often do such as the one they were about to see in Madison, Maine. He also stressed that these types of projects benefit both the local communities in saved construction dollars and the National Guard in providing quality training.

The employers were then taken to the project site where they were given a demonstration of the new Palletized Loading System (PLS) vehicle and a tour of the project site. This year the Battalion was tasked in constructing a series of athletic fields and parking lots on a 26-acre site in Madison and several ball fields with an adjacent parking in Falmouth, Maine.

The participants were then treated to some good old army chow.

Once lunch concluded, the group was taken to the Norridgewock Airport for the highlight of the day. A Maine Army National Guard Blackhawk helicopter, from the 112th Air Ambulance Company awaited to take all employers for a fly over of the project sites.

Dan Labbe, a maintenance supervisor for Prime Tanning in Berwick, Maine thought the ride was great. "I've never done that before. It was awesome." Labbe went on to say that the day gave him a better understanding of his employee's role in the Guard. "This has definitely changed my outlook. I used to think that he was just going off for a two week vacation. Now I know better."



Quality Soldiers in the Maine Guard

By: Col. Mark Gilbert, Chief of Staff

When the conventional measurement of organizational success is taken it usually includes some elaborate system of identifying key tasks and processes, assigning numerical values to those tasks/processes and evaluating degree of achievement and assessing a score. Rather autocratic and objective in most cases. However, the true measurement of organization success is its people since they are the ultimate determinant of that numerical score. And by every measure of its people the Maine Army National Guard is at the top of the game. The "people" I refer to herein are all categories that support the success of the Maine Army National Guard. The danger of the conventional measurement methodology is the failure to recognize the human element.

This article is about and for the identification of individual excellence in the Maine Army National Guard which is the absolute reason for the organizational excellence we enjoy.

The National Guard Bureau (NGB), our resource and policy provider, has developed a system of organizational measurement which is titled "State Performance Indicators Reporting System" (SPIRS). SPIRS is a relatively new system that identifies 25 key functions states perform and assesses numerical value to achieving the established goals. The results of the first two reporting periods have revealed Maine as one of the top five states of the 54 reportable states, territories and district. This is no small accomplishment and one in which EVERY person in or supporting the Maine Army National Guard ought to be proud since it was the collective efforts of **individuals** who allowed for such achievement. The results are more than numerical assess-

ments but establish credibility within the NGB, which allows our state to "stretch" its organizational influence. In short it is a "force multiplier" which postures us for greater support from NGB because we have proven our ability to manage and execute effectively and efficiently.

Having set the stage with our organizational standing let me refocus on the individual. As with most organizations (private and government) there seems to be a select few who continually set the benchmark for others to emulate. The Maine Army National Guard is not exceptional in that regard with one exception I contend, and the facts support, that we have an inordinate number of benchmark setters among our people. As example, over the last 12 months or so we have left a trail of excellence examples at the individual level that ANY organization would be envious of.

The following is a list of examples of that individual success. Space restrictions do not allow for the inclusion of individual names, additionally there would be the inevitable omission which would be unfair:

- ♦A survey of some 35 new soldiers revealed that 80% are going on to college and of those 40% were National Honor Society Members.

- ♦A Maine Army National Guard Officer was recognized as the Distinguished Graduate of the Command and General Staff College by receiving the General John J. Pershing Award.

- ♦Members of the Weapons of Mass Destruction-Civil Support Team (WMD-CST) consistently maintained the highest collective average score ever achieved at the National Fire Academy conducted Hazardous Material Courses.

- ♦Students attending the demanding Automated Field Artillery Tactical Data

System (AFATDS) training all received first time go's, established a class average of 93% with three soldiers achieving 100%.

- ♦The MEARNG Head Nurse was selected as the Maine Nurse Practitioner of the year.

- ♦Two recent graduates of the very challenging Warrant Officer Candidate Course were recognized as Distinguished Honor Graduates.

- ♦Three returnees for the Primary Leadership Development (PLDC) Course were recognized as Distinguished Honor Graduates with two additionally receiving the leadership award.

- ♦Three members of the STARC (State Area Command) Staff recently achieved their Masters Degrees.

- ♦The only Maine Air National Guard member of the WMD-CST recently was the first Air Force member to graduate from the Army BattleStaff NCO Course and had the highest APFT score of his class (295 at 52 years of age).

As you can see by the above list we have some very exceptional people in our organization but this is only a sampling since there are many more which have not been pointed out here. Take the time to find out who they are in your organization and congratulate them and thank them for making our organization a National Benchmark Setter.

Many systems have been developed and much money has been made over the last decade defining excellence. Using Hollywood terms such as "Quality Assurance" and "Total Quality Management". However, no matter how you package it measure it or embrace it, there is one overriding factor which absolutely determines excellence and that is people and their performance.

'Guard Joins Forces'

Continued from page 5

The 120th ATS Company, MeARNG in Bangor has the responsibility to provide air traffic support for the Maine Army National Guard. Whether the unit is going to the field to conduct training, an exercise or to war for the real thing, the job remains the same. According to Staff Sergeant David A. Mooney, facility chief with the 120th, "We are responsible to control air traffic patterns, assign runways, monitor the wind, weather changes and conditions. We guide the pilots while they are in our airspace. Our job is to make sure

they land safely."

Mooney continued, "Once we arrive on site, we become mobile. We deploy with a HUMVEE and do a site selection and try to determine where we expect to have aircraft coming in from. We try to determine what we need to do to be able to face the aircraft at all times. We need visibility to see the area they are landing in and we need to monitor the traffic in and out always facing the traffic."

In many respects the mission of the 120th ATS parallels that of their civilian counterparts who guide air traffic at America's busy airports. Mooney added, "We have a lot of the same training as the

folks who have gone through the Federal Aviation Administration, FAA, training. Although the military trains at Fort Rucker, Alabama and civilians attend the FAA school in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, much of the training is exactly the same. Some of our troops have even attended the FAA schools." Despite doing, 'the same basic job'; out in the field however, the differences become evident. "In combat, we do look for an existing runway and airport over making our own. We obviously prefer to use existing facilities. However, we do have that ability, and we always send the lead vehicle forward with the mobile tower brought up later."

240th Group lends Expertise to Engineers

'Buffalo Country'

Continued from page 3

they started back for South Dakota," said Lt. Col. Swartz. The equipment was available when the unit arrived in the woods of the Black Hills State Park.

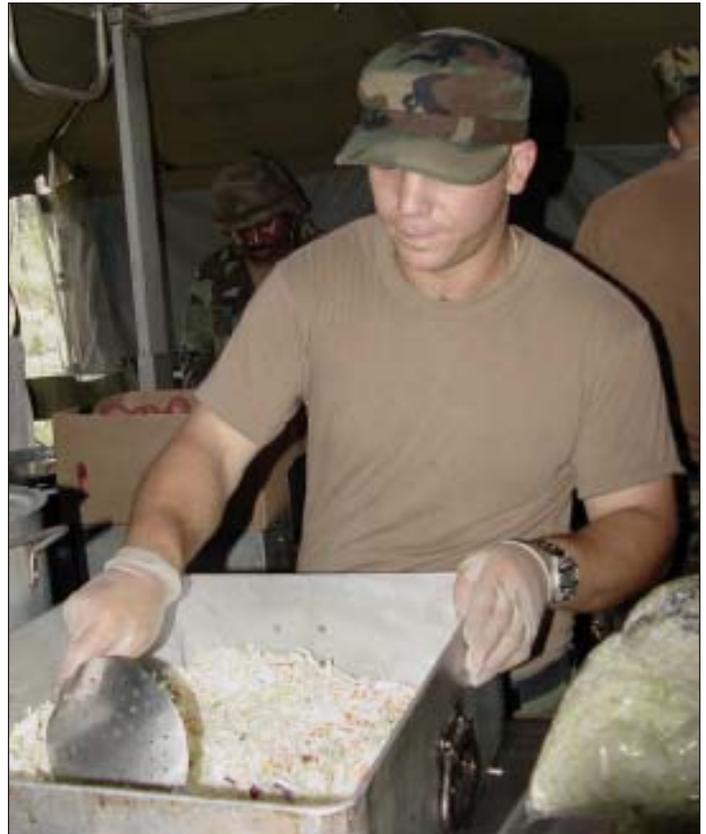
This annual training period was a lot different from any previous training period for this unit. They were thousands of miles from home, at a high altitude of 5383 feet (same as Mount Katahdin) and they also had to adhere to testing of their military skills and reactions as a unit. As in the following scenario: Imagine darkness surrounding two soldiers, while guarding their gate and perimeter, when two armed civilians, speaking in a foreign language, appeared in front of them asking for food and water. What would you do?

This activity was part of an active Army - TAMS (Training Assessment Model System) evaluation, and this was just one test, in a succession of four that the unit successfully passed. Evaluator, Lt. Col. Russel, from the 1st Cavalry, Fort Hood, Texas, appraised the unit on its reactions to the challenges. Russel said, "This is a highly motivated group of soldiers from Maine, which is good to see from the active duty side." He provided very positive information about the evaluation to everyone involved.

These situations tested the soldiers

everyone was involved," said Sgt. Lambert, from surveying. It provided another tool, in developing assessments while involving every soldier.

The mission of the 240th Group was to provide command and control of units below them, both vertical and horizontal engineering projects. This required a high level of logistics and good communication in several directions. From the higher headquarters, the 109th Engineer Brigade from South Dakota handed out the missions to the designated subordinate units. Those subordinate units were: the 52nd Engineer Battalion, with Company A, an active duty unit, Company B, a National Guard unit from Port-



Spc. Clayton Soule, mess section, mixes coleslaw for the night dinner (Photo by: SFC Angela Blevins, PA, MeARNG)



Operations Sgt. Maj. Robert Higgins explains to SGT Lambert what is required for surveying at a Boy Scout construction site. (Photo by: SFC Angela Blevins, PA, MeARNG)

military skills and knowledge, and each situation was followed by an after action review (AAR). "Every soldier that was involved in the activity was in the AAR. Instead of just ignoring that it happened,

SD and a Youth Center in Hill City, SD, while C Company was reconstructing a bridge within the ranching industry and the 842nd Engineer Company, repaired a runway in Sturgis, SD. All of the soldiers

have endured through high altitude acclimation, equivalent to that of Mount Katahdin, lightening storms almost daily, the heat and buffalo interactions. And for an example of this, when the 52nd Engineer Company, from Oregon arrived, they did the usual task of securing their perimeter by setting up concertina fencing. But what the unit didn't realize was that the buffalo roam freely in herds and might get trapped in it. The Custer Park officials told them to take it down.

Morale is high, being a long distance from Maine, Sgt. Maj. Robert Higgins said: "The soldiers' are highly charged and very enthusiastic, even in these challenging times."

Lt. Col. Swartz said, "This has been a very positive experience. For the first time in several years we were in the field tactically, and having the opportunity to work as an engineering headquarters and command and control for other engineering units."

The 286th Supply and Service Battalion

Thirty Years of Service to Community and Country

By: Col. Roland M. Lapointe

The 286th Supply and Service Battalion was truly a fixture in the structure of the Maine Army National Guard, proudly serving community and country for thirty years - in peace and in war. The unit's participation in Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm affirmed the validity of the Army's Total Force Policy for rapidly expanding the standing army through mobilization of its reserve units and individuals when needed. This was a proud unit, which honored its motto of "Valor, Veracity and Virtue". No vignette as brief as this can hope to do justice to the thirty year history of the 286th Supply and Service Battalion. Nonetheless, a useful overview of the battalion's historical highlights, unit lineage, and wartime service is provided.

Historical Setting.

The 286th Supply and Service Battalion was first organized as such on December 31, 1967. By the end of that same year, the United States had committed 500,000 ground troops to the war in Vietnam and suffered 9,353 service members killed during the preceding twelve months. In the previous summer, Israeli armed forces stormed the Golan Heights to defeat of Syria, Jordan and Egypt in the Six-Day War. This was the historic setting into which the 286th Supply and Service Battalion began its service to the nation - a service that continued for thirty years until its inactivation in 1997. During that time, the unit provided invaluable service to the citizens of Maine and played a significant role in support of Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm.

Unit Lineage.

The lineage of the 286th Supply and Service Battalion dates back to August 19, 1952, when it was first organized as the 181st Signal Radar Maintenance Unit, Type C, Maine Army National Guard. Following the unit's formal redesignation as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 286th Supply and Service Battalion (GS)(Fwd) in 1967, a subsequent reorganization became effective June 1, 1968. This action, as directed in General Order #11, dated May 27, 1968 reorganized units from the 20th Armor Battalion's, Battery F, Aviation, and the 142d Ordnance Company.



Desert Shield/Desert Storm.

On November 17, 1990 the battalion was mobilized for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. Following mobilization, the unit performed duties in Southwest Asia from December 6, 1990 to May 10, 1991. During this period, the 286th Supply and Service Battalion was assigned to the 159th Corps Support Group, 2d Corps Support Command, VII U.S. Corps. While in the Gulf, the 286th provided combat services support to the 1st Infantry Division as well as other divisional and non-divisional units operating in its area of operations. During the period in which the 286th Supply and Service Battalion conducted operations, it provided a significant amount of combat service support to its customer

units. This support played a key role in the ability of the 1st Infantry Division to execute the primary attack in the VII Corp's area of operations. The unit was released from active duty on 4 June 1991. After the Storm, following the redeployment to home station, the battalion resumed command and control of its peacetime subordinate units on 1 August 1991.

Past Commanders.

Throughout its history, the unit operated under the leadership of fourteen battalion commanders. Interestingly enough, the majority of the commanders were traditional guardsmen, including LTC Haley who commanded the unit during its mobilization. This is yet another affirmation of the National Guard's heritage as an organization of citizen soldiers.

Folding the Colors.

The 286th Supply and Service Battalion was officially inactivated on October 1, 1997, following a ceremony conducted at the Augusta Armory on September 6 of that year. In order to preserve the lineage and honors of HHD, 286th Supply and Service Battalion, the unit was consolidated with Battery A, 1st Battalion, 152d Field Artillery located in Waterville, Maine. Today, that lineage rests with the 286th QM Battalion (POL) stationed at the Armed Forces Reserve Center in Bangor, Maine.



The 286th Supply and Service's final formation before leaving for Desert Storm, at Gardner, Maine November 1990. (Photo by MEARNG)

From the State Command Sergeant Major

NCO-ERs Important Responsibility

Noncommissioned Officers (NCOs) have the awesome responsibility of looking out for the welfare and well being of our nation's sons and daughters. It's a responsibility we should not take lightly nor allow anyone else to take away. Taking care of soldiers is NCO business and it is an honor and a privilege to do so. While there are various leadership styles and management methods, leaders should never lose sight of the fact that we are dealing daily with human beings. We have a unique opportunity everyday to make a positive impact in the lives of others. Do not waste it. Look for ways to make a difference. One responsibility that NCOs must take

very seriously is providing fair and honest evaluations to our soldiers. The Noncommissioned Officer Evaluation Report (NCO-ER) is a permanent part of an NCO's official record. It is the single most important document in an NCO's file and is a primary factor in determining an NCO's eligibility for promotions, assignments, and schools.

Therefore, the overall quality of the NCOER is of utmost concern, both in substance and format.

We must keep in mind that the NCO-ER is designed to strengthen the capability of the NCO Corps by reemphasizing basic soldier responsibilities and our Army values. This criterion highlights performance oriented counseling,

while ensuring the best-qualified soldiers are identified for positions of increased responsibility and promotion.

We must ensure that we conduct effective counseling, mentoring and training of our NCOs. A truly effective NCO is an NCO that has his replacement already trained.

The NCO-ER provides The Army National Guard an invaluable management tool to determine the true capability of our most valuable resource, our soldiers. Overall, our use of the NCO-ER has very much improved in recent years. As



CSM Mark J. Collins

we enter this rating season, let us take our responsibility as NCOs seriously. Treat each report as if it were your own.

Looking to the Maine Army National Guard Soldier

What aspect of the Maine Army National Guard has influenced your decision to remain in the organization?



SPC Valarie Collins
HSC, 133d Engineer Bn.

Drills and Annual Training Periods get me outside. My civilian job doesn't.



PFC Kristoffer Tardiff
Co. C, 133d Engineer Bn.

Drills and Annual Training provides me with a good change of pace. It gets me out of the city.



SSG Rita Tompkins
Co. C, 133d Engineer Bn.

I enjoy the pay, benefits and the opportunity to break away from my regular routine. My weekly job with the Guard is a lot different than what I do at annual training or drills.



MSG Don G. Mixer
Commo Chief, HHD STARC

I enjoy being a member of the Guard, I like the benefits and the people and the commissary and insurance are nice, too