**Memorial run**

Members of the Kentucky Air Guard who expect to be deployed in November can easily register to vote and cast an absentee ballot through the help of a federal Web site.

To those who are not registered to vote can complete a Federal Post Card Application and mail it to the state in which they vote.

The cards, which also can be used to request an absentee voting ballot, are available online at the Federal Voting Assistance Program Web site — http://www.fvap.gov.

The deadline for voter registration applications is Aug. 15.

Absentee voting ballots are due in their respective states no later than Oct. 11.

**Eight members of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron ran the Kentucky Derby Festival’s Mini Marathon in May in honor of the unit’s fallen airmen, Tech. Sgts. Chris Matero and Martin Tracy. Both were killed during a training mission in September 2002, when the MC-130 they were aboard crashed in Puerto Rico. Matero and Tracy, who served as combat controllers, were avid runners.**


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**Ky. maintenance group receives top NGB honor**

By Capt. Dale Grover

Wing Public Affairs Officer

The Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Maintenance Group was recognized for exceptional performance last month when it was named the 2003 Air National Guard Outstanding Medium Aircraft Maintenance Unit of the Year.

The group also was selected as the National Guard Bureau’s nominee for the 2003 Air Force Maintenance Effectiveness Award for medium-sized aircraft.


During this period, the 123rd Maintenance Group was federally activated in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, just months after completing a yearlong mobilization in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

In bestowing the award during a ceremony held on base May 15, the National Guard Bureau’s Col. Elliot Worcester called the 123rd “one of this nation’s best Air National Guard Units.”

“The presentations this morning reflect the services and the sacrifices that you have all made in order to protect our freedom and to bring that freedom to others around the world,” he told the crowd of about 500 unit members who gathered for the ceremony in the Fuel Cell Hangar.

“The efforts put forth by the members of the maintenance group in support of this wing’s operational mission are noteworthy. From ensuring full mission accomplishment in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom to supporting the community with programs like the Combined Federal Campaign and Special Olympics, you’ve proven yourselves to be warriors and patriots,” he continued.

“Col. Hunt provided command leadership and an expeditionary maintenance group, and the maintainers of the 123rd Maintenance Group performed the highest quality of maintenance in deployed locations and at home. You have proven that you have a winning attitude, and I congratulate all of you for winning this outstanding aircraft maintenance unit award,” said Colonel Worcester, who is director of logistics for the Air National Guard.

During the award period, the 123rd Maintenance Group deployed 51 personnel and associated equipment to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in support of four C-130s. It also deployed 113 troops and equipment to the Central Command Area of Responsibility in support of six C-130s. Meanwhile, the group’s remaining personnel supported Air Mobility Command missions from Louisville.

The combined operations resulted in the generation of 3,196 sorties and 7,821 hours of flight, according to the award citation.

Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing, also congratulated the members of the 123rd Maintenance Group, and he expressed his appreciation for the hard work of everyone in the wing.

The colonel, who recently returned from a five-month deployment to Kuwait, told the audience that his experiences there confirmed the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing have only reinforced his belief that “nobody does airlift any better than the 123rd.”

“I’ve always been proud to be a part of this wing,” he continued, “but the things we’ve done over the past couple of years and the way we stack up against other units makes me even more proud.”

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123rd Airlift Wing
Public Affairs Office
Kentucky Air National Guard
1101 Grade Lane
Louisville, KY 40213-2678

OFFICIAL BUSINESS
Don’t be tempted by shortcuts in procedure, professionalism, performance

I have many good memories of riding bikes while growing up. It afforded an expansion of independence that was supplantated only by my driver’s license.

The way to almost anywhere out of my old neighborhood was a trip past Mr. Scott’s house, which was situated on the corner of a “T” intersection.

Although sidewalks bordered his front yard on either side, a telephone pole and a mailbox right on the corner made negotiating the turn at speed quite a challenge—and speed was important.

More often than not, we would cut a clean swath across his yard and never have to break pace.

It was a shortcut used by everyone, and by midsummer, every summer, there was a well-worn, bare path grooved into the ground.

If Mr. Scott minded he never said so; maybe it was because his four kids were among the chief abusers of the lawn.

Anyway, I never gave it much thought until years later when the balance of my attention was turned more toward tending a lawn than riding a bike.

It occurred to me that Mr. Scott must have reseded every fall after most of the bikes were retired for the winter. Because every spring a new stand of grass replaced the bare path left from the summer before.

Spring, however, brought out the bikes again with riders returning to old habits. By midsummer the cycle had repeated.

It seems like a small thing, but our shortcut cost Mr. Scott a good deal of extra work and probably some aggravation (not to mention having a racing stripe across his otherwise immaculate lawn for half the year).

Some shortcuts, though, can be much more serious and have wider-reaching consequences.

The prison guards at Abu Ghraib in Iraq (and perhaps others in their chain of command) took shortcuts in their professionalism, procedure and performance of duty in dealing with prisoners under their care.

Human rights issues aside for a moment, their actions—with thoughtlessness carried out or carefully calculated—have squandered a tremendous amount of progress in the Global War on Terror.

The depth of goodwill eroded by the accounts of prisoner abuse is beyond accurate measurement and will likely hamper our effort to stabilize that region of the globe for years.

Hitting closer to home is the incident in which members of this unit brought unauthorized weapons home from Iraq.

Who, when, why, what and how are still being looked into, and there are, no doubt, a thousand excuses—but not one good reason this took place at all.

This much is sure: Liberties were taken, shortcuts were made and the costs for all of us have yet to be tallied.

The lesson for each of us, when tempted to take shortcuts in procedure, in professionalism or in performance of duty, is DON’T.

Shortcuts always come with a price, rarely save enough time or talent to be worthwhile and usually involve “wearing someone else’s grass.”

Let’s be careful not to put others or ourselves at risk—to pay a price for others to decide to cut.

We owe it to each other to be responsible and considerate in everything we do.

COMMANDER’S CALL

Don’t be tempted by shortcuts in procedure, professionalism, performance.

AIRMEN’S ACCESS TO PAY INFORMATION GETS EASIER

The complexity of the system posed many operational and maintenance challenges, said Joe Rippke, 12th Operations Support Squadron’s ground training flight program manager.

“When the system worked, which was most of the time, it was great,” he said. “But when the valves malfunctioned, the ride could get wild.”

The new trainers are based on virtual reality concepts.

The student is given a 180-degree image around and above the front of the cockpit.

As the student “maneuvers” the trainer, the visual images respond graphically to what the aircraft would be doing.

The simulator operator sits behind the student and can talk over the student’s shoulder, which allows a degree of instructor-student feedback not possible in the old system.

But the underlying reason for the change is the fact that the new trainer is similar to the new T-38 aircraft.

The new aircraft features improved avionics and support systems, Mr. Rippke said. This makes it closer in design to the F-15 Strike Eagle, F-16 Fighting Falcon and F/A-22 Raptor cockpits.

“A training system has to prepare the pilots for what the aircraft they’ll fly,” Mr. Rippke said.

The old full-motion simulators don’t present the new cockpit and, in the final analysis, the motion part of the training environment was exciting, but wasn’t necessary to accomplish the training goals. So this is the time to make the change.”

The new trainers are a lot smaller and are controlled by a personal computer capable of sophisticated animations to add realism and training options.

The instructor can even inject a “wingman” into the scenario to add the challenges of formation flying.

The conversion to T-38C aircraft here will be completed by August, so this is an opportune time to install the new trainers, Mr. Rippke said.

“We will have two operational flight trainers and one unit training device on line and expect to keep them running 16 hours a day to meet student demand,” he added.
MIDS completes inspection

Cargo Courier Staff Report

The 123rd Medical Squadron successfully completed a Health Services Inspection here April 25.

The inspection, conducted by the Air Force Inspector General from Kirkland Air Force Base, N.M., covered such areas as medical readiness, training, medical operations and leadership. The squadron’s airmen worked exceptionally hard to complete the inspection, said Lt. Col. Diana Shoop, chief of health care support services.

“They are extremely dedicated to the mission and ready for any challenge,” said Shoop.

Awareness can prevent suicides

“Suicide is a long-term solution to a short-term problem.”

I first heard that phrase nearly 20 years ago when a chaplain was giving the annual suicide awareness briefing to our unit. I like the way he framed the issue because most suicidal people want to live, but they aren’t able to see alternatives to the situations they’re facing at the time.

Most often, suicidal people are temporarily overwhelmed with real-life events, including relationship difficulties, separation, divorce, significant problems at work.

Nearly everyone at some time in his or her life thinks about suicide during a particularly painful personal crisis.

Most people decide to live because they come to realize that the crisis is temporary, but suicidal people need help to realize their dilemma as inescapable and feel a total loss of control.

People with a history of depression may also be vulnerable to thoughts about suicide. Here are some potential indicators that someone is having suicidal thoughts:

—They may give away their possessions.
—They may talk about suicide and death, or express that they have no reason to live.
—They may prepare for their planned death by making final arrangements.
—They may give up their responsibilities. They may decide that they are not worth it. They may act impulsively. They may engage in reckless behavior.
—They may withdraw from friends or family. They may avoid activities they once enjoyed. They may refuse to help their friends or family.
—They may give away their possessions.
—They may engage in reckless behavior.
—They may become angry, irritable, or depressed.
—They may become isolated. They may stop going out with friends or family.
—They may become more passive or apathetic.
—They may give away their possessions.
—They may become irritable, angry, or depressed.
—They may become isolated. They may stop going out with friends or family.
—They may become more passive or apathetic.

If you feel you might be suicidal, or you know someone who is, get help from individuals or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

For information or to seek help, contact the wing chaplain at (502) 648-2399 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at (800) 784-2433.

Maj. Fred Ehrmann
Wing Chaplain

KyANG unit profile

123rd Special Tactics Squadron

Leadership
Maj. Jeremy J.C. Shoop has commanded the unit since November 1996.

Mission
The squadron is a rapidly deployable special forces unit capable of employment into combat by any means available in the military.

The unit conducts special reconnaissance of assault zone sites; operates terminal airfield operations; provides combat search and rescue, personnel recovery and battlefield trauma care; and establishes secure command-and-control communications.

Personnel
The squadron has 52 members; nearly half serve full time.

Global engagement
Members of the special tactics squadron were mobilized soon after the attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. The airmen deployed to various parts of the world, including Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, Iraq, Kuwait and Djibouti. Many of their missions and deployment locations remain classified.

Several unit members recently received high-level decorations for gallantry in action.

KyANG NEWS

19 Kentucky airmen receive medals in May

Rosa presented with Bronze Star for service in OEF

By Tech. Sgt. Amy Mundell
Cargo Courier Editor

Hundreds of members of the 123rd Air Lift Wing packed into the Fuel Cell Hangar on May 15 to see 19 fellow Guardsmen receive medals for their service to their country, state and community.

Among the recipients was Senior Master Sgt. Jon Rosa, a combat controller from the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron, who was awarded the Bronze Star Medal by Maj. Gen. Donald Storm, adjutant general of the Kentucky National Guard.

Senior Rosa was honored for his service in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom, where he was directly responsible for the safety and security of Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

His duties included orchestrating 26 close-air-support sorties for overhead security of the president’s motorcade and air travel.

Senior Rosa’s aviation expertise and leadership set the standard for all special tactics groups in country, according to his award citation.

Being selected for the security detail was an honor, said Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airlift Wing.

“It’s a testament to his technical expertise and professionalism,” Colonel Kraus said.

“While certainly a reflection on Jon and his ability to manage a wide scope it also reflects on all the accomplishments of the special tactics squadron and their unique role in the war on terror.”

Colonel Kraus also expressed his appreciation for the exceptional performance of 18 other members of Kentucky Air Guard who were presented with medals during the ceremony.

Most of the 18 airmen were honored for their service in either Operation Enduring Freedom, Operation Iraqi Freedom or both.

Other medal recipients

Maj. Gen. Donald Storm, adjutant general of the Kentucky National Guard, pins the Bronze Star Medal on Senior Master Sgt. Jon Rosa here May 15 for his service in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. Sergeant Rosa served as a body guard to the country’s president, Hamid Karzai, for three months in 2003.

Senior Warrant Officer Philip Speck/KyANG

123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Don Fox
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Anthony Pickman
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Tech. Sgt. Pete Rendon
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Tech. Sgt. Morgan Branch
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Tech. Sgt. Steve Hatfield
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Tech. Sgt. Curtis Hall
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Tech. Sgt. Ron Thomas
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Staff Sgt. Larry Burton
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Staff Sergeant Tracy Wilton
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Senior Airmen Jeremy Wheatley
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Senior Airmen John Bedinger
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Staff Sgt. Alex Gutierrez
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Tim Holaday
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Staff Sgt. Patty Murphy
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Don Fox
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Gary Dunlap
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Troy Cibulak
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. John Bowling
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Master Sgt. Tim Holaday
123rd Aircraft Maintenance Sq.

—Staff Sgt. Joshua Haney
123rd Special Tactics Sq.

—Tech. Sgt. Tom Yost
123rd Special Tactics Sq.

—Tech. Sgt. Steve Hatfield
123rd Special Tactics Sq.

—123rd Logistics Readiness Sq.

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New fitness standards for ANG troops released

By Capt. Kristin Knuteson
Wing Fitness Program Manager

The Air National Guard announced details of a new fitness program in April, making only minor changes to the previous fitness test that was unveiled last year.

Among the changes:
- Test results will be calculated using a point-based system.
  - The abdominal circumference location for female measurements has been revised.
  - Females will perform fall-body push-ups.
  - The push-up test will be a one-minute, timed test.
  - A 1 1/2-mile run may be performed instead of the step test as long as members meet certain criteria.

The components to be evaluated for a unit member’s score are aerobic fitness (50 points), abdominal circumference (30 points), push-ups (10 points) and crunches (10 points).

Total points earned will be divided by the possible points to provide a final score. Composite scores give fitness levels as follows:
- 90 or higher = Excellent
- 75 - 89.99 = Good
- 69.99 or lower = Poor

Those who rate “excellent” or “good” will test once per calendar year.

Members who are “marginal” will retest no later than six months after their previous test.

The 1 1/2-mile run or the three-minute step test will evaluate aerobic fitness.

Body composition will be determined by waist circumference, and a muscular assessment will be evaluated by the one-minute timed crunch test. Flexibility will be assessed with the sit-and-reach test, but it is not part of the composite score.

A fitness age will still be provided for the member’s knowledge; however, the Air National Guard score will determine whether a member meets the required standard.

Testing for unit fitness program managers and fitness assessment monitors will begin this month.

For more information, contact your unit fitness program manager.

MPF troops receive 24 Achievement Medals since 9-11

By Staff Sgt. Mark Flener
Cargo Courier Staff Writer

Since Sept. 11, 2001, members of the wing’s Military Personnel Flight have received 24 Air Force Achievement Medals for their hard work and dedication to duty.

Lt. Col. Dawn Muller, the flight’s commander, said the unit is comprised of exceptional airmen who often work well beyond the confines of a normal duty day.

Personnel specialists can, for example, report for duty as early as 3 a.m. and work well into the night when preparing units for deployments or in-processing.

Colonel Muller said, “When you process people, you’re talking about working all hours of the day and night,” she added.

Chief Master Sgt. Elizabeth Green, chief of personnel, said it was especially remarkable that the airmen received the honors for their performance during a time when the unit’s workload quadrupled.

“We live under pressure,” she said, referring to the numerous deployments of Kentucky Air Guard members in support of the Global War on Terror, Operation Iraqi Freedom and other U.S. military operations around the globe.

Honor guard performs with strength, dignity

By Senior Airman Wendy Haight
123rd Airlift Wing Honor Guard Member

Grieving family members huddle close as members of the 123rd Airlift Wing Honor Guard pay respect to fallen soldiers and airmen who have given the ultimate sacrifice to pave the path of freedom Americans enjoy every day.

Despite the anguish and despair of the moment — underscored by the graves surrounding us — there is strength and dignity — symbols of the honored profession of arms for which these soldiers and airmen sacrificed their lives.

Amidst the tears and poignant words of farewell, an honor guard team executes ceremonial movements with pride and precision, from the presentation of the American flag to the tear-yewed widow to the 21-gun salute, fired in perfect succession so that it sounds like three shots instead of 21.

As gunfire echoes across rolling hills of Kentucky, feelings shift from the sorrow and grief of loss to the pride and dignity of a fallen airman’s accomplishments. More importantly, it becomes apparent to all in attendance that the service stands side-by-side with its people and their families till the end.

This time-honored ceremony remains the core function of the Honor Guard, a 20-person team assigned to the 123rd Airlift Wing here. While other local events capture the imagination of many Honor Guard members, including the dedication of the Veterans' Memorial on Louisville’s waterfront, virtually every ceremonial guardian will tell you there’s something truly special — and very important about the memorial services they conduct.

The ceremonial image of Honor Guard members reflects dignity, honor and a strong representation of the values on which the military was founded, said Chief Master Sgt. Sheila Arwell, commander of the 123rd Honor Guard.

“Our team maintains the highest standard of discipline and appearance,” she said, “If we feel we present a positive attitude and a lasting image of the military members that have come and gone. We are all very proud to be a member of this team, and work hard to show that to all who witness what we do.”

“It’s an image that’s well honored from the beginning of the establishment of the Honor Guard. Most of the unit’s men and women — 90 percent — are traditional guardsmen who volunteer their free time to pay a final respect to the soldiers who have sealed our freedoms.

The requirements to become a ceremonial guardian go much further than image alone, said Senior Master Sgt. Ronnie Holliman, superintendent of the wing’s 123rd Services Flight.

Being an Honor Guard member means having pride, respect, honor, dignity and loyalty in addition to a sharp, well-groomed image, she said.

Many choose the Honor Guard from the beginning of their careers, some even before. They say the time-honored tradition is something in which to take ultimate pride.

“I feel that being in the honor guard is a great privilege — and the first word I think of is pride,” said Staff Sgt. Cutty Parker of the 123rd Honor Guard. “It takes a special person to be a part of the team, someone who has pride and excellence, someone who exemplifies the three core values of the Air Force.”

Besides preserving the tradition of military funerals, the Honor Guard also supports a variety of Color Guard events on base and in the local community.

The purpose of the Color Guard is to represent the United States, the Commonwealth, the Air Force and the Kentucky Air National Guard by presenting the colors of the United States, Kentucky and the U.S. Air Force.

KyANG Honor Guard members attend numerous events, including memorial dedications, parades, graduation and commencement ceremonies, and other events as requested by the community.

The 123rd Honor Guard currently has 20 members and is seeking more individuals to participate in the program, Sergeant Parker said.

In order to qualify, applicants must be interviewed, attend a one-week training class and receive an evaluation. After participants complete the process, they are eligible to perform in ceremonies.

The guardsmen practice quarterly through the year. Each practice lasts approximately four hours and is held in the Base Annex. During the summer months, the Color Guard participates in approximately 30 events; in the off-season, the team is involved in about 15 Color Guard functions.

For more information, contact Sergeant Parker at ext. 4620 option 5, or via e-mail at cutty.parker@kyjfoi.us.af.mil.
New fitness standards for ANG troops released

By Capt. Kristin Knutson
Wing Fitness Program Manager

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For more information, contact your unit fitness program manager.

Capt. Kristin Knutson, the wing’s fitness program manager, briefs unit fitness program managers on the newly released physical fitness standards. The new evaluation process will provide unit members with a numerical score based on their performance in aerobic fitness tests, muscular assessment tests and body composition measurements.

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Nearly everyone at some time in his or her life thinks about suicide during a particularly painful personal crisis. People decide to live because they come to realize that the crisis is temporary, but suicidal people sometimes believe it is permanent.

Awareness can prevent suicides

If you recognize any of these signs in another person, here are some tips to be helpful.

—Be willing to listen. Allow for expression of feelings. Accept the feelings without judgment.
—Don’t ask “Why.” This encourages defensiveness. Don’t act shocked.
—Don’t dare the person to do it.
—Don’t go away when they talk about suicide. Stay until they feel they’re safe and they’ve shared their thoughts.
—Don’t offer glib reassurance—it only proves you don’t understand.

This creates distance.

—Offer hope that alternatives are available. Don’t offer glib reassurance—it only proves you don’t understand.
—Take action! Remove means!
—If you feel you might be suicidal, or you know someone who is, get help from individuals or agencies specializing in crisis intervention and suicide prevention.

For information or to seek help, contact the wing chaplain at (502) 648-2399 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at (800) 784-2433.

Maj. Fred EHrmann Wing Chaplain

KYANG NEWS

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MDS completes inspection

Cargo Courier Staff Report

The 123rd Medical Squadron successfully completed a Health Services Inspection here April 25.

The inspection, conducted by the Air Force Inspector General from Kirkland Air Force Base, N.M., covered such areas as medical readiness, training, medical operations and leadership.

The squadron’s airmen worked exceptionally hard to complete the inspection, said Lt. Col. Diana Shoop, chief of health care support services.

“They are extremely dedicated to the mission and ready for any challenge,” said Colonel Shoop.

An HSI inspection, which is conducted at Air Guard bases every four to five years, is no small chore.

“Passing one of the toughest Headquarter Air Force inspections is definitely something to be proud of,” the colonel said.

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123rd Special Tactics Squadron

Leadership

Maj. Jeremy J.C. Shoop has commanded the unit since November 1996.

Mission

The squadron is a rapidly deployable special forces unit capable of employment into combat by any means available in the military.

The unit conducts special reconnaissance of assault zone sites; operates terminal airfield operations; provides combat search and rescue, personnel recovery and battlefield trauma care; and establishes secure command-and-control communications.

Personnel

The squadron has 52 members; nearly half serve full time.

Global engagement

Members of the special tactics squadron were mobilized soon after the attacks on the United States on Sept. 11, 2001. The airmen deployed to various parts of the world, including Afghanistan, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Puerto Rico, Iraq, Kuwait and Djibouti. Many of their missions and deployment locations remain classified.

Several unit members recently received high-level decorations for gallantry in action.

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Don’t be tempted by shortcuts in procedure, professionalism, performance

I have many good memo-
rries of riding bikes while growing up.
It afforded an expan-
sion of independence that
was supplanted only by
my driver’s license.
The way to almost anywhere out of my old neighborhood meant a trip past Mr. Scott’s house, which was situated on the cor-
ner of a “T” intersection.
Although sidewalks bordered his front yard on either side, a telephone pole and a mailbox right on the corner made negoti-
at the turn at speed quite a challenge and
speed was important.
More often than not, we would cut a clean
swath across his yard and never have to break
pace.
It was a shortcut used by everyone, and by midsummer, every so often, there was
a well-worn, bare path grooved into the
ground.
If Mr. Scott minded he never said so; maybe it was because his four kids were among the chief abusers of the lawn.
Anyway, I never gave it much thought
until years later when the balance of my at-
tention was turned more toward tending a
lawn than riding bikes.
It occurred to me that Mr. Scott must have
resigned every fall after most of the bikes
were retired for winter. Suddenly, every spring a new stand of grass replaced the bare
path left from the summer before.
Spring, however, brought out the bikes
again with riders returning to old habits. By
midsummer the cycle had repeated.
Seems like a small thing, but our shortcut
cost Mr. Scott a good deal of extra work and
probably some aggravation (not to mention
cost Mr. Scott a good deal of extra work and
rarely save enough time or talent to be
profes-
sionalism or in performance of duty, is
to take shortcuts in procedure, in profes-
sionalism or in performance of duty, is
don’t.
Shortcuts always come with a price.
Some shortcuts, though, can be much
more serious and have wide-reaching con-
sequences.
The prison guards at Abu Ghraib in Iraq
(and perhaps others in their chain of com-
mand) took shortcuts in their professional-
ism, procedure and performance of duty in
dealing with prisoners under their care.
Human rights issues aside for a moment,
their actions — whether thoughtlessly car-
rried out or carefully calculated — have
squandered a tremendous amount of
progress in the Global War on Terror.
The depth of goodwill erased by the ac-
counts of prisoner abuse is beyond accru-
ment and will likely hamper our effort to
stabilize that region of the globe for
years.
Hitting closer to home is the incident in
which members of this unit brought unau-
thorized weapons home from Iraq.
We, who, when, why, what and how are
still being looked into, and there are, no
doubt, a thousand excuses — but not one
good reason this took place at all.
This much is sure: Liberties were taken,
shortcuts were made and the costs for all of
us have yet to be tallied.
The lesson for each of us, when tempted
to take shortcuts in procedure, in profes-
sionalism or in performance of duty, is
DON’T.

The simulator controller sat at a console
about 40 feet away where he or she observed
the mission and controlled training through
the mission simulator, was involved in
the installation of the first full-motion T-38A
simulators in 1978.
They were top-of-the-line, state-of-the-
art systems then,” Mr. Hamada said. “They
replaced an earlier, nonmotion link trainer
that lacked the desired realism.”
To properly copy the aircraft, the old T-
38A simulator had cockpits for the instruc-
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Airmen’s access to pay information gets easier

The complexity of the system posed many
operational and maintenance challenges, said
Joe Rippke, 12th Operations Support
Squadron’s ground training flight program
manager.
“When the system worked, which was most
of the time, it was great,” he said. “But
when the valves malfunctioned, the ride
could get wild.”
The new trainers are based on virtual re-
ality concepts.
The student is given a 180-degree image
around and above the front of the cockpit.
As the student “maneuvers” the trainer,
the visual images respond graphically to
what the aircraft would be doing.
The simulator operator sits behind the stu-
dent and can talk over the student’s simul-
der, which allows a degree of instructor-stu-
dent feedback not possible in the old sys-
tem.
But the underlying reason for the change
is the fact that the new trainer is similar to
the new T-38 aircraft.
The new aircraft features improved avi-
onics and support systems, Mr. Rippke said.
This is by far the closest in design to the
15th Strike Eagle, F-16 Fighting Falcon and F-22
Raptor cockpits.
“A training system has to prepare the pi-
lots for the aircraft they’ll fly,” Mr. Rippke said.
The old-flying-motion simulators don’t
present the new cockpit and, in the final
analysis, the motion part of the training en-
vironment was exciting, but was not nec-
sary to accomplish the training goals. So this
is the time to make the change.”
The new trainers are a lot smaller and are
controlled by a personal computer capable
of sophisticated animations to add realism
and training options.
The instructor can even inject a “wingman”
into the scenario to add the chal-
lenges of formation flying.
The cost of operating and maintaining the new
equipment is much less than the old
systems, Mr. Rippke said.
The conversion to T-38C aircraft here
will be completed by August, so this is an
opportunity time to install the new
trainers, Mr. Rippke said.
“We will have two operational flight
trainers and one unit training device on
line and expect to keep them running 16 hours a day to meet the student load,” he added.
Memorial run

Eight members of the 123rd Special Tactics Squadron ran the Kentucky Derby Festival’s Mini Marathon in May in honor of the unit’s fallen airmen, Tech. Sgts. Chris Matero and Martin Tracy. Both were killed during a training mission in September 2002, when the MC-130 they were aboard crashed in Puerto Rico. Matero and Tracy, who served as combat controllers, were avid runners.


Ky. maintenance group receives top NGB honor

By Capt. Dale Grover
Wing Public Affairs Officer

The Kentucky Air National Guard’s 123rd Maintenance Group was recognized for exceptional performance last month when it was named the 2003 Air National Guard Outstanding Medium Aircraft Maintenance Unit of the Year.

The group also was selected as the National Guard Bureau’s nominee for the 2003 Air Force Maintenance Effectiveness Award for medium-sized aircraft.


During this period, the 123rd Maintenance Group was federally activated in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, just months after completing a yearlong mobilization in support of Operation Noble Eagle.

In bestowing the award during a ceremony held on base May 15, the National Guard Bureau’s Col. Elliot Worcester called the 123rd “one of this nation’s best Air National Guard Units.”

“The presentations this morning reflect the services and the sacrifices that you have all made in order to protect our freedom and to bring that freedom to others around the world,” he told the crowd of about 500 unit members who gathered for the ceremony in the Fuel Cell Hangar.

“The efforts put forth by the members of the maintenance group in support of this wing’s operational mission are noteworthy. From ensuring full mission accomplishment in operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom to supporting the community with programs like the Combined Federal Campaign and Special Olympics, you’ve proven yourselves to be warriors and patriots.

“Col. Hunt provided command leadership and an expeditionary maintenance group, and the maintainers of the 123rd Maintenance Group performed the highest quality of maintenance in deployed locations and at home. You have proven that you have a winning attitude, and I congratulate all of you for winning this outstanding aircraft maintenance unit award,” said Colonel Worcester, who is director of logistics for the Air National Guard.

During the award period, the 123rd Maintenance Group deployed 51 personnel and associated equipment to Ramstein Air Base, Germany, in support of four C-130s. It also deployed 113 troops and equipment to the Central Command Area of Responsibility in support of six C-130s. Meanwhile, the group’s remaining personnel supported Air Mobility Command missions from Louisville.

The combined operations resulted in the generation of 3,196 sorties and 7,821 hours of flight, according to the award citation.

Col. Mark Kraus, commander of the 123rd Airift Wing, also congratulated the members of the 123rd Maintenance Group, and he expressed his appreciation for the hard work of everyone in the wing.

The colonel, who recently returned from a five-month deployment to Kuwait, told the audience that his experiences there commending the 386th Air Expeditionary Wing have only reinforced his belief that “nobody does airlift any better than the 123rd.”

“I’ve always been proud to be a part of this wing,” he continued, “but the things we’ve done over the past couple of years and the way we stack up against other units makes me even more proud.”